

ABOUT THE BLURRING OF WORK AND PLAY: ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS EMERGING IN A FIRST- PERSON SHOOTER VIDEOGAME

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START



AGENDA

01

RATIONALE OF THE
RESEARCH

02

SCOPE OF THE
RESEARCH

03

FIRST RESULTS:
CHEATING

01

RESEARCH RATIONALE

A quick overview of the works that sustains the theoretical reasoning behind the research

- I. “Work” and “play”
- II. Amateur and professionals



01



LABOUR

02



WORK

03



PLAY

04



GAME

Diffusion of **gamification practices** in the context of work to sustain HR processes as learning and training

Emergence of **professionals** in the playing context, as streamers and e-sports players

WORK AT PLAY

PLAYBOUR

The **mechanisms** that drive players to engage in play that is highly profitable for the industry, yet is seldom or not remunerated

PLAY AT WORK

I **assume** that

Players that are put in or live different “work-play” conditions will behave differently in the game in terms of e.g., i) coordinated behaviour, ii) enactment of leadership, iii) management of mistakes.



I will **investigate**

Therefore, it might be possible to detect a difference in the team dynamics that occur before, during and after the game or identify possible common patterns.

The **target** of the study

01

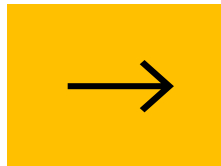
Amateur players

02

Professional players

Amateur players

Amateur players have been found to perceive playing as mandatory or even as a “second work” (Yee, 2006). Efforts, learning and collaboration are required to produce a “serious fun”.

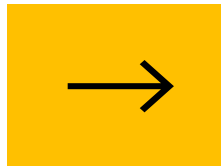


Criteria of inclusion:

- Internal motivations for playing (e.g., fun, relaxation)
- No profits earned from playing
- No interest nor activity in any kind of professional activity

Professionals: streamers

Streamers do an “emotional labour” during live performances. Their efforts are aimed at attracting spectators and retain them, since streamers are mostly sustained through subscriptions by their followers and advertising.

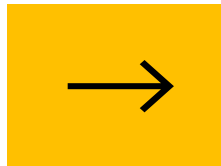


Criteria of inclusion:

- Both internal and external motivations
- Streaming account on at least one platform (e.g., Twitch or Facebook)
- Number of subscribers [**>TBD**]
- Income earned from streaming [**threshold TBD**]

Professionals: e-sporters

E-sports professional who perform a formalized, competitive video gaming are engaged in problems that are typical of professional workers, like pursuing a career in the area and developing their skills.



Criteria of inclusion:

- External motivations for playing
- Joining a team-2 sponsored team
- Participations to tournaments [number TBD]
- Income earned from playing [TBD]

02

RESEARCH

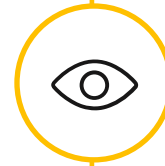


Description of the study, question, method and approach

- I. Qualitative ethnographic approach
- II. Tools and instruments
- III. Phases of the research

Research questions

What behaviors will these typologies of players enact in the game world? Are there any relevant differences among these behaviors?



First Person Shooter
commercial
videogame



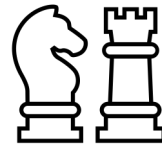
Qualitative
ethnographic
study



Explorative and
descriptive approach
to the subject

2.1 THE GAMING SETTING

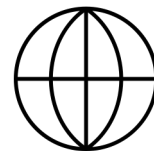
I decided to investigate **Call of Duty: Warzone** as the game is extremely popular all over the world – with a discrete presence of female players; furthermore, the BR requires to enact some strategy. Both competitive and cooperative dynamics could be observed in the game.



Battle Royale
mode



Semi-
cooperative
game



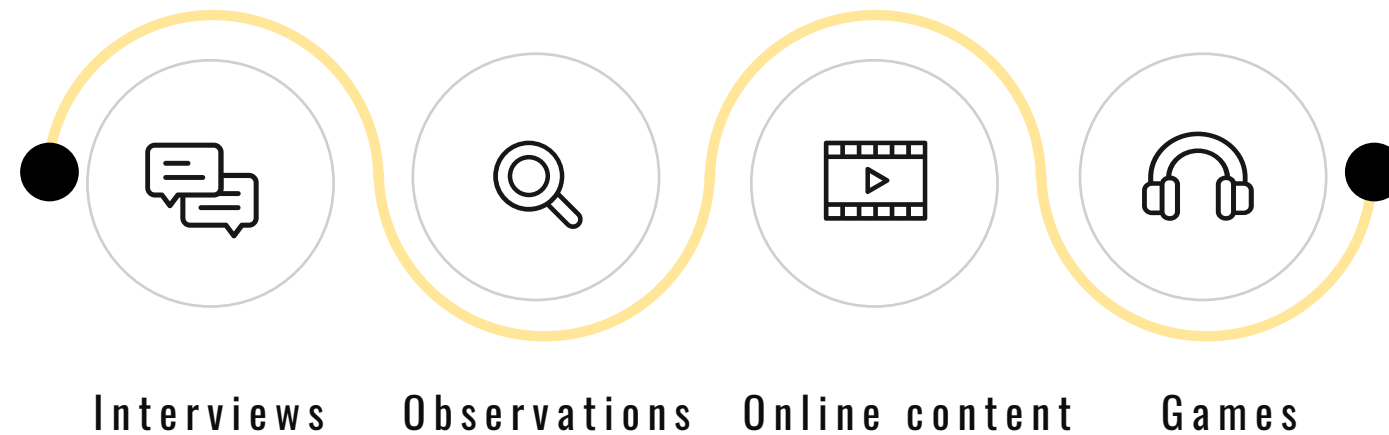
Popularity



Presence
of women

2.2 PROCEDURE

The digital ethnography started in May 2021. I have collected for one year. A new phase of data collection and subsequent analysis will follow, until the beginning of 2023. In the study I make use of interviews and observations – some of which in participatory mode.



May 2021

Interviews

To amateur players (N = 20) to deepen the understanding of the community and the game

Participant observations

Of games, played with members of different regiments and random players

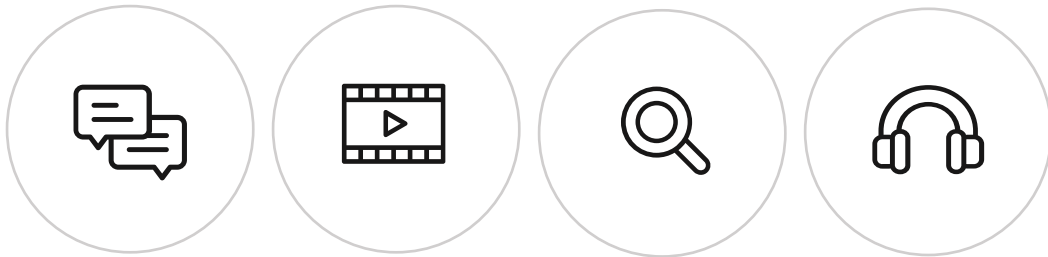
Observations

Of online content such as video and broadcasted sessions of playing and tournaments

Recordings

Of 40 games the conversational exchanges among players

2.3 DATA ANALYSIS



To code and interpret the data I am currently using a **Grounded Theory** approach because this allows to understand players' unique perceptions and understanding of their experience in Warzone and well suits the **ethnographic method**.

03

RESULTS



First results obtained from the observations and interviews which concern a key-theme

- I. Perception of cheating
- II. Evaluation of cheaters
- III. Behaviour in cheating

FOCUSING ON: Dark behaviors

Cheating emerged as a relevant phenomenon in the Warzone community due to its **uncontrolled diffusion**. The study might contribute to research on the topic by enlarging the perspective on the gaming environment, as different types of players - who have different interest in playing, and their reciprocal interaction are taken into account.

- Ruins the enjoyment of the game
- Contributes to negative dynamics
- When uncontrolled may lead to the collapsing of the game world, with players abandoning the game.

Relevance of cheating

3.2 Amateur players

Perception of cheating

They mostly have an **imprecise** knowledge of cheats and an indirect perception of the spread of cheating (by word-of-mouth). They also have less abilities to recognize players who use cheats.

Evaluation of cheaters

Amateur players who cheat are judged **less negatively** than professionals/streamers. The more they show to have abilities and experience in the game, the less harshly they are judged.

Behavior in cheating

They might wrongfully *hackuse* players and report them, being driven by **frustration** and **anger**. They need to reframe their loss as a “non event” as an emotional shield. They are exposed to unfair *shadowban*.

3.3 Streamers and e-sports players

Perception of cheating

They **more accurately** recognize cheaters. They **influence** the perception that the community has of the phenomenon by talking about cheating and producing content around the issue.

Evaluation of cheaters

Streamers and professionals who cheat are judged **more negatively** than amateurs, as there is a break in the trust between their followers.

Behavior in cheating

They might produce wrongful hackusations as well, being driven by the need to protect their image when they are defeated. Some of them endorse a campaign against cheaters, by **publicly** accusing other players.



01

KNOWLEDGE

Each category of players perceive cheating and is affected by the phenomenon in a peculiar way depending on its role - amateur or professionals.



02

CONTRIBUTION

Also, depending on their role, players contribute to the spread of the phenomenon differently, influencing the beliefs around cheating and its diffusion.



03

DESIGN SOLUTIONS

Possible suggestions to improve the gamer experience and avoiding the worst consequences of cheating (e.g., suspect, aggressivity....)

THANK YOU!

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