



ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Computers & Education

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/compedu

Second Life adoption in education: A motivational model based on Uses and Gratifications theory

M. Dolores Gallego ^a, Salvador Bueno ^{a,*}, Jan Noyes ^b^a Universidad Pablo de Olavide, ES-41013, Seville, Spain^b University of Bristol, Office 1D24, 12a Priory Road, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 1TU, United Kingdom

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 3 November 2015

Received in revised form 3 May 2016

Accepted 4 May 2016

Available online 5 May 2016

Keywords:

Second Life

Social Virtual World

Education

Motivations

Uses and Gratifications theory

ABSTRACT

Social Virtual Worlds (SVWs) are increasingly being used in education; however, little is known about how personal motivation affects engagement in online learning courses (e-learning). This article focuses on Second Life which is one of the better known SVW platforms and allows relationships to develop amongst people who share similar interests and/or activities. The aims of this study are twofold: (1) to analyse the motivation of Second Life users with regard to e-learning; and (2) to propose a model that explains and predicts the adoption of Second Life in this context. This model has been defined under the postulates of the Uses and Gratification theory (Blumler & Katz, 1974; Swanson, 1987) which comprises the seven constructs of convenience, entertainment, socialising, status seeking, information seeking, sharing experience, and continuance intention. A web-based survey is reported. Findings confirm the positive influence of convenience, sharing experiences, and entertainment on the intention to continue to use Second Life e-learning, and the positive impact of status, and information seeking on sharing experiences. Implications of this study are considered under the three categories of academic, managerial, and technological perspectives.

© 2016 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Second Life is an online service that aims to construct three-dimensional Social Virtual Worlds (SVWs) in order to build relationships synchronously among people who share interests and/or activities (Memikoğlu, 2014). This is summed up by Greiner, Caravella, and Roth (2014) who affirm that Second Life is purely a social environment with no particular stipulated goal of participation. It can be accessed via virtual embodiments (avatars or residents) through which users can interact verbally and non-verbally (Barnes & Pressey, 2011; Locher, Jucker, & Berger, 2015). Another feature of Second Life is that it is made up of two types of land regions, namely, mainland and islands with the latter defined as private regions (Second Life, 2015). Both are places where you can work alone or with other users constructing homes, although there are some differences with regard to the rules in terms of the legal rights of the properties. Fig. 1 shows an example of an island in Second Life.

Second Life is part of social media and according to the social media classification proposed by Kaplan and Haenlein (2009) it has the highest level of social presence, self-presentation and disclosure. This is thought to be because it attempts to replicate dimensions of face-to-face interactions (i.e. non-verbal communication and a 'personal touch') in a virtual

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: mdgalper@upo.es (M.D. Gallego), sbueavi@upo.es (S. Bueno).



Fig. 1. Texas A&M University Second Life Campus.

environment. However, it is not easy to identify the number of users as there are no official registrations. Estimates suggest that during the last 10 years, Second Life users have spent the equivalent of 217,266 years of time in-world (Hassouneh & Brengman, 2014).

From an educational point of view, learning in Second Life centres around a set of interactive communication tools that can facilitate collaborative activities between instructors and students (Burgess, Slate, Rojas-LeBouef, & LaPrairie, 2010; Jarmon, Traphagan, Mayrath, & Trivedi, 2009; Pellas & Kazanidis, 2014; Schmeil, Eppler, & de Freitas, 2012; Sierra, Gutiérrez, & Garzón-Castro, 2012). A sense of presence is developed in the students who feel as if they are physically present in the educational centre and spending time with their instructors/professors or peers (Alenezi & Shahi, 2015). As a result, students develop new skills in Second Life, and gain a wider perspective of the subject or topic under discussion (Buckless, 2012; Ward, 2010).

Based on this, Second Life is deemed to be a rich environment that allows students, instructors and professionals to create learning experiences actively through the formation of specific environments (Chow, Herold, Choo, & Chan, 2012; Memikoğlu, 2014; Sidorko, 2009). Fig. 2 shows a picture of a classroom in Second Life. Here we can observe how students feel as if they are physically present in the classroom in order to spend time with their teachers or peers although they are located in different places. Further, it has been shown to meet the needs of both formal and informal education (Cheng, 2014). Cheal (2007, p. 204) found that Second Life is “part of a continuum of instructional technology tools that corresponds to twentieth and twenty-first century developments in educational theory”.

Floyd and Frank (2012, p. 11) found that “the education sector represents 5 percent of total regions in Second Life”. In terms of actual numbers, some estimations are that approximately 500 universities and colleges around the world use Second Life (Alenezi & Shahi, 2015). For instance, these are some universities with islands in Second Life in order to carry out e-learning



Fig. 2. A classroom in Second Life.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/348154>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/348154>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)