

Understanding Influencer Marketing in the Gaming Industry: The role of social influence and engagement

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Abstract

The gaming industry is experiencing rapid growth, and influence marketing has become an essential tool for brands seeking to reach gamers. Based on a narrative literature review, this study aims to explore the role of social influence in the context of influence marketing in the gaming industry, with a focus on the impact of user engagement.

Drawing upon social influence theory and the concept of social congruity, we propose a conceptual model that connects these key variables. The model suggests that social influence exerted by gaming influencers on social media can influence user engagement.

The expected results of this study will contribute to a better understanding of the role of social influence in influencer marketing within the gaming industry. Furthermore, the proposed conceptual model will provide insights for marketing professionals to optimize their influence strategies and enhance user engagement among gamers.

Keywords: influence marketing, gaming, social influence, engagement, social congruity, conceptual model.

JEL Classification: M31

Paper type: theoretical research

Résumé

L'industrie du gaming connaît une expansion fulgurante, et le marketing d'influence est devenu un outil incontournable pour les marques cherchant à atteindre les joueurs. Cette étude vise à explorer le rôle de l'influence sociale dans le contexte du marketing d'influence dans l'industrie du gaming, en mettant l'accent sur l'impact de l'engagement des utilisateurs gamers.

En nous appuyant sur la théorie de l'influence sociale et le concept de congruité sociale, nous proposons un modèle conceptuel qui met en relation ces variables clés. Le modèle suggère que l'influence sociale exercée par les influenceurs gamers sur les réseaux sociaux peut influencer l'engagement des utilisateurs gamers. Nous posons l'hypothèse que plus l'influence sociale perçue est élevée, plus l'engagement des utilisateurs gamers sera fort.

Pour étayer notre modèle, nous proposons une méthodologie de recherche incluant une enquête auprès d'un échantillon de joueurs réguliers. Les données recueillies seront analysées à l'aide d'analyses statistiques pour évaluer les relations entre l'influence sociale, la congruité sociale et l'engagement des utilisateurs gamers.

Les résultats attendus de cette étude contribueront à une meilleure compréhension du rôle de l'influence sociale dans le marketing d'influence de l'industrie du gaming. En outre, le modèle conceptuel proposé fournira des pistes pour les professionnels du marketing afin d'optimiser leurs stratégies d'influence et de renforcer l'engagement des utilisateurs gamers.

Mots-clés : marketing d'influence, gaming, influence sociale, engagement, congruité sociale, modèle conceptuel

Classification JEL : M31

Type d'article : Recherche théorique

1. Introduction

With the emergence of the Internet, marketing witnessed an evolution in terms of paradigms and mechanisms by which companies reach their consumers. From content marketing to paid advertising, it is undoubtedly that social media played a crucial role in diversifying and leveraging the quality of channels and offerings. In response to the constraints of traditional communication methods, companies are increasingly embracing innovative strategies to optimize their outreach. This involves a thorough examination of the intricate digital landscape and the identification of opportunities within it. By adapting to the evolving digital environment, businesses can enhance their communication effectiveness and reach broader audiences. This may entail leveraging social media platforms, adopting advanced analytics tools, and exploring emerging technologies. Ultimately, the pursuit of efficient communication strategies in the digital age is essential for maintaining competitiveness and engaging with customers effectively. One valid example could be found in influencer marketing; The latter knew a rapid growth with the increasing number of celebrities that produce content in different domains to their followers fuelled, by the technological advancement and innovative tools provided by different platforms (exp. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube etc.). Recent reports highlighted some key insights related to this industry. For instance, the Influencer Marketing Hub (2022) evaluated the growth of this industry by 16.4 billion dollars with an estimation of 75% of brands who are willing to engage influencers in their practices.

One of the most successful features of this strategy is the diversity of content offered by influencers that can touch users in every corner of the virtual space. From fashion to music to entertainment, each field has its own experts that we can call an influencer. Recently, with the growth of the gaming industry – 3 billion players around the globe -, content creators related to video games are gaining more attention from companies. Bearing this evolution in mind, we aim to better understand - through a model proposition - the role of social influence in leveraging consumers' engagement in the gaming sector.

While existing literature has extensively explored the intersection of social influence and consumer engagement (Argyris et al., 2020), to the best knowledge of the authors, there remains a notable gap in understanding these dynamics within the specific context of influential gamers. The realm of gaming is evolving from social settings creating unique relationships between famous gamers (exp. Ninja) and consumers making the interaction mechanisms very important to explore (Watts et al., 2021). Moreover, with the evolving landscape of technology and the nature of gaming communities (exp. Esports, streaming, Forums, etc.), current research has focused on mainstream influencers, ignoring the wide range of gaming personalities and their unique influence patterns and how it might impact the consumers' behavior. Finally, Research has failed to thoroughly examine the mechanisms of social elements, such as identification and compliance, within the gaming context across diverse social settings, cultures, and platforms. To close these gaps, our research explores the influencer-fan interactions, within the gaming communities, advancing our knowledge of how social influence and congruity affect consumer engagement in an increasingly significant field.

Throughout this paper, our focus will be on delving into the foundational theories underpinning the literature review. We will meticulously examine these theories to gain a deeper understanding of their implications and significance within our research context. Following this exploration, we will articulate the primary hypotheses that will form the cornerstone of our conceptual framework. These hypotheses will be derived from the synthesis of existing literature and theoretical frameworks, providing a robust basis for our subsequent analysis and empirical investigation.

2. Literature review

2.1. Influencer marketing

Influencer marketing is the practice of capitalizing on key influencers to promote or endorse products and services to target their followers. Thus, the intrinsic characteristics (exp. personality) of influencers play a key role in the success of this marketing strategy (Wang and Huang, 2022). This practice is gaining more and more attention in the business world as well as in scientific literature. Prior studies developed an interest in regard to its efficacy in leveraging brands' objectives such as consumer engagement (Wang and Huang, 2022), trust (Liu et al., 2015), attitude (De Veirman et al., 2017), brand image (Isyanto et al., 2020), purchase intention and e-commerce (Isyanto et al., 2020; Wang and Huang, 2022; Hung et al., 2022). Research has pointed out three mainstreams when considering this type of strategy:

Knowledge of the influencers: (Jin and Phua, 2014) pointed out that informational credibility and quality of content have a significant influence on their fans. The latter may continue their following activities because of offered knowledge in a certain area (exp. fashion).

Emotional attachment: according to (Sánchez-Fernández and Jiménez-Castillo, 2021) Influencers maintain a stable connection with their fans by sharing their life habits, activities, and even some personal information, creating thus, a deep relationship leading to a sense of belonging and an emotional attachment based on physical attractiveness, common interests, and desired experiences.

Number of followers: It has been argued that the number of followers has a big impact on consumers' decision to endorse a certain celebrity; as it is a sign of credibility and good quality (Dias et al., 2021; Human-Van Eck et al., 2021; Isyanto et al., 2020), leading to the establishment of a solid community by complying with its norms and adopting its values.

Given the fact that this influence marketing is a new research item, it is still unclear how influencers may shape consumer behaviors. However, literature emphasizes the role of celebrities in transforming their followers' attitudes and values by imitating the formers' way of life (Jin and Phua, 2014). This social identification and congruity will push consumers to adopt the style and the choice of products of their favourite influencers, and thus, closing the psychological gap between them (Belanche et al., 2021).

2.2. Congruity theory

Congruity theory explains a person is more likely to have positive attitudes toward the object when an individual perceives an object or a phenomenon as consistent with what s/he holds (Osgood and Tannenbaum, 1955). This phenomenon occurs due to the reduced dissonance between a person's own opinions and an object (Osgood and Tannenbaum, 1955).

The consumer behavior literature has certainly shown that "Self-image congruence", "self-congruence," "self-congruity", and "image congruence" are used interchangeably in the consumer behavior literature (Kressmann and al., 2006). Sirgy (1991) noted that the commonly used self-image congruence models include the actual self-congruity model, the ideal self-congruity model, the social self-congruity model, the ideal social self-congruity model, and the affective self-social congruity models (Sirgy, 1991).

Self-image congruity is related to customer-focused congruity because customers purchase goods and services to express themselves, fulfilling their psychological needs in addition to utilitarian benefits (Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967). Self-image explains customers' beliefs about their identities, lifestyles, and preferences, representing their preferred (ideal self) and/or perceived (actual self) image. Online-offline brand image congruity represents

company-oriented congruity since customers develop their own perceptions across environments when evaluating the company (Kwon and Lennon, 2009). Self-congruity theory explains customers' tendencies to purchase products and services congruent with their own self-image. Since customers ascribe symbolic value to brands, they prefer to interact with products and brands compatible with their self-image/self-concept. When customers perceive similarities or perceived fit between their self-concept and the brand image, they tend to develop favorable attitudes toward the brand (Sirgy and al., 1997). This theory proposes that consumer behavior is determined, in part, by the congruence resulting from a psychological comparison involving the product-user image and the consumer's self-concept (e.g., actual self-image, ideal self-image, social self-image). This psychological comparison can be categorized as high or low self-congruity. High self-congruity is experienced when the consumer perceives the product-user image to match that of his or her self-image, and vice versa. Self-congruity affects consumer behavior through self-concept motives such as the need for self-consistency and self-esteem.

Meanwhile, the classification of self-congruity dimensions may vary according to the perspective on the categorization of self-concept. For instance, Sirgy and al. (2000) argue that the self-concept consists of both private self and public self and then self-congruity dimensions can be classified into **private self-congruity** and **public self-congruity**. Also according to him, we should have four corresponding types of self-congruities: **actual self-congruity, ideal self-congruity, social self-congruity, and ideal social self-congruity**.

Actual self-congruity: It refers to the degree of match between a shopper's actual self-image and a retail patron image, or the fit between how shoppers actually see themselves in relation to the retail patron image. Actual self-image is part of what psychologists refer to as the private self. The private self involves those images that one has of oneself about which one feels protective. Sirgy, M. J., Grewal, D., and Mangleburg, T. (2000).

Ideal self-congruity: It refers to the degree of match between a shopper's ideal self-image and a retail patron image or the fit between how shoppers like to see themselves in relation to the retail patron image. Ideal self-image is also part of the private self. A person may see himself as timid and lacking in confidence (actual self-image) yet may not like this self-perception. He may want to become sensitive but self-assured (ideal self-image). Sirgy and al., (2000).

Social self-congruity: It refers to the degree of match between a shopper's social self-image and a retail patron image or the fit between how shoppers believe others see them about the retail patron image. A person may believe others see him or her as introverted and plain. This social self-image may be consistent or inconsistent with the actual and ideal self. Sirgy and al., (2000).

Ideal social self-congruity: It refers to the degree of match between a shopper's ideal social self-image and a retail patron image or the fit between how shoppers would like to be seen by others concerning the retail patron image. The ideal social self-image, like the social self-image, is part of the public self. Patrons of upscale clothing boutiques may want to be seen by others as being classy. This is their ideal social self-image. The ideal social self-image affects people's behavior through the "social approval motive" Johar and Sirgy, 1991; Sirgy, Johar, and Claiborne, 1992).

2.3. Influence theory

Social influence theory offers a useful theoretical perspective for understanding the underlying mechanisms of influencers' relationships with their followers (Kapitan and Silvera, 2016; Sokolova and Kefi, 2020). In its original formulation (Kelman, 1961, 1974; 2006), social influence theory distinguishes three processes of social influence: conformity or compliance, identification, and internalization. Kelman aimed to determine the conditions

under which an expert source leads to a simple shift in attitude toward the viewpoint it introduces, analogous to compliance. Often, this approval is coupled with an internalization, that is to say a real structural change in the social representation.

The central theme of social influence theory, as proposed by Kelman (1958), is that an individual's attitudes, beliefs, and subsequent actions or behaviors are influenced by other referents through the three processes of conformity, identification, and internalization. These are sometimes referred to as Normative and Informational Influences then as Social Identity, Group Norm and Subjective Norm, respectively by Goodwin (1987) and (Zhou, 2011).

Within the framework of Herbert Kelman's theoretical reflection on the mechanisms inherent to change, and leaving aside the detail of his learned paradigm where he synthesizes the main conclusions of his study, we will simply recall the fundamental distinction he establishes between the three processes of influence, namely conformity or compliance, identification and internalization. Let us first note that these three terms are not all on the same plane:

Compliance occurs when a 'consumer/user' accepts the influence of the 'influencer/user' because they wish to obtain a result that is consistent with the community characteristics of the field of influence in question. The induced behaviour is adopted not because the 'consumer/Internet' user thinks it is intrinsically beneficial, but because it produces a desirable consequence: what the individual essentially learns is to say to do the expected thing in situations particular, whatever his private convictions. (Kelman, 1958).

In other words, compliance encourages the consumer to create a short-term favorable impression on the provider and others, and compliance-based cooperation may assume the consumer's dependence on the service firm. (Jones, 1965).

Elsewhere **identification** occurs when a consumer cooperates because he believes that his behavior is relevant and required by a reciprocal role relationship in which he is a party (Kelman, 1958). Identification therefore does not depend on the adoption by the consumer of a behavior because he considers it intrinsically satisfying (Kelman, 1958). However, the attitudes and behaviors adopted during the identification process will only be expressed when the role relationship and the expectations of the other (McCall and Simmons, 1978) become salient and attractive. Thus, the marketer can encourage 'consumers/Internet users' to cooperate through the identification process: a 'consumer/Internet user' cooperates because he believes that his behaviour is relevant and required by a reciprocal role relationship in which he is a stakeholder (Kelman, 1961).

Internalization occurs when the consumer/internet user agrees to cooperate with the influencer because this behavior fits into an existing value system or is intrinsically satisfying (Kelman 1958). When a behavior or attitude is internalized, the 'consumer/Internet user' will adopt it or express it outside the context of the service relationship. Moreover, different consumers attach distinct meanings to the same roles, Burke and Reitzes (1981). Influencers might expect consumers to be more likely to internalize cooperative behaviors that match their idealized view of the role (McCall and Simmons 1978) as well as the meanings the consumer attaches to the role; the individual accepts the influence because it is consistent with their value system.

We can say that Consumers today use social networks to share opinions and discuss brands so that these three processes influence the consumer's decision: conformity or the source (social networks) holds power over the target (consumer), the identification or extension of compliance in the absence of the source and the internalization that unfolds when consumer values are altered.

2.4. Engagement

Initially, the roots of the concept of engagement can be traced to the late 60s and the beginning of the 70s in psychology and sociology studies. Thereafter, other disciplines (exp.

management, politics, education, etc.) followed the same path by shifting their attention to this phenomenon (Hollebeek, 2011). From a marketing point of view, the engagement construct is a fairly recent topic that refers to the different interactions between a subject (customer/consumer) and an object (brand, product, organization or community, etc.) (Bowden, 2009; van Doorn et al., 2010). As a result, scholars appropriate consumer engagement to relational and service marketing literature. For instance, (Vivek et al., 2012) argue that consumer engagement refers to *"all marketing activities aimed at establishing, developing and maintaining a successful relational exchange"*. As a matter of fact, the booming of the internet gave birth to multiple forms of visibility such as social media, virtual communities, web sites, etc., thus creating an infinite number of opportunities for the encounter between consumers and brands with the objective to co-create value that goes beyond the basic function of acquiring a product or a service. Considering this relational dimension, brands are more and more relying on influence marketing to engage their consumers which brings us to one of the earliest definitions announced by Kiesler (1971) *"The influence on the behaviour of others, not by persuasion, but by obtaining prior behaviour"*. According to (Hung et al., 2022), Thanks to social media, we are able quantitate users' behaviour and thus track their activities vis-à-vis the content creator through multiple actions such as likes, shares, comments etc. These metrics are visible not only to influencers and brands but to other consumers as well, which can emphasize the relevance of the influencers input (exp. publications, communication etc.) and thus impact the opinion of other users and their behaviour as well. In the same vein, Johnstone and Lindh, (2018) research put forward the importance of attitudinal sphere and the significance of the circulated information posted by celebrities in implicating their followers through multiple age segments, which promotes a trust relationship between the two parties and can be translated to eWOM, benefiting influencers and their communities.

Taking into consideration all of these aspects, we believe that the most appropriate conceptualisation of engagement of this study could be found in (Hollebeek et al., 2014) works integrating 3 dimensions of consumer engagement, i.e cognitive, affective and behavioural :

- The **cognitive** aspect is related to the degree of informational immersion about everything related to a certain celebrity, whether it's about their life, activities and/or posted content ;
- The **affective** component refers to emotional implication of users towards the influencer and his community developing a feeling of attachment ;
- The **behavioural** dimension involves all actions taken towards the influencer, from participating in his social media page to supporting his community etc. (Hollebeek et al., 2014).

3. Hypotheses and conceptual Model

3.1. The impact of congruence on the variables of social influence theory

Even with strong parasocial relationships, if congruence between the consumer and the influencer is insufficient, consumers may resist purchase recommendations (Aw and Chuah, 2021).

3.1.1. The impact of congruence on internalization

Prior studies confirmed that individuals' behavioural congruence with the norms do have an impact on the internalization of a specific normative behaviour (Amiot et al., 2012). When perceiving one's group norm as encouraging behaviour, it is possible that individual group members internalize those behaviours, such that they are part of their self (Haslam & Reicher,

2007). Previous studies have also confirmed the role played by behavioural congruence in the internalization of a potentially socially harmful behaviour (Sansfaçon & Amiot, 2014). Furthermore, Lee and Koo (2016) found that the congruence between a celebrity and the endorsed product/behavior, which reflects the internalization aspect, exerts a considerable influence on consumer behaviours. This aligns with the findings of Rathnayake's (2021) research, which underscores the significance of attachment in the influence process through self-congruence.

To this effect and In line with prior studies, we predict that:

H1.a. Congruence positively affects internalization with the social media influencer.

3.1.2. The Influence of congruence on parasocial identification

Social classifications rooted in influencers encompass individuals who collectively align with the symbolic messages communicated by influencers and the behaviours they endorse. In this context, these social classifications serve as pivotal components that foster interpersonal alignment among followers and consumers, fostering a sense of community, that can lead to collective actions displaying the community rules and preferences (Wei et al., 2022).

According to Choi and Rifon (2007), the congruence between a celebrity endorser's image and consumers' self-concept may even drive consumers to form parasocial identification, an imaginary relationship, with the endorser (Choi and Rifon 2007). The higher image-congruence an individual perceives, the more likely he or she exhibits identification with the target model. The performance of parasocial identification in traditional media could also happen on social media, given the interactivity that consumers nowadays are able to not only closely follow but also immediately interact with media characters, such as social media influencers (Labrecque 2014). Several studies highlighted the impact of social media in establishing a connection where the endorsers identify similarities in their personalities with the image projected by the influencers (Shan et al., 2020; Wei et al., 2022). Thus, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H1.b. The congruence will positively lead to parasocial identification with the social media influencer.

3.1.3. The Influence of congruence on compliance with the social media influencer

Compliance can occur when an individual accepts influence from another person or from a group because he/she hopes to achieve a favourable reaction from them (McCormick 2016). The individual may be interested in attaining specific rewards or avoiding specific punishments that the influencing agent controls. In the other side, previous studies found that the congruence between consumer self-image and celebrity image was an important role in the endorsement process, indicating that celebrity/product congruence had a direct, positive effect on attitude toward the ad (Choi and Rifon, 2012). Furthermore, Sakib et al., (2020) found that Shared values contribute to strengthening the relationship between followers and vloggers increasing compliance intentions.

Acceptance of influence thus has a role in defining congruency between the consumer and the influencer, hence the following hypothesis:

H1.c. the congruence positively affect compliance with the social media Influencer.

3.2. The impact of social influence theory variables on engagement

When a group situation is created, the normative social influences are grossly increased, producing considerably more errors in individual judgment (Deutsch and Gerard, 1955). Social factors therefore can play a role in the creation, exchange, modification and

consumption of socially generated influence that can impact the followers' engagement. (Alensi, 2023).

3.2.1. The impact of internalization on engagement

According to the Contingent Consistency Model's approach (Bagozzi and Lee, 2002), decision makers would be more likely to form an intention, or to engage in concert with their attitudes, when perceiving norms that exhilarate making such a decision or encourage acting correspondingly. The influence mode characterized by group norms here is similar to Kelman's (1961, 1974) variable of social influence: Internalization; in other words, the adoption of a decision based on the congruence of one's values with the values of another. Moreover, Internalization of social influence highlighted that people are more likely to accept the wisdom of the crowd and close friends (Alenizi, 2023), which can generate their engagement and connection with the influencer. Therefore, we can propose the following hypothesis:

H2.a. Internalization of influencers' behaviour can have a strong influence on their followers' engagement.

3.2.2. The impact of identification on engagement

The Normative-based model (Bagozzi and Lee, 2002) suggests that group norms tends to influence intentions as the person identifies with a particular category of other persons. Social identity, thereupon, lead to actions for the benefit of the group (Bergami and Bagozzi 2000; Ellemers et al. 1999). Moreover, the results of Golob and Podnar's "Consumer-brand identification" study (2013) shows that consumers' identification strongly affects and influences commitment. As well as a more recent study from (Prentice, Yun Han and al., 2019) which confirms that identifying with other members of an online community is significantly related to identification with the community; and both identifications do have an important impact on customer engagement. Theses influence approaches also have similarities with kelman's (1961, 1974) variable of social influence: Identification. This element of social influence can also explain the positive impact on followers' behaviour after positive shared reviews and recommendations of opinion leaders, industry experts, celebrities and friends (Alenizi, 2023). We can suggest then the following hypothesis:

H2.b. Identification with the influencers' community can have a strong influence on their followers' engagement.

3.2.3. The impact of compliance on engagement

In a further extension of his own model (1961, 1974), Kelman's (2006) analysis of the individual's relationship to social systems conceptually links Compliance to Individuals' rule, role, and value orientations to a system. This process of influence is characterized, according to him, by a distinct set of antecedent and consequent conditions. Influence is likely to take the form of compliance if the primary concern of the person exposed to influence is with the social effect of her or his behaviour so the influencer's influence techniques that are designed to limit the follower's choice behaviour and so, impact his engagement. While remembering that, in his prior study of "The Role of the Group in the Induction of Therapeutic Change", Kelman (1958) found that the type of patient behaviour induced by the compliance approach of influence is a strong engagement to the therapeutic work. As well Alenisi (2023) who conclude, in his recent exploration of the influence theory variables, that the compliance factor of social influence explain that people can only adopt or engage with influence when they perceive high usability and credibility (of the influencer here). We can therefore support the following hypothesis:

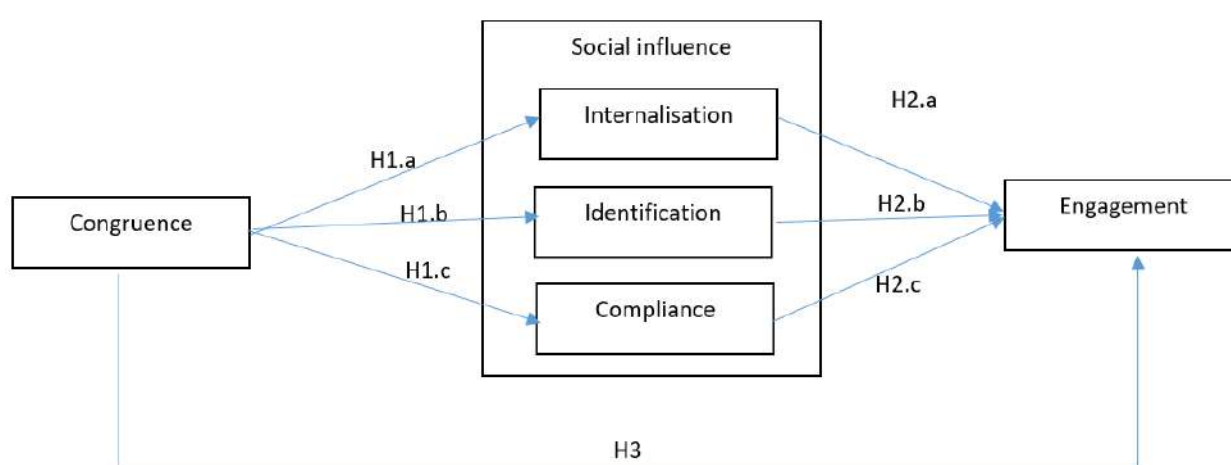
H2.c. Compliance to influencers' behaviour can have a strong influence on their followers' engagement.

3.3. The influence of congruence on engagement

According to Monica and All., (2023) congruence between a published post and the subsequent management response to user comments effectively leads to higher engagement. Value congruence has been recognized as one of the significant antecedents of affective engagement (J. Zhang and M. Bloemer, 2008). Building upon the relational marketing framework of Morgan and Hunt (1994), MacMillan et al. (2005) empirically demonstrated the positive impact of value congruence on engagement. Consequently, we posit the following hypothesis:

H3. Value congruence positively influences follower engagement.

Figure1. Conceptual model proposition



Source: Authors

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has endeavoured to propose and substantiate a conceptual model elucidating the dynamics of social influence within the gaming industry, particularly in the realm of influencer marketing. By adopting the episode of influence as the fundamental unit of analysis, our model aims to scrutinize the veracity of social influence in gaming, its ramifications on consumer engagement, and the variables that moderate this connection. Recent studies underscore the profound impact of social influence on consumer engagement in gaming, highlighting its potency in shaping consumer behaviour (De Vries et al., 2012). Moreover, congruence emerges as a pivotal concept, elucidating how gamers are predisposed to engage with content that aligns with their personal values and beliefs, which can be swayed by social factors such as influential figures (Choi and Rifon, 2012).

However, empirical validation is imperative to unravel the intricate web of variables impacting follower engagement and substantiate the role of influence and congruence in effecting behavioural change (Sundar et al., 2009). Prior to pre-testing the measurement instruments, it is essential to stabilize the model, ensuring its robustness and applicability. Furthermore, careful consideration and discussion regarding the methodology for data collection are warranted, as declarations of influence are susceptible to various biases.

Moving forward, it is imperative to dig deeper into understanding the nexus between social influence and influencer marketing strategies in the gaming fields. Leveraging congruity theory and social influence theory, influencers can optimize their strategies to enhance user

engagement among gamers. By aligning content with the values and preferences of their audience, influencers can foster stronger connections and wield greater influence (Fine F. Leung & al., 2024). Additionally, by comprehensively understanding the mechanisms of social influence, influencers can tailor their approaches to resonate more effectively with their target, thereby maximizing engagement and impact

In essence, this paper serves as a stepping stone towards a more nuanced understanding of influencer marketing in the gaming industry, shedding light on the pivotal role of social influence and engagement. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, further research in this domain will be instrumental in informing effective marketing strategies and fostering meaningful connections between influencers and their audiences.

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