

Youth take a stand in debate on entrepreneurship

For the first time, The Straits Times Education Forum saw not just the panellists engaging in a spirited debate, but also youth taking a stand on important issues.

Two junior college students, a polytechnic graduate and an alumnus of Singapore Management University (SMU) joined in the discussions yesterday at the forum on whether entrepreneurs today do more harm than good.

Stacy Lee, 18, from Catholic Junior College, said that harm inadvertently arose from entrepreneurial companies today and that young people were affected disproportionately.

"Youth regard the credibility of social media as normative," she said. "Consumers today remain naive of how much information we

are giving away."

She cited the example of the FaceTime bug found earlier this year that turned on a user's microphone without his or her consent.

"We have traded privacy for convenience. In the past, people searched Google for answers. Today, Google searches us."

Eliora Joseph, 17, from National Junior College, said: "Companies are profit-driven and will prioritise revenue over more important things like privacy."

But two other youth disagreed.

Ngee Ann Polytechnic graduate Chong Kok Leong, 21, said: "Consumers also stand to benefit from entrepreneurship because they have access to better goods and services. Entrepreneurship is a tool that brings gifts like productivity



National Junior College student Eliora Joseph speaking during the debate on entrepreneurship at The Straits Times Education Forum yesterday. "Companies are profit-driven and will prioritise revenue over more important things like privacy," she said. ST PHOTO: JASMINE CHOONG

growth. It can cause harm in the wrong hands but consumers can also shape it to encourage good behaviour from companies."

Ms Anna Haotanto, 34, an SMU

graduate who founded the financial and career advice platform The New Savvy, said: "There are risks that entrepreneurs take because we believe in a cause that is bigger

than us. It is not about making money, because if it is, we would work in a bank."

Sue-Ann Tan