

Hello!

Welcome to The Smart Gaming Project!

WHO IS CONDUCTING THIS RESEARCH?

The research is conducted by a research team including Dr. Halley Pontes member of the Department of Psychological Sciences at Birkbeck, University of London and Professor Christian Montag, member of the Psychology Department at University of Ulm.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The main goal of the study is to understand how professional gamers may differ from non-professional gamers. To achieve this, we will examine a number of factors that will be presented to you as questions in the survey tapping into your sociodemographic information, mental health and wellbeing (e.g., satisfaction with life), individual differences (e.g., personality traits), toxic behaviours (e.g., perceived exposure to hate speech), and addictive behaviours (e.g., gaming addiction).

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART?

Participants that are at least 16 years old can participate in the present study. Participation in the survey is voluntary and greatly appreciated. Please bear in mind that this survey is private, anonymous, and confidential, therefore no information revealing your identity (e.g., name) will be requested and we discourage disclosing such information, if this happens, your data will be removed from the study.

WHAT ARE THE PROCEDURES OF TAKING PART?

If you decide to take part, you will be asked to complete an anonymous and confidential online survey lasting up to 20 minutes that will ask you to answer a set of questions related to your sociodemographic background (e.g., gender, age), mental health and wellbeing (e.g., life satisfaction, mental and physical health), personality and preferences for using technology, experience of toxic behaviours when playing video games (e.g., hate speech, trolling), and symptoms of overuse of technology (e.g., social media, gambling, gaming).

When completing the online survey, we ask you not to provide any additional information other than the one being directly asked. We also note that you should not add any personal data and if you do you your data will be automatically fully removed from our data set and not used in the study.

Upon completion of the survey, you will be provided with feedback about your own behaviours in relation to the way in which you use and experience technology in comparison to the behaviours of other participants who have agreed to participate and already completed the survey. Note that we will not provide any clinical or diagnostic information as we intend to share the following information in graph and text formats: your motives to play video games, your experiences with loot boxes if you engaged in them, your perception of experience of hate speech in games, and how your use of technology is shaped by your views on climate change. We will also provide you with a Debrief Information Sheet containing useful information and resources about what you can do next and how to contact the research team to know more about the study and/or to ask us any question you might have.

WHAT ARE MY PARTICIPATION RIGHTS?

Participation in this research guarantees the right to withdraw, to ask questions about how your data will be handled and about the study itself, the right to confidentiality and anonymity, the right to refuse to answer questions and to be given access to a summary of the findings.

WHAT IF I WANT TO WITHDRAW MY INFORMATION?

If you wish to withdraw your responses, you may do this without any consequences. There are two ways for you to withdraw your data.

The first option includes closing the survey window on your web browser at any point you wish to cease your participation. By doing this, your data will be removed from the survey and not utilised in the study. The second option is for those who have reached the last page of the survey after having completed all questions. If this is your case, you can withdraw your data by closing the window on your web browser and not submitting your answers. By doing this, your data will be removed from the survey and not utilised in the study.

Once you have fully completed the survey and submitted your answers, we will have no means to remove your data the research team is not able to tie in anyone's identity to the data provided due to the anonymous nature of the survey. For this reason, if you are not sure about whether or not you wish to participate in this study, we ask you to refrain from partaking in the study.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY RESPONSES TO THE STUDY?

Data collected in this study will be analysed and used by the research team of this study the purposes of academic publications that will only report general trends/responses and no identifying information about you.

WILL MY RESPONSES AND INFORMATION BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

All information provided by you in the survey will be treated with the strictest confidence throughout the study. Any data you provide in the survey will be stored using end-to-end encryption and kept in secure folders on a password protected computer where only the research team will have access.

Information, which may lead to your identification, such as your name, will not be requested at any point. However, if any personal information capable of revealing your identity is provided, we will proceed to the deletion of your identifying data from the study.

To comply with the University's current Open Research Policy, a curated and anonymised version of the dataset of any academic publication will be deposited onto Birkbeck Research Data Repository (BiRD: <https://researchdata.bbk.ac.uk>). Moreover, the research team may also upload an anonymised copy of the data set on the Open Science Framework platform (<https://osf.io/>) should this be required by academic journals during the publication process.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS TO TAKING PART?

Due to the nature of the questions being asked in the survey, it is likely that a small portion of participants may find some of the questions potentially distressing as they ask about experiences related to mental health and toxicity in games.

If any of the questions presented to you elicit such negative psychological reactions, we would encourage you to cease your participation in this survey by closing the window on the web browser and by seeking appropriate support through the following non-profit organisations:

Mind (<https://www.mind.org.uk>):

- Infoline: +44 (0) 300 123 3393
- Email: infoline@mind.org.uk

Anxiety UK (<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/>):

- Helpline: +44 (0) 3444 775 774
- Text: +44 (0) 7537 416 905
- Email: services@anxietyuk.org.uk

GamCare (<https://www.gamcare.org.uk/>)

- Phone Helpline: +44 (0) 808 8020 133
- WhatsApp Helpline: +44 (0) 20 3031 8881
- Live Chat Support: <https://www.gamcare.org.uk/get-support/talk-to-us-now/>

Mental Health Europe (<https://www.mhe-sme.org/>)

- Helplines and resources across Europe: <https://www.mhe-sme.org/library/youth-helplines/>

Safe in Our World (<https://safeinourworld.org>)

- Worldwide local websites and emergency contact numbers for mental health support: <https://safeinourworld.org/find-help/>

Any further questions?

If you have any questions or require more information about this study before or during your participation, please any member of the research team using the contact information below:

Dr. Halley Pontes (contactme@halleypontes.com)

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For information about Birkbeck's data protection policy please visit: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/about-us/policies/privacy#9>

If you have concerns about this study, please contact the School's Ethics Officer at: BEI-ethics@bbk.ac.uk.

School Ethics Officer

School of Business, Economics and Informatics

Birkbeck, University of London

London WC1E 7HX

You also have the right to submit a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office <https://ico.org.uk/>