Sustainability Study Process Gamification: Review of Best Practices, Challenges and Benefits in a Digital Era

Māris Purviņš[1], Dzintra Atstāja[1,2]*, & Natālija Cudečka-Puriņa[1]

[1]*BA School of Business and Finance, LV-1013 Riga, Latvia*
[2]*Riga Stradins university*

*Corresponding author: Dzintra Atstāja, BA School of Business and Finance, LV-1013 Riga, Latvia and Riga Stradins university.

Abstract
The idea of making learning enjoyable using games, GBL, encourages students to think out of the box, work with others and oversee individual learning. This paper investigates GBL by explaining its theoretical framework and explaining the advantages while putting into perspective the practice issues such as lack of sufficient resources and hostility towards change. This segment provides evidence of two educational games that were adapted digitally. The Circular Economy game which is an offshoot of the Quadruple Helix Concept project allows students to use games and artificial intelligence to test business sustainability ideas. The Fiftyville Investigation on the other hand exposes the students to a world of mysteries and helps them perform better in research as well as analysis and teamwork within a virtual space. These games are effective in stimulating GBL, the bridging of concepts and the application of knowledge, as well as the development of strong and deep learning which caters to students' diverse needs. And although there are obstacles, their use exemplifies the great potential of new strategies in promoting vibrant and comprehensive learning environments and training students to deal with complex problems of the world.

Keywords: Sustainability, Gamification, Educational Process, Business Practices, Environnement.

Introduction

The gamification of the educational process, by integrating game elements or specific games into the lectures has emerged as a significant trend in contemporary pedagogy, driven by the need to engage students in more engaging learning experiences. The gaming industry is constantly evolving. The variety of games offered within the market goes beyond the everyday level and moves into social, spiritual and artistic culture. Research across the world show that board games are used in the fields of pedagogy, psychology and social sciences [1, 2].

Game-based learning (GBL) has been well-seen as an effective tool to engage the students and boost their achievements across various educational contexts. Researches indicate that GBL has a significant correlation with improved learning outcomes compared to traditional instructional methods, as it creates an immersive environment that fosters real-time engagement and out-of-the-box thinking approach [3-5].

For instance, a study by Setyaningrum et al. demonstrated that students that apply GBLGBL strategies achieved higher academic performance than those relying solely on conventional textbooks [3]. This finding underscores the effectiveness of games in promoting deeper understanding and retention of knowledge [6]. In addition, GBL can provide added value also to qualitative education, which itself is one of the key contributors in achieving not only the goals of more qualitative and high level education, but also sustainability, which is becoming a crucial aspect for social, economic and environmental well-being in the upcoming future [7].

Moreover, the role of games in education extends beyond mere entertainment; they serve as powerful tools for developing essential skills such as problem-solving, collaboration, and creativity. Ali et al. highlighted the benefit of safe and controlled environment for learners, encouraging them to interact and engage with content in ways that traditional methods may not facilitate [8]. The use GBL can stimulate intrinsic motivation, prompting students to deep-dive in the learning process [4, 9]. Furthermore, the adaptability of games allows developing individual approach, catering to diverse learning techniques, which is particularly beneficial in heterogeneous classrooms [10, 11]. However, despite the promising benefits of gamification of the study process, several challenges persist.

The implementation of GBL is commonly hindered by a lack of resources, inadequate training for educators, and resistance from stakeholders who may not fully understand the pedagogical value of games [12-14]. For example, Hertati noted that many schools face infrastructural limitations that prevent the effective application of gamification practices [12].

Additionally, there is a need for a cohesive framework to evaluate the effectiveness of educational games, as the absence of standardized assessment methods complicates the measurement of their impact on learning outcomes [15, 16]. In summary, while gamification of the study process presents numerous advantages, including enhanced engagement and better outcomes knowledge- and comprehension-wise, it also poses significant challenges that must be addressed. Educators and policymakers must work collaboratively to overcome these barriers, ensuring that GBL can be effectively implemented in educational settings to maximize its potential benefits [17].

When initiating the research, the authors also assessed the previous studies performed on GBL and its integration into study processes. In order to undertake this assessment, the authors used VosViewer analytical tool which provided access to 1244 documents, which covered the timeframe from 2014 to 2025 and geography-wise covered entire World. The results that are available in the Fig. 1 are based on the initially pre-defined set of keywords that authors identified, and which are:

- Game-Based Learning,
- Educational Innovation,
- Digital Games in Education,
- Sustainability and Business Practices,
- Research Skill Development.

The authors also performed the key-word approbation within a group of local experts, involved in educational practices, and who apply GBL in their study-process. The VOSviewer tool's parameters were adjusted to group keywords into several clusters according to their connections with co-occurrence. As a result, the clusters depicted on the network maps from various years were compared and evaluated in relation to one another, demonstrating the significance of the study and potential future directions.
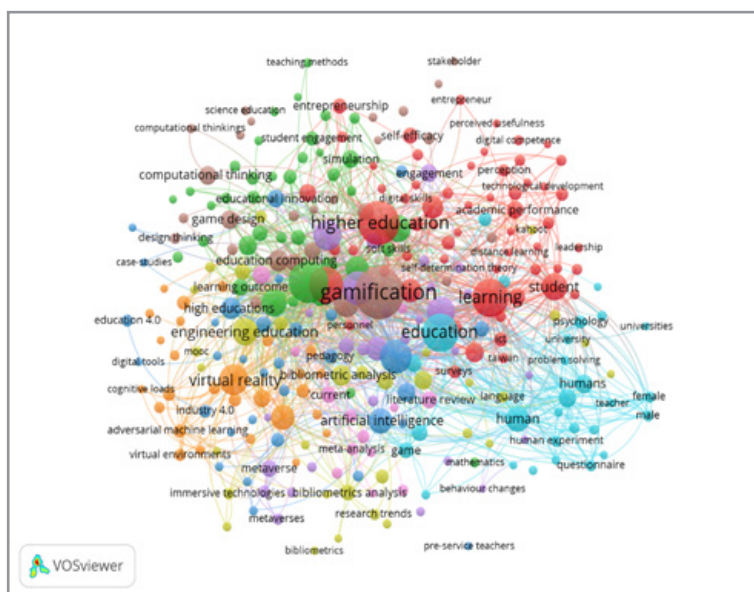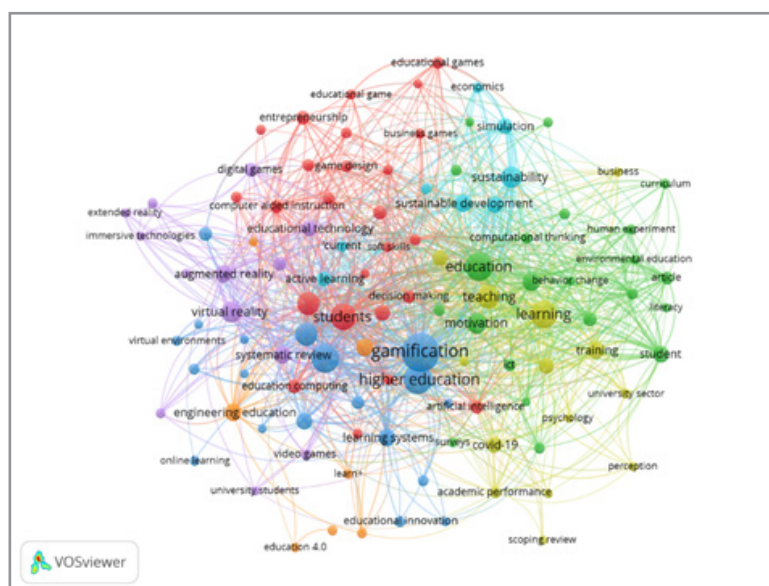

Figure 1: Key-word co-occurrence in the analysed papers in Global Landscape within last 10 years (developed by the authors via VosViewer)

The analysis of the Fig.1. performed by the researchers, identifies certain trends in previous researches by scientists focused on GBL and its associated keywords. The frequent emergence of keywords such as "Educational Innovation" and "Digital Games in Education" accentuates a growing global-wide interest in applying latest technological and AI solutions for learning practices. The frequency of "Sustainability and Business Practices" appearance highlights a certain multi-disciplinary trend. It can be assumed that GBL is being applied not solely for pedagogical practices, but also as an important and valuable tool to address a range of challenges, be it economic, societal or environmental. Moreover, the inclusion of "Research Skill Development" emphasises the role of GBL in providing the students with valuable analytical and critical-thinking skills. The high number of doc-

uments may indicate a robust and constantly increasing interest in these topics worldwide, which is a positive trend, showing that also the educational process is not stagnating, but tends to use state-of-the-art solutions to deliver knowledge and skills in the most accessible manner to the newer generations, that have different knowledge-capture possibilities.

When narrowing the research more to Europe, the authors were able to identify 450 research papers for the same time frame from 2015 to 2025. The results for this assessment are provided in Fig.2.

Figure 2: Key-word co-occurrence in the analysed papers published in Europe (developed by the authors via VosViewer)

The pattern revealed by Fig. 2, which focuses on 450 European research from 2015 to 2025, is similar yet provides a geographically varied trajectory. This significantly smaller dataset suggests that European research may be more concentrated or less productive, although the topics are still in line with global trends that have been identified in the Fig.1. Keywords such as "Game-based learning" and "Educational innovation" have high level of co-occurence, which might show that Europe is closely following developments in education around the world and is eager to be front-runner in application of novel and state-of-the-art solutions in the study processes. However, the concentration of smaller studies may also reflect the funding environment or regional policy agendas that influence scientific research on GBL. Together, these figures show a dynamic and cross-cutting research landscape, in which Europe reflects regional goals but also contributes to the global conversation. In summary, bibliometric analysis performed by the authors provides additional evidence of the consistent theoretical framework that links GBL, innovation in education and constant advancement of the research skills. This conclusion highlights the importance of constant innovation of the study processes as a significant number of researches emphasise also the differences between different generations and their cognitive abilities.

Types of Games Used in Education
Diversification of the study process, by adding GBL encompasses a diverse range of formats, each serving distinct pedagogical purposes. These games can be classified into several categories, including serious games, simulations, digital/online games, and board games. Each type offers unique advantages and applications in the learning process.

Serious Games
Serious games are designed primarily for educational purposes rather than entertainment. These types of games often include elements of gameplay to engage learners while delivering educational content. For instance, serious games can provide real-world scenarios to be simulated, allowing students to apply their knowledge in a controlled environment. Research indicates that serious games can significantly improve student's critical thinking and problem-solving capabilities [18, 19]. An example of a serious game is "Foldit," which allows players to contribute to scientific research by folding proteins, thereby teaching concepts in biology and chemistry while engaging them in a collaborative effort [18].

Simulation Games
Simulation games replicate real-world processes or systems, providing learners with hands-on experience in a risk-free and controlled environment. These games are particularly effective in fields such as medicine, engineering, and environmental science. For example, medical students often use simulation games to practice surgical procedures, which helps them develop practical skills without the consequences of real-life mistakes [20]. The "SimCity" series is another notable example, where players manage a city, learning about urban planning, resource management, and environmental sustainability [20].

Digital/Online Games

Digital games, including those played on computers, tablets, or smartphones, have gained immense popularity in education. This type of games in many cases involve interactive elements and multimedia content, which is considered to be attractive for the students. A study by Tevetoğlu highlighted the positive impact of gamification elements on students' listening skills and vocabulary acquisition in language learning contexts [21]. Popular examples include "Kahoot!" and "Quizlet," which facilitate interactive quizzes and flashcards, respectively, enhancing student participation and knowledge retention [21, 22].

Board Games

Board games have long been utilized as educational tools, promoting strategic thinking and collaboration among players. They can be adapted to teach various subjects, from mathematics to history. For instance, games like "Settlers of Catan" can facilitate comprehension of resource management and negotiation skills, while "Timeline" teaches historical events in a fun and engaging manner [23]. The tactile nature of board games also encourages face-to-face interaction, which can enhance social skills and teamwork among students [23].

Examples of Popular Educational Games

Several educational games have gained recognition for their effectiveness in various learning environments.

- **Minecraft:** Education Edition: This game allows students to explore, create, and collaborate in a virtual world. It has been used to teach subjects such as mathematics, science, and history by enabling students to build models and conduct experiments within the game [24].
- **Duolingo:** A digital language-learning platform that gamifies the process of learning new languages. Its use of rewards, levels, and interactive exercises keeps learners motivated and engaged [21].
- **Scratch:** An online platform that teaches programming concepts through game design. It allows students to create their own games, fostering creativity and computational thinking [25].
- **Portal 2:** Puzzle Maker: The game includes a level editor that encourages students to design their own puzzles, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills and logical reasoning [18].

In summary, the diverse types of games used in education each offer unique benefits and applications. By leveraging these various formats, lecturers can develop engaging and successful learning experiences that comprises of different learning styles, techniques and objectives.

Conceptual basis of Game-Based Learning

GBL is underpinned by several theoretical frameworks that elucidate its cognitive benefits, engagement mechanisms, and the role of narrative and interactivity in enhancing the learning experience. Understanding these foundations is crucial for educators and game designers aiming to create effective games that also deliver educational function. One of the key cognitive benefits of gaming for students is the strengthening of problem-solving and critical thinking skills. Games often provide players with complex challenges that require strategic thinking, analysis, and decision-making. Research has shown that engaging with games can improve cognitive flexibility and the ability to adapt to new situations [26]. For instance, Winskell et al. highlight how interactive narratives in games can help players navigate social dynamics and risk-taking scenarios, thereby stimulating analytical thinking and situational awareness [27]. Additionally, GBL environment encourages self-regulated learning, allowing students to control their educational process and develop metacognitive skills [28].

Engagement theories, particularly flow theory, play a significant role in understanding how games motivate learners. Flow theory, proposed by Csikszentmihalyi, describes a state of complete immersion and focused engagement that occurs when individuals are challenged at an optimal level [29]. In the context of GBL, achieving flow can lead to enhanced learning outcomes as students become fully absorbed in the game mechanics and narrative. Studies indicate that games designed to promote flow experiences can significantly increase motivation and engagement, making learning process more attractive and effective [29, 30]. Furthermore, the incorporation of game rewarding or challenge elements, and feedback can enhance intrinsic motivation, prompting learners to persist in their educational tasks [31, 32].

The Role of Narrative and Interactivity in Learning - these two components are critical for GBL that contribute to its effectiveness. Narratives provide context and meaning to the learning experience, allowing students to connect emotionally with the content. Rowe et al. emphasize the importance of rich narratives in educational games, as they contextualize learning scenarios and foster social collaboration among players [33]. Interactive narratives, where players make choices that influence the story's outcome, further enhance engagement by allowing learners to explore different perspectives and consequences of their actions [34]. This interactivity not only supports active learning but also encourages critical reflection on the material, as students must consider the implications of their decisions within the game [27, 30].

In conclusion, the conceptual basis of GBL encompass cognitive benefits, engagement theories, and the significance of narrative and interactivity. By leveraging these principles, educators can design effective educational games that promote deeper learning, critical thinking, and sustained engagement among students.

Benefits of Integrating Games in the Study Process

Educational process, that includes GBL, provides a wide range of benefits that enhance both the learning experience and educational outcomes, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and innovative approaches, as well as fostering sustainability, for instance in form of circular innovation [35]. These benefits can be categorized into four main areas: enhancing student engagement and higher level of motivation, developing soft skills, improving knowledge retention, and learning objectives, and sustaining the knowledge gap between theory and practice.

Enhancing Student Motivation level and Engagement in the process

One of the most significant benefits of GBL is its ability to enhance student motivation level and engagement in the study process. Games inherently possess elements of fun, challenge, and competition, which can attract student focus and attention and foster active involvement into the study process can retain

students attention and foster active participation in the learning process. Research indicates that GBL environments foster higher levels of engagement if compared with commonly used teaching methods [36, 37]. For instance, Hu et al. identified that students who were involved in GBL reported improved motivation due to the enjoyable and challenging nature of the games [37]. Additionally, gamification strategies, for example badges, points, or leaderboards, have been shown to further enhance student engagement as they are able to offer instant feedback and recognition for achievements [36, 38].

Development of Soft Skills GBL
This approach also has a crucial role in the development of essential soft skills, such as teamwork and communication. Many educational games require collaboration among players, fostering an environment where students have to cooperate to achieve common goals. For example, Krishnan et al. highlighted the pedagogic benefits of collaborative game-based activities, fostering critical and analytical thinking and problem-solving skills and capabilities by promoting interaction between the students [39]. This collaborative aspect not only enhances interpersonal skills but also adjust students for real-life scenarios where effective communication and cooperation are vital [40]. Furthermore, the interactive nature of games encourages students to express their thoughts and strategies, thereby improving their communication skills [39, 40].

Improving Knowledge Retention and Learning Outcomes
Another significant benefit of integrating GBL into the study process is the improvement of knowledge level and higher learning outcomes. Studies reveal that GBL can lead to better retention of information compared to traditional instructional methods. For instance, Rondon et al. conducted a comparative study that demonstrated significant improvements in knowledge level among students who engaged in GBL [41]. Similarly, Ghoman et al. Ghoman et al. reported a 12% increase in knowledge sustaining level among healthcare providers who participated in a serious game focused on neonatal resuscitation [42]. This enhanced retention is linked to the interactive and involving nature of games, which facilitate deeper cognitive processing of the material [43].

Overcoming the Gap Between Theory and Practice
Games also serve as effective tools for overcoming the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge application. By simulating real-life scenarios, educational games allow students to apply theoretical concepts in a safe and controlled environment. For example, Graafland et al. found that serious gaming improved surgeons' situational awareness in the operating room, demonstrating how GBL can transform theoretical knowledge into practical skills [44]. This experiential learning approach not only reinforces theoretical understanding but also prepares students for real-life challenges they may encounter in their respective fields [45, 46]. The ability to practice skills in a simulated environment enhances confidence and competence, eventually leading to better preparedness for professional responsibilities. To sum up, the integration of GBL into the study process offers a multitude of benefits, including enhanced motivation and engagement, development of soft skills, improved knowledge retention, and the ability to minimise the gap between theory and practice. As educational institutions continue to explore innovative teaching methods, GBL stands out as a promising approach to foster a more interactive and efficient learning environment.

Challenges in Using Games for Education
While the incorporation of GBL into the educational process provides a range of benefits, several challenges must be addressed to ensure their effective implementation. These challenges include resource and time constraints, accessibility and inclusivity concerns, the risk of distraction or overemphasis on entertainment, and resistance from educators or institutions.

Resource and Time Constraints
One of the primary challenges in implementing GBL is the resource and time constraints faced by educators and institutions. Developing or acquiring high-quality educational games can be costly and time-consuming. Many schools lack the necessary funding and technological infrastructure to support GBL initiatives [47, 48]. Additionally, educators often have limited time to design and integrate games into their curricula, which can hinder their willingness to adopt this approach [49]. The need for training and professional development in using educational games effectively further compounds these resource limitations [50]. Without adequate resources and time, the potential positive aspects of GBL may not be fully realized.

Accessibility and Inclusivity Concerns
Accessibility and inclusivity are critical considerations when incorporating GBL into education. Many educational games may not be designed with all learners in mind, particularly those with disabilities or diverse learning needs. This lack of inclusivity can create barriers to participation and limit the efficiency of GBL for all students [51, 52]. For instance, games that rely heavily on visual or auditory cues may disadvantage students with visual or hearing impairments. Additionally, the digital divide can exacerbate these issues, as students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may lack access to the necessary technology to engage with digital games [48]. Ensuring that educational games are accessible and inclusive is essential for maximizing their impact on diverse student populations.

Risk of Distraction or Overemphasis on Entertainment
Another challenge associated with GBL is potential for student distraction or an overemphasis on entertainment rather than educational content. While games can be engaging, there is a risk that students may focus more on the gaming experience than on the learning objectives [49]. This concern is particularly relevant when games are not well-aligned with educational goals or when the gameplay mechanics overshadow the intended learning outcomes [53]. Educators must carefully select or design games that maintain a right proportion of amusement and educational value to avoid this pitfall [54]. Furthermore, the perception of games as mere entertainment can lead to scepticism among educators and stakeholders regarding their effectiveness in promoting meaningful learning process [50].

Resistance from Educators or Institutions
Resistance from educators or institutions can also pose significant challenges to the implementation of GBL. Some educators may be hesitant to incorporate games into their teaching due to a lack of familiarity with gaming technologies or concerns about

their effectiveness [48, 50]. Additionally, institutional policies and curricula may not support the integration of games, leading to a lack of institutional buy-in [55]. This resistance can stem from traditional views of education that prioritize conventional teaching methods over innovative approaches like GBL. To overcome this challenge, it is essential to provide educators with the necessary training, resources, and support to confidently adopt GBL strategies in their classrooms [49, 53]. In conclusion, while GBL presents exciting opportunities for enhancing education, several challenges must be addressed. Resource and time constraints, accessibility and inclusivity concerns, the risk of distraction, and resistance from educators or institutions are significant barriers that can impede the successful integration of GBL into the study process. By acknowledging and addressing these challenges, educators and policymakers can work towards creating a more effective and inclusive learning environment that leverages the benefits of GBL.

Practical Implementation of GBL: Digitalizing Educational Games for Business and Research Skills

The use of GBL in education has been noted to increase participation as well as educational performance. In this subsection, two educational games—Circular Economy and Fiftywille Investigation—are being presented in the context of their role as tools for enhancing students' learning on business sustainability and research methods, respectively. Both games are examples of a new form of experiential learning where students are engaged in active, rich, and memorable experiences in the learning process.

The Game of the Circular Economy: Promoting Business Sustainability

As part of the "Quadruple Helix Concept" project the Circular Economy game translated into Latvian aims at concentrating on embedding sustainability concepts in the business environment. Initially, it was developed as a card game, however, during the processes of digitalization it turned into a WEB game accessible at the address: https://qhc.ba.lv/circularity.

Game Objectives and Features

- **Learning Goals:** The game aims to teach students about sustainable business practices through five thematic areas: Reduce, Prolong, Recycle, Renew, and Inform. Each theme contains cards presenting concepts, descriptions, and real-life examples.
- **Interactive Gameplay:** Students begin by creating a profile and selecting a theme. They explore thematic cards, flipping between the problem description and practical examples.
- **AI Integration for Idea Validation:** The game leverages AI to provide personalized feedback. Upon completing the game, students validate their business ideas, receiving AI-driven insights and improvement recommendations.

Implementation and Challenges

- **Digital Infrastructure:** Using PHP, MySQL, HTML, and JavaScript frameworks, the game stores student inputs, tracks progress, and enables iterative learning.
- **Personalization through AI:** Machine learning models analyse student-provided data on business ideas and suggest actionable improvements tailored to sustainability goals.

- **Adoption Hurdles:** Initial challenges included ensuring an intuitive user interface and fostering student confidence in the AI-generated feedback.
- **Educational Impact:** The game motivates the players to assess their business ideas more rationally and to specify their pros, cons, and how they can be improved. It is possible for students to put some of the theoretical aspects they have learned into practice and this works as an integration of learning and entrepreneurship.

Fiftywille Investigation Game
Enhancing Research Skills
The Fiftywille Investigation game immerses students in a fictional mystery-solving scenario designed to enhance research and analytical thinking skills. Developed as part of the CS50x curriculum, it is available at https://qhc.ba.lv/fiftywille.

Game Objectives and Features
- **Learning Goals:** Students learn research fundamentals, including data analysis, hypothesis testing, and collaborative problem-solving, by investigating a staged theft in the fictional town of Fiftywille.
- **Real-World Simulation:** Players assume the role of investigators tasked with decoding encrypted messages, analysing clues, and compiling evidence.
- **Multidisciplinary Learning:** The game integrates cryptography, data interpretation, and cultural literacy to reflect the multifaceted nature of real-world research.

Implementation and Challenges
- **Scalable Development:** Built using web technologies, the game supports individual and collaborative modes, enabling diverse applications in educational settings.
- **Inclusive Design:** To ensure accessibility, the game supports multiple formats, including audio and visual aids for participants with varying needs.
- **Educational Alignment:** Aligning game scenarios with curricular objectives required iterative feedback from educators and students.
- **Educational Impact:** Students gain hands-on experience in interpreting data across languages, formats, and disciplines. The collaborative nature of the game mirrors real-world research dynamics, teaching students the value of teamwork and ethical data handling.

Integrating GBL into the Study Process
During the research the authors have identified a range of pedagogical advantages that can be highlighted and taken into consideration by the study process curators:
- **Engagement and Retention:** Both games foster deep engagement through interactive and narrative elements, encouraging active participation and better level of knowledge.
- **Skill Development:** The Circular Economy game develops entrepreneurial acumen, while the Fiftywille Investigation game enhances analytical thinking skills.
- **Practical Application:** Both games simulate real-life scenarios, providing students with safe environments to experiment and learn from failures.

Challenges and Future Directions
- **Scalability and Adaptation:** Scaling the games for diverse student groups while maintaining contextual relevance remains an ongoing challenge.
- **AI Ethical Considerations:** As AI tools become integral to educational games, ensuring transparency and unbiased recommendations is critical.
- **Long-Term Impact Assessment:** Future studies will focus on assessing the longitudinal impact of these games on student learning and professional development.

By addressing these challenges, GBL can evolve into a more inclusive, effective, and sustainable approach to modern education.

Discussion
The researchers chose one of the educational games - Fiftywille Investigation Game to perform a practical testing of it in the student environment in January 2025. This tool offers a multifaceted approach allowing participants to gain certain critical research abilities. The researchers opted for this tool, as the game has a certain emphasis on the interdisciplinary nature of research. Another benefit of the tool is that it fosters students to apply analysis and critical thinking techniques, by using different foreign languages, as well as cryptography. The application of the tool demonstrates the obstacles that can be come across when working with encrypted or architecturally diversified data. These aspects require students to engage in activities that require decoding sophisticated data formats, such as Caesar ciphers and Morse code. With the help of this method, the tutor can not only improve student comprehension of information security but also develops their capacity for analytical and critical processing of data and foster original problem-solving. Additionally, the tool has a focus on assessing sources that are bilingual and culturally varied and all this emphasizes how crucial global competency can be in the research settings.

The tool testing gathered ca. 120 students from 1st year social sciences programme. During the testing phase, the participants demonstrated improvement in such vital skills as collaboration and communication, mirroring real-world research scenarios that rely heavily on teamwork and shared responsibilities in data analysis. The online tool effectively imitated the challenges of handling complex or inaccurate data, encouraging students to adopt a systematic strategy to research. This required identifying trends and sorting pertinent information from irrelevant information. Responses from more than 100 students studying the social sciences emphasized the value of developing routines such as identifying interconnected systems and staying focused on the goals of the research. The tool testing activity highlighted the importance of comprehension that researchers often come across constantly changing environment of research. The students were able to comprehend that efficient and in-depth research includes much more than just acquiring evidence. In order for the students to be able to yield meaningful and bold results, it requires creativity, cooperation, determination, and careful application of digital tools.

Conclusions
The digitalization of educational games such as the Circular Economy and Fiftywille Investigation demonstrates the transformative potential of GBL in higher education. By combining interactive gameplay with AI-driven insights, these games not only teach theoretical concepts but also provide practical tools for addressing real-life challenges.

The findings of present research identify that the Circular Economy and Fiftywille Investigation games are valuable tools to be integrated in higher education study programmes as they effectively merge theoretical learning with experiential methodologies and thus are able to offer a dynamic and interactive platform for education. The Circular Economy game reveals sustainable business practices by offering students to analyse thematic areas such as reduction, renewal, and recycling. Furthermore, the digital version of the game offers integrating AI-driven feedback mechanisms, which is then able to improve students' chosen strategies and develop entrepreneurial ideas further, adding also practical recommendations.

The Fiftywille Investigation game offers students a rich, multi-disciplinary experience by combining cryptographic tasks, data analysis, and elements of cultural literacy. By engaging with these interactive challenges, students encounter scenarios that mimic the intricate nature of real-world research. This approach provides a dynamic and immersive platform that sharpens their analytical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Together with other educational tools, the game illustrates the potential of game-based learning to transform abstract theories into practical skills, equipping learners with the confidence and competence needed to tackle real-life professional challenges.

Despite these potentially highly-valuable outcomes, the issue remains how to effectively scale these tools across varied student demographics while ensuring they remain inclusive and accessible to all learners. The incorporation of AI into the educational process raises ethical questions, particularly concerning transparency and data privacy, highlighting the need for well-defined implementation frameworks. Additionally, the absence of standardized methodologies for evaluating the long-term impact of game-based learning limits researchers' capacity to fully assess its effectiveness. The researchers plan to address these issues, by focusing on the longitudinal studies, which aim to assess the sustained influence of GBL on student learning outcomes and practical skill development. If these challenges are effectively addressed, with careful consideration of both benefits and potential limitations, GBL could transform the educational landscape, creating a more dynamic, inclusive, and effective system that meets the growing global need for innovation and sustainability. Planned deployment and validation of the Circular Economy game in Spring 2025 will offer further insights into the integration of AI in educational settings, paving the way for innovative teaching methodologies.

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