

The impact of using gamification to improve students' engagement in higher education

Sabie Oana Matilda

Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania

Ruxandra Irina Popescu, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania

Marian Iulian Trusca, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania

Abstract: Probably one of the biggest challenges facing professors today is to actively involve as many students as possible in the teaching and learning process. In the contemporary technological and digital society, a solution in this regard could be gamification. The concept of gamification in higher education has become increasingly popular in recent years. Despite the growing scientific literature in this area, there are still many questions about the real impact and benefits of gamification. The aim of this paper is to investigate the role of gamification in students' engagement from five different international universities. Moreover, the study analyses the impact of a pilot application on students who become mayors in a simulating game situation for a four-year period. The main objective of the research is to provide an insight into the feasibility of game-based learning, also known as gamification.

The research is based on a qualitative approach, being an exploratory study conducted using two research methods: (1) the analysis of the official documents and specialized literature; and (2) the opinion survey based on an interview, in order to design a series of proposals for improving students' current level of engagement. The research findings highlight the fact that the e-learning approach through gamification generates the dose of enthusiasm that students sometimes need in higher education. The development of digital and other new skills underscores how incorporating play into learning routines can be a tool that teachers can use to maximize students' engagement. However, any gamification must be carefully analyzed before it is implemented in order to be relevant and effective. Thus, the implementation of gamification can be an imperative for modern universities that want to increase student's engagement and give them the opportunity to develop, both personally and professionally.