

PRESS RELEASE

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QatarDebate plans to utilize Virtual Reality (VR) technology into its practices extending its offering of world class debate trainings to reach various segments of the community.

Doha – QatarDebate

QatarDebate Center (QD) a member of Qatar Foundation (QF), - is launching an innovative concept in the world of debate leveraging VR in the debate learning process.

The idea was initiated by Abdullah Ahmad Al-Emadi - a former debater and a current student at Northwestern University Qatar – and adopted by QatarDebate after identifying an opportunity to create and capture value to the centers stakeholders. QatarDebate is one of the pioneers in the world in employing VR as a tool aimed at motivating individuals of all ages to enjoy learning the art of debate by providing immersive and realistic experience for users and achieving positive results by eradicating fear of public speaking.

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Abdullah Ahmad Al-Emadi said "It is a stimulating experience that serves the youth who want to learn debates but lack the courage to showcase their skills, who have the courage, but lack the proper skill set, and who are too shy to speak out. It also offers a valuable solution for adults who fear public speaking and help them overcome those feelings".

With regard to the positive effects of the project, Al-Emadi said: "As a former debater, I know the challenges that junior debaters face and the one challenge that stood up the most was fear of public speaking which ultimately reflected on my overall performance".

"The idea focuses mainly on developing an interactive and entertaining method to explore debating. Debaters can put on their VR headsets and get immersed into a virtual space allowing the user to interact with his environment" Abdullah Al Emadi said.

Dr. Mahmoud Barraaj, Outreach Program Specialist - QatarDebate Center, said: "A key element of a VR-based approach for debaters training, is the level of presence along with the empathy inflicted on the trainees that will allow them to experience realistic and emotion-rich situations in a virtual environment".

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Dr. BarraJ praised QatarDebate continuous exploration of solutions that serve the community through the adoption of latest technologies in the aim of facilitating accessibility to various segments to the art of debate. Noting that several scientific papers highlighted the significant impact of deploying virtual reality on the education industry.

“VR is still an emerging technology in terms of recognizing its full potential in education. We must think about what's possible now so that when the technology becomes more prevalent, we can leverage it to create life-changing learning experiences” Dr. BarraJ said.

It is worth mentioning that Virtual reality (VR) is an interactive computer-generated experience taking place within a simulated environment, that incorporates mainly auditory and visual, but also other types of sensory feedback like haptic. This immersive environment can be similar to the real world or it can be fantastical, creating an experience that is not possible in ordinary physical reality. A person using virtual reality equipment is able to "look around" the artificial world, move around in it, and interact with virtual features or items.

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Notes to the Editor:

The idea of launching QatarDebate had emerged from the vision of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser Al Thani -Chairman of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, which is based on human development as the most expensive wealth through two parallel lines: transplant science and knowledge and launch enhancing the skills of creative talent: the ability to express opinion and interact with others and not a collision with them.

Thousands of students underwent to training courses organized by QatarDebate, and many of them participated in local, regional and global tournaments which organized by "QatarDebate" Center, and so many proven over the success of the "QatarDebate" during the last period, and reflects the great effort done by the officials in the center... QatarDebate helped to achieve its objectives the great support given by the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development...

The QatarDebate Center was founded in 2008 in order to develop the level of open discussion and debate and promote it among students in Qatar and the Middle East, including contributing to the preparation of global citizens and leaders of thoughts in the future.