

KOPTUR, EVREN, Ph.D., May 2016

LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT  
AND EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

TRANSFERABLE LEARNING SKILLS OF AN MMORPG: A WORLD OF  
WARCRAFT QUEST (214 pp.)

Director of Dissertation: Drew Tiene, Ph.D.

Traditional paradigms of learning and education are being challenged by the new types of learners of the 21st century and their needs. Since today's learners are accustomed to multiple stimuli competing for their attention, utilizing video games in education comes as an inherent part of motivating and engaging these learners. Given the fact that these learners are already immersed and well-versed in video game platforms, their voluntary investment can and should be utilized for their own learning.

Massively Multiplayer Role Playing Online games are one of the many genres of video games that players are drawn to and play regularly. The most popular and played MMORPG is World of Warcraft. This study investigated the potential of transferable learning skills gained or improved by playing WoW to real life. It attempted to research on the possibility of transferring four different learning categories: experiential learning, collaborative learning, leadership, and autonomous learning respectively through playing WoW.

This study included 258 online survey participants. At the end of each category, the participants were asked to elaborate on a comment question associated with its category. Along with the survey data, two interviews were conducted. Overall and individual results of the survey and interview were analyzed. This data was used to discuss what skills can be learned through playing MMORPGs and to what extent these

skills are transferred to real life. The results indicated that the mentioned categories of learning occur in the game and are perceived to be transferable to real life in varying degrees.