


Chapter 12


Educational Gamification for Classroom and Learning Diversity in Higher Education: A Student–Based Methodological Tool

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ABSTRACT

Gamification has recently been sustained as one of the most frequently implemented and researched active learning methods, having several challenges and difficulties regarding its proper utilization arisen from field-based experience, especially in educational contexts not intrinsically linked to playful and/or truthfully interactive

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learning. In this situation, Higher Education is one of the scenarios where gamified practices have offered the most variations regarding its reported effectiveness and proper methodological design. In order to account for such a situation, a narrative review of the most recent gamified experiences in the stage was conducted, offering valuable insights regarding several risks, difficulties and benefits of creating gameful learning proposals. Despite the remarkable recent advances in real experiences of gamified learning, much work remains to be done if educators and researchers alike aim towards establishing clear and meaningful connections between its theoretical principles and actually recommended educational practices in the matter.

INTRODUCTION

As a result of the globalizing processes that have shaped the development of contemporary societies over the past few decades, educational and formative scenarios have acquired a more unique and diverse composition than ever before. The current generation of learners, primarily due to their extensive use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), is accustomed to forms of interaction, socialization, and gratification that often diverge from the traditional methods employed by their educators. These educators, shaped by their own experiences as both teacher trainees and students, frequently find themselves navigating a gap between their pedagogical practices and the evolving expectations of their students (Kanuka et al., 2025).

This disconnect has contributed to a pervasive lack of motivation among students, which has emerged as a critical challenge in fostering meaningful and lifelong learning. Students increasingly seek training and preparation delivered through alternative methods that align more closely with their preferences and desires (Inácio Cardozo et al., 2024). This shift is particularly pronounced in traditional and well-established institutions, such as universities, which are often perceived as centers of knowledge that have become progressively outdated. Many of these institutions remain anchored in teacher-centered approaches and memorization-based training, which fail to resonate with the interactive and fast-paced learning demands of today's students (Aznar-Díaz et al., 2020).

In response to these challenges, it has become imperative for educational programs and curricula to adapt in ways that are both appealing and effective, ensuring they meet the needs of a generation shaped by digital immersion and interactive experiences. Within this context, educational gamification has emerged as a promising methodological alternative. Gamification involves the integration of game-inspired elements—such as points, badges, leaderboards, and narrative structures—into non-

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