

## Chapter 25

# Gamification, Learning, and the Acquisition of 21st Century Skills Amongst Malaysian Law Students

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The diversification of pedagogic tools remains essential for a fruitful learning experience among the Gen Z students by embedding technology such as gamification in learning. Recent literature has discussed the acquisition of 21st century skills and the educational challenges generally faced by Asian students due to their cultural traits. Against this background, the findings of this study open reflections relating to the benefit of gamification in acquiring 21st century skills. The objective of this chapter is to identify whether gamification is a suitable pedagogic tool among Malaysian law students in order to support the acquisition of 21st century skills. The respondents are from Year 1 and Year 2 of a three-year Bachelor of Laws degree with the majority being Malaysian students. The data collected showed that gamification helps in the acquisition of 21st century skills. Evidently, it showed that gamification can be a suitable alternative pedagogic tool to support the students to learn skills such as critical thinking, creativity, innovation, leadership, or communication.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background of the Study**

Undeniably, the shift from traditional pedagogies to e-pedagogies was necessary to ensure the continuity of learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Gamification, as an alternative teaching tool, is not new and has been gaining particular attention in the past decade in the field of education (Hallifax et al., 2019; Majuri et al., 2018). Furthermore, gamification as a pedagogic tool had shown its potential in enabling students gain affective and cognitive skills as well as impacting performances, attitudes and behaviors (Majuri et al., 2018; Manzano-León, 2021; Mohamad et al., 2021; Lane, 2021; Sailer & Homner, 2020; Turner et al., 2019). Alongside with other disciplines and in order to answer employment and societal paradigm shifts, education providers moved towards 21st century skills development with an emerging need for digital skills (Latorre-Coscolluela et al., 2020; Van Laar et al., 2020).

Law schools are renowned for developing graduates with ethics, critical thinking, negotiation argumentation, leadership, problem solving and research skills (Giddings & Weinberg, 2020; Kathrani, 2020). However, content and organization of the profession evolve and change rapidly impacting the preparedness and acclimatizing of the students to the modern functions of the profession (Giddings & Weinberg, 2020). Consequently, education providers need to look at pedagogic approaches which allow for more experientiality and immersion during the learning process.

In Malaysia, there are approximately 20 universities and colleges offering law programmes and there are concerns whether legal education offered at higher learning institutes are in line with the 4th Industrial Revolution to reflect the demands of the 21st century skills (Amirnuddin et al., 2020). This study directs the focus on law education and students from a private university in Malaysia studying Bachelor of Laws programme. Recognized by the Legal Profession Qualifying Board, Malaysia, the Bachelor of Laws programme enables the students to become inter alia, but not limited to, advocate and solicitor, legal advisor, legal writer, legal scholar, forensic or criminal investigator. During the three years of studies, the students would need to pass all 21 core modules and 5 elective modules, and undergo a 6-week internship to enable them to fulfil the required programme learning objectives. In addition, the programme had been designed to develop and assess key capabilities during the studies with an emphasis on discipline specific knowledge, problem solving, critical and creative thinking, communication, lifelong learning, personal and social competencies, entrepreneurialism and global perspective. The pedagogies employed vary from authentic to blended approaches and the Bachelor of Laws programme introduced gamification since 2019.

### **Problem Statement and Aim of the Study**

Previous teaching methods on various law modules centered around the teacher-centric approach, where students were taught via lecture sessions, watching videos, listening to presentations by guest speakers and answering quizzes. The emphasis placed by the lecturer was on providing information to students during lectures and ensuring this information was understood by way of student participation and answering of questions in the tutorials. Although student performance on the module was 'good', with student satisfaction levels ranging from 'good' to 'very good', it was observed by staff teaching those students in Year 2 that the academic skills set would have further improved, particularly with regard

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