Effectiveness of Educaplay in Improving Student's Written Assessment Scores in Values Education

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ABSTRACT

This research examined the performance of Educaplay as a gamified instructional medium in enhancing the written evaluation scores of Grade 8 students in Values Education at Bulacan State University Laboratory High School. The study has solved the long-standing problem of low learner engagement and the shortcomings of conventional pedagogical practices in imparting abstract moral ideas. A to identify the effects of incorporating digital tools quantitative quasi-experimental research design was implemented with 42 students that were split into experimental and control groups. The experimental group was taught with the help of Educaplay, and the control group was taught using the Educaplay group learned in conventional learning. The data were collected by means of pre-test and post-test, as well. as the structured questionnaires that are based on the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 and the System Usability Scale. These measures were used to evaluate the academic achievements of students, their degree of acceptance and many other things. perceptions of the usability of the platform. Statistical tools such as mean, standard deviation, and percentage were used to inquire into the results. The results showed that the students in the experimental group indicated an improvement in their. Comparison of their post-test scores with their pre-test performance, which showed that Educaplay had a positive impact on their. academic achievement. Furthermore, the platform was highly rated in terms of usability and acceptance, implying that it was effective in increasing student engagement, motivation, participation. The research finds that Educaplay is a useful additional resource that could be used to improve learning outcomes in Values Education. It is advised that teachers should consider integrating gamified platforms that can promote interactive, student-centered learning and enhance general performance in school.

Keywords: *Educaplay, Gamified Instructional Tool, Gamification Learning Theory, UTAUT2, SUS*

INTRODUCTION

A massive revolution in the education systems of different nations around the world has been experienced in the 21 st century, with dramatic changes in technology changing the way individuals access, manipulate, and use information. The traditional classroom education has transformed into a multidimensional one in which the learning experiences can be digitalized, made collaborative, and self-directed (Thornhill-Miller et al., 2023).

Values Education in the Philippines is a key player in cultivating a moral thinking, ethical decision-making, and civic responsibility among Filipino students. But its teaching is subject to the same constant difficulties. The traditional teaching techniques such as lectures, guided discussion and reflective writing do not tend to keep the students motivated, especially where the moral lessons are taught in an abstract manner without the interactive or experiential elements. Pallo and Ferenal (2025) revealed that a lack of interest in Values Education can greatly impact academic success among students. At the same time, the scores of written assessment in the subject indicate a disconnect between the instructional goals and the learning outcomes (Espinosa et al., 2023).

The DepEd ICT Roadmap and the Digital Rise Program are some of the programs was to strengthen the integration of ICT in education, a trend that signals institutional dedication to technology-enhanced education.

Nevertheless, there are obstacles that still need to be addressed to let effective implementation take place (Monteza, 2025).

In spite of these obstacles, gamified platforms have proved to be effective in enhancing student performance and motivation (Guisadio et al., 2025). Among these, Educaplay online platform allowing teachers to create interactive activities such as quizzes, word games, crosswords, and puzzles is an accessible, user-friendly platform that meets both pedagogical and technological objectives.

Although studies have confirmed that gamified learning tools such as Kahoot!, Quizizz and Edmodo help increase engagement and academic performance in various disciplines, especially that Values Education wasn't explored. It is this gap which is the foundation of the present studies. This is based on the hypothesis that Educaplay can be an effective auxiliary instructional tool in the Values Education classroom.

The general problem of the study is: How effective is the Educaplay in improving the written assessment scores of Grade 8 learners in Values Education?

This study investigated the following questions:

1. How the Educaplay be described the level of acceptance of students in Educaplau as a supplementary pedagogical platform in terms of:

1.1. Performance Expectancy;

1.2. Effort Expectancy;

1.3. Social Influence;

1.4. Facilitating Condition;

1.5. Hedonic Motivation;

1.6. Attitude Toward Use; and

1.7. Behavioral Intention

2. What is the level of usability of Educaplay as perceived by the students?

3.What are the students' pre-test scores before the implementation of Educaplay in experimental and control groups?

4.What are the students' post-test scores after the implementation of Educaplay in experimental and control groups?

5. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores among experimental and control groups after the use of Educaplay as an instructional tool?

6. Is there significant differences on students' written assessment scores between experimental and control groups?

METHODOLOGY

The research design that will determine the success of Educaplay in improving the written assessment scores of a quantitative, quasi-experimental study was Grade 8 students in Values Education. Class sections that were not intact they employed, which rules out random assignment, but permits meaningful comparison. The pre-tests were carried out to identify the baseline performance of the two groups, then an intervention period of the

experimental group and post-tests of both groups to measure the learning gains. It was decided to use this design based on its practical applicability to actual classroom situations.

This was done at the Laboratory High School of Bulacan State University -Main Capus. The place was selected because of the presence of the internet, the administration and the presence of cooperating Values Education teacher. The participants of the study were a group consisting of 42 Grade 8 students and divided into two groups: experimental group (n=21) and the group (n=21). The method used in choosing the sample was convenience sampling and the inclusion criteria included that the parents had to give their approval and the internet had to be accessible to enable. It was possible to have uninterrupted use of Educaplay. The experimental group included 10 males (47.62) and less than 11 females (52.38%), with ages 13 (38.10%) and 14 (61.90%). The control group was also composed of 10 males (47.62%) and 11 females (52.38%), with ages 13 (57.14%) and 14 (42.86%).

Data collection was done using three instruments. The first one was that a researcher-developed pre-test and post-test based on items related to a validated table of specifications in Values Education was given to both groups. Second, a modified UTAUT2 questionnaire with 25 items that comprised seven constructs, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, hedonic motivation, attitude towards use, and behavioral intention were measured on 4-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree / Not Acceptable at All, 4 = Strongly Agree). Third, a system usability scale (SUS) was modified to include 10-rated questions. on a 4-point Likert scale was used to verify the usability of Educaplay in terms of its effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction. All the instruments were subject to content and face validation by subject matter experts to assure that every item was not only suitably suited to the targeted constructs but also thought to be. suitable, explicit and reflective of the study objectives.

Prior consent was obtained from the school principal. All students that participated had parental consent. The baseline scores were set by giving both groups the pre-tests at the same time. The experimental cohorts would then be provided with Educaplay-integrated lessons in the 3rd quarter of Academic Year 2025-2026. The lesson plans of both groups were accepted by the subject coordinator of the Values Education. In the experimental group, Educaplay exercises like quizzes, word games, and interactive puzzles were incorporated in the motivation part of each lesson, which includes application, and evaluation. Normal instruction was given to the control group Educaplay. The post-test was administered to both of the groups after the intervention, and UTAUT2 and SUS questionnaires were also fulfilled by the experimental group.

The analysis provided is pre-test, post-test, and UTAUT2 and SUS findings, which are summarized with the help of descriptive statistics, mean, standard deviation, median and mode. UTAUT2 scores (1.00 -1.74 = Not Acceptable at All; 1.75-2.49=Somewhat Not Acceptable) were applied to the UPA and Chusanachoti (2023) acceptance interpretation scale. A standard SUS Score Excel Calculator was used to process the SUS scores and scaled on the adjective rating scale (Bellio & Kuric, 2025). Using a paired sample t-test, the scores of both tests were compared. The level of statistical significance was considered with an alpha level of 0.05. The processing of data was done through Google sheets.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Part I. Level of Student Acceptance of Educaplay (UTAUT2)

Table 1

Overall Level of Acceptance of Educaplay per UTAUT2 Construct

UTAUT2 Construct	Overall Mean	SD	Description
Performance Expectancy	3.53	0.42	Highly Accepted
Effort Expectancy	3.46	0.53	Highly Accepted

UTAUT2 Construct	Overall Mean	SD	Description
Social Influence	3.45	0.60	Highly Accepted
Facilitating Conditions	3.54	0.50	Highly Accepted
Hedonic Motivation	3.49	0.56	Highly Accepted
Attitude Toward Use	3.49	0.52	Highly Accepted
Behavioral Intention	3.50	0.71	Highly Accepted

All the seven constructs of UTAUT2 were rated as of a Highly Accepted nature, with a mean of between 3.45 (Social Influence) and 3.54 (Facilitating Conditions). Students rated Educaplay as helpful to learn, user friendly, socially accepted and entertaining. These conclusions can be supported by Bayrak and Liman-Kaban (2024), who revealed that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence are positively related to the behavioral intention of teachers and students to use gamified tools. Perceived improvement in learning effectiveness (M=3.62) was the highest rated sub-score under the Performance Expectancy category, whereas Academic Performance received the lowest sub-score (M=3.41), indicating that students could more directly see the immediate pedagogical benefits of Educaplay more than they can see its impact on grades. Facilitating Conditions had the most overall construct mean (M=3.54), with the students confirming complete access to resources and knowledge to use the platforms. The lowest sub-item in this construct was access to external support (M=3.24, described as Somewhat High Acceptable), which indicated a possible gap in institutional peer assistance. Results of the Social Influence scores revealed higher peer-based adoption than institutional endorsement, which was in line with the UTAUT2 that gamified tools change in more fun experiences rather than traditional method. Moreover, the interplay of peer pressure and hedonic pleasure reinforce the dual nature of the influence of social processes and intrinsic pleasure in hastening the process of technology acceptance within classroom settings.

Part II. Level of Usability of Educaplay

Table 2

Students' Level of Usability of Educaplay

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
1. I think that I would like to use the website frequently.	4.10	0.83	Usable
2. I found the website to be simple.	4.57	0.60	Highly Usable
3. I thought the website was easy to use	4.57	0.75	Highly Usable
4. I could use the website without technical support	4.48	0.60	Highly Usable
5. Various functions were well integrated.	4.14	0.85	Usable
6. There was a lot of consistency in the website	4.14	0.73	Usable
7. Most people would learn to use it very quickly.	4.71	0.46	Highly Usable
8. I found the website very intuitive	4.48	0.60	Highly Usable

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
9. I felt very confident using the website.	4.33	0.66	Highly Usable
10. I could use it without learning anything new	4.00	1.22	Usable
TOTAL / Score	4.35 / 89	0.73	Highly Usable (A+, Best Imaginable)

Educaplay had a SUS score of 89, graded A+, and classified Best Imaginable which was well above the standard benchmarked SUS score of 68. The platform scored the highest in terms of learnability (M=4.71) and simplicity (M=4.57) which validated the intuitive design of the platform. Moderately less scores on consistency (M=4.14) imply that there is a slight possibility of improvement in interface uniformity. These results can be related to Molina et al. (2022), who state that pedagogical technology should be defined by such attributes as ease of use, accessibility, and user-satisfaction. The high usability score helps to warrant Educaplay as a dependable and efficient tool of classroom usage by Values Education. In addition, its potential to become a prototype within a broader curricular framework and its associated positive appraisals is indicative of its ability to serve as a role model within a larger curricular platform and its related favorable reviews. This kind of integration is not only helping to increase the instructional design but also, empirically helping to support the sustainability of technology driven learning practices in formal education.

Part III. Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

Table 3

Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Test	Mean	Median	Mode	SD
Control	Pre-Test	18.00	19	19	1.52
Control	Post-Test	18.19	19	19	1.47
Experimental	Pre-Test	16.62	17	19	2.71
Experimental	Post-Test	19.19	19	18	0.75

The control group had their own slightly higher (M=18.00,SD=1.52) than the experimental group (M=16.62,SD=2.71) before the intervention, which has less variability, a heterogeneous baseline before the intervention. With the implementation of Educaplay, the mean score in the experimental group increased significantly to 19.19 and the standard deviation (SD=0.75) decreased significantly indicating better performance and higher consistency in the scores. In the meantime, there was a slight change in the control group (18.00 to 18.19). It is a positive trend, suggesting that Educaplay aided poorer students to bridge achievement gaps at the cost of stronger students, which helps to promote equity in academic performance. These results are consistent with those of Diaz and Estoque Loñez (2024), who confirmed the same results, that gamification has been the most effective intervention strategy to bridge early learning gaps across disciplines. This type of evidence highlights the importance that gamified platform can play as an inclusive tool that can be used to balance achievement to ensure that learners with varied profiles benefit equally through the use of technology enhanced instruction. By doing so, gamification helps to democratize the learning experience and makes digital platforms leverage point between equity and innovation in the modern educational context.

Part IV. Significant Difference in Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

Table 4

Paired T-Test Results: Pre-Test vs. Post-Test Within Each Group

Group	t-value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Control Group	-1.28	0.214	Do not reject H_0	No significant difference
Experimental Group	-2.70	0.014	Reject H_0	Significant difference

The results of paired t-test showed that the control group did not have any significant changes of the one before and after the test scores ($t = -1.28$, $p = 0.214 > 0.05$), which meant that the traditional instruction did not offer any tangible academic gains. Conversely, when compared to the control group, the experimental group showed statistically significant change ($t = -2.70$, $p = 0.014 < 0.05$), which strongly indicates that Educaplay positively influenced student learning. Although the negative t-values of both groups suggest that the respective post-test means of the two groups were not far apart, only change observed in experimental group was found to be statistically significant. These results are further confirmed by Meng et al. (2024) who have discovered that gamified systems can contribute significantly to improving the score, grades and the overall academic performance of the students. This helps support the notion that gamification can yield quantifiable change and as much promise as it has to be applied in a formal learning institution.

Part V. Significant Difference Between Experimental and Control Groups

Table 5

Independent Samples T-Test: Post-Test Scores of Control vs. Experimental Group

Comparison	t-value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Control Post-Test vs. Experimental Post-Test	-2.78	0.01	Reject H_0	Significant difference between groups

A t-test which was conducted by the independent samples t-test accepted the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the mean of sands per 1 mm (2) obtained and their known values, (3) b. This conclusively confirms that there is indeed a statistically significant difference between the post-test scores of the two groups with the experimental group giving superior performance compared to the control group. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, offering empirical data that taking Educaplay as a teaching intervention had a more enhancing effect on academic performance than a traditional as a teaching approach. Such findings are in accord with what Khanchai et al. (2025) have found in identifying students that are in conditions of gamified learning as performing significantly better than in conditions of non-gamified learning.

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this research point to the fact that the use of Educaplay as an additional instructional tool was able to improve the outcomes of the written assessment of Grade 3 students in Values Education. Students in the experimental group had shown a statistically significant increase in post-test scores after they were exposed to Educaplay system unlike those in the control group who mentored typical classroom instruction. A t-test of independent samples further confirmed that there was a significant difference in the final test performance between the two groups, with the experimental group getting significantly higher results. Regarding the acceptance of the product by the students, Educaplay scored high in all constructs of the UTAUT2 model, which include, among others, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, helping conditions, hedonic

motivation, attitude toward use and behavioural intention) reflecting the positive perception that the students held of the platform in terms of its usefulness, accessibility, and entertainment value. Also, the platform scored 89 on the System Usability Scale (SUS), which is defined as A+ or the best imaginable, which confirms that Educaplay is easy to navigate and follow, as well as be easily adapted to classroom environments. Taken together, these findings confirm that Educaplay has the potential to help promote higher student engagement, motivation, and academic development in Values Education and make it a viable and efficient supplementary learning resource in the context of modern technology-enhanced instructional practices.

On the basis of these findings, a series of recommendations are advanced: teachers are recommended to design diversified, gamified activities (e.g., competitions, rewards, interactive challenges), in line with building motivation benefits to the fullest extent possible; institutions are recommended to conduct orientations and guided walkthroughs, to build confidence and reduce confusion; school heads are recommended to promote Educaplay, through a combination of clear policies, education, and curriculum alignment; peer support systems and help desks are recommended, to address technical problems; and, finally, teachers are strongly encouraged to design varied, gamified activities (e.g., competitions, rewards, interactive challenges) to optimize motivation benefits to full extent possible. The longitudinal designs that should be used in future studies include the subject and grade levels, and by integrating these with the technology experts and a continuous positive feedback, the future research will ensure pedagogical soundness, technical efficiency, and a sustained engagement among the students. It is also advisable to establish institutional monitoring systems that will be used to keep abreast with changes in pedagogical approaches and curriculum demands. Co- operation with educational technology developers is also recommended to keep up with changing pedagogical practice and curricular requirements.

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Ethical Considerations

This paper addressed the best ethical principles when conducting a research that involves human subjects and the following were the principles that were addressed in this paper:

• Involvement in the study was voluntary. Minor subjects were not allowed to participate without an explicit permission of their parent or guardian, and student consent was also taken.

• The participants had the right to drop out any time without academic penalty or consequence. And, to be precise on the matter: All of the personal information was anonymized, coded in a confidential way, and stored in a secure place. Data could be used solely academically and were destroyed upon conclusion of the research.

• No known risk factors were posed in the study. The subjects were told that they could skip any item or; they could withdraw without any penalty. The study was reviewed by the relevant institutional authority of Bulacan State University before it was implemented, and it adhered to all the ethical standards.

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