

# Ines&Us: Endless Love Alternate Reality Game to Build Utopic New Worlds

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**Abstract:** The eternal challenge of teaching-learning literature is to delight educators and learners by reading and make them agents multipliers of the experience of reading perceived as a process of transformation of people and creation of utopian and possible worlds. This work explores the concept of endless love of Pedro and Inês praised in the Inezian myth, together with a gamified technological platform accessible to the population through the cell phone, to create a serious game of performative reading and production of multimodal texts to creation of social entrepreneurship projects. The initial application of IU Endless Love game indicates that it may influence teen students and adults be changed from conventional literature readers to be builders of utopic worlds who use their available resources to 1) to train readers on a large scale, 2) to spread the Inezian myth in Brazil and Portugal, 3) to facilitate the understanding and definition of reading objectives, 4) to incentive social entrepreneurship and 5) to fight the two critical social scenarios in their region concerning violence against women and hunger.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Together with the problem of the low level of reading and writing capabilities of young people demonstrated in several countries by PISA report (PISA2016), we have the problem of violence against the woman. According to data from the United Nations report one in five women and girls, including 19 per cent of women and girls aged 15 to 49, have experienced physical and/or sexual and/or domestic violence by an intimate partner with the last 12 months (United Nations, 2015). Yet, 49 countries have no laws that specifically protect women from such violence. This is an indicator of a great challenge for our society, included in the Goal 5 on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, whose solution goes unquestionably through the preparation of youth, by developing its reading and writing skills, to rewrite the future of humanity in its own words and actions, in a reading-acting revolution. In Brazil, phenomenon of violence against women is taking on frightening proportions,

at least since 2013, when the country climbed to 5th place in the world ranking of femicide. The 107 cases of femicide registered in the first 20 days of 2019 in the country (Garcia, 2019), however, speak eloquently of the insufficiency and inefficacy of governmental strategies and actions to break the cycle of this epidemic violence, as well as of the inefficiency to apply existing knowledge to facing sociocultural challenges of this dimension.

A history of love, lived in real life between a woman and a man, has been challenging for almost seven centuries the space-time line of history itself and becoming a myth of Portuguese nationality has also been challenging the poetic imagination in the field of arts, in particular the literary. From the renaissance epic of *Os Lusíadas*, in Camões, to the postmodern rhapsody of *A Boba*, in Estela Guedes, the loves of Inês de Castro and Pedro have already been narrated in the most different media and formats by storytellers of various nationalities for in addition to the Portuguese from their languages and their historical-cultural perspectives. The

posthumous consecration of Ines as Queen of Portugal at the behest of Dom Pedro, who loved her much more than the royal throne destined for him, would perpetuate her as the protagonist of "love to the end of the world" (the Inezian myth) and also as the victim of a femicide, *avant la lettre*, committed in the fourteenth century, in 1355, in a context of conflictive family relations generated by reasons of political background, at the behest of the King of Portugal, Alfonso IV, Pedro's father.

This incessant challenge of promoting the charm for reading, in addition to enchanting educators and students through reading practice, with an emphasis on literature, is to make them multipliers of the experience of reading perceived as a process of transformation of people and creation of utopian worlds in which the experience of writing registers as a creative instance for ordinary people, child and teenage girls and boys, women and men, in a formative-pedagogical context, who live the "real life" of social inequalities, as gender inequality, also in school spaces, have guaranteed their right to learn to recreate the world and their ways of being in it, constructing new meanings about gender relations in general, and affective ones in particular, based on equity and respect for oneself and for the other.

Is the concept of infinite love advocated in the Inezian myth, embedded in a gamified technological platform accessible to the population by means of the cellular telephone, capable of influence the attitude of the reader of the Inezian work to transcend his personal transformation in relation to reading and femicide in order to live also an attitude of commitment in a solidarity movement that goes beyond the fight against gender violence? In order to answer this research question, it was elaborated and tested in this work a serious game of performative reading and production of multimodal texts based on the Inezian myth and of social entrepreneurial performances, to lead readers-actors to the reconstruction of utopian personal worlds (female and male self-images), to the reconstruction of utopian worlds of the genre of the other (gender relations), and to the reconstruction of utopian worlds of citizenship.

## 2 RELATED WORKS

Breaking with the verbal as the only way of human language, poets of various aesthetic expressions, in the last five hundred years, have created narratives that recall the love and tragedy of Inês de Castro and reaffirm their symbolic reign. Above all, these poets

update social processes in which women and men construct themselves as subjects of femininities and masculinities and thus establish relations among themselves, affective or not, involving or not the sexuality. By means of critical analyzes of works of these collections, among them the literary one, one can propose interpretative hypotheses around instances of symbolic action of the Inezian myth in the construction of gender identities in socio-cultural contexts such as Portuguese, as was done from the recreations of Inês de Castro produced by contemporary Portuguese playwrights (Andrade, 2010).

In Portugal, where the 393 cases of femicide registered between 2004 and 2014 (Teixeira, 2015, p.16), the Art'Themis Project - Young Protagonists in Gender Prevention and Equality implemented systematic actions of awareness and prevention of sexist and racist behaviour in schools in Porto and Matosinhos in the school year 2014/2015 that supported research such as carried out at University of Porto whose good results include an interactive experience between students and plastic artist in the co-production of works carried out during a live painting session integrated with a debate among the participants on raise gender equality awareness, (Teixeira, 2015), such as community experiences around the world that show the power of storytelling to generate criticism and collective action as well as to stimulate engagement and active citizenship (Solinger, Fox, Irani, 2008). In Brazil, governmental and non-governmental organizations initiated the Pact and the National Policy to Combat Violence against Women the Special Secretariat for Policies for Women (SPM) to debate policies in pursuit of gender equality, as established as goals in the SDGs, among them policies of economic autonomy and of encouraging political participation, insertion in power spaces and new educational approaches, considering the multifaceted and structural character of gender violence, in its foundations linked to the patriarchal culture (Bugni, 2016).

In Portugal and Brazil there are works developed in primary and secondary schools that aims to promote a more playful contact and creative of children and adolescents with the reading practice of the Inezian theme, instrumented by art-educational practices such as dramatization, singing, vocalization, animation with elements of drawing, collage and cartoons performed by students with partnership and supervision of teacher. But data such as those recorded in the Observatory on Dating Violence in 2018 shows that pedagogic works at schools related above have no yet enough synergy

with government strategies and no achieve massive reach and impact for a cultural change, from a transformation of the gender consciousness, from the masculine and feminine perspectives (Neves, 2018). None of these works have used alternate reality games to create a perception of endless love based relationship between citizens nor to make adolescents and young people to transcend endless love concept from inezian myth to create social entrepreneurship projects based on endless love concept.

### 3 INES&US APPROACH

The IU (Inês&Us) game is created based on ReadAct approach to build alternate-reality serious games which blend storytelling, tutorial-based education and theatrical reading (and writing) of multimedia contents about a given social problem (Barros and Andrade, 2018). This approach aims to empower teachers and students of a school to take individual or collective action to solve a given problem (the different forms of violence against women, in the IU game) in the context of their community, using principles of utopia to build new worlds (More, 1985) while they live a hero's journey (Campbell, 1949) that impacts his culture in a gamified experience (Huizinga, 1955).

Utopianism is used in IU to lead players to transforming their attitude of the future from optimized, fictional or projected scenarios of research hypotheses or actions to build new better worlds that overcome challenges as these of fight violence against women and reduce hunger (Vieira, 2011). In fact, as the proactive citizens of Utopia (More, 1985), in IU's theaters the players read about Inês and Pedro's endless love in the morning, afternoon and in the evening in different ways allowed in the game by IU's transmedia facilities to build through utopianism, new possibilities concerning women empowerment and hunger reduction by following discovery, experimentation, creation and innovation steps of social entrepreneurship process.

Besides gamification techniques of conventional games that are used in its mobile app, the IU game also offers a web geo-referenced information system for teachers and specially appointed tutors to create, dispatch and manage missions for the players in the real world in addition to theatrical reading and assignments that explore principles of crowdsourcing, utopia, incentives engineering, knowledge management, trust verification, and

entrepreneurship and e-commerce. The game is played in 5 missions as illustrated in Figure 1.

#### 3.1 Inês&Us Gameplay

The experience of reading performance in alternate reality to promote knowledge and enjoyment of the historical-mythical narrative of Inês de Castro and to create new worlds is lived by groups of players and at least one teacher, through 5 missions (5 levels of difficulty and maturity) in 3 stages: the school (missions 1, 2 and 3), cyberspace (mission 4) and community (mission 5).

In dreaming mission the educator brings to your classroom an utopian world created by him, as a way to present for his class a seed book about the endless love of Pedro and Ines. This is done in a performative way, to encourage participants to dream about the theme of the IU game that is the powerful love that goes beyond even the death and moves a person who loves to do things that seem impossible. The objective is to create in the players an ideological, fantastic, mythical, epic inspiration that will lead them to the creation of a new literary work, using his skills to represent an utopic world concerning this theme. Each player registers the first version of their dream in the right place of the IU mobile app, using text, with no preoccupation with form and style. In diving mission players have time to read the seed book and immerse themselves intimately in the world built by its author. In this dive he must identify the dystopias and utopias present in the history of Pedro and Inês and choose the ones he wants to reduce or amplify in his construction of a new utopian world. Each player enrich your dream of utopic world by the dreams of the author and by the dreams of the history characters, and register the second version of your utopic world in the IU mobile app. In creation mission players use their presence, their body in all their sensory, creative and psychomotor dimensions, and especially speech and writing, to reinvent, mimic a new expression of theme and history, modifying it if desired, creating a representation personalized work of the seed-work, which is a new work of his own. In this third mission, this new work is a mini-story, in narrative, poetic or musical form, with a limit of 25 words. This mini-story tells a new story of Pedro and Inês, in which the cultural, ethical, moral, intellectual, political and economic values involved are influenced by the power of the endless love of the Inezian myth to represent a new utopian world that the player wants and if he has the courage he will undertake to build it, in the real world, in

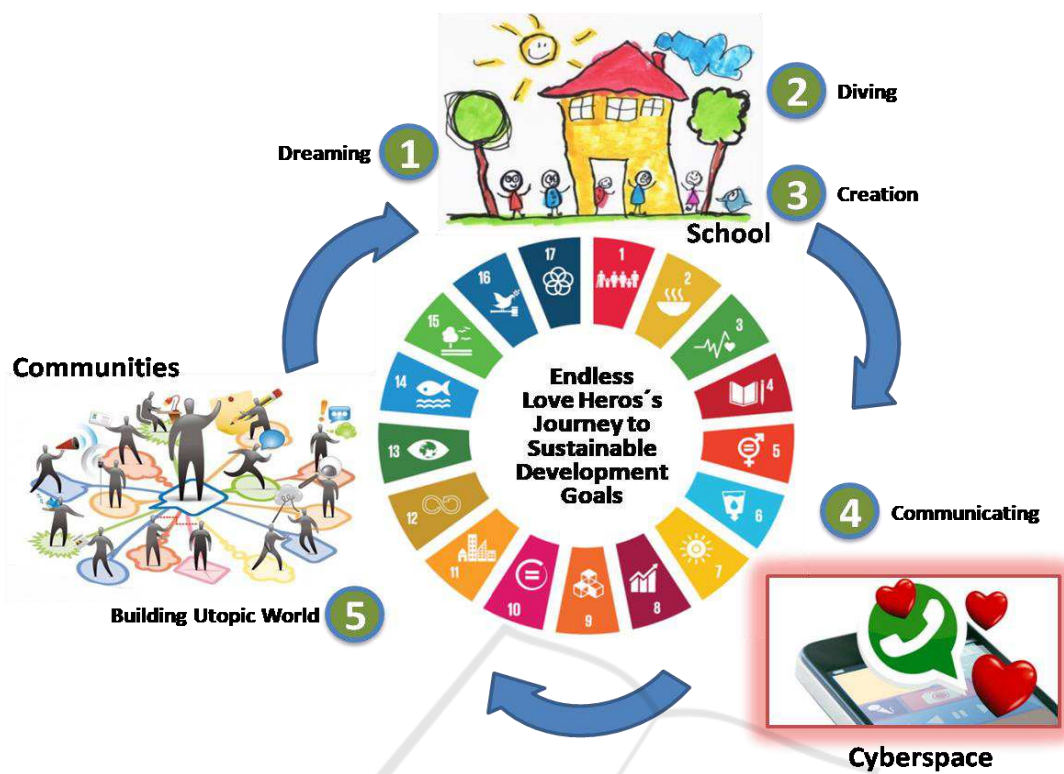


Figure 1: Inês&Us Gameplay and its 5 missions to improve capacity of players to transform a reading and writing experience into a tool for building new utopian worlds from endless love of inezian myth.

missions 4 and 5 of the game. The communicating mission is achieved in the endless love virtual place in cyberspace. This part of web and mobile game platform is configured as a cultural marketplace, where all players create an utopian social business in the virtual world in the form of a personalized social network to preach the love that reaffirms their gender, the gender of the other and support segments of society formed by people in need (suffering violence against women or hunger) with his literary work and services. In this cyberspace agency they share, by digital means, their versions of the story of Inês and endless love written in their own mini-story representing their utopian worlds. They also use the social network communication tools to manage the accesses of the beneficiary readers of their work and the tangible and intangible values they offer for the work offered in their agency (the mini-stories). Build Utopic World, the 5<sup>th</sup> and last mission, is accomplished in the community were the player live or in this one the player chose to change. Each player must interact with as many people as possible in the community to win new readers who will be transformed by this reading into voluntary members of the player utopian cultural agency. Once they have been shaped by reading and by transcendent

love preached by the player through his dream of utopian world, these new readers must offer various intangible and tangible assets of value to build the new utopian world designed by the player and shown directly or indirectly for his mini-story. These assets may have different values represented by a symbolic number of Utopic Declarations of Love (UDL) depending on the different reactions of the reader. All the information created in the experience lived and all the assets with its values build in the 5 game missions are registered in synchronous and asynchronous mode in the endless love virtual place.

The bridge that connects and transform love from endless romantic love into endless transcendent love is made of gamified performatic readings. In the UI match presented in this article, it was made a bridge between love needed to fight violence against women, and love needed to fight hunger. This bridge is chosen by players and teachers as the theme for the construction of new utopian worlds.

After completing the fifth mission, players return to school where they take the role of educators and start a new IU game match, creating a cycle of repetition of the 5 missions, now using their own utopic worlds as the powerful energy needed to promote the reading of other Inezian works that say

about endless love with new possibilities to allow to build new bridges that allows to pass new forms of social entrepreneurship. These 5 interdependent mission experiences are driven by a endless love hero's journey with narrative, interfaces, awards and rules aligned with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), especially with the Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (United Nations, 2015). Other targets of other SDG Goals may be a complementary aim of the match for the 5<sup>th</sup> mission, like the target "By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round", of the SDG 2, chosen in our test experiment.

### 3.2 Inês&Us Rules

The hero's journey to contribute to achieve Goal 5 and others Goals of the SDGs has the following rules: 1. Mini-story can be of 3 textual modalities: a) narrative, b) poetic and c) music (original music or parody). 2. The mini-story must be registered in digital form and sent to Endless Love Virtual Place. 3. The size limit of each mini-story is 25 words. 4. Each player must win at least 10 epic readers for his mini-story. 5. Each epic reader should send to endless love virtual place at least one epic like with its tangible and intangible values. 6. Epic likes can be of 3 types: 1) like textual in the form of written comment of up to 10 words, 2) like textual in the form of audio of up to 30 seconds, and 3) like embracing in the form of a selfie embraced with the author of the mini-story, showing the mini-story manuscript in a poster. 7. The epic like sending message should begin with the identification of the mini-story (title) and its author (name). 8. Value of epic likes range from 1 to 3 utopic declaration of love UDLs (Like epic type textual writing = 1 UDL, Like epic type textual audio = 1 UDL, Like epic type embracer = 2 UDLs, Like epic sublime = 4 UDLs, Like epic gift = 6 UDLs). 9. The sublime epic like is a like of any of the 3 types in which it is made explicit that the reader felt an improvement of his state of mind because of the message of the mini-story. 10. The like epic gift is a like of any of the 3 types in which it is made explicit that the reader was motivated to donate a kilo of non-perishable food because of the message of the mini-story read and explains why he is making the donation. This like is a good with a tangible value (the food donated) and an intangible value (the testimony) represented by 10 UDLs). The goods of tangible value received (food) is delivered to the elderly institute of Sumé on

the last day of game match. 11. A reader can send the same comment in the 3 possible formats (writing, audio and embracing).

## 4 PRELIMINARY TESTS

Preliminary tests were carried out to evaluate the impact of IU game on the pleasure of reading, in Brazil-Portugal interculturality, in the reconstruction of utopian personal-world of gender (female and male self-images), in the reconstruction of utopian worlds of the other gender (gender relations) and in the reconstruction of utopian worlds of citizenship of another (social entrepreneurship) that could be improved. The preliminary validation experiment was performed with a total of 32 peoples (19 to 35 years old, 23.5% male and 76.5% female) from university for a duration of 6 weeks in the end of 2018. 2 people functioned as "teacher training agents" in preparing the 5 missions in the real world besides text, audio and video assignments and orchestrating social and entrepreneurship actions in the players communities. All the players played the IU game composed by these 5 read-writing-acting missions to create a literature social business and to contribute to achievement of some target of SDGs Goal 5 and SDG 2.

### 4.1 Mini-stories of New Worlds

The first impact of the experience of playing the IU game is represented by the mini-story itself because it represents the part that can be written of the new utopian world created by the player from his personal transformation caused by the reading of the Inezian work. Here are shown only 2 mini-stories illustrating changes made by the readers in the original story. These changes were multiplied and re-signified in their utopian entrepreneurial activities in the community during the accomplishment of the mission 5. Some evidences of new utopic worlds building by readers are: a) 3 of the mini-stories describe Inês as a black queen, an additional fact that is incompatible with the original story that demonstrates unequivocally the perception of these players-readers of racial inequalities especially in relation to women; b) in 90% of the mini-stories the protagonist that represents Inês does not die; c) in 80% of the mini-stories written by players of masculine gender, they militate against women's rights and prevent Pedro's father from committing femicide; d) in 100% of the mini-stories is included the transcendence of the power of the love of Pedro

and Inês that moved him to crown her as a queen after dead and to initiate an internal war in Portugal; e) in 100% of the mini-stories the romantic love that is the reference in the Inezian myth was transformed into a new kind of love capable of moving people to become social entrepreneurs. This latest modification of the Inez myth is proven by the creation of 30 utopic individual agencies by all players to prevent the old people's hunger at the Sumé's elderly care institute.



Figure 2: Two examples of mini-stories created by players to building new utopian worlds from endless love of inezian myth.

#### 4.2 Personal Transformations

The first variable investigated in the tests was the influence of the UI on the player's ability to perceive and set goals for a reading and to transform a reading and writing experience into a tool for building new utopian worlds. This ability was evaluated before and after the experience of playing the UI. This was done by means of a test with 10 questions, whose answers indicate an accumulated ability to read and write as an act of (re)construction of utopian worlds and to promote in other people (their future players) this reading and writing experience with that power. Each question has weight 1 and the maximum capacity (level 10 of power) corresponds to the accuracy of the 10 questions. Figure 3 shows the results of the two evaluations. It is observed that all players have demonstrated the growth of this capacity.

Then the influence of the UI on the entrepreneurial skills of the players was observed, through an evaluation of the self-analysis each of them made of their own power to construct new utopicworlds through innovative reading and writing. Each YES response indicates its belief in its own power to engage in the construction of new utopic worlds in relation to an aspect of the process of transformation of the reading-writing experience into a process of possible utopian worlds

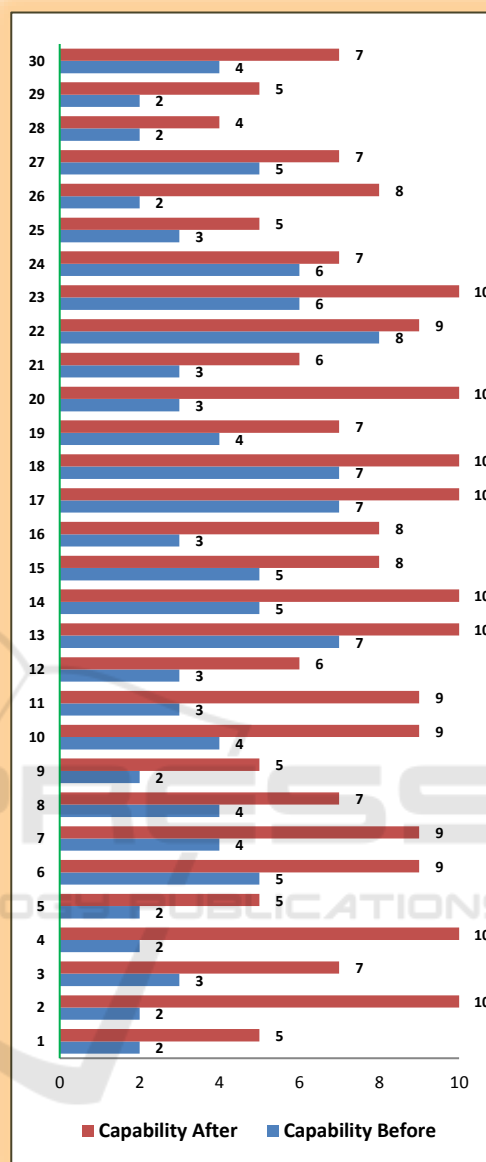


Figure 3: Improvements in capability of players to transform a reading and writing experience into a tool for building new utopian worlds from endless love of inezian myth.

construction. The changes in the number of responses before and after playing the game, illustrated in Figure 4, show the unequivocal positive influence of the UI playing experience on the following aspects of the utopian attitude: 1. Do you enjoy reading literary texts? 2. Do you like to give a practical sense of literary texts? 3. Are you able to make a mini-story in narrative text? 4. Are you able to make a mini-story in poetic text? 5. Do

you find it important to involve friends and family in your school projects? 6. Have you ever learned a subject studied at school in a reading game? 7. Do you know how to create a utopian cultural enterprise? 8. Would you dare to create a utopian cultural enterprise? 9. Would you dare to run a utopian cultural agency?

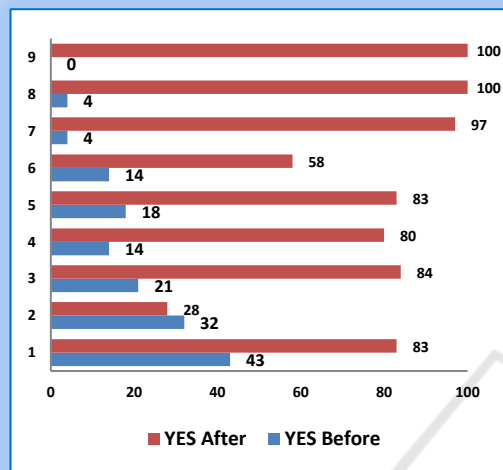


Figure 4: Changes of players for utopic attitude.

### 4.3 Social Entrepreneurship

Finally, it was measured the performance of the players in mission 5 to build an agency to prevent the old people's hunger at the Sumé's elderly care institute. Players have created a non-profit organization with the following business model: each player creates their own individual socio-cultural agency that offers their mini-story as a good of intangible value to their readers, and receives in exchange from that reader a good whose value is defined by the reader, based on his perception of the value of the utopian world constructed by the player, verified in the enjoyment of the reading of the mini-stories and vision of the utopian world presented by the player. These goods vary in value according to rule 10 of the game, from a like on the UI mobile platform up to 1 kilo of non-perishable food. All participating players donate goods of tangible value obtained in their reading campaigns (food donations) to the association and this donates all of the assets to the Sumé's elderly care institute. As shown in Figures 3 and 4, in this IU match all 30 players engaged as founding members and achieved the mission 5. In a 6-week experiment the game generated 32 multipliers of Inês's and Pedro's endless love of the mini-story genre, formed 932

intercultural Portugal-Brazil readers representing 6% of the population of the city, transformed these readers into social agents engaged to build a possible utopian world who have transcended endless romantic love of Inezian myth to a endless solidarity love for poor citizens, that had lead for donation of food to prevent hunger in a local elderly people institute.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

The concept of infinite love from the myth of Inês, together with a technological platform accessible to the population by means of the cell phone, was elaborated in this work to create a serious game of performatic reading and production of multimodal texts capable of generating 4 impacts: 1) to train readers on a large scale, 2) to spread the Inezian work in Brazil and Portugal, 3) to facilitate the understanding of reading objectives, and 4) to promote social entrepreneurship.

These initial application of IU Endless Love game answer the research question showing that it may influence teen students and adults be changed from conventional literature readers to be utopic worlds builders using their three major resources that could be put to use in dealing with the two critical social scenario in their region concerning violence against women (SDG 5) and hunger (SDG 2): 1) insider knowledge - about the scenario itself and appropriate solutions (e.g. from previous experiences of similar crises in the same region); 2) energy for social activity - to help solve problems (when they or their communities are afflicted themselves); and, 3) large numbers of flexible actors who could be fielded to alleviate symptoms or implement solutions - as compared to government agents who get paid by the hours and are subject to their strict work regulations. The experiment was carried out with few players and new experiments of playing IU with a large-scale population are been carried out to validate this hypothesis.

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