

Chapter 4

Effects of Gamification on Student Achievement in Learning: A Comparative Analysis of Pre- and Post-Test Outcomes for Secondary Students in Johor, Malaysia

Mageswaran Sanmugam

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3313-4462>

Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

This research paper examines the impact of gamification on academic achievement in undergraduate students. The study used a quasi-experimental design, comparing pre- and post-test scores. Results showed a significant improvement in post-test scores for the gamified group compared to the control group. The study also found that pre-test scores and engagement metrics significantly influenced the outcomes. The study suggests that the effectiveness of gamification depends on factors like design, intervention duration, and alignment with educational objectives. It recommends further longitudinal studies and exploring gamification's applicability across diverse educational settings.

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INTRODUCTION

Gamification, integrating game-like elements into non-game contexts, has gained significant attention in education as a potential strategy to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. However, the empirical evidence on the effectiveness of gamification in improving academic performance remains mixed. While some studies have reported positive effects of gamification on student learning, others have found inconclusive or even negative results. (Khaldi et al., 2023)(Bai et al., 2020)(Yıldırım & Şen, 2019). The intriguing aspect of gamification in educational contexts is its promise to transform traditional learning environments into engaging and interactive spaces. This potential has been acknowledged and explored through various studies aiming to understand how integrating game elements—such as points, badges, and leaderboards—into educational settings can foster a more dynamic learning experience.(An, 2020) The premise of employing game mechanics is to leverage the intrinsic motivation and engagement that games naturally elicit, applying these to academic settings to boost students' interest and participation in their learning journey. (Kucher, 2021)(Laine & Lindberg, 2020)(Václavíková, 2020)Despite this promising outlook, the impact of gamification on actual learning outcomes has been met with mixed results, presenting an intriguing paradox. While some scholars highlight the positive implications of gamification, noting improved student engagement and performance, others cast a shadow of doubt, pointing out instances where gamification does not yield significant enhancements or might even detract from learning outcomes. (Amo et al., 2018)(Bai et al., 2020)This divergence in findings underscores the complexity of effectively integrating gamification in education. It suggests that not all gamified approaches are created equal or universally effective across different educational settings and student demographics. The effectiveness of gamification, therefore, seems to hinge on several critical factors, including the design of the gamification elements themselves. For instance, merely adding points or leaderboards to an educational activity without considering how these elements align with the learning objectives and content might not improve student achievement. (Furdu et al., 2017)(Landers, 2014) Additionally, the duration of the intervention and the extent to which students engage with the gamified elements play crucial roles in determining the impact of gamification. Short-term interventions may not capture the full extent of gamification's potential benefits, while longer-term implementations could provide more insights into how these strategies foster sustained engagement and learning. Aligning game mechanics with educational objectives is paramount to ensure that the gamification strategy does not become a distraction but a potent tool for enhancing the learning experience. (Botra et al., 2014)(Urh et al., 2015) Furthermore, acknowledging the variability in how different students respond to gamified learning is crucial. Individual differences in learning preferences, moti-

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