RESEARCH ON WORLD OF WARCRAFT

Character Creation in *World of Warcraft*:
***World of Warcraft* subscribers vs. Non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers**
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Introduction

Every second of every day, millions of individuals intermingle and play together in online videogames known as Massive-Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs). These MMORPGs have become extremely popular all around the globe. Gamers who are engrossed in MMORPGs usually spend around 22 hours per week playing the game and are an average age of 26 years old (Yee "The Demographics"). One reason for this widespread popularity is because of the variety of play that MMORPGs offer the gamer. MMORPGs accommodate multiple play styles of different types of gamers.

World of Warcraft is currently the most popular MMORPG offered on the market and has boomed in its amount of subscriptions ever since its release in 2004. This can be seen in Bruce Woodcock's graph MMOG Active Subscriptions: 200,000+ which is available on mmogchart.com. On November 21, 2008, in a Blizzard revealed that *World of Warcraft* had reached over 11.5 million subscribers worldwide after their newest expansion was released. *World of Warcraft* even topped the charts of Nielson Wire Games March 2009 data for top PC game usage (*World of Warcraft*, Playstation 2 Continue Most Played Gaming Trend).

In *World of Warcraft* the player, before they are able to play the game, must create a character or multiple characters they are going to use to progress and level through the game. In creating a character, there are many choices involved. For example, when creating a character in *World of Warcraft*, a player must choose what faction he or she would like their character to be a part of, what race he or she wants their character to be, the sex of their character, the class of their character, and the looks of their character. Creating a character in *World of Warcraft* is an intricate process that often

takes time, thought, and effort into the character creation process by the individual creating the character. There are many different reasons and thought processes behind creating a character for *World of Warcraft* and other MMORPGs that are involved in the creation process that determines exactly what they want their character to look like and be. Nick Yee has previously done studies on the topic of the character creation process and what exactly influences the player to create their own individual character.

Nick Yee's original article on the different characters that people create on MMORPGs was titled "The Character Creation Process." This article aimed to answer questions such as: How do people decide what character to create? Do they always pick certain character classes? Do they carefully read through class descriptions before deciding? Do they go by their gut reaction? In order to answer these questions, Yee asked 500 participants to act as though they were a new member to a MMORPG and were about to create a character. Yee then asked them to write out and describe the factors that were most important to them while creating a character. After the results were compiled and coded, Yee categorized the results and listed the factors in descending order of importance. He found that the most important factor that players thought about while creating a character was the Class Type (20%) followed by Class Abilities (17%) and Race Aesthetics (11%) (Yee "The Character Creation Process"). Yee's findings in "The Character Creation Process" led him to write a short article titled "Preferred Class Type." This article consisted of 500 participants that simply answered the question "What is your preferred class type across all MMORPGs" (Yee "Preferred Class Type"). This study gauged what classes were the most popular across all MMORGPs.

Even though Yee has studied the different reasons and motivations involved in the character creation process among players of all types of MMORGs, no study has compared the different types of characters created in *World of Warcraft* and the reasons behind creating those characters for *World of Warcraft* subscribers and non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers. In the following study, I aim to use Yee's

previous studies as a foundation to further the research of the players' individual reasons for creating the MMORPG characters they create using the popular MMORPG *World of Warcraft.* The goal is to not only gather data for those who are active *World of Warcraft* subscribers but to also collect data for non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers. The data collected will answer if there are any differences among *World of Warcraft* subscribers and non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers in the characters they create and the reasons behind creating the characters they make.

Method

Participants

The subjects for the present study were selected in two different ways. To acquire interviewees for those who currently have an active account to *World of Warcraft*, I posted the interview questions (which can be seen in Appendix I) on a popular *World of Warcraft* forum website named mmo-champion.com. The forum was then left up for 5 days to let *World of Warcraft* enthusiasts who actively post on mmo-champion.com with the adequate amount of time and opportunity to answer the interview questions. In those 5 days that the interview questions were online, I received a total of 17 appropriate responses. This amount of responses was over the goal of 10 responses. In order to obtain data for those who do not have an active subscription to *World of Warcraft,* I went out and found individuals who had not previously played *World of Warcraft.* This group of individuals consisted of students currently enrolled and attending the University of Denver, fellow peers, and family members. These personal interviews were conducted over a period of 10 days with each interview taking around 15-20 minutes. A total of 11 interviews were conducted which was one more than the goal set at the beginning of the research.

Procedure

The procedure for collecting the data for the subjects who have an active subscription to *World of Warcraft* was to first explain that I was conducting research about *World of Warcraft* subscribers and

the characters they create vs. a new subscriber/individual who has never played *World of Warcraft* and the characters they choose to create when creating a character in the game. I then asked them to complete the interview questions posted on mmo-champion.com using one character that they have previously created to answer the questions. The data was then collected and reviewed.

To collect data from those who were a new subscriber/individual who has never played *World of Warcraft*, I approached the subjects and explained to them briefly what I was researching. I then asked them if they would be a willing participant in this study. If the subject replied with a "yes," then the research was conducted. To make sure that the subject was not influenced by any other previous characters created, I selected a new *World of Warcraft* realm for each different subject to create their own character in. Before the subjects created their own personalized character, I quickly briefed them on the interface and how they are able to read about the classes and races available on the right side of the screen. After I the briefing, the subject had an unlimited amount of time to create their character. The character creation took around 5-10 minutes for each individual that participated in the current study. Once the subject was done creating their own *World of Warcraft* character, the subject was then interviewed about the character they just created. This interview process took around 5-10 minutes for each subject.

Interview Questions

The interview questions included the following four sections: (1) personal info of the subject participating in the study, (2) in-game character information, (3) reasons why the subjects create the character did, and (4) information about the character creation interface. The first set of questions in the interview gave information about the subject that participated in the study. The information gathered was the age and sex of the participant. This amount of information was just enough to both keep the participants in the study anonymous and allow me to obtain enough information to make certain observations. The second set of questions in the interview collected all the information for the character the subjects created. For example, the sex of character, race of character, name of character,

class of character were all collected in this section. The third set of questions in the interview dealt with the reasons why the subjects in the study created the characters they did. For example, "Does your character's name have any significance?" falls under the third set of questions. In the fourth set of questions information about the character creation interface that *World of Warcraft* provides are posed. Questions like "Were you comfortable creating a character and dealing with these sorts of characters?" are asked in this section. There were a total of 14 questions in the interview that made up the four different sections. The complete list of interview questions is located in Appendix I.

Results

Tables and Graphs

Subjects	Sex (of subject)	Sex (of character)	Name (of character)	Faction	Race (of character)	Class
Subscribers to World of Warcraft						
Subject 1	Male	Male	Wiriamu	Horde	Tauren	Druid
Subject 2	Male	Male	Mayikillu	Horde	Tauren	Hunter
Subject 3	Male	Male	Rune	Horde	Orc	Death Knight
Subject 4	Male	Female	Deathawaitss	Horde	Undead	Death Knight
Subject 5	Male	Male	Muto	Horde	Blood Elf	Priest
Subject 6	Male	Female	N/A	Horde	Blood Elf	Paladin
Subject 7	Male	Male	Geldore	Alliance	Dwarf	Paladin
Subject 8	Male	Male	Tomcruse	Horde	Tauren	Shaman
Subject 9	Male	Male	Zarios	Horde	Orc	Shaman
Subject 10	Male	Male	Syatek	Horde	Orc	Hunter
Subject 11	Male	Male	Flyingmoney	Horde	Orc	Shaman
Subject 12	Male	Male	Royal	Horde	Blood Elf	Paladin
Subject 13	Male	Female	Robinhoodexe	Alliance	Night Elf	Druid
Subject 14	Female	Female	Martine	Horde	Blood Elf	Paladin

Subject 15	Male	Female	Sinclaires	Horde	Undead	Warlock
Subject 16	Male	Male	Muzy	Horde	Tauren	N/A
Subject 17	Male	Male	Somrune	Alliance	Dwarf	Death Knight
Non-Subscribers to World of Warcraft						
Subject 18	Male	Male	Redswede	Alliance	Human	Warrior
Subject 19	Female	Female	Paigepoo	Alliance	Gnome	Warrior
Subject 20	Female	Female	Marda	Alliance	Human	Paladin
Subject 21	Male	Male	Cushing	Alliance	Human	Priest
Subject 22	Male	Male	Brownnips	Horde	Undead	Warrior
Subject 23	Female	Female	Buchanda	Horde	Tauren	Warrior
Subject 24	Female	Female	Medusa	Horde	Undead	Rogue
Subject 25	Male	Male	Kubwachura	Alliance	Night Elf	Warrior
Subject 26	Female	Female	Steinmeister	Alliance	Night Elf	Hunter
Subject 27	Male	Male	Stig	Alliance	Night Elf	Rogue
Subject 28	Male	Male	Forbeslist	Alliance	Night Elf	Warrior

Table 1

Figure 1

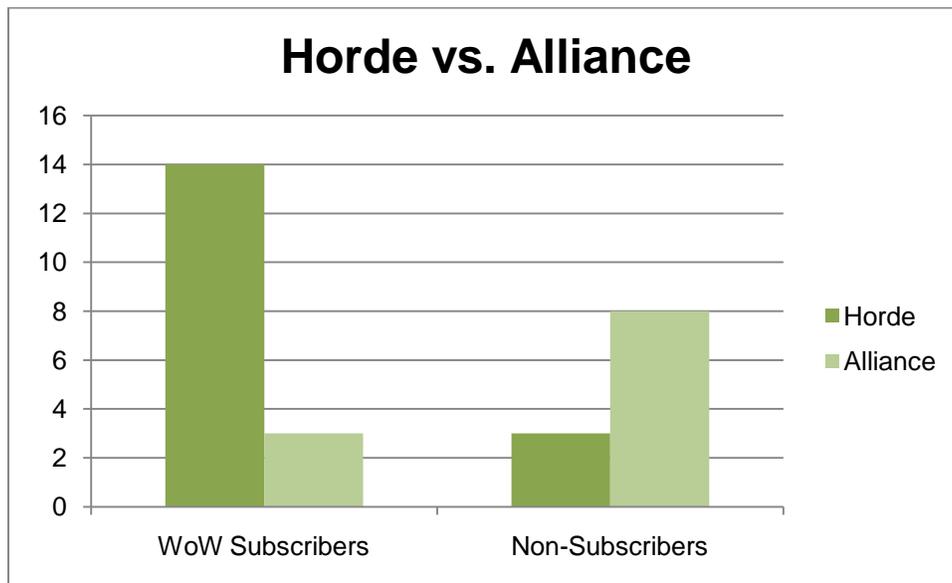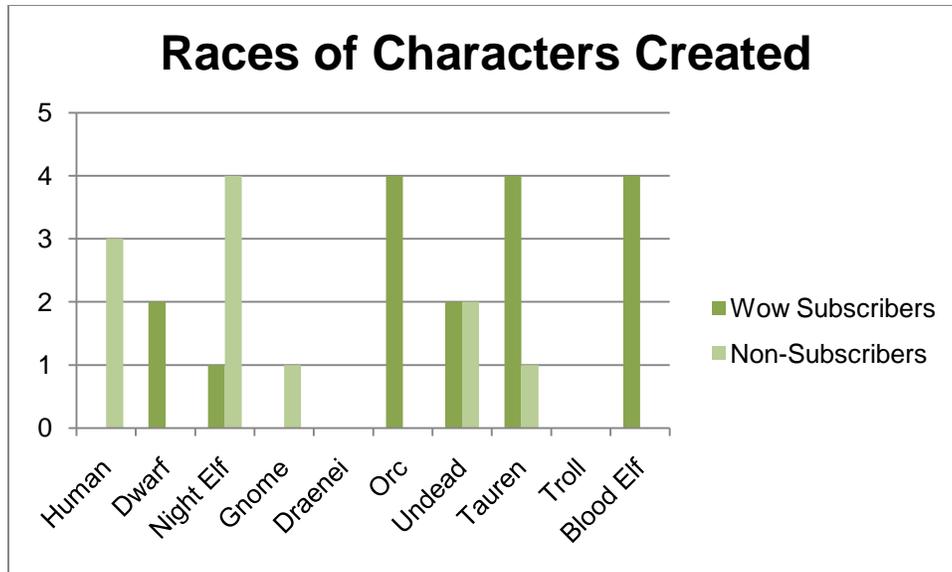## Races of Characters Created
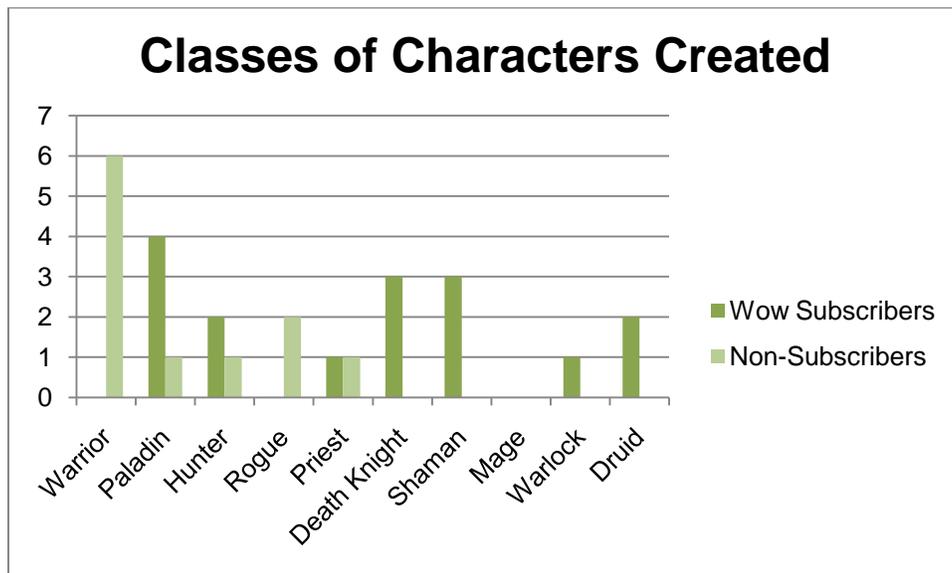

Figure 2

Classes of Characters Created

Figure 3

(1) Personal info of the subjects participating in the study

For this study, it was calculated that the average age for the population who have an active subscription was 19.53 (SD= 3.37) and the average age for the population for those who are new subscribers/individuals who have never played *World of Warcraft* was 24.5 (SD=13.09). It was also calculated that the amount of males and females involved in the study was 16 males and 1 female for

World of Warcraft subscribers and 6 males and 5 females for non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers. This made 22 males and 6 females and 28 participants total involved in the study.

(2) In-game character information

The first difference that can be seen among the characters created by the *World of Warcraft* subscribers verses the non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers, is that there is a notable difference in the amount of Alliance and Horde characters that were created among the two groups. For those who have an active subscription, 14 of the 17 characters belonged to the Horde faction while only 3 of the 17 characters created belonged to the Alliance faction. For those who do not have an active account, only 3 of the 11 created characters of the Horde faction and 8 of the 11 crated characters of the Alliance faction. This dissimilarity can be seen in Figure 2 above.

The lack of correspondence in the amount of Horde and Alliance characters created between the two groups involved in this study naturally created a big difference in the races of the *World of Warcraft* characters created. This is because no races cross over between factions. Each race is dedicated to a certain faction. For example, the Human, Dwarf, Night Elf, Gnome, and Draenei all swear allegiance to the Alliance, while the Orc, Undead, Tauren, Troll, and Blood Elf all swear their allegiance to the Horde. Because of the difference in amount of Horde and Alliance characters created, there was a difference in types of characters created. In Figure 2, it can be seen that for the subscribers to *World of Warcraft,* there were 2 Dwarfs, 1 Night Elf, 4 Orcs, 2 Undeads, 4 Taurens, and 4 Blood Elves made and for the non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers 3 Humans, 4 Night Elves, 1 Gnome, 2 Undead, and 1 Tauren were made.

It was also noted that in the types of classes of characters created, there was an inconsistency between the two groups (WoW subscribers and Non-WoW Subscribers) interviewed. Figure 3 shows the breakout of the classes of the characters created by each group. For non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers, 7 Warriors, 2 Paladins, 1 Hunter, 2 Rogues, and 1 Priest were created. The majority of characters created in this group were classes that did not use mana as a resource. For *World of Warcraft* subscribers, 4

Paladins, 2 Hunters, 1 Priest, 3 Death Knights, 3 Shamans, 1 Warlock, and 2 Druids were made. The

majority of characters created in this group were classes that use mana as a resource.

(3) Reasons for creating characters

After the interviewee had answered the questions on their in-game character information, I

asked them 5 simple questions on their reasoning behind creating their own individual character. These

five questions were: (1) Why did you choose to create a [faction]? (2) Why did you create a [race]? (3)

Why did you create a [class]? (4) Did you model this character after yourself? Why or Why not? (5) Does

your character's name have any significance? These five questions were read and reviewed in order that

I may find any similarities or differences in the reasons behind why *World of Warcraft* subscribers and

non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers create their individual characters.

In section 2 of the results section, it was noticed that for those who play *World of Warcraft*

more Horde characters were created than Alliance characters. It was also noticed that for those who do

not actively play *World of Warcraft,* there were more Alliance characters created than Horde characters.

The first question, "Why did you choose to create a [faction]?" attempted to find out exactly why this is

the case. After coding and categorizing the responses for both categories, it was found that for non-

World of Warcraft subscribers the reason they mainly chose to create Alliance characters was because

they liked the look of the Alliance characters better, they thought the Horde were the "bad guys," and

the Alliance had more races that they felt they could relate to or connect with. Active participants

indicated that they liked the look of the Alliance characters better wrote:

"I created an Alliance character because the races looked cooler" (18, Male, Night Elf,

Warrior)

"Because they are better looking" (19, Female, Night Elf)

"None of the Horde characters looks appealed to me" (53, Male, Human, Priest)

The answers from the participants who stated they felt the Horde were the bad guy wrote:

"I consider the Alliance to be the "good guys" and did not want my character to be a

"bad guy" (53, Male, Human, Priest)

Some participants felt as though they could relate to the Alliance characters over the Horde characters.

They wrote:

"The Alliance characters were familiar to me. The Horde characters seemed weird, scary

and monstrous" (52, Female, Human, Paladin)

It was found that for the *World of Warcraft* subscribers, the reason they mainly chose to create Horde

characters over Alliance characters was they liked the look of the Horde characters, felt that the Alliance

overall had less experienced, immature players, or they had switched or started a Horde character so

that they could play with their friends online. The responses that indicated that they like the look of the

Horde better wrote:

"Because I liked the looks" (19, Female, Blood Elf, Paladin)

"Horde is much cooler than the Alliance, and they look cooler" (17, Male, Orc, Hunter)

Individuals who thought the Alliance had less experienced, immature players wrote:

"I was initially Alliance, but it seemed to be filled with many immature people, that and

they seemed to suck in BG's. Not much has changed, but I look a lot cooler now." (22,

Male, Orc, Death Knight)

"I noticed that alliance (at least on the realm i was on) were too young and

immature...and pretty incompetent" (27, Male, Blood Elf, Paladin)

Another reason why more Horde characters were played by *World of Warcraft* subscribers was that they

wanted to be able to play with their friends. These individuals wrote:

"Faction transfer. Friend played alliance so i rolled alliance. Transferred because said

friend wanted to transfer" (19, Male, Tauren, N/A)

"Primarily alliance when I first started, 11 years of age, switched to Horde when I met some nice players who were like me" (16, Male, Orc, Shaman)

"Well my friend that got me started plays horde and they just looked way cooler so i picked them" (18, Male, Blood Elf, Priest).

It was also noted in section 2 that there was a big difference in the races of characters created caused by the difference in the amount of Horde and Alliance characters created between the two groups. When I asked the participants involved in the study "Why did you create a [race]?" the answers were generally the same across both groups studied. Both groups chose their specific races because of their looks. There was a couple of exceptions; some participants who had a *World of Warcraft* subscription did choose a specific race because the race they chose were the only ones who had a class they were wanting to play and some participants who did not have a subscription to *World of Warcraft* chose their race because of their background, characteristics, and lore. Participants from both groups who chose their race for their character based on the looks wrote:

"It was between a Night Elf and a Human. The Night Elf had cooler looking hair" (18, Male, Night Elf, Warrior)

"Because they look bad ass....and they are the best dps race on the Horde side" (22, Male, Orc, Death Knight)

"Because dwarves are the shit! they look cool cause they are small" (20, Male, Dwarf, Paladin)

"I usually don't like orcs, but WoW did a really nice job of making them look all brutal and mean but still seem civilized...rather than them being crazy, blood-thirsty animals with large beat sticks" (16, Male, Orc, Shaman)

"I liked the look of the Undead" (19, Male, Undead, Warrior)

The first exception of people who have *World of Warcraft* who did not mention looks wrote:

"Blood elves are the only paladin class atm for horde" (21, Male, Blood Elves, Paladin)

"Because Blood Elves were the only Horde race that could be paladins" (26, Female, Blood Elves, Paladin)

The second exception was for non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers. They mentioned that they chose their race because of the background, characteristics, and lore of the race. For example, one participant wrote:

"I liked how the Tauren race strives to preserve the balance of nature" (18, Female, Tauren, Warrior).

The last part in section 2 of the results section involved the classes of the characters the participants chose to create. It was found that the classes of the characters created were different in each group interviewed. The third question in the category of "Reasons for Creating Characters" asked "Why did you create a [class]?" This question was asked to see if there were any similarities or dissimilarities among the reasons why *World of Warcraft* players and non-*World of Warcraft* players choose the classes they create. The majority of the answers across both groups stated that they created a specific class because of the background and characteristics the class had to offer or that they felt that class best represented themselves. For those who actively play *World of Warcraft* answers included:

"I love the shapeshifting, the lore and the whole Druid thing, aka keeper of nature and such" (17, Male, Night Elf, Druid)

"i thought it was the best class that represented myself. i love animals but i hunt and fish and do all that cool stuff" (18, Male, Orc, Hunter)

"The class was new, and I liked the ideas and info that had been released about them" (22, Male, Orc, Death Knight)

Those who do not play *World of Warcraft* wrote:

"I liked the ability to unleash 5 combo points for finishing moves. I also like the characteristics" (19, Male, Undead, Warrior)

"I like Warriors, I used to want to be a Warrior" (18, Male, Human Warrior)

"Cause they are strong and could deal a lot of damage. I like big weapons" (20, Female, Night Elf, Warrior)

"When I was younger I thought I was going to be a priest, so I wanted to be a priest after I saw that option" (53, Male, Human, Priest)

"Because they are holy, they can heal, and combat evil. Also because they are self-sufficient" (52, Female, Human, Paladin)

"Warriors seemed tough. I liked the solo aspect" (19, Male, Undead, Warrior).

When the participants in the study were asked question (4) "Did you model this character after yourself? Why or Why not?" there was differing answers among those who play *World of Warcraft* and those who do not play *World of Warcraft*. For those who do not play *World of Warcraft,* almost every participant interviewed in the study answered "Yes," that they did model their character after themselves. The participants mainly wanted their character to represent themselves. When I asked them "Why?" the participants answered:

"Because I wanted my character to look like me, red hair and a beard. I usually do that with all of my characters I create if I have the option" (19, Male, Human, Warrior)

"Because I feel like I am big and buff so I went for the biggest/most jacked character. I feel as though I would be represented as a warrior" (18, Male, Night Elf, Warrior)

"I didn't understand all the different characters in the game so I built one I could relate to and represented me" (53, Male, Human, Priest)

"Cause the Undead were skinny. I am very skinny myself" (19, Male, Undead, Warrior)

For those who play *World of Warcraft,* there were only a couple answers of "Yes" and many answers of "No." Those who answered "Yes" did so for the same reasons that non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers did. They wanted a character they could relate to and represented themselves. They wrote:

"The class was new, and I liked the ideas and info that had been released about them" (27, Male, Blood Elf, Paladin)

"I wanted my character to look like me" (20, Male, Dwarf, Paladin)

Those who answered "No" did not model their character after themselves mainly because they felt that it was just a videogame and they did not want their character to be modeled after themselves. They wrote:

"Nope, picked the most beautiful" (17, Male, Night Elf, Druid)

"No, I don't enjoy playing a character that looks just like me" (21, Male, Blood Elf, Paladin)

"No, It's a game! I just want my character to look cool, after all I have to stare at it for hours on end!" (22, Male, Orc, Death Knight)

"No, It's just a game" (18, Male, Blood Elf, Priest)

The last question that was asked about the "Reasons for Creating Character" was "Does your character's name have any significance?" After analyzing the answers for both groups studied, it was found that the reasons for the participant naming the individual was similar between both groups. The reasons for each participants name had to do with the name of the participant, characteristics of the participant, or a significant name of an object, thing, person, or place. Some examples from both groups where the character was modeled after the participants name were, Paigepoo and Forbeslist. The participant who named his/her character Paigepoo wrote that the significance of his or her character's name was that "my mom used to call me Paigepoo when I was a little girl, and she sometimes does till this day" (20, Female, Dwarf, Warrior). The participant who named his/her character Forbeslist stated

that the significance of his or her character's name was that "it is my last name, and I thought it was cool because of the magazine titled Forbes" (19, Male, Night Elf, Warrior). An example of where the *World of Warcraft* character was named after certain characteristics of the participant was Brownnips. When the participant who created Brownnips was asked what the significance behind their name for their character was, the participant answered "I have brown nipples" (19, Male, Undead, Warrior) More examples from both groups where the character was named after a significant object, thing, person, or place were Tomcruse, Robinhoodexe, and Kubwachura. The participants who created the character's with the names of Tomcruse and Robinhoodexe both stated that the significance behind the name of the character was that they "idolized" these individuals. The participant who created the character with the name of Kubwachura said the significance of the character's name was "it means big frog in Swahili. I like it because it is an oxymoron" (18, Male, Night Elf, Warrior).

(4) Information about the character creation interface

The last set of questions that the interviewee was asked had to do with the character creation interface that the creators of *World of Warcraft* provides to everyone. There were two questions total in this section. These three questions were: (1) Were you confused when creating a character? If so, in what way? (2) Did you read the write-ups located on the right side of the screen? These questions were asked in order to gauge whether the *World of Warcraft* subscriber and non-*World of Warcraft* subscriber were confused in any way during the character creation process, were comfortable with the types of characters there were to create, and how they went about creating the character.

Virtually everyone involved in the study said that they were not confused when I asked them "Were you confused when creating a character?" Those who do play *World of Warcraft* said they were not confused at all when creating a character simply because they have created characters before and were familiar with the interface. The participants wrote:

"Wasn't confused, was a bit of a veteran by this point" (22, Male, Orc, Death Knight)

"I was not confused. I knew from experience" (20, Male, Dwarf, Paladin)

There were some participants who play *World of Warcraft* who were not confused when creating a character, but were a bit confused when they first started playing. These participants wrote:

"When i first started back in Vanilla i definitly was. Its part of the reason why i had chosen alliance instead of horde at first" (27, Male, Blood Elf, Paladin)

"Not this character, already did that when I attempted an alliance character long long ago" (20, Male, Dwarf, Death Knight)

Those who do not play *World of Warcraft* stated that they were not confused when creating the character at all because of the easy interface that the *World of Warcraft* creators provided them. The participants answered:

"The explanations on the right and the easy interface made creating a character really easy" (19, Male, Undead, Warrior)

"The system was very easy to use" (19, Male, Night Elf, Warrior)

"Very self-explanatory. I also had a good idea of what I wanted to be" (52, Female, Human, Paladin)

There were a few individuals who had not played *World of Warcraft* who indicated that the character creation process was confusing to them. They wrote:

"I was very confused. They gave me so many choices." (20, Female, Dwarf, Warrior)

"I had a lot of trouble deciding races." (18, Male, Night Elf, Warrior)

When the participants from both groups were asked "Did you read any of the write-ups on the right side of the screen?" there were differing answers among both groups. Those who play *World of Warcraft* said that they did not read the write-ups on the right side of the screen during the character creation process, while those who did not play *World of Warcraft* said that they did read the write-ups. Those who play *World of Warcraft* wrote:

"Nope" (16, Male, Orc, Chaman)

"No, I already knew the character I wanted to be" (22, Male, Orc, Death Knight)

The participants that did not play *World of Warcraft* answered:

"I read a fair amount in order to familiarize myself with the game" (18, Female, Night Elf, Hunter)

"Yes, I read a lot" (20, Female, Dwarf, Warrior)

"Read everything" (52, Female, Human, Paladin)

Discussion

The purpose of this study was threefold: to investigate what types of character *World of Warcraft* subscribers and non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers create, to examine the reasons for why the participant chose their specific character, and to observe if there were any differences among *World of Warcraft* subscribers and non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers in the characters they make and the reasons for doing creating their own character. The data collected in this study revealed many interesting results. It was very interesting to note that every participant in the non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers group chose to create a character who was the same sex as the participant, while this was not the case for all the participants involved in the *World of Warcraft* subscribers group. In the *World of Warcraft* subscribers group 4 out of the 17 participants chose to create a character of the opposite sex from themselves. Another big dissimilarity between groups was the amount of Horde and Alliance characters that were created. *World of Warcraft* subscribers created more Horde characters than Alliance characters. The opposite was found for non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers. This could be because the *World of Warcraft* subscribers are more experienced with the game and are more comfortable with creating characters that would be considered unfamiliar to the non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers. It could be a possibility that if I had asked the *World of Warcraft* subscriber population to answer the interview with the first character they created when joining *World of Warcraft*, there might have been more Alliance characters created than Horde characters for the population. For the reasons

for creating characters, it was interesting to see the significance of the characters names. The participant always had a specific reason or significance to why they chose to name their character with a specific name. This observation seemed to indicate that the individual creating the character wanted to have some kind of connection with their character even if they chose to not represent themselves in their character in any way.

There were some limitations to this research study. One limitation was that the population for both groups was not that big in terms of individuals interviewed. The small populations may not accurately represent the total population of individuals that fall under each category. Another limitation was that for the group of *World of Warcraft* subscribers, I simply asked them to choose one character they had previously created to answer the interview questions with instead of asking them to use the character they first created when starting *World of Warcraft*. This may have influenced some of their answers about the character and may be the reason why there are some dissimilarities among the created characters and the reasons behind creating the characters for each specific group. The last limitation was that the group of non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers only consisted of University of Denver students, family members, and friends. There was not enough time in this study to go out and find different participants for the study.

There is much more research to be done involving the character creation process and the reasons why individuals create their characters. Future research on comparing the character creation process between *World of Warcraft* subscribers and non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers should involve more participants in the study for both groups and more in-depth interview questions. Future studies could consider posting the interview questions on the official *World of Warcraft* forums (that is if their post does not get deleted) or other *World of Warcraft* related forums on the internet in order to acquire more responses from *World of Warcraft* players. These future studies should also plan to make time to interview more non-*World of Warcraft* subscribers so that population is not underrepresented.

Works Cited

Works Cited

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Appendices

Appendix I.

Interview Questions

Sex: Male/Female

Age:

Name of Character:

Sex of Character:

Faction: Alliance/Horde

Race of Character:

Class of Character:

Why did you choose to create a [faction]?

Why did you create a [race]?

Why did you create a [class]?

Did you model this character after yourself?   Yes/No
      Why or Why not?

Does your character's name have any significance?

Were you confused when creating a character? If so, in what way?

Did you read the write-ups located on the right side of the screen?