
Educational Games about the Environment: The Microplastics Escape Game OCEAN EYE

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Abstract

Microplastics increasingly pollute European rivers. European citizens as well as experts researching plastics are worried about the potential impact of microplastics for the natural environment and human health. However, a representative survey in Germany showed that fewer participants in the younger age group and participants with a low educational level have heard about microplastics. Hence, educating citizens about microplastics is still necessary and doing so in an engaging way could be especially promising for citizens which are less interested in environmental topics. Therefore, we introduce the microplastics escape game OCEAN EYE (developed and managed by the Austrian association ScienceCenter Netzwerk) – an educational game with environmental focus. Additionally, we present our evaluation-approach on how to 1) investigate the game's feasibility to raise awareness around the issue; 2) explore the effects of participant's willingness to do something against microplastics; and 3) evaluate the overall player experience. The approach will be employed in our upcoming study with Austrian participants from the age of 15 onwards. The data collection will be carried out in October and November 2022. We hope to encourage researchers and practitioners working on microplastics to use environmental focused games as educational interventions as well as to foster evidence-based practices.

Keywords: microplastics, awareness, education, games, intervention, evaluation

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