



“Massively Multiplayers Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG’S) and the emotional wellbeing of adults living with a physical disability”

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Background

- Social isolation and loneliness are only two of a plethora of psychosocial challenges that adults living with a physical disability needs to manage on a daily basis
- Facilitating regular engagement with the local community, in order to establish a sense of belonging; brings its own challenges including inaccessibility; transport and mobility concerns
- Lack of self-identity and connectedness could increase the risk of mental health difficulties including depression, anxiety and hopelessness. MMORPG’s inexplicitly relies on social interaction; hence being the genre of choice for of this explorative study
- Research found that by using the more social functions of the Internet; there can be a marked decrease in loneliness of this specific group

Aim

“What is known in the evidence about using Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG’s) to promote the emotional wellbeing of adults living with a physical disability?”

Method

Scoping review conducted by searching multiple databases including PsychINFO, SocIndex, CINAHL, Medline and Web of Science (ISI)

References:

1. Fokkema, Dr T., and K. Knipscheer. “Escape Loneliness by Going Digital: A Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation of a Dutch Experiment in Using ECT to Overcome Loneliness among Older Adults.” *Aging & Mental Health* 11, no. 5 (September 1, 2007): 496-504. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13607860701366129>.

Preliminary findings

- This Scoping Review highlighted significant gaps in relation to using digital gameplay (specifically in relation to MMORPG’S) as an engagement tool with physically disabled adults
- Whilst there is a pre-existing body of literature regarding the use of internet gaming and digital platforms as intervention tools; these pre-existing literature almost exclusively focused on children and adolescents
- Across international academic and grey literature; the lack of empirical research into this topic highlighted the need for further studies into utilising a digital platform in enhancing the emotional wellbeing of adults living with a physical disability

Next Steps

- Online, exploratory survey to gain further insight into the relationship between MMORPG’s and adults living with a physical disability. Themes to be explored will include motivation to play and the potential of strengthening social interaction through gaming

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