

Editorial Preface

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The International Journal of Virtual Communities and Social Networking (IJVCSN) publishes latest research from the areas of information technology, management, sociology, and psychology that examine issues related to social media. This issue is collection of four essays, which examine both technical as well as social issues related to virtual communities and social networking.

The first paper in this issue entitled, Perceptions of Social Media Impact on Social Behavior of Students: A Comparison between Students and Faculty, is a large and extensive study about student and faculty perceptions of the impact of social media on the behavior of students. The authors, Hashim, Al-Sharqi, and Kutbi, collected data from over 2600 students, and 500 faculty and found that there is an effect of social media on positive social behavior of students. There were also some disadvantages which included concerns about physical inactivity, social introversion, and mental dullness.

In the second essay, An extensible game engine to develop animated facial avatars in 3D virtual environment, Zarrad developed an extensible game engine framework that included definitions of various controller, object behaviors, and graphics rendering. In the 3-D environment, which had a high degree of programming independence, the author developed a MPEG-4 facial animation framework. They then tested the architecture and showed that their framework had definite advantages over existing techniques in use.

Koch, Moqbel, Barton, and Bartlett examined the use of Facebook as a hedonic information system in the third paper, Intended continued use of social networking sites: effects on job satisfaction and performance. In their study of 178 professionals, Koch et al, used an extension of TAM and found that ease of use impacts perceived enjoyment, and that enjoyment, in turn, positively affects perceived usefulness in an individual's job. Interestingly, perceived enjoyment has a stronger influence on use than ease of use, and usefulness for the job. Moreover, they found that use of Facebook positively affects job performance.

In the final paper, Evaluating the Business Impacts of Social Media Use with System Dynamics and Agent-Based Modeling, authors Pirttilä, Kärkkäinen and Jussila used systems dynamics, and agent-based modeling to examine the effect of social media in business ecosystems. The paper focuses on a review of literature in the area of systems dynamics and agent-based modeling by first identifying relevant literature using electronic research databases. The authors then evaluated the papers in depth to examine the role of systems dynamics and agent-based modeling, and to identify areas of future research in the area.

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