D4 - Exploring Online Social Collaborative Spaces as Educational Alternatives to Physical Site Visits in AEC Education

COA SHOWCASE

Site visits are crucial in Architecture, Engineering, and Construction (AEC) education, offering students hands-on experience and practical insights. However, physical visits often encounter challenges such as logistical constraints, safety concerns, and limited accessibility. Consequently, there is a growing trend towards virtual learning environments, providing flexible and accessible alternatives to traditional methods. This study discusses developing and evaluating an Online Social Collaborative Space (OSCS) as a substitute for real-world site visits. The workflow for OSCS development is outlined, followed by a pilot study involving AEC students to assess the OSCS. The evaluation focused on quantitative measures of workload, ease of use, and sense of presence within the environment. The findings aim to enhance conventional AEC education practices by offering insights into the feasibility and effectiveness of immersive social collaborative spaces as substitutes for physical site visits.