**Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form**

**Part 2 of the study**

**Study Title:** The psychology of massively multiplayer online role-playing games and self-esteem

**Researcher(s):** Michael Kavanagh, Charlotte Brett and Dr Catherine Brignell

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**Consent Form:** Written 06/06/2021, Version 4.

**ERGO ID:** 64224

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and e-mail the researchers if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. You may like to discuss it with others but it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate you will need to select/click that you consent to take part in the study at the end of this document.

**What is the research about?**

My name is Michael Kavanagh and I am a Clinical Psychology Doctorate student at the University of Southampton in the United Kingdom.

This second part of study “the psychology of massively multiplayer online role-playing games” aims to understand how practicing mental visualisation effects task performance.

This study was approved by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) at the University of Southampton (Ethics/ERGO Number: 64224).

**Why have I been asked to participate?**

You have been asked to take part because of the responses you gave to part 1 of the study you completed, and you are a person over 18 years of age that plays massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs). To be eligible to take part in this study, MMORPGs must be the main type of game that you play. You must be over 18 years of age and be fluent in the English language.

We are aiming to recruit around 300 participants for this study.

**What will happen to me if I take part?**

The total time it will take to complete this study is about 45 minutes and it should be completed in one go/sitting. This study initially involves completing a questionnaire which should take less than 5 minutes of your time. From there, you will be asked to take part in an interactive ball-tossing game used for mental visualisation.

We will be examining the effects of practicing mental visualisation on task performance. Thus, we will ask you to practice your mental visualisation skills. We have found that the best way to do this is to have you play an online ball tossing game with either participants from our study, other studies or students from different universities logged on at the same time (this is a globally used gaming system so you are not likely to have to wait longer than 15 seconds for other participants to join). After the game, you will complete another questionnaire, again this should take less than 5 minutes of your time. Following this, we will ask you to either play or not play your usual MMORPG game for 30 minutes before completing another questionnaire, again this should take less than 5 minutes of your time.

This survey is not fully anonymous as we will ask for your e-mail address. This is so we can enter you into another prize draw for 10 X £20 Amazon e-vouchers (this is an additional and separate prize draw to the Amazon prize draw you have been entered to for the first study). We really appreciate your precious time, and whilst we would ideally like to give more, we will also send you an Amazon e-voucher for £1 as token of appreciation. Entry to the Amazon voucher raffle; and entitlement to the £1 e-voucher is only eligible upon full completion of this part of the study. We only have funding to give the first 300 eligible participants who complete the survey with a £1 token of appreciation e-voucher. We will draw the raffle for the vouchers and send people their e-vouchers before December 2021.

If you wish to withdraw your data for any reason, you must e-mail me (Michael Kavanagh at [mk7n19@soton.ac.uk](mailto:mk7n19@soton.ac.uk)) within three weeks of today’s date. When the data is analysed, your e-mail address will be removed from our data holdings and we will not have access to it.

You can complete this study without entering an e-mail address, however, this would mean that we would be unable to contact you should you win one of the Amazon vouchers and we would not be able to e-mail you your £1 Amazon e-voucher.

**Are there any benefits in my taking part?**

If you decide to take part in this study and fully complete it, you will be entered into a draw for 10 X £20 Amazon vouchers and sent a £1 Amazon e-voucher as a token of appreciation. Importantly, your participation will contribute to our understanding of potential problems for people who play MMORPG.

**Are there any risks involved?**

It is expected that taking part in this study will not cause you any psychological discomfort and/or distress, however, should you feel uncomfortable you can leave the survey at any time. You can also contact the following resources for support:

United Kingdom based: Contact your GP or call NHS 111 (or 999 if you feel unable to keep yourself safe).

There are also suicide prevention, awareness and support telephone lines you can call internationally. Please see this website for the resource in your country: <http://www.suicide.org/international-suicide-hotlines.html>

**What data will be collected?**

The questions in this survey ask for information in relation to visualisation, self-esteem and motivations for internet gaming. As mentioned above, we will ask for your e-mail address to enter you into a prize draw and to send you a £1 Amazon e-voucher.

All information collected for this study will be stored securely on a password protected computer and backed up on a secure server. In addition, all data will be pooled and only compiled into data summaries or summary reports. When the data is pooled, all e-mail addresses will be deleted (we anticipate that this will be in December 2021). Only the researchers and their supervisor will have access to this information.

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of ethics and research integrity. In accordance with our Research Data Management Policy, data will be held for 10 years after the study has finished when it will be securely destroyed.

**Will my participation be confidential?**

As reiterated above, this survey is not fully anonymous as we will ask for your e-mail address.

Only members of the research team and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data about you for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your data. All of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

**Do I have to take part?**

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to select/click that you consent to take part in the study at the end of this document.

**What happens if I change my mind?**

If you wish to withdraw your data for any reason, you must e-mail me (Michael Kavanagh at [mk7n19@soton.ac.uk](mailto:mk7n19@soton.ac.uk)) within three weeks of today’s date. When the data is analysed, your e-mail address will be removed from our data holdings and we will not have access to it. This additionally means that all the data collected for the study will be pooled together (this also strengthens anonymity for participants) and we will be unable to identify which data belongs to you.

**What will happen to the results of the research?**

Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify you. The information collected will be analysed and written up as part of the researcher’s dissertation. It will also potentially be published in a research journal or presented at a research conference.

**Where can I get more information?**

If you require further information please e-mail me (Michael Kavanagh at [mk7n19@soton.ac.uk](mailto:mk7n19@soton.ac.uk)).

**What happens if there is a problem?**

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researchers who will do their best to answer your questions.

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (023 8059 5058, [rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk](mailto:rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk)).

**Data Protection Privacy Notice**

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, ‘Personal data’ means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University’s data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page>).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/ls/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf>

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University’s policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason (‘lawful basis’) to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the ‘Data Controller’ for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information - may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your personal data is used, or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University’s data protection webpage (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University’s Data Protection Officer ([data.protection@soton.ac.uk](mailto:data.protection@soton.ac.uk)).

**Thank you for reading this information sheet and considering taking part in this research**

Please tick (check) this box to indicate that you have read and understood information on this form,

are aged 18 or over and agree to take part in this survey.

Please tick (check) this box to indicate that you understand that you will not be able to withdraw your data from the study unless you contact us within three weeks from today’s date. It may not be possible to remove your data after this date as your personal information will no longer be linked to your data as it will be pooled with other participant’s data for analysis.

Please tick (check) this box to indicate that you understand that as part of the study you will be asked to play an online game. This does not require you to download any software.