TOP TRUMPS AS A TOOL FOR PRESERVING HERITAGE IN THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

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ABSTRACT
Through the history of mind kind, human associated themselves with games and play. Game has a universal language, learning the role of the game enable individual to engage with the game regardless to the language or the country it came from. Artist and historian were intrigued by the role of game as a social and cultural contribution in the society. Artist presented games as an artistic subject in their art practice as a preservation to document the era and capture a historical moment, yet using game as form of preserving heritage did not caught the attention to artists and designers in Saudi Arabia. The research aims to highlight the role of game in preserving heritage by introducing top trumps as a game card that has the strategic forms of reviving heritage. Varying form art, science and history the game has captured all ages to be part of all disciplines Implementing the structure and methodology of top trumps game will help in preserving history and will encourage various level in the society to be part of such interest. Understanding the role of heritage will assure that new generation of Saudi Arabia will be more proactive with their authentic heritage and identity. Games such as top trumps played an important role in capturing the attention of individuals in the United Kingdom society and globally. The paper will introduce the role of game to preserve heritage. The research will introduce the role of game and play by introducing game cards based on top trumps cards aiming to attract Saudi Arabian generation to heritage and history.

Keywords: Heritage, Aesthetic, Identity, Game, Play, Art

INTRODUCTION
Heritage and authenticity goes hand in hand in the Saudi Arabian society. In 12/7/1437 AH, 19th April 2016 the approval of 2030 marked the important of heritage by Saudi Arabian government (2030, 20/10/2016). Saudi Arabian 2030 vision and the national transformation program, focused on three main categories; vibrant society, a thriving economy and an ambitious nation. Vibrant society as a category presents Saudi Arabian historical and cultural legacy which gives the Saudi Arabian society its richness and diversity (2030, 20/10/2016). Understanding the role of heritage will assure that new generation of Saudi Arabia will be more proactive with their authentic heritage and identity.

Understanding the role of heritage will assure that new generation of Saudi Arabia will be more proactive with their authentic heritage and identity. Defining the term games is sometimes be a challenge, as it may differ from one person to the other. Game can be related to physical or mental games or it may contain both. It can be sport games or board games or computer games that both for children and adult. The research will focus on the use of Top Trumps as a card game in reviving heritage (Moursund, Introduction to Using Games in Education: A Guide for Teachers and Parents, 6/26/06).

Human have associated themselves with game since the beginning of time. This was recorded in the early civilisation artefacts. Board games was used in the Indus Valley where participants move pieces between squares (BBC, 2014) (see Fig.1).
Games have united individuals and embraced people in the society. Art played a vital role in preserving the social activity of certain culture. Game and play was one of the subjects that have chosen by artist as a form of preservation. In the Islamic heritage art game was seen as a form of engagement and aesthetic, engaging nature with society such as Polo game miniature Persian painting (Canby, 2014) (see Fig.2).

In addition, Saudi Arabian artists such as Safyah Bin Zaqr and Ola Hejazi have associated game in their art practice for preservation and visual dialogue.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Books Related to Game

- **Works of Game (Sharp, 2013)**
  In this book, Sharp differentiate between Game art and Art Game. Explaining how can a game be in contemporary art practice such as a painting or a sculpture by giving an example of Damisch “Moves” exhibition and Duchamp’s Chess motifs. While game makers just recently started to align with art practice by thinking about game with aesthetic, theoretical and conceptual intention. In addition, Sharps introduced Games as a medium by questioning the aesthetic and approaches that involved in creating games. In addition, Sharp presents thick and thin aesthetic of game. In addition, the author differentiates between art and game. In this book Sharp addresses critics agreement that thick aesthetic depends on previous experience of life (Sharp, 2013, p. 77)

- **The Aesthetic of Play (Upton, 2015)**
  This reference differentiated between game and play. Addressing the problems of defining games and argued against Salen and Zimmerman definition of games as “a game is a system in which players engage in artificial conflict, defined by rules that results in a quantifiable outcome” (Upton, 2015, p. 12). Upton stressed on the way of thinking rather than the how people historically thought about the game. Upton, in addition put forward Johan Huizinga thoughts of play through human culture. In his book homo Ludens, Huizinga presented the manifestation of play as a cultural force in a non-game activities such as worship,
art and philosophy (Upton, 2015, p. 13). Upton defines play as the following, “play is free movement within a system of constraints” (Upton, 2015, p. 14).

In this research the constrains are bound by the memory of a person to recall number, digits and names using top trumps as a reviving history. In addition, Upton identifies the role of play as a system that has been constructed according to a universal set of organising principles (Upton, 2015, p. 21). Upton presented the term ‘window down’ process of oriented play. Instillation can be considered a form of play where audience come to and interact in with the space. This engagement with the work is a form of dialogue which what defines play.

In the game player’s engagement is a two way follow of information. To Upton this is a dialogue rather than a monologue. To him film, literature and theatre is a one-way flow of information while a game engages players in a two-way flow of information where dialogue plays an essential part in the experience (Upton, 2015, p. 23). Play is interactive. It is the give-and-take between player in a constrain system defined by the rule of the game. (Upton, 2015, p. 23)

- Homo Ludens (Huizinga, 1944)
  In this book Huizinga defined play as the following, “play is a voluntary activity or occupation executed within certain fixed limits of time and place, according to rules freely accepted but absolutely binding, having its aim in itself and accompanied by a feeling of tension, joy and the consciousness that it is different from ordinary life” (Huizinga, 1944, p. 172). Ludens also in this book differentiate the role of play in poetry, plastic art, music and sculpture.

- Game Theory A Very Short Introduction (Binmore, 2007)
  Ken Binmore presented the rational thinking of prediction by introducing game theory.

- The Art of Game Design (Schell, 2015)
  In this book Schell’s illustrates the meaning of game and play. He also explains and signifies the theoretical and practical elements of a good game such as mechanics, aesthetic, story and technology presented by skills such as visual arts, architecture, history and animation. Schell also highlighting the important of theme that attract audience to the game. Themes such as historical documentary, hidden treasures, battle competing and so on. The book also illustrates the method and process of formulating the game form an idea to the actual game.

Books related to art and games
The Book of Game Design, Jesse Schell,
Tracy Fullerton, Chris Swain, and Steven Hoffman defined game as a system that is closed and formal with a defined structure that unit and engages individual in conflict umbrella. (schell, 2015, p. 43).

Books related to heritage
(The Kindom of Saudi Arabia Encyclopaedis, Macca Almukarama District, part one, 2007). This encyclopaedia presents Macca Region history, tradition and folklore. In this part a historical introduction of games played in the society, which includes illustration with a brief to the rule of the game.

GAMES AND PLAY
Games is a universal language that unite people. This universal language is governing by the rule of the game. The simplicity of the game is what unite and engage people around the world. This engagement can be epistemology or a physical one which varies from a board game to card game to athletic game. Upton highlighter the essential role of meta-rules structure for any form of play. To him a successful play should have meta-rules structure that enable the game to be a universal language and playable (Upton, 2015, p. 10). In addition, Upton emphasis on the play-based frame-work that defines any activity as art, such as, music, painting and architecture which can be called play (Upton, 2015, pp. 10-11)

ARTISTS AND GAME
Artists through time engaged themselves with games. They used game as theme, as a form of visual language in their art practice, to transmit their ideas and concept. This was very clear from Islamic Safavid
Persian miniature painting to contemporary art. Artist such as British artists Frank Moss Bennett historical scenes (Top-Art-Gallery.com, 1874-1953), and Saudi Arabian artists Dia Aziz Dia and Safyah Bin Zaqr, artistic documentation of the Saudi heritage used game in their art practice as a form of game art (see Figs.3&4).

**Fig.3.** Safiyah Bin Zaqr  
**Fig.4.** Dia Aziz Dia (Dia)  
Oil painting  
Oil painting

**PROBLEM FORMULATION**
Artist presented games as an artistic subject in their art practice as a preservation to document the era and capture a historical moment, yet using game as form of preserving heritage did not caught the attention to artists, designers and researches in Saudi Arabia. The paper will emphasize on the usefulness of games as a form of reviving and sustaining the understanding of history to the new generation.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**
Games that is associated with children has more flexible set off rules that enable different age group to engage when playing if the rule is flexible and looser (Upton, 2015, p. 17). The research will follow a descriptive approach in the theoretical framework and practical approach based on implantation.

**The relation of game and art**
Art perceived differently in various community and culture. Art as an aesthetic convey various elements that it is not related to what is only visible. The relationship of a painting with audience can be more than just an interactive of lines and colours. In addition, individuals, can appreciate the concept and feeling that a painting may covey. Most critics linked individual past experience with what the reaction towards a work of art may have, which can be defined as thick aesthetic (Sharp, 2013, p. 77). John Hospers thin and thick aesthetic theory defined thick aesthetic as means of grounding a work in the more shaded realm of experience which requires a sophisticated understanding of what can be created through a given medium, how it is useful to its community, and how it fits in a large whole of time and space. (Sharp, 2013, pp. 77-78) while thin aesthetic look at the art work in terms of understanding the shallow appreciation of art which focuses on the main visual elements. Hospers theory pave the way how artist approaches game and game designing and how game designers approach artistic practice. (Sharp, 2013, p. 78). Although Game can be seen as a structure form that encompass set of rules and constrains it can also be seen as art. A form of art that has the ability to interact with individuals (Sharp, 2013, pp. 77-78).

A game can be an experience which also can an entertainment product. Sharp differentiate between game as an entertainment and game as a medium (Sharp, 2013, p. 106). To Sharp, games are medium in which play is suspended. In this context medium is referred to a creative substrate such oil paint or charcoal. As so, in the same way oil suspends pigment for application to a surface in order to make an image (Sharp, 2013, p. 106). Assigning meaning in a work of art is as interpreting a secret message from its creator. It’s as finding hidden treasure inside the work and carefully bring it to the light. (Upton, 2015, pp. 260-261)
Preservation and reviving of heritage as a subject can also be seen in the form of a game as an aesthetic structure of preservation, that will engage individual in the society to understand and appreciate heritage.

The realization that art and literature do not encode fixed hidden truths is one of the dominant themes of late-twentieth-century critical thought. How we read a text, look at a painting, or play a game, is dependent on the different interpretation that may emerge that may contradict one another which is an essential element of play (Upton, 2015, p. 264). Game works like an artwork. It has similar elements of a painting, a music or a poetry. It has aesthetica and internal and external constrains that make a game favourable to the audience. Individuals playing a game can imply a different character to the game different form the one created by the Game designer. As a result, the game designer has no force on the player to play his game in a specific way (Upton, 2015, p. 265). The designers are not powerless yet has no control on the considerable amount of play that may emerge naturally than other in his work (Upton, 2015, p. 265).

Interpretive play is what we do when we play a game, read a book, watch a movie, or listen to a symphony. It is a form of engagement (Upton, 2015, p. 258). We construct new internal constraints that agree with what has come before, and we use those internal constraints to anticipate what will come after. These constraints are both explanations and predictions, they are a means of understanding a thing, which sometimes does not stop by stopping the engagement. The experience can go on even if the external stimulus is moved. This is what Upton called the “winding down” process, the nature outcome of closure-oriented play (Upton, 2015, p. 258).

**Games as a medium**

Bernard Suits states that when we play a game you go into the attempt of overcoming obstacles to achieve goals (Upton, 2015, p. 16). Achieving goals is part of this engagements. It also differentiates between art game and game art and the aesthetic related to thin and thick aesthetic. Art games are aesthetically thin because of their emphasis on craft and medium and their antiquated ideas of art’s function as a window on to the soul. Game art (art made from games) uses games for thin aesthetics of symbols experience in service of the thick aesthetics of conceptual exploration such as Jeff Koons art work. Art games take a more conservative approach of emphasizing representational expression in a thick way, at the same time that they thinly explore the conceptually and critically focused aesthetics of contemporary art (Sharp, 2013, p. 78).

**Gaming in Saudi Arabia**

Tradition is an important element in any society. Folklore games are a mirror to the society. Games transmit numerous symbols, believes and values that people in the society. Cultural context has a strong element to individual paying games regardless to the fixed structure that govern the game which will remain the same (Upton, 2015, p. 10). In Saudi Arabia games, have inherited form one generation to another. Games and paly is rooted in every era and generation.

In Saudi Arabia, some games are hybrid yet the adaptation of game rule may still be the same. From traditional games, such as birbir to app gamed such as candy crush, have all attracted individuals in the society. Almaqtat (algatra), the drop, is one of the Saudi Arabia traditional board game that engages two individuals. (The Kindom of Saudi Arabia Encyclopaedis, Macca Almukarama District, part one, 2007, p. 603). Saudi Arabia invested in reviving heritage and supported various initiative related to it.
Benefiting from games as a structure of reviving heritage is very limited in the Arab world in and outside Saudi Arabia. Young generation have realised the important issue of history and identity and the important of reviving Saudi Arabia heritage. Yet using games as a medium that can address heritage to young and old generation is limited.

One of the new initiative in the Arab world is the Qirtas group of reviving the position of Arabic culture. The initiative focus on reflecting the scientific heritage with 3d puzzles. Qirtas combines: cultural heritage, simplified mechanical concepts, and contemporary aesthetics (Qirtas) (see Fig.5).

**Top Trumps**

Since the introduction of Top Trumps card games in 1968 educators benefited from them as a teaching aids in their class rooms. With the list of numerical data each card contains, the game aims to win the opponent card by comparing these values. Top trumps pack has different theme such as film, animals, architecture building or art. From a distinctive animal to a famous artist. Each card illustrates numeric data and information about them. For example, if cards are on architectural building each building would show a different historical background of the building, and numeric data that include dates and architectural measurement. Using the Elements of Top Trumps cards as a teaching aid is a plus factor to play and learn simultaneously. The cards as a game can be used as introduction to all subjects related to education and heritage in and outside the class room (BBSRC, 1994-2014).

Top Trumps increase individual learning ability to learn, not only by reinforcing their learning, sorting and comparing, but to increase dialogue and interaction. The rule of the game is not limited. Individuals can explore other aspect of information by searching and exploring other information by adding additional question. Top trumps can encourage individual to read the work from a thick aesthetic rather than a thin aesthetic approach (Chemistry, 2016).

Top trumps games have cons and pros. The report has listed the top trumps pros pivot around the relation to its added value in education, the simplicity of it concepts and rules. Grouping the pros of top tumps into three categories; education, design, audience. In terms of education top trumps normally lists factual information which is a great source for education that enhances knowledge and numeracy due to the fact it lists figures such as dates and measurements. In addition, the simplicity of concept and rules of play gives it a bigger platform of different audience which is not limited to young individuals only. Disadvantages, on the other hand, it may seem dated and need to have at least two people in the game. The use of multiples packs is also may consider an additional disadvantage. (BBSRC, 1994-2014)
To design top trumps cards you need to have the following point; a topic with enough categories ideally a minimum of six is valued which have numerical values. Ideally it should be twenty different cards. It essential that you have a reliable source for reference. When using images, it is essential that you consider copy right and attribution. All information should be easy and to the point to understand. Size of the cards should consider the type of audience, the bigger the audience the better. (BBSRC, 1994-2014)

To Moursund, games are fun activity that gives individual playing the enjoyment and pleasure of interactive and doing. As a form of play games gives us passionate of involvement. With the structure of rules, it gives us the motivation to win and gratification. Theses outcomes and feedback gives individual the learning based on problem solving and creativity (Moursund, Introduction to Using Games in Education: A Guide for Teachers and Parents, 6/26/06). Using games as a learning process provided students opportunities to construct their own challenges and set new relationships that will help in their progress (Kafai, January 2006).

**Top Trumps as an artistic source of reviving heritage**

Fun is one of the main goals of education, yet few people would list that and it is very little used in education (Moursund, Introduction to Using Games in Education: A Guide for Teachers and Parents, 6/26/06, p. 10). Games can enhance individual thinking. Thinking is a process, a process that is dynamic. The mind and brain learns by developing patterns. Inform of information, knowledge and wisdom as you think these patterns helps us to solve problems or task easily (Moursund, Introduction to Using Games in Education: A Guide for Teachers and Parents, 6/26/06). Einstein declares that when solving problems, we cannot use the same kind of thinking that we used when we created them. The process of thinking varies from a vertical thinking to lateral thinking. Edward de Bono states; the vertical thinker know exactly what they are looking for while the lateral thinker are always in the process of searching to find what they are looking for (Moursund, Introduction to Using Games in Education: A Guide for Teachers and Parents, 6/26/06, p. 10). Using games will give individual the potential of making connection and engage with more possibilities and challenges.

**The Practical Experiments:**

Art game emphasise on the engagement of thinking, logic and fantasy. Top Trumps is a simple game to play, that requires no prior knowledge to understand the rules. It is also very easy to customize: it would, for instance, be possible to create a pack of ‘Saudi Arabian architecture’; ‘Saudi Arabian artists’; or other Saudi Arabian heritage related subjects. A personalized examples of Top Trumps cards will be developed as a template for use reviving heritage in Saudi Arabia. The game will provide an ideal way for individuals in the society to learn about basic heritage and art related subject in the Kingdom. The game will create opportunities to engage individuals to history in the society. A method that previously been research by Cohen to stimulate student interest in statistic and encourage critical discussion in the UK. (Cohen, 2015)

Saudi Arabian heritage is an open source for experimentation and research. The Saudi heritage covers subjects such as folklore, design, architecture and history. Initiating cards that addresses historical theme by using top trumps structure as a medium and a tool to reviving Saudi Arabian heritage will be addressed by using game and play theory. The elements of thin aesthetic and thick aesthetic can be addressed in the implementation to enhance vertical and lateral thinking. In addition, the winding down process of rethinking and revaluating information as a part of the game structure will help in adding individual challenges to the game.

Examples of card will be design to cover historical and tradition heritage in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabian and the Islamic world. Examples of cards such as Islamic Miniature painting (Fig.6), Islamic invention (Fig. 7), Saudi Arabian customs (Fig. 8), Saudi Arabian artists (Fig. 9) and jewellery (Fig.10) is designed and categories in the following points:-
- The name of the category
- The title of the card
- A picture
- A description

Custom elements of comparison based on the specific category of the cards such as and not limited to date, size, material, dynasty, which will add a historical and numerical value to the cards.

**Fig.6 Islamic Miniature Painting**
Fig. 7 Islamic Invention

Fig. 8 Saudi Arabian Traditional Customs
RESEARCH RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATION
It is important to think about games as a method of overcoming history and heritage anxiety. Game can help in simulating competition and motivation. Education materials is a very important factor in education which games such as top trumps can be used easily in the Saudi Arabian education. Using top trumps in education could be a goal to address the anxiety students feel when studying history and subject that is difficult to students. Using Games should be an essential and legitimate study and research in the kingdom. It is essential to consider game as a medium of reviving heritage and history. The implementation of game is limited to board games or card games but it should also be experimentation on digital games.

REFERENCES


