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Exploring Teachers' Attitudes toward the Integration of Gamification in Tutorial Sessions

Case study: Algerian Middle Schools – Saida

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Abstract

Gamification in education represents an innovative and engaging strategy to motivate students and enhance their learning achievements. Nevertheless, despite the increasing pedagogical interest in gamification over the last two decades, teachers' attitudes toward gamification and its implementation remain a neglected research area. This exploratory study aims at investigating or revealing Middle school teachers' attitudes toward integrating this technique in their instructional process. Moreover, it seeks to investigate teachers' perceptions of this new strategy mainly in tutorial sessions since teachers are allowed more flexibility, hence they can be more creative and productive when performing them. To fulfil the study's main aim, a mixed method approach is put into action, a structured questionnaire is delivered to EFL teachers from Saida City, and a structured interview is conducted with five teachers from different schools. The findings revealed that the majority of teachers hold positive attitudes towards the use of gamification and believe that its appropriate use develops English language acquisition in a fun and innovative way as well as it promotes learners' motivation and engagement. However, just a minority has put it into action for several reasons mainly the lack of ICT material, class, and time management. As a result, this research implies maintaining the availability of the needed materials as well as the necessity to offer specific training for teachers on how to plan and design games as well as how to integrate gamification elements in tutorial sessions by selecting, adapting, and implementing authentic materials that meet the learning objectives and suits the educational setting.

Keywords: Algerian middle school of Saida, Attitudes, EFL teachers Gamification, Tutorial Session

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List of Acronyms

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

TSS: Tutorial Sessions

SDT: Self-Determination Theory

ICT: Information and Communications Technology

MMR: Mixed Method Research

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General Introduction

General Introduction

The implementation of games in education represents a strategy implemented by pedagogical actors to motivate and engage their students. Nowadays, the 21st century is marked by technological advance that influences all domains. Henceforth, educational practitioners focus on promoting the methods used in teaching that suit the educational environment as well as the learners' needs and interests. Today's generation or as they are named the 21st-century learners or digital learners are almost living in the virtual world. Moreover, playing digital games is a part of their daily routine. As a matter of fact, games affects their behaviour and their way of thinking in addition to developing many skills if used properly. As a result, educators decided to integrate *Gamification* as a strategy of teaching in their practices. Developed at the beginning of the 21st century that touched all domains such as economy, management, and commerce for the purpose of decreasing stress and anxiety, stimulating workers' motivation and promoting their feedback thus their incomes.

Gamification is an innovative and engaging tactic to motivate students and enhance their learning process progressively. It has been widely defined by different researchers in the field mainly (Lee & Hammer, 2011; Kapp, 2012; Deterding et al, 2011) as the integration of digital games and game design, elements, mechanics, and aesthetics in a non-game context. In other words, it means gamifying the classroom by using digital tools and game platforms for learning and enjoying not solely playing for learning. The process encompasses the implementation of game techniques such as points, badges, leader-boards, and tracking processes to hook the learner's attention and make them focus on developing their skills to perform their tasks hence win challenges, or pass levels in the game either individually or collaboratively which positively enhance their thinking, communicative and social skills.

Gamification in education has been used to teach different subjects mainly English as a Foreign Language. The outcomes of teaching EFL are interconnected to the teachers' efforts and the methods they use in their classrooms to make them interesting and fruitful. The use of technology in classrooms has approved its success since learners respond positively and enthusiastically to it. Moreover, teaching through the gamification method implicates the use of computers, tablets, or

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smartphones that must be in excellent condition and provided with a good internet connection which is not the case for all schools. As a result, teachers incorporate game design and mechanics according to their working environment.

EFL teachers tend to adopt different gamification tools such as game learning applications. Nevertheless, despite an increasing academic interest in gamification over the last two decades, teachers' attitudes towards its use remain a neglected research area specifically in countries where the use of technology in schools is still considered a luxury thus the gamification method is not adopted among their educational systems; which is the case of Algerian EFL teachers. The Algerian educational system allows some extent of flexibility to EFL teachers to manipulate their teaching performances according to the curriculum and learners' interests. In the case of Algerian Middle schools, learners have tutorials once in two weeks in which teachers are free to adapt their lesson plans and create their setting. Moreover, during TSs the class is divided into two groups. Therefore, it is easier to manage and promote learners' engagement and motivation.

In the light of what has been mentioned above, this exploratory study aims to gain better knowledge about the attitudes of EFL teachers serving in Algerian Middle Schools in Saida City towards the use of Gamification during tutorial sessions. Firstly, it strives to investigate Algerian middle school EFL teachers' attitudes towards adopting gamification in teaching EFL mainly during tutorial sessions. Secondly, it attempts to explore Algerian middle school EFL teachers' perceptions about implementing gamification as a new teaching strategy in their practices.

The great role of educators cannot be neglected since they are the designers of the learning environment. This study is an endeavour to understand their attitudes toward the use of Gamification in teaching EFL. Thus, to achieve the aims of the research the following questions have been raised:

- 1- What are Algerian middle school teachers' attitudes towards adopting the Gamification strategy in teaching English as a Foreign Language in tutorial sessions?
- 2- How do Algerian EFL middle school teachers perceive gamification as a modern strategy in teaching?

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To answer these questions, the following research hypotheses are formulated:

- 1- Algerian EFL middle school teachers might demonstrate positive attitudes regarding the use of gamification in their practice mainly during tutorial sessions.
- 2- Algerian EFL middle school teachers seem to recognize the effective use of gamification in teaching and learning EFL.

Concerning the methodology used to gather data, the researcher has relied on a mixed method approach (quantitative and qualitative approaches), where a teachers' questionnaire and a teachers' interview were incorporated. This means that data were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The questionnaire was structured, in which close-ended questions and a five-item Likert Scale were incorporated. The interview contains five questions conducted with five teachers from different middle schools in Saida City.

This research is divided into three chapters. Chapter One is devoted to the review of the literature. It introduces an overview of gamification and its implementation in the educational field mainly in teaching EFL. The research design and methodology were discussed in the second chapter. It described the study tools in depth, as well as the participants' profiles, research processes, and data processing methodologies. The third chapter was about analysing the acquired data. Finally, it summarizes the most relevant findings. It recommends pieces of advice to improve teachers' awareness of the significance of professional development in adopting new teaching methods. These recommendations are made in response to the findings.

Chapter One: The Review of Literature

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Chapter One: Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

1.2 An Overview of Gamification

1.3 Defining Gamification

1.4 Gamifying Education

1.4.1 Gamification, Education and Motivation

1.4.1.1 Self-Determination Theory

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1.4.2 Aims and Techniques

1.5 Elements of Gamification

1.6 Implementing Gamification in EFL Teaching

1.7 Advantages and Disadvantages of Gamification

1.8 Conclusion

1.1 Introduction:

Gamification in language classrooms, is widely illustrated as the practice of implementing games and fun activities in an educational setting i.e. non-game context to promote learners' engagement and motivation as well as make them learn in a pleasurable, purposeful way and, most importantly, at their own pace. This chapter is related to the literature review of the research. Initially, it aims to introduce the term gamification, laying out its major development phases, approaches, and elements. Henceforth, it covers the integration of gamification in educational settings and EFL classrooms. Besides, it targets its advantages and disadvantages.

1.2 An Overview about Gamification:

The concept of gamification is not as new in education as it appears. The use of games to accomplish a task or an activity in competitive and ludic scenarios was used by the Scouts in the early 1900's. Groups of Boy Scouts used to be assigned challenging missions and obstacles to overcome, and the winners earned rewards, for instance, badges and trophies, to trigger a desired behaviour (Koutropoulos & Porter, 2017). However, Gamification did not gain real practice in the digital world until the creation of the first computer game in 1978.

Before tackling the modern explicit concept of gamification, it is important to go through the understanding of the word GAME which is directly linked to playing and entertainment probably worldwide. Yet, it is different from playing. (Huber & Hilty, 2015) argue that a game involves participants in a problem-solving activity approached playfully based on systematic formal rules which result in quantifiable outcomes. In the same vein, (Deterding et al.,2011) in their article entitled "*From Game Design Elements to Gamefulness: Defining Gamification*", argue that gamification refers to games and not playfulness they explain that:

In game studies, this distinction between games and play is usually tied back to Caillois' concept of *paidia* and *ludus* as two poles of play activities. Whereas *paidia* (or "playing") denotes a more freeform, expressive, improvisational, even

“tumultuous” recombination of behaviours and meanings, *ludus* (or “gaming”) captures playing structured by rules and competitive strife toward goals. Along those lines, classic definitions in game studies state that gaming and games – in contrast to playing and toys – are characterized by explicit rule systems and the competition or strife of actors in those systems towards discrete goals or outcomes. (p. 11)

Additionally, (Kapp, 2012) adds that when game elements are successfully combined they all work together to provoke an emotional reaction towards the situation. As a result, a game represents an organized and purposeful process that hooks the player’s interest and links his/her behaviour directly to the outcome hence generating interaction and opting for positive consequences in an entertaining yet challenging atmosphere.

Furthermore, the term Gamification was coined in 2002 by the British game designer Nick Pelling (Marczewski, 2013). He used this term to specifically describe the use of game elements and techniques in a non-game situation to promote the learning process as well as increase the participants’ motivation and engagement. According to (Lee & Hammer, 2011) gamification represents the use of game mechanics, dynamics, and frameworks to stimulate a desired behaviour. It was comprised in documents in 2008 and its design was popularized in 2010 (Deterding et al., 2011). The actual use of gamification was integrated into various fields such as marketing, trade advertising, and education sectors for training workers, educating learners, solving problems, and producing new ideas and concepts.

1.3 Defining Gamification

Different understandings of gamification have been set by various researchers underlying different aspects, the fact that made it difficult to identify a precise definition. A broader yet wrapping meaning was introduced by the father of gamification Nick Pelling, as cited previously, which is the use of game elements and techniques in a non-game context. Similarly, (Deterding et al., 2011) propose the following definition “Gamification” is “the use of game design elements in non-game

contexts.” (p.10). in the same vein, (Zicherman & Cunningham, 2011) define gamification in the introduction of their book *Gamification by Design* as “The process of game-thinking and game mechanics to engage users and solve problems.” Furthermore, (Kapp, 2012) explains that using game-based thinking is gamification, he defines it as “using game-based mechanics, aesthetics and game thinking to engage people, motivate action, promote learning, and solve problems.” (p.10). He broke down his definition into elements to offer a better and more specific understanding of the concept of gamification as follows:

- *Game-based*: An engaging system in which participants face an abstract challenge governed by specific instructions, interactivity, and feedback stimulating an emotional reaction that leads to quantifiable outcomes.
- *Mechanics*: Like points, badges, and leader boards representing crucial and constructive cornerstones to transform ordinary activities into a game-like process using applications or platforms.
- *Aesthetics*: It plays a great role in attracting the participants’ intention as well as stimulating motivation since playing a game first requires their acceptance. Hence, a well-designed game is more effective and successful.
- *Game thinking*: According to Kapp this is the most significant element in gamification. It represents the idea of linking the game with real situations and everyday experiences. It fosters the spirit of competition, collaboration, exploration, and storytelling.
- *Engage*: The process of engaging participants is an explicit aim of gamification to hook their attention and successfully implicate them in the game.
- *People*: These are identified according to each field, they could be students, workers, or clients... they represent the individuals who will take action in the game.
- *Motivate action*: Participants must be motivated intrinsically and extrinsically in a view of boosting their behaviour and action. The process of the games should meet their expectations for the sake of driving them into action. This represents a primary element in gamification.

- *Promote learning:* As several gamification structures are based on educational psychology and are strategies that instructors, professors, and instructional designers have been employing for years, gamification can be operated to develop learning. Various educational practitioners have made items like giving grades for tasks, constructive criticism, and encouraging teamwork on project mainstays. The dissimilarity is that gamification offers an additional level of intrigue and a novel approach to combine those components into a captivating gaming environment that inspires and informs students.
- *Solve problems:* Gamification holds great undertaking for problem-solving. Games' cooperative elements can help a group of users focus on a single topic. The competitive characteristic of games motivates players to put forth maximum effort for the sake of winning.

Henceforth, (Fulton, 2019) emphasizes the aspect of motivation by defining gamification as follows: “the bringing of game elements, into non-gaming environments to capture the motivational factors found in games.” To wrap up all the definitions above, Gamification can be defined as an aesthetic game design that brings elements and mechanics of games into a non-game setting to trigger a desired behaviour, to create a governed system where participants are motivated and engaged to interact and cooperate to build constructive feedback that results in an emotional reaction that leads to quantifiable consequences. During the process of gamification, players are challenged to fulfil tasks and collect points and badges, instructors can design leader-boards and tracking systems to follow their progress. For instance, designing rewards for the group or the player who performs better and this can be arranged daily, weekly, monthly... Therefore, it is a system designed in a disciplined, purposeful, and entertaining way to promote positive behaviour and interest in achieving positive learning outcomes in a short period.

1.4 Gamifying Education

Gamification of education has been made feasible by the digitalization of instruction brought about by the development of technology (Szabo & Kopinska, 2023). The year 2010 witnessed the creation and design of new games in learning. The new 21st century generation or Digital Natives as they are called have different interests and needs compared with the former ones. In an attempt to simplify the integration of gamification in educational settings, (Huang & Soman, 2013) introduce a five-step model that summarizes the main phases to gamify education.

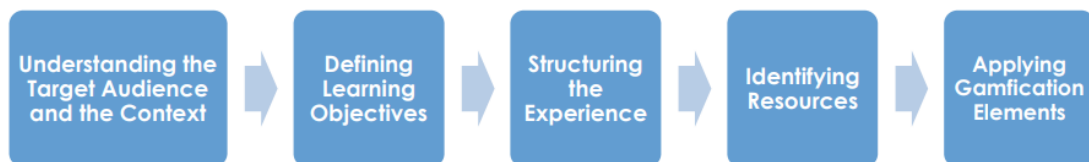


Figure 01: Educational Gamification Five-Step Model

Adapted from (Huang & Soman, 2013, p. 7)

The figure above demonstrates the five-step model of *the gamified educational model* in a research study conducted by (Huang & Soman, 2013) entitled “A Practitioner’s Guide to Gamification of Education”. Initially, it explains that *understanding the target audience and the context* is a significant key step in managing the instructional process. This means that teachers should first identify the characteristics of their learners as well as the context in which the program takes place. This will help teachers design an effective instructional setting. Secondly, *defining learning objectives*. Teachers should carefully set their general goals that should be met not only at the end of the lesson but also in the exit profile. As mentioned earlier, gamification aims at using games to obtain better learning outcomes as well as intriguing a desired behaviour, therefore the learning objectives should encompass both learning and behavioural sub-goals. Thirdly, *structuring the experience*, teachers should break and sequence the learning content into stages and quantify what learners require to reach at the end of each level. In other words, this step indicates identifying the important points of the program in addition to the main

obstacles that may be faced during its application. Fourthly, *identifying resources*. After identifying the stages, it will be easy for teachers to judge which ones can be gamified. Also, it clarifies whether the implementation of game elements is possible or not. Finally, *applying gamification elements*, (Huang & Samon, 2013) divide gamification elements into two categories: self-elements and social-elements. This implies that teachers should select the elements according to the activities that they plan to implement in the lesson. For instance, if the task is individual, they should go with self-elements like points and badges... Yet, if it is a collaborative work, they should go with more interactive and competitive elements such as leader-boards, and story-line.... (p.13)

Moreover, according to (Lee & Hammer, 2011; Dichev & Dicheva, 2017; and Fulton, 2019) The process of motivating and incentivizing learners has been the teachers' main focus since the beginning of teaching. Nowadays, due to technological advancement and the huge interest in the world of digital games by all age groups, gamification of education is considered as a promoting approach for increasing learners' motivation thus engagement. As learners spend most of their time playing digital games on their smartphones, tablets, or computers, their focus is driven to completing requirements or quests rather than learning. Therefore, utilizing this important aspect to revitalize the motivational process to play and learn at the same time as well as installing 21st century skills such as critical thinking and digital literacy is what is meant by incorporating game design elements in educational procedures.

1.4.1 Gamification, Education and Motivation

In a research study conducted by (Henares, 2021) about the effectiveness of gamification tools in the educational context, the researcher emphasized defining the gamification strategy as the use of game elements, mechanics, and design in a non-game environment to motivate the participants, learners in this case. In the same vein (Kim, 2015) explains that the motivational power of games is very effective when implemented in teaching practices since it captures the eyes of students hence

promoting their engagement and affecting their behaviour in a short period. The researcher also raises the importance of the impact of gamification aesthetics on increasing motivation, as mentioned previously in the definition of gamification provided by (Kapp, 2012). This aesthetics represent the fun part of the games implemented, they trigger the feelings and emotions of joy and amusement, therefore reducing the anxiety and stress and breaking the boredom caused by the traditional dull learning methods. Moreover, the fact of experiencing new situations and challenges progressively develops learners' curiosity and sense of discovery which tests their abilities and boosts their self-confidence which shifts their focus from being afraid of falling into mistakes to focusing on the activity and reaching the objectives set by the game.

According to (Fluton, 2019) Gamification tools are crucial for teachers to update their practices and cope with the modern technological development that greatly influences the learners' lives and represents a prominent aspect in growing their motivation in classrooms. He confirms the fact that gamification comprises the effective use of technology and careful game design to motivate students and claims that: "At its core, gamification is built on researched areas of psychology of self-determination theory, flow theory, and self-efficacy." (p.7)

1.4.1.1 *Self-Determination Theory*

Developed by Deci & Ryan in 1985, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a motivational theory that studies human motivational activities. According to (Fluton, 2019; and Rahayu, et al., 2022) SDT proposed that the growth and positive change of humans are by the satisfaction of innate psychological needs that affect their behaviours and activities. The theory identifies three major psychological needs:

- *Autonomy*: Refers to the feeling of being in control of endorsing one's behaviour. It is a crucial aspect of applying a learner-centred approach.
- *Competence*: Refers to feeling effective in learning experiences and in the continuous process of mastering one's capacities in different activities.

- *Relatedness*: Refers to the feeling of being related and connected with others (peers, teachers, learning resources). It involves collaborative work which underlies the experience of learning and sharing knowledge.

1.4.1.2 *Flow Theory*:

“Flow state” is a notion developed by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi in 1975. The theory is a study of motivation which suggests that learners can experience optimal learning when performing activities characterized by a balance between what they know and what they need to learn, i.e. it relates to interest, control, and focus on the learning situation. (Fluton, 2019)

1.4.1.3 *Self-efficacy Theory*

According to (Fluton, 2019; Cabalsa, n.d) self-efficacy theory of motivation studies learners’ perceptions of their abilities to accomplish different activities. Self-efficacy is defined by (Bandura,1986) as "People's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances"(cited in Cabalsa, n.d. p.5).

1.4.2 Aims and Techniques

According to (Lee & Hammer, 2011) to understand how gamification techniques can best be installed in an educational context, there are three major areas to discuss *cognitive, emotional, and social*.

- *Cognitive*: The role of doing tasks while playing involves the students in active experiments and triggers their curiosity to discover and reach new targets, in other words, promotes their learning process gradually and guides them to mastery, thus keeping them engaged even while solving difficult tasks. However, to achieve this objective, the design of game levels should be perfectly tailored to meet learners’ levels, interests, values, and skills. Moreover, the difficulty of tasks should increase along with the learners’ skills i.e. the goals of the game are inquired to be specific, reasonably difficult to obtain positive outcomes. Additionally, it promotes the autonomy of learners,

since they are allowed to select their sub-goals in the task which gives them more control on what they are learning, that is to say, supporting their engagement and promoting their motivation. As a result, learners' attitudes and perspectives toward learning will transform because they will have a clear understanding of what they are studying, and they will give them instant and direct incentives rather than long-term and uncertain rewards. (Bandura, 1986; Locke & Latham, 1990; Locke, 1991; Koster, 2004; Gee, 2008 cited in Lee & Hammer, 2011)

- *Emotional:* Games are considered a powerful tool to invoke emotions like enthusiasm, curiosity, joy, and even frustration. The importance of the involvement of games in education underlies breaking students' fear of failing i.e. the process of playing a game involves experiencing repeated experiments and thus repeated failure. Nevertheless, it shifts learners' focus from being afraid to fail and losing to challenging themselves repeatedly to win. Henceforth, it supports their self-confidence and optimism. Its goal concentrates on changing negative emotional experiences into positive ones by reframing failure as an indispensable part of learning. Consequently, gamification offers learners a safe environment to construct their learning, assess their capacities, and value their efforts, therefore they become active, optimistic, engaged, and motivated instead of being fearful and helpless. (Pope, 2003; Lazzaro, 2004; Gee, 2008; McGonigal, 2011 cited in Lee & Hammer, 2011).
- *Social:* gamification techniques promote both collaborative and individual learning skills. On the one hand, games can be played collaboratively, which involves group interaction as well as dividing tasks to each participant to achieve a specific aim, thus gamification guarantees the active participation of all learners. On the other hand, individual participants can experience new identities by creating avatars for instance, which according to (Lee & Hammer, 2011) has a great influence on introverted learners who have difficulties

interacting explicitly. Therefore, gamification offers a wonderful chance for teachers to help integrate all learners into active learning and allow them to explore their potential by experimenting with meaningful roles and experiencing a successful learning journey that will be awarded appropriately.

1.5 Elements of Gamification

Gamification elements are extremely important for the design of any game for a specific objective or use. However, according to (Kapp,2012) they do not represent all the aims of a game, their function is embodied in classifying students according to their individual or group places for instance assigning avatars. Also, ranking them according to their scores and points. Additionally, they help teachers track their progress and assess their learning outcomes to provide incentives and rewards like badges and trophies. (Lee & Hammer, 2011) argue that the educational system is already gamified. This can be explained, for instance as the students' grades which can be translated as points, school projects also can be improved as a sequence's final objective which supports collaborative work. Furthermore, the rewards given at the end of each term characterize the success of learners according to their progress. These elements are also called components, currently, they are found in all types of games encompassing: points, badges, leader-boards, and progress tracking. Their way of design can be adjusted according to different educational environments to boost their motivation and engagement (Ngoc, 2022).

(Ngoc,2022) suggests that:

➤ *Points and levels:* Learners are asked to accomplish levels in a game through challenges when they succeed they are awarded points. The latter is a crucial element that links the game with motivation and keeps learners engaged for a long time. As a result, it increases the positive improvements.

➤ *Leader-boards:* Can be defined as a ranking list that enables each learner to see and compare his/her points and scores to other learners. This strongly fosters the sense of competition on the one hand and strengthens the sense of belonging on another hand. Therefore, it aims to motivate students to climb ranks quickly and effectively.

➤ *Badges:* Badges of games have a significant impact on the motivation of learners learning progress. They represent icons awarded for the successful accomplishment of challenges and quests by breaking the level into small tasks to reach. Medals are a simple example of badges (golden, silver, and bronze). They function as a digital and visual demonstration of victory and can stimulate users to gather more.

➤ *Progress Tracking:* This element allows learners to control their progress since it gives them feedback about their strengths and weaknesses. In addition, it shows them how much advancement they have reached. Hence, it assists them in setting clear goals about the coming steps.

1.6 Implementing Gamification in EFL Teaching

The use of gamification or digital games in teaching languages specifically English as a foreign language has been the interest of many research studies all over the world specifically in the last two decades. Some research works highlighted the impact of gamification on supporting EFL teaching and students' learning in addition to students' engagement and motivation whereas other studies emphasized its influence on language skills and elements for instance: speaking and reading skills as well as vocabulary and grammar. On the other hand, few research articles analysed the attitudes and perceptions of teachers and learners on the fact of gamifying EFL classrooms and its overall use in higher institutes and schools remains limited (Belda-Medina & Clavo-Ferrer, 2022; Szabo & Kopinska 2023; Redjeki & Muhajir, 2021; Luo, 2024; Cherghi & Omranpoor, 2022; Plamquist, 2021)

These studies proved that to reach a successful integration of gamification in EFL classrooms, it is a must to provide each learner and teacher of course with a computer, a tablet, or a smartphone that should be in excellent condition, supported with a large memory size and a good internet connection. Moreover, the digital literacy is an indispensable matter. Another crucial point is the game design, it is very important to adapt it according to the educational setting, it should be created and designed carefully to suit the learners' interests, hence facilitating the game flow. Additionally, teachers who are not able to design their applications should be

equipped with a well-designed app or platform that encompasses all the elements of gamification mentioned above in addition to rules, challenges as well and feedback (Boudour, 2023) which allow them to track learners' academic progress and learning outcomes also permit students to stay updated about their learning information.

Different gamification tools designed particularly for learning foreign languages have been put under study such as Kahoot and Duolingo, these are classified among the most famous and used game platforms (Redjeki & Muhajir, 2021; Belda-Medina & Clavo-Ferrer, 2022) Furthermore, concerning the efficiency of use (Henares, 2021) argued in a master thesis conducted to investigate the effectiveness of gamification tools to teach and learn EFL for Spanish secondary school students that most of the learners felt a sense of enjoyment acquiring English through games which reveals that they were more engaged and motivated. The study also affirmed that games allow them to be more active participants and make the process of learning experiential rather than theoretical which gave them more autonomy and supported their creativity in the classroom.

Moreover, a research study introduced by (Tirasin, 2023) investigated the cognition of teachers, in upper secondary schools in Norway, towards the integration of gamification in teaching EFL, which confirmed that teachers held positive attitudes with a significant acceptance that gamification tools can be effectively used in EFL classrooms with nearly 95% of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that digital games could be utilized to meet Norwegian curriculum and pedagogical standards. Conversely, (Luo, 2024) argued that the gamifying of EFL classrooms does not solely encompass the actual use of gamification tools, it significantly requires other factors that contribute to the acceptance of teachers to use them such as classroom management and creating a safe environment to integrate technology in schools. Therefore, understanding the effect of technological means in educational settings to spot its significance on the improvement of both engagement and academic outcomes which is a result of a long-term application of all factors engaged in the teaching and learning process. Another research article pursued by (Thuy & Hung, 2021) on teachers' perceptions of using gamification applications in teaching speaking skills to EFL young learners showed that approximately 89.8% agreed or strongly agreed

confirming it could hook learners' attention and help them to stay focused and engaged during the speaking lessons. Furthermore, teachers' perceptions highlighted the positive impact of gamification on presenting other parts of the English language mainly vocabulary and grammar by proving its benefits in assisting students to learn new words and understand grammar structures quickly and most importantly in a fun way.

Nevertheless, gamification is still being discovered in different countries namely where educational systems are not digitalized in other words where the integration of technology remains luxurious rather than a cornerstone in successful modern education. A research article undertaken by (Boudour, 2023) on exploring Algerian middle school teachers' perspectives towards gamifying EFL teaching in Mostaganem City revealed that the Algerian educational policy allows teachers to be flexible in their practice and adjust their methods and techniques to the 21st-century learners. The researcher accentuated the role of the level of teachers' awareness as well as their mastery and experience in discovering and accepting new methods like gamification, which of course requires a high level of skills in different areas such as classroom management, technology, and monitoring applications. In addition to emphasizing the major role of professional development for teachers, the study approved that middle school teachers are well acquainted with the notion of gamification and relate it to facilitating and improving the process of EFL teaching and enhancing students' performance. However, there is no actual use of gamification for many reasons such as deficiency of ICT material in public schools, limited internet access, outnumbered classes, and shortage of time. On the other hand, some teachers confirmed using educational apps like Duolingo. Yet, most of them admitted using gamification elements unconsciously for instance setting a positive competitive atmosphere by engaging learners into challenges where they receive incentives like rewards and badges progressively. Henceforth, the investigator tackled the attitudes of teachers towards gamification which proved to be highly positive and they believe that good preparation and management of gamified lessons ascertain its effectiveness. This can be applied also to high schools since they share the same working atmosphere.

1.7 Advantages and Disadvantages of Gamification

As with any teaching method, gamification has its merits and demerits. (Lee & Hammer, 2011) stressed the role of schools along with gamification to strengthen the educational process, they state that:

Bringing education and game elements together could turn out like peanut butter meeting chocolate: two great tastes working together, leading to results that are especially important for developing 21st-century skills. Gamification can motivate students to engage in the classroom, give teachers better tools to guide and reward students and get students to bring their full selves to the pursuit of learning. It can show them the ways that education can be a joyful experience, and the blurring of boundaries between informal and formal learning can inspire students to learn in life-wide, lifelong, and life deep ways. (p.4)

From what has been written previously, the implementation of gamification in education, specifically in the EFL context proves to encompass various benefits, since learning a new language requires being in touch with it practically, therefore gamified learning allows more experiential experiences where learners are autonomous, fully engaged and motivated to learn and discover the language joyfully and excitingly.

Nonetheless, the risks facing the application of gamification in schools may occur under various circumstances. According to (Boudour, 2023) the misuse of technology by learners and the mismanagement by teachers might result in negative learning outcomes hence not achieving the desired behaviour identified in the learning objectives. (Lee & Hammer, 2011) argues that the process of gamifying classrooms suggests allowing more freedom to learners to experiment, fail, and explore multiple alternatives in different games and challenges to control their experiences however one of the gamification elements is rules, therefore “By making play mandatory, gamification might create rule-based experiences that feel just like school” (p.4) This can reinstall the anxiety and decrease motivation as learners would feel limited and obliged to perform triggered conducts instead of discovering and learning joyfully.

1.8 Conclusion

In a nutshell, gamification is considered by several educational practitioners as a novel method that will renovate the educational process by the integration of games and game elements in a non-game context to meet the interests of the 21st generation learners, since it engages, motivates and provides an exciting as well as an enjoyable learning experience.

Chapter Two: Methodology and Design

Chapter Two: Research Methodology and Design

Chapter Two: Research Methodology and Design

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Research Questions and Hypothesis

2.3 The objectives of the Study

2.4 Methodology

2.4.1 The Quantitative and Qualitative Research

2.4.2 Mixed-Method Research

2.5 Target Population

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2.6.2.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of Questionnaires

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2.7.1 The Likert Scale

2.8 Interview

2.8.1 Describing the Teachers' Interview

2.9 Limitations of the Study

2.10 Conclusion

2.1 Introduction

Following the first chapter which dealt with the theoretical exploration of the most significant concepts of the research. The second chapter is devoted to the explanation of the methodology undertaken while working on the subject matter. Initially, it rephrases the research questions and hypothesis along with its aim. Secondly, it covers a detailed analysis of the methodology used to analyse the teachers' attitudes towards the use of gamification in the EFL context. Thirdly, this chapter aims at defining and describing the target population chosen for the study in addition to the presentation of the research tools used to meet its objectives. Finally, this chapter is concluded by revealing the limitations.

2.2 Research Questions and Hypothesis

As a reminder for the reader, the investigator of this research has raised two research questions, they are stated as follows:

- 3- What are Algerian middle school teachers' attitudes towards adopting the Gamification strategy in teaching English as a Foreign Language in tutorial sessions?
- 4- How do Algerian EFL middle school teachers perceive gamification as a modern strategy in teaching?

To answer these questions, two research hypotheses are formulated as follows

- 3- Algerian EFL middle school teachers might demonstrate positive attitudes regarding the use of gamification in their practice mainly during tutorial sessions.
- 4- Algerian EFL middle school teachers seem to recognize the effective use of gamification in teaching and learning EFL.

2.3 The Objectives of the Study

In essence, the rationale behind conducting this study is the desire to explore the openness of EFL middle school teachers towards adopting new and modern methods to cope with the interests of the 21st century learner. Therefore, the objectives of the research are cited as follows:

- 1- To investigate Algerian middle school EFL teachers' attitudes towards adopting gamification in teaching EFL mainly during tutorial sessions.
- 2- To explore Algerian middle school EFL teachers' perceptions about implementing gamification as a new teaching strategy in their practices.

2.4 Methodology

The process of conducting research means following a specific framework used for planning, implementing, and analysing a certain study. Therefore, selecting an appropriate research methodology can guarantee the effectiveness of its results (Mohdjan,2018). In the same vein, (Apuke, 2017) confirms that the purpose of research is “to investigate facts, reconfirm the results of previous experiments, provide solutions for existing or new issues, support theories, as well as propose new theories.” (p.40). There are different methodologies in undertaking a research: quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. The present research explores teachers' attitudes concerning the use of the gamification method. Since the topic is new and still being discovered and explored in the Algerian educational sphere, the researcher chose a mixed method approach to conduct the study in which a questionnaire and an interview are directed to middle school teachers in Saida. For this purpose, the researcher used the Likert scale which facilitates the measurement of qualitative data quantitatively in the questionnaire as well as a structured interview to obtain clear and valid findings.

2.4.1 The Quantitative and Qualitative Research

Quantitative research is quantifying and analysing variables to get results and it includes the utilization and analysis of numerical data using specific statistical

techniques to answer questions (Apuke, 2017) whereas qualitative research allows researchers to explore the opinions and views of homogenous as well as varied groups of people to assist in analysing these contrasting insights within a community or society. “Because social capital is relational—it exists between people—asking a group of people to respond together to certain questions and hypothetical situations may yield information that is more nuanced than data derived from surveys” (Choy,2014)

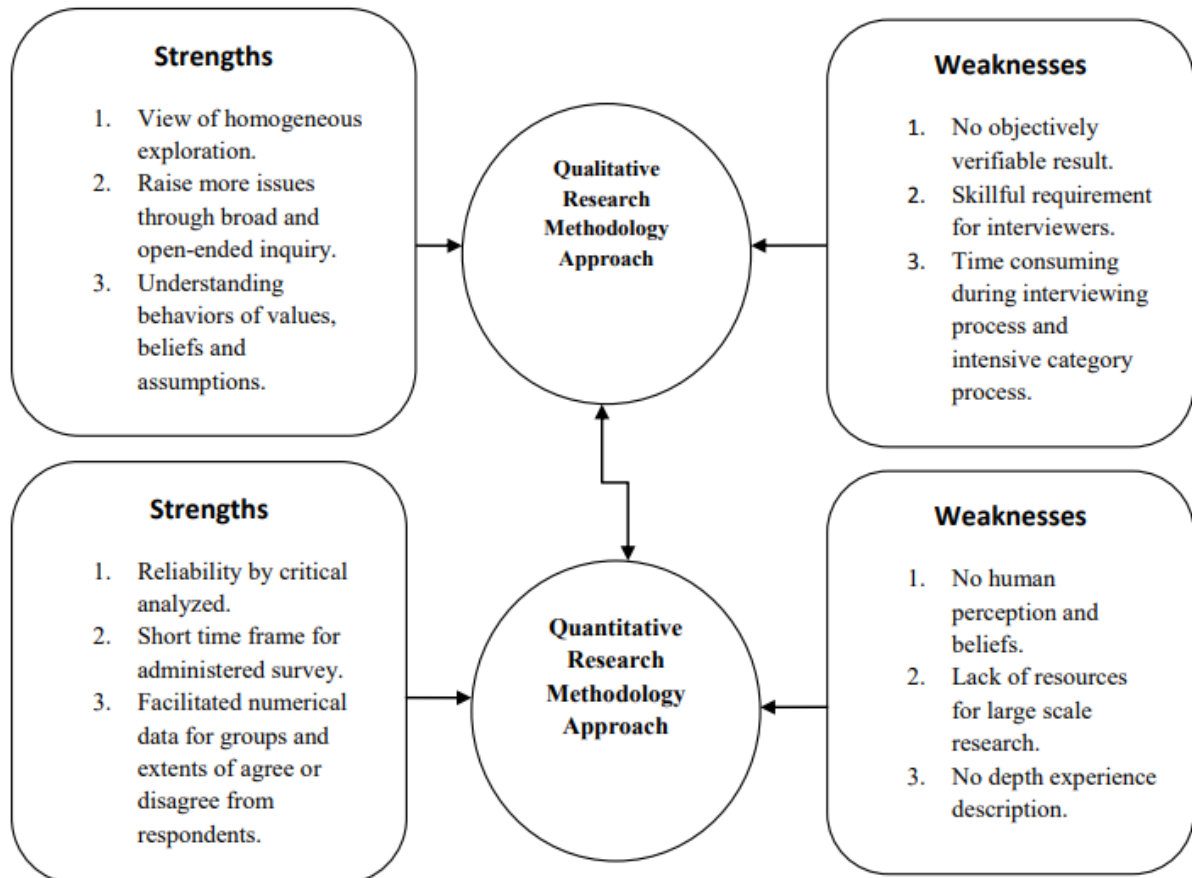


Figure 2 Quantitative research vs Qualitative research

Note. Reprinted from IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 19, Issue 4, Ver. III (Apr. 2014), PP 99-104

2.4.2 Mixed-Method Research

The mixed-method research (MMR) is considered as a principled complementary research method to the previous quantitative and qualitative approaches. The fact of synergizing methods results in a variety of important information that researchers cannot reach by using only one approach. Moreover, it

allows the application of different research tools to fulfil the objective of the situation under study in order to explore various perspectives (Dawadi et al, 2021).

The researcher has chosen the mixed method approach to conduct this research study. Since it is focused on the attitudes of humans, the researcher selected data collection tools from both quantitative and qualitative approaches which are questionnaire and interview to obtain accurate results.

2.5 Target Population

Population is the whole group meant to make inferences about by researchers. In this study, the main participants were Algerian middle school teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) from Saida. First, the researcher opted for a Probability Sampling Method, Simple Random Sampling; hence the questionnaire was delivered online to teachers via emails and a Facebook group of EFL teachers in Saida. Moreover, the interview was conducted after obtaining the consent of five teachers with experience using gamification techniques and agreed to undertake it anonymously.

2.6 Research Tools and Data Collection

One of the most prominent characteristics of good research is the instruments used to collect the data for the study. Hence, the data collection methods should be chosen carefully by researchers to suit the nature of the research. There are different research tools designed to collect a specific sort of data according to each type of research. Each instrument has its specificities, design, implementation, and interpretation.

According to (Ghounane & Rabahi, 2023) the research instruments are divided into quantitative and qualitative ones. The former includes the use of questionnaires and the latter insists on the use of interviews and observation. Thus, the appropriate selection of data collection tools facilitates the process of data analysis and interpretation.

2.6.1. Differences in Data Collection Methods

There are different data collection methods devoted to each type of research whether it be quantitative or qualitative. However, most methods can be used for both. “The distinction is mainly due to the restrictions imposed on flexibility, structure, sequential order, depth and freedom that a researcher has in their use during the research process.” (Kumar, 2011 p.132)

For instance, descriptive responses obtained as a reply to closed-ended questions are all quantitative but if the questions are written as rating scales, they will be interpreted as numerals so they are considered as quantitative.

2.6.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is one of the primary data collection methods. It consists of a list of questions written for the participants to answer. In this method, the questionnaire is given personally, sent via post or email, or published online via social media platforms for instance. In other words, the respondents are invited to answer the questionnaire by themselves without the presence of the researcher and then send it back. (Kumar, 2011) explains that the respondents interpret what is expected as there is no one to elaborate on the meaning of the questions. Thus, the questions must be produced in simple and clear language to understand. In addition, the design of the questionnaire layout shouldn't be complex and boring to read. Similarly, the questions should be sequenced logically and in an interactive style so that the respondent would understand the meaning correctly. Henceforth, the researcher should avoid ambiguous and sensitive interrogations. All of the above should be taken into consideration before starting to design a questionnaire to avoid any misinterpretation or refusal to answer, therefore a dead end for the research work.

2.6.2.1 Advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires

According to (Kumar, 2011) a questionnaire is considered an advantageous data collection method because it is a less expensive way which saves time. Additionally, it is far from the bias of the researcher since the respondents answer on

their own besides it offers great anonymity and gives time to think thoroughly before answering which increases the obtainability of accurate results. Nevertheless, even though the questionnaire is popular amongst researchers it also has its demerits. (Kothari, 2004) explains that the application of questionnaires is limited to an educated and cooperating population, furthermore, the rate of the responses is low and this may lead to an important reduction in the sampling size, hence the findings may not be representative of the total population under study. Moreover, the fact of the lacking opportunity to illustrate and clarify issues may also result in either an omission of replies to certain questions or keeping a neutral reply, and maybe both which will interpret the finding as a difficult process.

2.6.3. The Presentation of the Teachers' Questionnaire

In this research work, a structured questionnaire was intended for middle school teachers of English from Saida. It was applied to explore their attitudes toward implementing Gamification in EFL teaching as a novel and modern practice and how they measure its impact on the learning process as well as predicting their intentions to incorporate this strategy in their teaching in the future. This questionnaire was delivered online to teachers in the first week of March 2024 during the second term examinations, so that teachers would have time to respond appropriately.

The teachers' questionnaire was composed of ten questions and a series of nine statements divided into three sections in addition to the section devoted to demographic information. The second section covers the teachers' knowledge about the concept of Gamification and whether they implement it in their practice. The third section includes their attitudes towards the implementation of Gamification in EFL teaching during tutorial sessions. Lastly, the fourth section sheds light on teachers' intentions toward implementing Gamification in their future practices. This questionnaire is comprised of closed-ended questions including yes/no questions and a five-item Likert scale.

2.6.4 Formulating Questions

The forms of questions used in a questionnaire are extremely significant because they have a major impact on the quality of the responses gathered from the participants. The researcher should appropriately select the wording and the structure of the queries to meet the objectives of clarity, simplicity, relevance, and freedom from bias.

There are two forms of questions, **open-ended** and **close-ended**, which are commonly used in different areas of research mainly social sciences. In the case of the questionnaire, a respondent is free to write his answers when provided with open-ended questions, in other words, the possible answers are not given. By contrast, in close-ended questions, the respondent is provided with categories of responses and he/she is invited to choose what best describes his/her answers.

In this research study, close-ended questions were chosen by the researcher since the sample population is moderately large. (Kuthari,2004) argues that in a questionnaire open-ended questions should be avoided to the extent possible as it is extremely challenging to analyse the responses written by the participants and the researcher needs to go through content analysis to classify data. Yet, even though close-ended questions lack depth and variety as well as they may condition the way of thinking of the respondents, in case of the given answers are labelled according to the researcher's interests, and they provide more accurate findings additionally they assist in guaranteeing the collection of the data needed besides making the analysis process fast and easy.

2.7 Measuring Attitudes in Quantitative Research

It exists various methods to measure attitudes quantitatively. With quantitative research, a researcher can investigate, quantify, ascertain the degree of, and amalgamate attitudes towards all facets of a problem to derive a single indication that embodies the attitude in its entirety. these methods are known as attitudinal scales. There are three major scales in quantitative research, Thurstone, Guttman, and Likert.

In this study case, the researcher used the Likert scale. The latter is the easiest to construct and therefore is used far more.

2.7.1. The Likert Scale

Likert Scale is one of the psychometric measurement tools utilized to gauge people's attitudes, opinions, and beliefs to help the researcher get a holistic view of them. It is commonly used in questionnaires in which a person is required to rate or indicate their agreement and disagreement towards a certain issue. "The Likert Scale is named after its creator, Rensis Likert, who developed it in 1932. In survey research, Likert scales are the most commonly used type of scale." (Roy, 2020. P. 21)

According to (Kumar, 2011) Likert scale is also called the summated rating scale, which is centred on the idea that every item or statement on the scale has an equal attitudinal value. The scale includes five to seven items which can be about:

Agreement (strongly agree to strongly disagree)

Certainty (very confident to very doubtful)

Frequency (often to never) ... etc

The above items are known as Likert Scale Response Anchors. Moreover, it is important to mention that all Likert scales comprise a mid-point for those who maintain a neutral position.

2.8 Interview

One of the qualitative approach research tools is the interview. In which the researcher who is the interviewer collects data by asking questions to the interviewee. There are three different types of interview which should be adapted to the nature of the research. Structured interview, which refers to predetermined questions asked in a predetermined order, semi-structured interview which includes questions that prompt natural discussions with the interviewees and unstructured interview, which denotes a free lo of the conversation.

Interviews present an extremely effective tool when the researcher opts to investigate people's beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, feelings, and opinions...

specifically when the research topic is novel or difficult to understand and implicates complicated questions.

2.8.1 Describing the Teachers' Interview

The type of interview used by the researcher is a structured interview. It encompasses five questions covering the perceptions of teachers towards the use of the gamification strategy in EFL teaching. Moreover, the researcher reached out to five teachers from different middle schools located in Saida, Algeria who implemented some of the gamification techniques in their practices, who agreed to conduct the interview anonymously. For the purpose of obtaining diverse answers about the topic.

2.9. Limitations of the Study

As with every researcher conducting an inquiry, the researcher faced various limitations while doing this study. Firstly, the novelty of the subject matter makes the process of selecting relevant sources of information difficult. Secondly, the target population was not totally collaborative. Thirdly, the process of conducting and gathering data from the interview took a long time since the researcher had to relocate.

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter was descriptive. The aim behind it was to paraphrase the research questions and hypothesis as well as its objective. It gave a thorough overview of the research techniques utilized to measure middle school teachers' opinions about the use of Gamification in teaching EFL. The target population that helped to complete this research was also included in this chapter. Moreover, it identified and explained the research techniques applied to finish this scholarly work. Lastly, the chapter outlined the limitations of the research. The examination of the information gathered from the teachers' questionnaire is covered in the next chapter.

Chapter three: Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

Chapter Three: Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Data Analysis

3.2.1 Teachers' Questionnaire

3.2.2 Teachers' Interview

3.3 Discussion and Interpretation of the Findings

3.3.1 Teachers' Questionnaire

3.3.2 Teachers' Interview

3.4 Conclusion

3.1. Introduction

After describing the methodology used by the researcher to fulfil this study, in the former chapter. The current one aims to analyse and interpret data collected from the teachers' questionnaire and interview as well as discussing the findings gathered from both data collection tools.

3.2. Data Analysis

In this section, the findings obtained from the analysis of both instruments which are the teachers' questionnaire and the interview will be interpreted to have a clear perception of Algerian EFL middle school teachers' attitudes toward the integration of the gamification strategy in their practice mainly during tutorial sessions.

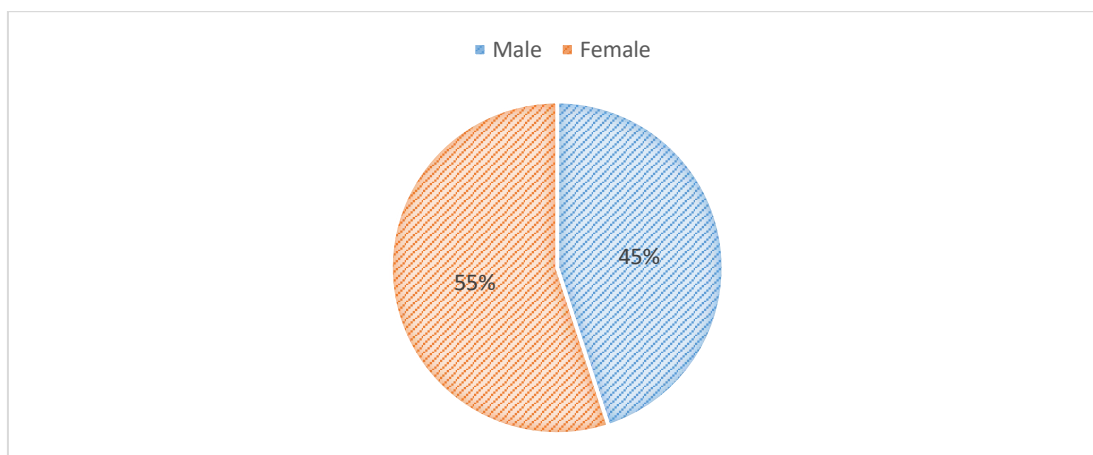
3.2.1 Teachers' Questionnaire

In this section, the researcher focuses on the detailed analysis of the information gathered from the questionnaire that was recovered from the target population to get accurate results. This is through the description and analysis of all the questions presented in the forms of tables, pie charts, and diagrams.

Section one: Demographics

Question one: Teachers' gender

The pie chart below reveals that the vast majority of questioned teachers were female teachers, representing a number of 22 (55%) out of 40. However, the male teachers were about 18 representing a percentage of (45%).



Pie chart 3.1 Teachers' gender

Section two: Concept awareness and implementation

Question one: Are you familiar with the concept of gamification in education?

According to the table below the vast majority of teachers representing a number of 38 (95%) confirmed that they are familiar with the concept of Gamification in the educational field mainly in teaching EFL. By contrast, just 2 (5%) out of 40 teachers revealed their ignorance about the subject matter.

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	38	95%
No	2	5%
Total	40	100%

Table 3.1 *Teachers' familiarity with the concept of gamification*

Question two: Have you ever implemented gamification techniques in your practices?

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	22	56.4%
No	17	43.6%
Total	39	97.5%

Table 3.2 *The implementation of gamification techniques in the classroom*

As the table shows 22 out of 40 teachers with a percentage of 56.4% admitted that they have implemented the gamification techniques in teaching EFL Yet 17 out of 40 representing a considerable percentage of 43.6% disclosed that they have never used it in their practice.

Question three: Do you feel comfortable while integrating game techniques into your practice?

The goal behind this question was to know if EFL teachers feel comfortable while integrating gamification as a novel tactic as well as their proficiency in using its different techniques in the classroom. Thus measuring its success in delivering lessons. The table below shows that 18 (46.2%) of teachers confirmed the former statement, on the other hand, 21 (53.8%) confirmed the opposite mentioning that one of the participants did not answer the question.

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	18	46.2%
No	21	53.8%
Total	39	97.5%

Table 3.3 *Teachers' comfort and feeling towards integrating gamification in teaching*

Question four: Do you use gamification during tutorial sessions?

This question aims to investigate the fact of using gamification in Teaching EFL during tutorial sessions. Middle school EFL teachers are allowed more flexibility in planning and delivering TSs. As a result, it represents a great opportunity to discover and attempt novel ways in modern education. Thus, the table below demonstrates an equal response by the participants.

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	20	50%
No	20	50%
Total	40	100%

Table 3.4 *The implementation of gamification in tutorial sessions*

Question five: Do you use game platforms like Duolingo in teaching tutorial sessions?

This question seeks to figure out whether teachers use online game platforms as one of the gamification techniques in delivering TSs or not. As it is shown in the table below only 7 (17.9%) replied positively whereas 32 (82.1%) admitted that they do not use online platforms mentioning that one participant did not answer the question.

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	7	17.9%
No	32	82.1%
Total	39	97.5%

Table 3.5 *The use of online game platforms in tutorial sessions*

Question six: If yes, would you name other platforms that you currently use?

The current question was intended for teachers who have given a positive answer. It aims at exploring teachers' use of online learning game platforms. The following answers were delivered by the teachers

- ABCya.com
- gamestolearnenglish.com - learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org
- gamestolearn english.com
- Simon says, Pictionary...
- ESL strategies
- Hangman

Question seven: Do you think that game elements like points and badges are more motivating for learners?

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	19	47.5%
No	21	52.5%
Total	40	100%

Table 3.6 *Teachers' opinion about the use of game elements to increase motivation*

The table above reveals teachers' views on using game elements like points and badges to stimulate students' motivation. In other words, the impact of game elements on learners' drive to learn EFL. Hence, 21 (52.5%) teachers replied negatively whereas 19 (47.5%) confirmed that the use of game elements increases learners' motivation.

Question eight: If yes, would you name other elements that you frequently use?

The purpose of this inquiry was to identify other game elements that EFL teachers frequently use while integrating gamification into their practice.

The following suggestions were given:

- trophies and prizes
- I put them in groups (usually 5 or 6), the first and second groups are awarded extra grades in their evaluation mark
- Trophies and rewards
- points that are converted into extra grades
- Flashcards
- Songs, dialogues, realia, flashcards, and data show

- Passwords
- Puzzle

Section three: Attitudes toward using gamification in tutorial sessions

Please rate your agreement with the following statement regarding the use of Gamification on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 =agree, 5 = strongly agree)

Statement one: Using Gamification in EFL teaching is more effective than traditional ones.

The figure above describes the different attitudes of teachers towards the effectiveness of using gamification in teaching EFL as a new technique comparing it with traditional methods of teaching. The vast majority agree and strongly agree on the fact that it is indeed effective representing more than 50%. This implies that the teachers are ready to adopt new ways of teaching. However, 2 (5%) teachers strongly disagree along with 5(17.5%) who claimed that it is less effective than the used methods in EFL teaching which probably indicates either a lack of ICT materials and skills or a failure in managing the process of gamification techniques among students. Besides, 8 (20%) of teachers remained neutral.

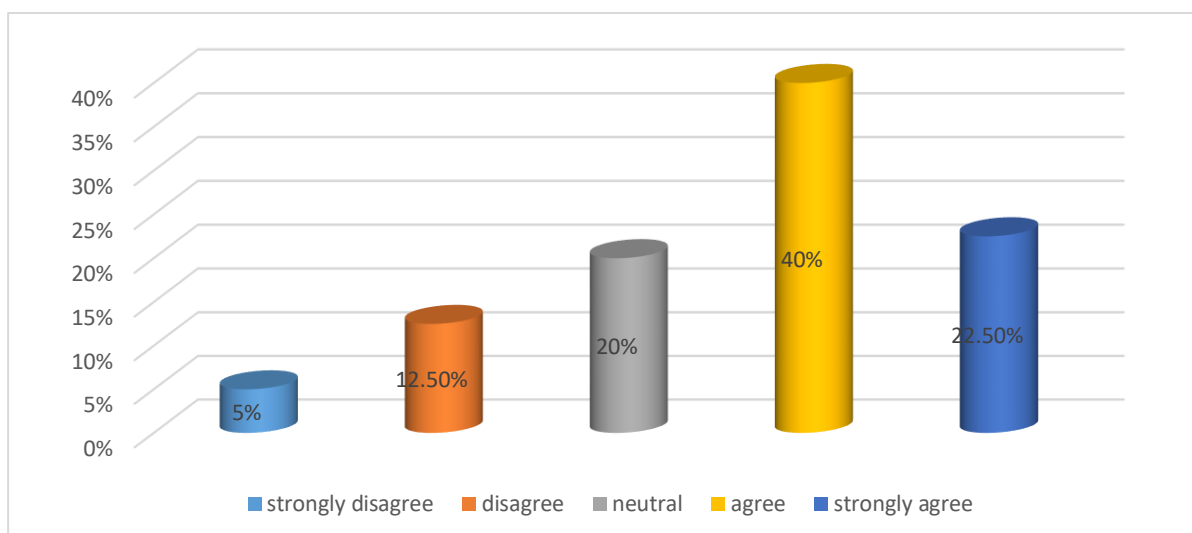


Figure 3.1 Teachers' opinion about the use of gamification as a new strategy

Statement two: Using Gamification in tutorial sessions is more manageable than in-class sessions.

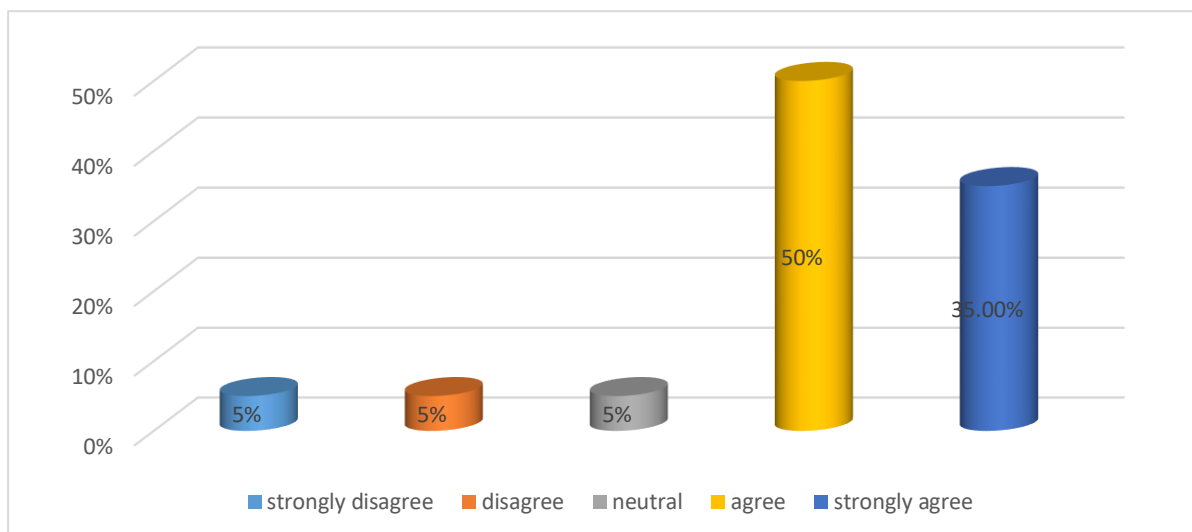


Figure 3.2 Teachers' attitude towards the use of gamification in tutorial sessions

The figure above clearly reveals that the implementation of the gamification techniques in teaching EFL is easy to manage and control when used in TSs since the class is divided into 2 groups. 50% of teachers agree and 35% strongly agree on it. This denotes that crowded classrooms prevent teachers from trying to update their practices. Yet, only 15% is equally divided on the other options.

Statement three: Using gamification strategies increases learners' engagement and retention.

The graph below indicates the opinions of teachers towards the positive use of gamification strategies and their constructive influence on engaging learners in the instructional process and optimizing their retention regarding language points mainly vocabulary and grammar tools. Hence, 46.20% of teachers show a positive attitude along with 30.80% who strongly confirm the former statement. Nevertheless, a minority of 7 teachers out of 40 confirm their negative opinion which probably implies their inflexibility while teaching. On the other hand, 2 teachers stayed discrete.

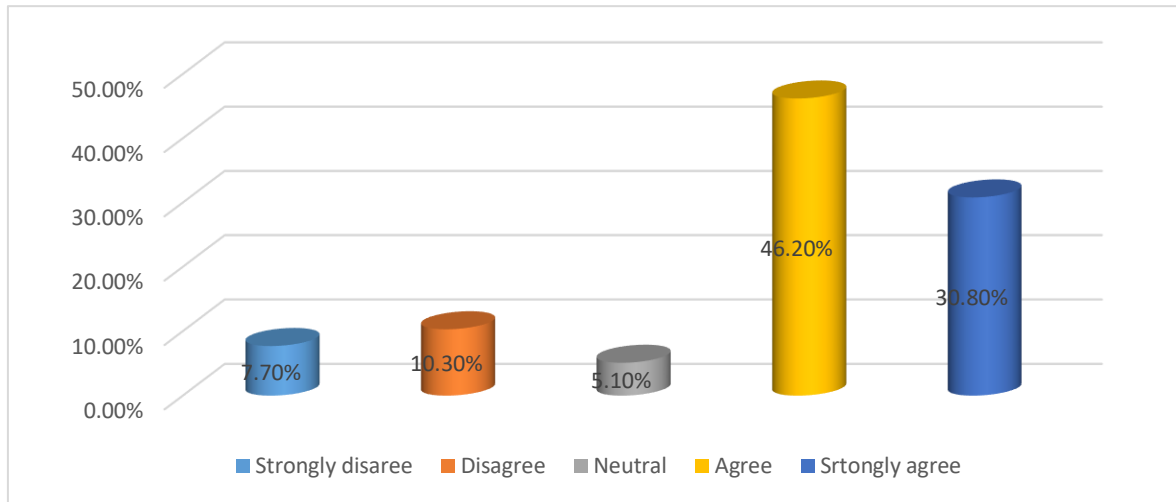


Figure 3.3 The impact of gamification on increasing learners' engagement and retention

Statement four: Playing while learning boosts students' motivation and reduces anxiety.

The following graph proves teachers' positive agreement on the fact that fun learning promotes learners' motivation and decreases their feelings of stress and anxiety, thus increasing their self-esteem. More than 70% of teachers highly agree with the former claim. On the contrary 20% of them disagree and strongly disagree and that is probably because of the challenging game, yet it is up to teachers to provide a safe environment for learning. Besides 5% remain neutral.

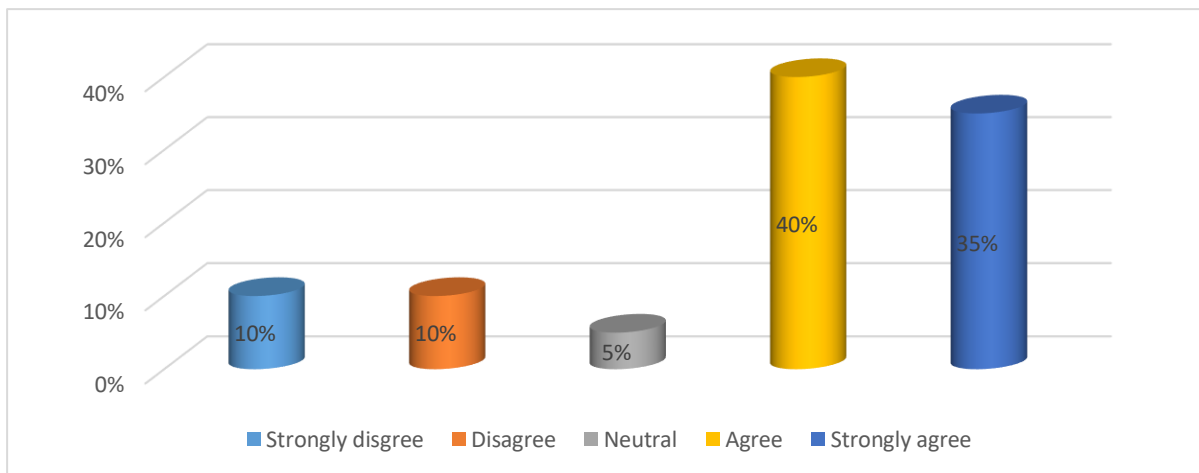


Figure 3.4 The impact of gamification on boosting motivation and reducing anxiety

Statement five: Playing while learning installs and develops students' learning skills like critical thinking.

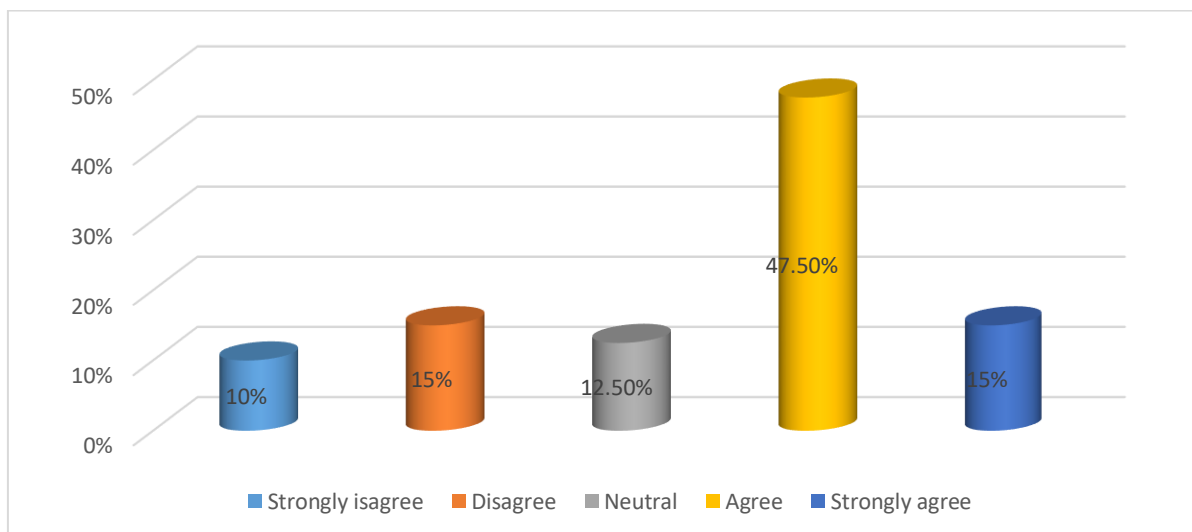


Figure 3.5 The impact of gamification on developing the learning skills

The figure above shows teachers' views about the impact of integrating gamification while learning on learners' learning skills mainly 21st century skills. The vast majority representing 47.5% along with 15% highly confirm the statement. This means that the fact of putting learners in a purposeful and challenging learning situation yet fun at the same time promotes their learning skills. On the other hand, 20% of teachers claim the contrary, implying that playing while learning distracts learners' focus on learning. 5 teachers representing 12.5% kept a neutral opinion.

Statement six: Playing while learning encourages collaboration and immediate feedback.

According to the graph below the majority of teachers representing 37.5% show an affirmative attitude along with 35% who strongly approve of the fact that gamification buoys up collaborative work among learners as well as encourages them to interact and share their feedback with their classmates and teacher. Nonetheless, 7.5% completely disagree besides 17.5% disapprove of the former statement probably because collaborative work may hinder slow learners' process of understanding, therefore teachers should highly considerate individual differences while assigning learning groups.

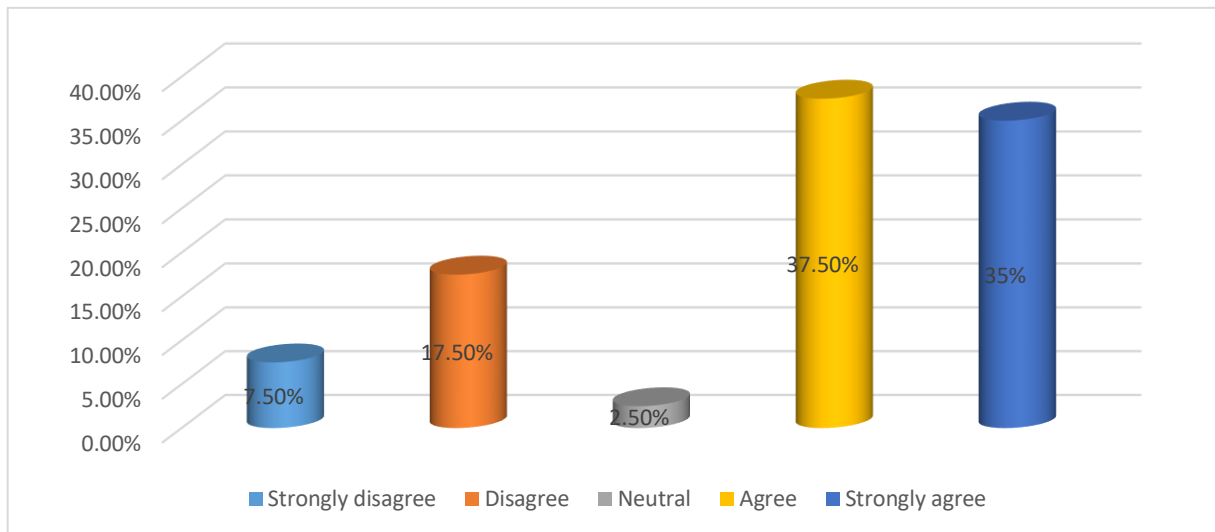


Figure 3.6 The impact of gamification on promoting group work and constructive feedback

Statement seven: Playing while learning helps the students meet the lessons' objectives smoothly.

According to the demonstrating figure below, teachers who agree on the fact that using gamification technique helps learners achieve the lessons' learning objectives easily are presenting a percentage of 45% in addition to 25% who strongly confirm it. In other words, making learners concentrate on winning a game enhances their understanding and prevents them from falling into ambiguity and confusion of language points. Even so, 10 teachers prove the contrary probably because they believe that playing while learning distracts students from the process of learning.

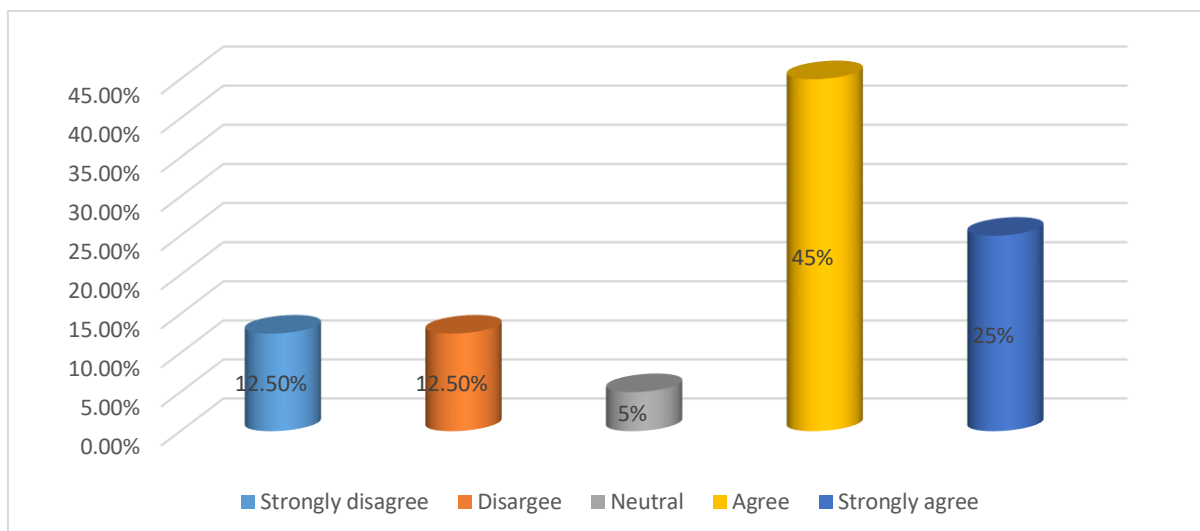


Figure 3.7 The impact of gamification on facilitating the achievement of the lessons' objectives

Statement eight: Using Game techniques facilitates the measurement of learners' learning outcomes.

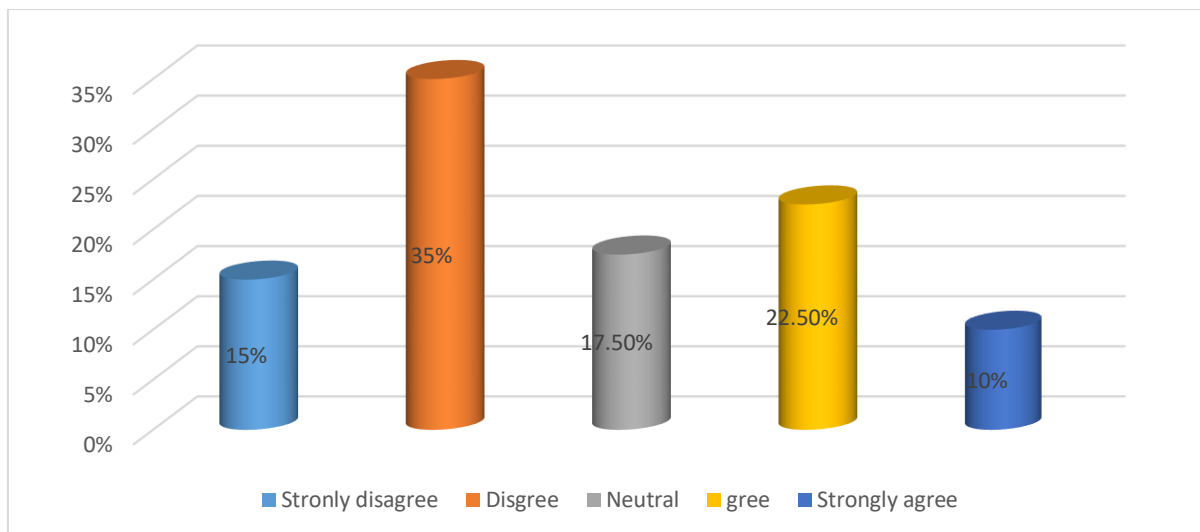


Figure 3.8 The impact of gamification on the learning outcomes

The graph above points out the teachers' insights on using gamification to measure learners' learning outcomes. Unlike the previous statements, the vast majority stand on a negative affirmation representing 35% along with 15% who entirely disagree on this fact. This implies that teachers approve of the individual written measurement of students' knowledge formally. Nevertheless, 13 out of 40 teachers agree and highly confirm the statement probably because they believe that learners may have better outcomes when the anxiety caused by the traditional ways of assessment is reduced. Moreover, 7 (17.5%) of teachers kept a neutral opinion probably because of a narrow experience regarding the subject matter.

Statement nine: Mastering ICTs and technical skills by teachers and students is crucial for integrating gamification effectively in the classroom.

The attitudes of teachers towards the importance of mastering ICT materials along with technical skills are demonstrated in the next figure. It is predictable that the vast majority highly approve of this matter since the implementation of the concept of gamification in education requires the use of technological tools. Hence, 47.5% of teachers strongly agree on this fact while 32.5% also agree. On the other hand, 5 teachers disapprove of it, which may imply that they favour the traditional methods of games in the classroom. 3 teachers kept a neutral opinion which may imply that they are not familiar with the modern concept of gamification in education.

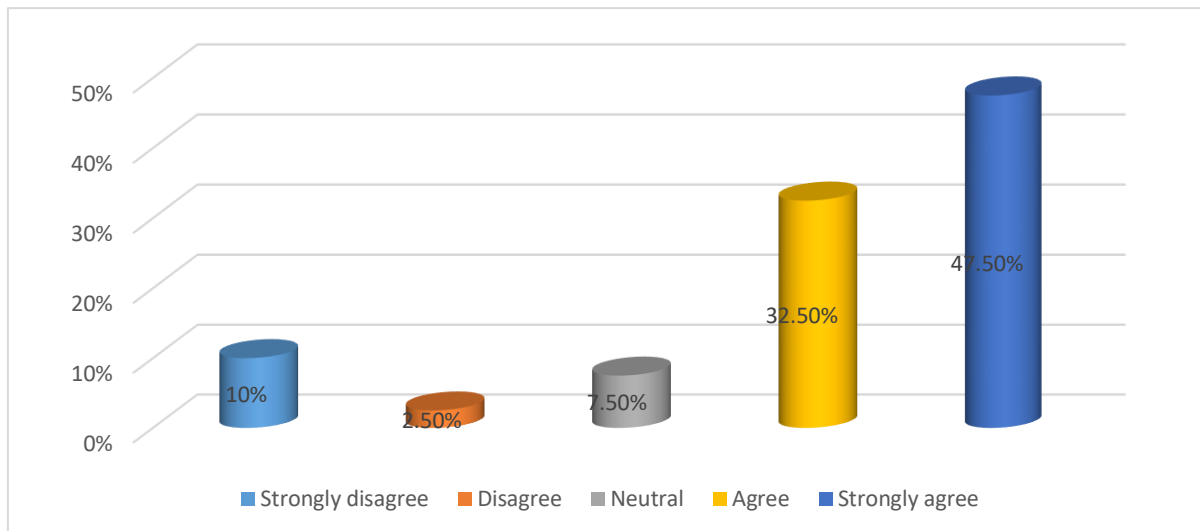
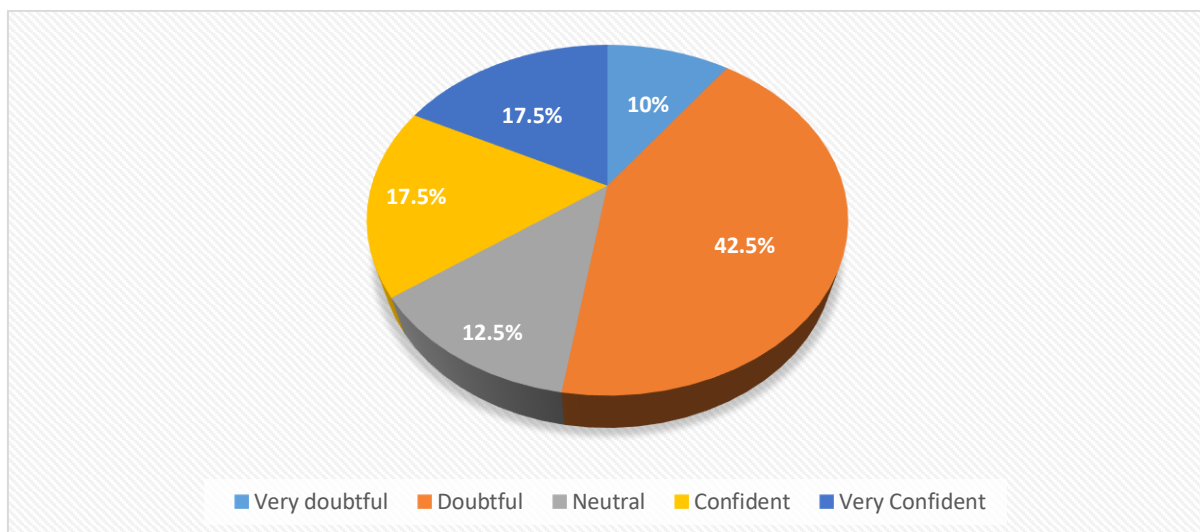


Figure 3.9 The impact of ICT materials on the use of gamification

Section four: Intention and behaviour

Please rate your opinion on the following statement regarding the use of Gamification on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very doubtful, 2 = doubtful, 3 = neutral, 4 = confident, 5 = very confident)

Question one: To what extent do you believe that the use of Gamification in teaching EFL will become an essential part of your professional workflow in the future?

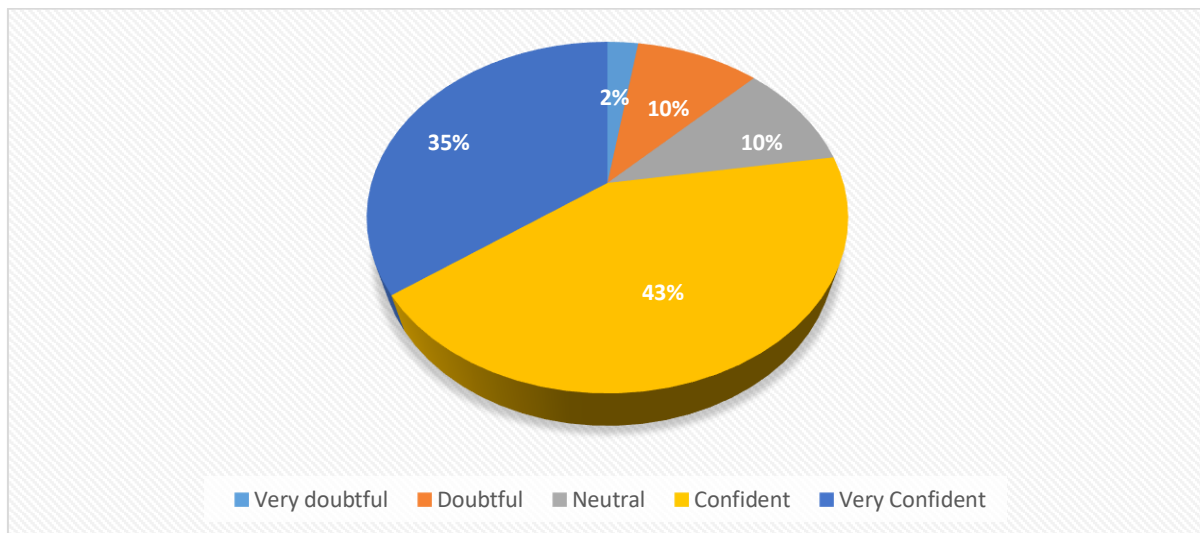


Pie chart 3.2 Teachers' Confidence in adopting gamification in their future practice

The pie chart above depicts teachers' future intentions in adopting gamification in teaching EFL mainly in TSs. It is clearly portrayed that more than 50% of the informants are not confident about it, since 17 (42.5%) claim that they are doubtful in addition 4(10%) confirm their total doubtfulness. This indicates that teachers may need specific training about the use of gamification in education as well

as a significant lack of ICT materials provision. On the other hand, 14 teachers confirm their confidence, which may imply that they promote their professional development individually moreover they either afford their own ICT material or unlike the majority of schools, their school administrations cover it. Whereas, 5 teachers kept a neutral opinion.

Question two: How confident are you in your ability to use ICT materials?

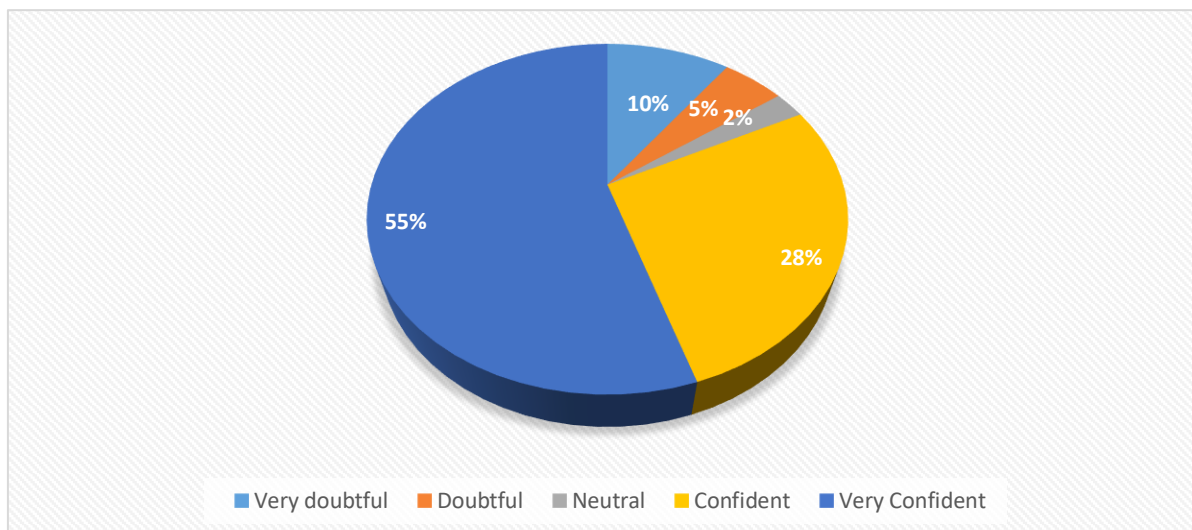


Pie chart 3.3 Teachers' Confidence in their ICT skills

The thirteenth question aims to show the teachers' opinions about their confidence in their ability to use ICT materials. Referring to the pie chart above the vast majority representing 43% of informants are confident besides 35% who are very confident about their skills in using ICTs in the classroom. Conversely, a minority of 12% represent teachers who are not sure about their capability to master the use of technological tools. Yet, 10% remained discrete.

Question three: Would you attend workshops or professional development sessions focused on implementing gamification in EFL teaching?

The objective of the final question is to anticipate teachers' attitudes and intentions about adopting gamification in their practices by measuring their readiness to attend training sessions about it. The pie chart below evidently proves that a wide portion representing 55% strongly assert their confidence along with 28% who are confident. This explains that teachers are ready to adopt new and modern teaching methods yet they require professional support. On the contrary, just 15% claim to be unconfident which may suggest either that they do not need further help or they are not interested in adopting gamification as a novel teaching technique.



Pie chart 3.4 Teachers' intentions on attending training sessions

3.2.2 Teachers' Interview

Question one: What is your opinion about the use of gamification as a modern teaching strategy in teaching EFL?

Teaching EFL requires new methods and creativity to keep the classroom alive and increase learners' enthusiasm, this is what all five interviewees emphasized. They approved that the use of modern educational methods specifically gamification in teaching EFL in middle school is a useful and successful way that helps in engaging learners and boosting their motivation because it breaks the classroom routine and provides amusement while learning, therefore it reduces stress and anxiety. Teacher A described learners' behaviour when playing while learning as active, eager to know and learn different language points, they even ask for these kinds of lessons, and tasks for the coming lessons.

Question two: Have you ever implemented gamification techniques in tutorial sessions? If yes, would you please describe your experience?

The participants confirmed that they have used some of the gamification techniques to perform some lessons during whole-class lessons and tutorial sessions. However, its implementation in tutorial sessions was more effective for several reasons, mainly easy class management as well as the lessons being devoted to practicing the language and not delivering lessons. They described their experiences as follows:

- Teachers A, B, and D said that they have frequently used the platform gamestolearnenglish.com in tutorial sessions to practice vocabulary because it

is easy to use particularly for the first and second years. Learners were excited and fully engaged in the tasks, they enjoyed the process of the game and every learner had the chance to speak.

- Teacher C said that using Quizizz.com with the fourth-year pupils has been very effective in improving their performances “*They started being more active and less stressed*”
- Teacher E highlighted the importance of role-play to practice conversational English based on the correct use of specific language points like grammar. Learners choose the topic to prepare and they can take different personalities. Setting rewards and points kept learners engaged and motivated to correct their mistakes and reach a better outcome.

Question three: What do you perceive as the potential benefits of using gamification in performing tutorial sessions?

Teachers' answers were almost focused on engagement, motivation, and enjoyment while learning. They affirmed that the use of gamification during tutorials allows learners to explore their knowledge and put it into practice either individually or collaboratively. Furthermore, the gamification techniques facilitate the process of facing difficulties faced by learners during full class sessions, since teachers may adjust the lesson to support them and maximize the effectiveness of the practice. Teachers A and B said that considering the public schools' circumstances (crowded classrooms, loaded curriculum, deficiency in ICT material, prohibition of using smartphones or tablets), the strategy can be used sometimes during tutorial sessions with a great effort provided by teachers.

Question four: How do you believe gamification can promote learners' engagement and motivation?

Teachers highlighted the huge interest of the 21st-century generation in the world of digital games, they argued that learners show more interest when playing traditional games in the class. As a result, if digital games are integrated into teaching EFL, it will hook learner's attention and engage them in the process of learning. Moreover, gamification increases both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, since it incorporates fun learning, and game elements like points and rewards, as well as promoting social interaction. Teacher D said that it would be a career-changing strategy for EFL teachers.

Question five: Conversely, what are the challenges do you foresee when using gamification?

The interviewees basically shared similar attitudes toward the challenges that may hinder the process of implementing gamification in EFL classrooms. The first

point is the fact of changing the whole procedural process to a new method that requires training and practice. Moreover, the provision of ICT material, they explained that during their experiences they used a computer and a data projector to introduce the game to learners which means that they have not gamified their classrooms. In addition, it can be time-consuming and cause distraction if not used professionally especially in overcrowded classrooms. Furthermore, it requires a good lesson plan to fit the learners' interests as well as preparing the learners for this new experience primarily explaining the rules and the process of the game to meet the objectives of the lesson. Teacher C mentioned having an experience in a private school where students are allowed to use their smartphones under the guidance of the teacher, arguing that it necessitates a small group of learners to facilitate the monitoring of the lesson also avoid chaos and noise in order to attain positive outcomes.

3.3. Discussion and Interpretation of the Findings

Attitude refers to an individual's evaluation and its influence on an intended behaviour. As it affects a person's intentions to implement a certain action founded on their profoundly alleged beliefs, attitude therefore is considered a crucial metric (Alshaya, 2020). As mentioned in the introduction, this research paper aims to explore the attitudes of Algerian EFL middle school teachers from Saida towards the use of gamification as a novel teaching strategy in their practices mainly in performing tutorial sessions. The implementation of modern EFL teaching methods is neither a quick nor an easy task for most teachers, however, their continuous professional development is reinforced by their readiness to renovate their approaches to teaching in delivering knowledge to their learners (Boudour, 2023). Henceforth, some teachers endeavour and challenge themselves to adopt and implement new innovative methods to revitalize their classrooms and attract learners' attention to promote their engagement and boost their motivation hence reducing stress and anxiety.

3.3.1 Teachers' Questionnaire

the findings proved that the majority of teachers representing 95% of the sample population are aware of the concept of gamification in education, yet this parentage started to narrow down when tackling its actual implementation. Teachers implements some techniques of gamification and not the whole mechanism. This is due to several matters most significantly the shortage of electronic hardware in schools besides a lack of proficiency by some teachers and learners. Moreover, class management and the successful allocation of time could be challenging and represent an important obstacle for teachers to gamify their lessons. On the other hand, a minority of 8 teachers confirmed the usefulness of online platforms such as

gamestolearnenlish.com and showed a positive attitude towards using game elements like points and rewards in promoting students' motivation.

Indeed, shifting from familiar to newer methods of teaching requires solid skills. yet, a large portion of teachers held a positive attitude towards the integration of gamified instructions, since more than 50% agreed on its effectiveness. In addition, most teachers positively perceive that the integration of gamified techniques is more manageable in tutorial sessions than in full-class ones. Furthermore, the majority of teachers agreed on the fact that playing while learning boosts students' motivation and reduces anxiety hence it increases their engagement and retention. Moreover, it installs and develops 21st-century skills amongst 21st-century learners such as critical thinking and collaborative work which encourages constructive feedback. Therefore, support them to successfully reach the lessons' objectives. Additionally, teachers strongly insisted on mastering technological tools to achieve an effective implementation of gamification. Nevertheless, measuring its impact on learning outcomes requires real use and further research.

Finally, according to the last section of the questionnaire, the majority of teachers showed little intention of adopting gamification techniques in their future conduct despite the positive attitudes that were depicted in the second section. Even though they revealed a strong confidence in their abilities in integrating it along with their proficiency in using ICT materials which explains their strong will to attend specific training to develop their competencies and master designing lessons based on gamification. Eventually, a well-prepared teacher equipped with the necessary skills reduces the obstacles and hindrances endured during the instructional process thus facilitating the flow of the lesson and helping teachers identify the impact of gamification on the learning outcomes.

3.3.2 Teachers' interview

From the results of the teachers' interview, it is noticed that teachers perceive gamification as a great step for the improvement of EFL teaching in Algerian middle schools. According to their experiences, they highlighted its major impact on increasing the engagement and motivation of the pupils, specifically the elements of gamification, as well as installing a safe environment that promotes the learning process and strengthens social interaction subsequently maintaining the good flow of the language practice and supporting learners to obtain positive outcomes if used professionally and appropriately since it involves technological tools, digital games and internet.

Nonetheless, besides its benefits and usefulness, different challenges encounter its use. Participants find difficulties in gamifying their lessons. Firstly, on

the technical level, teachers need training to master the use of this novel strategy. Secondly, Algerian public schools have a common problem which is overcrowded classrooms. Consequently, it is advised to implement gamification during tutorial sessions if possible. Thirdly, the availability of ICT material presents a major obstacle for teachers since they have to rely on their own resources. Fourthly, the process of gamifying the lessons can be time consuming if the learners do not understand the rules, principles and the purpose of games thus it may turn into a destruction rather than enjoyment. As a result, the teacher may find challenges in managing the class and delivering the lesson suitably.

3.4. Conclusion

The last chapter of the dissertation was devoted to the analysis of the data collected from the teachers' questionnaire and interview as well as the discussion of the findings. Undeniably tangible results were achieved. The outcomes portrayed that EFL middle school teachers are aware of and asserted a positive attitude towards the use of gamification as a modern teaching technique specifically in tutorial sessions. Besides, they perceive it as a useful strategy to promote EFL learning and teaching. Henceforth, they confirmed their readiness to attend training sessions to support their skills and improve their competencies on the subject matter.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Overall, teachers' eagerness to integrate gamification into their instructive settings is a favourable indication of the improvement of future EFL teaching. Since gamification represents a ground-breaking teaching strategy, it can lift the process of EFL teaching and learning to excellence. Moreover, gamifying EFL classrooms has a positive impact on attracting the learners' minds and engaging them in the process of learning for a long period as it sets long-term goals. However, the gamification elements are provided and given immediately by teachers by receiving the learners' feedback which has a prominent positive effect in stimulating and increasing their motivation intrinsically and extrinsically.

Furthermore, the use of games provides a learning environment that interests the 21st-century learner hence it breaks the routine and boredom as well as decreases the stress and anxiety while learning. Additionally, playing while learning involves students in a joyful yet productive and experiential experience whether individually or collaboratively in games where they share the same goals to achieve, therefore it helps learners to integrate smoothly in social relations specifically introverted ones under the guidance of their teachers.

The use of games in teaching is not a new tactic, it is approved that it has a vital impact on learners. Thus, this research work reveals that Algerian middle school teachers in Saida City demonstrate positive attitudes toward the integration of the gamification strategy in their practices more than traditional ones; mainly in tutorial sessions since it is easier to manage the groups. In addition to the constructive use of gamification in teaching EFL, teachers perceive it as a beneficial strategy that suits the learners learning interests and helps to achieve the lessons' objectives smoothly. However, the working circumstances represent a critical obstacle to the process of its integration in schools.

Even though, the Algerian educational system allows EFL teachers to adopt and adapt different procedures in their classrooms. Yet schools do not provide the necessary material to smooth the workflow, unlike private schools which are gaining much attention because they opt for the integration of technology to attract the learners'/parent's interests and facilitate the teaching progress as well as divide

General Conclusion

learners into small groups to simplify the assessment of the acquired knowledge and obtain better outcomes.

To develop the present research, the researcher suggested two hypotheses. The first one proposed that Algerian EFL middle school teachers might demonstrate positive attitudes regarding the use of gamification in their practice mainly during tutorial sessions. The second one advocated that Algerian EFL middle school teachers seem to recognize the effective use of gamification in teaching and learning EFL. Based on arguments and proof that was gained in this study work, it is found that the current research proved all the suggested hypotheses.

In light of the findings of the current research, the researcher provides some recommendations to suggest a proposal for the best course of action towards the raised as follows:

✓ *Improving their working skills*

Teachers should give major importance to continuous professional development and avoid falling into a routine and getting used to familiarity to modernize their background knowledge and strive for excellence.

✓ *Making action research*

Teachers should challenge themselves by bridging the gap between their actual knowledge and real practice in the field to reach effective learning strategies and improve not only their performances but also their learning outcomes.

✓ *Working collaboratively*

Teachers should share their knowledge with their colleagues and ask for assistance if needed. This greatly helps to increase their improvement and reduce falling into unwanted situations.

This study can pave the way to other studies related to the field of TEFL like “Exploring EFL students’ attitudes toward learning through gamification” and a comparative study “Investigating the differences of implementing the gamification

General Conclusion

strategy in public and private schools”. These topics could provide a starting point for a dissertation on the role of adopting a novel teaching tactic in teaching and learning EFL and could be modified to fit the interests and research objectives of the author.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

We appreciate your willingness to participate in this survey, which aims to explore and understand your attitudes towards the use of Gamification in education specifically in tutorial sessions. Your valuable insights will contribute to our understanding of the impact of the variety of teaching methods and its role of promoting the learning process.

Section one: Demographics

1.1 Gender: male female

Section two: Concept awareness

2.1 Are you familiar with the concept of gamification in education?

Yes No

2.2 Have you ever implemented gamification techniques in your practices?

Yes No

2.3 Do you feel comfortable while integrating game techniques in your practice?

Yes No

2.4 Do you use gamification during tutorial sessions?

Yes No

2.5 Do you use game platforms like Duolingo in teaching tutorial sessions?

Yes No

If yes, name others:

2.6 Do you think that game elements like points and badges are more motivating for learners?

Yes No

If yes, name other elements that you frequently use:

.....

Section three: Attitudes towards using gamification in tutorial sessions

Please rate your agreement with the following statement regarding the use of Gamification on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 =agree, 5 = strongly agree)

3.1 Using the Gamification method in EFL teaching is more effective than traditional ones.

1 2 3 4 5

3.2 Using Gamification in tutorial sessions is more manageable than in class sessions.

1 2 3 4 5

3.3 Using gamification strategies increases learners' engagement and retention.

1 2 3 4 5

3.4 Playing while learning boosts students' motivation and reduces anxiety.

1 2 3 4 5

3.5 Playing while learning installs and develops student's learning skills like critical thinking.

1 2 3 4 5

3.6 Playing while learning encourages collaboration and immediate feedback.

1 2 3 4 5

3.7 Playing while learning helps the students' meet the lessons' objectives smoothly.

1 2 3 4 5

3.8 Using Game techniques facilitates the measurement of learners' learning outcomes.

1 2 3 4 5

3.9 Mastering ICT's and technical skills by teachers and students is crucial for integrating gamification effectively in the classroom.

1 2 3 4 5

Section four: Intention and behaviour

Please rate your opinion on the following statement regarding the use of Gamification on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very doubtful, 2 = doubtful, 3 = neutral, 4 = confident, 5 = very confident)

4.1 To what extent do you believe that the use of Gamification in teaching EFL will become an essential part of your professional workflow in the future?

1 2 3 4 5

4.2 How confident are you in your ability to use ICT materials?

1 2 3 4 5

4.3 Would you attend workshops or professional development sessions focused on implementing gamification in EFL teaching?

1 2 3 4 5

Thank You

Appendix B

Teachers' interview:

- 1- What is your opinion about the use of gamification as a modern teaching method in teaching EFL?
- 2- Have you ever implemented gamification techniques in tutorial sessions?
If yes, would you please describe your experience?
- 3- What do you perceive as the potential benefits of using gamification in performing tutorial sessions?
- 4- How do you believe gamification can promote learners' engagement and motivation?
- 5- Conversely, what are the challenges do you foresee when using gamification?