

Qualitative Study on the Utilization of Wordwall to Increase Elementary School Student Engagement

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Abstract

The Wordwall is an interactive platform that provides a variety of educational games such as quizzes and puzzles that can be adapted to the subject matter. This study aims to explore the use of Wordwall applications to increase the involvement of elementary school students in learning. The research was conducted on classroom teachers and 20 1st grade elementary school students, using a qualitative approach through observation of students and interviews with teachers. The results of the study show that Wordwall is able to increase student participation, focus, and enthusiasm in learning. Teachers find it helpful in delivering material in an engaging way, although some experience technical difficulties in operating the application. These findings show that Wordwall has the potential to be an effective learning medium if it is accompanied by teacher training and facility support from schools. The use of Wordwall is not only an innovation, but also a strategy to create a fun and relevant learning atmosphere in the digital era. This research provides insights for educators in integrating technology into learning.

1. Introduction

Learning in elementary school is the main foundation in building students' academic abilities. In this process, student activity is an important factor that determines the success of learning. However, in practice, many students are less active in participating in learning activities, especially if the method used is less interesting. Therefore, innovations in learning are needed that are able to increase student participation optimally. One alternative that can be used is the use of interactive application-based technology. The use of monotonous learning methods, models, and media makes students quickly feel bored, thus having an impact on learning interest. Unpleasant learning causes students to become discouraged and feel lazy (Malewa & Muh, 2023). According to data from the Ministry of Education and Culture, research and technology (2022), more than 60% of elementary school students show low participation in online and offline learning due to monotonous learning methods. This condition shows the need for innovative strategies to encourage active student involvement in the learning process.

Along with the development of technology, various educational applications have been developed to support the learning process. One of the applications that is widely used by educators is Wordwall, a digital platform that provides a wide variety of interactive activities. Wordwall allows teachers to create educational games such as quizzes, crossword puzzles, and various other exercises that can be tailored to the needs of students. With attractive and easy-to-use features, this app has the potential to increase student engagement in learning. The function of learning media in general is to illustrate concepts that are abstract or difficult to understand so that they become clearer and more visible. Mu'minah & Arif Gaffar (2020) said that learning media is a tool for teachers to convey educational content to students that is useful for arousing their interest in learning. The benefits of learning media can be felt by teachers and students involved in the learning process.

The application of technology in learning is not just a trend, but also a necessity in today's digital era. Students who are already familiar with digital devices will be more motivated to learn if the subject matter is presented in an interesting and interactive form. Wordwall offers a more fun and challenging learning experience, so it can increase students' interest and understanding of the subject matter. Thus, the use of Wordwall can be an effective strategy to create a more dynamic and fun learning environment.

Although Wordwall has many advantages, the effectiveness of its use in elementary school learning still needs to be studied further. Not all teachers and students have adequate technological capabilities, so the implementation of this application may face some obstacles. In addition, the use of technology in learning must also be balanced with conventional methods so that the essence of the teaching and learning process is maintained. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct in-depth research to understand how Wordwall can be optimally utilized in the context of learning in elementary schools. Teachers in the 21st Century education era can utilize technology-based learning media to increase students' interest in learning. Professional teachers must also be able to investigate what can attract the attention of their students (Anggraeni et al., 2021).

This study aims to explore the use of Wordwall applications in an effort to increase the involvement of elementary school students in learning. This research will be conducted using a qualitative approach to gain a deeper understanding of the experience of teachers and students in using this application. The main focus of this study is how Wordwall is used in the learning process, the benefits felt by students and teachers, and the challenges faced in its implementation. With the results of this research, it is hoped that it can provide insight for educators on effective strategies in integrating technology into learning. Sherianto (2020) said that Wordwall is an application that can be used as a learning tool, learning reference, and assessment instrument for teachers and students. However, there are still limited field studies that evaluate the use of Wordwall directly in the classroom in the early stages of elementary school, Halik (2021) said that Wordwall can be interpreted as a web application used to create entertaining quiz-based games.

Through this research, it is hoped that the best way to use Wordwall as an innovative and interactive learning tool can be found. The results of this research can also be considered for schools in adopting technology as part of a more modern learning strategy. With the increase in student involvement in learning, it is hoped that the quality of education in elementary schools can improve. Therefore, the use of the Wordwall application is not just an innovation, but also a strategic step in creating a more effective and enjoyable learning experience for students

Wordwall as an interactive learning medium, This application allows teachers to create activities such as quizzes, spinning wheels, crossword puzzles, and word matching, which can be adapted to learning objectives (Sherianto, 2020). With an attractive appearance and easy use, Wordwall provides a more enjoyable learning experience for students. According to Halik (2021), Wordwall is an interactive learning media that is able to increase students' attention because of its gamified nature, so that students feel like they are playing while learning. In addition, Wordwall is also flexible in its use because it can be accessed through various devices such as computers, tablets, and smartphones. This provides flexibility for teachers and students to access materials anytime and anywhere. Mu'minah & Gaffar (2020) states that a good learning media is a medium that is able to facilitate students to understand abstract concepts, motivate students to learn, and adjust to student characteristics. Wordwall meets these criteria because it is able to transform learning content into visual and interactive forms that are easier to understand and engaging.

Student involvement in learning is an important indicator in the success of the learning process. Students who are actively involved in learning tend to have higher motivation to learn and show a better understanding of the subject matter (Zulherman et al., 2022). This involvement can be in the form of participation in discussions, answering questions, and completing tasks independently or in groups. According to Anggraeni et al. (2021), student involvement can be increased through the use of interactive learning media that is relevant to students' interests and needs. Media such as Wordwall can create a fun learning atmosphere, spur curiosity, and arouse students' enthusiasm for learning. In the context of learning in elementary school, interactive media such as Wordwall also encourages students to be more active in exploring the material independently. Data from the Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology (2022) shows that more than 60% of elementary school students show low involvement in conventional learning, both online and offline. This shows the need for learning media that is able to stimulate student involvement through a more modern and interactive approach.

Compared to other media such as printed books, whiteboards, or worksheets, Wordwall offers advantages in terms of visualization, interactivity, and student engagement. Traditional media tends

to be one-way and less actively engages students. Instead, Wordwall places students as active participants in the learning process. Research by Pratama and Yulianingsih (2022) shows that the use of interactive digital media such as Wordwall is more effective in improving student learning outcomes and engagement compared to non-digital learning media. While similar apps like Kahoot or Quizizz also offer interactive quiz features, Wordwall has the advantage of having a more diverse game type and ease of setting up quiz formats. However, several challenges also arise in the use of Wordwall, such as limited access to technology in some schools and teachers' readiness in managing digital media. Therefore, it is important to adapt the use of this media to the context and conditions of each school, as well as to provide training to teachers so that they can make optimal use of Wordwall.

2. Method

The research method used in this study is a qualitative method, as the main goal is to understand in depth how the Wordwall application is utilized in the learning process in elementary school. This research was carried out by conducting direct observations on several students when they used the Wordwall application in the classroom. This observation aims to see firsthand how students respond to learning activities using the application, whether they look more enthusiastic, more focused, or vice versa. This way, researchers can get a more real picture of how Wordwall actually affects student engagement in learning. This study was conducted on 1 classroom teacher and 20 grade 1 students in one of the elementary schools in Malang City. Sample selection was carried out purposively to obtain in-depth data that was relevant to the focus of the research. The data were analyzed thematically by identifying patterns of student engagement through transcripts, observations, and interviews.

In addition to observation, the researcher also conducted interviews with classroom teachers to find out whether they had used the Wordwall application in learning activities or not. The interview also explored whether teachers had previously heard of this application, as well as what they thought about the potential of Wordwall in helping the teaching and learning process. These questions are asked casually so that teachers feel comfortable sharing their experiences and views. Through these interviews, the researchers hope to get honest and in-depth information about how well teachers are familiar with and utilize interactive technology such as Wordwall in their teaching activities.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on the results of observations of several elementary school students when using the Wordwall application in the teaching and learning process, it was found that students showed a very positive response. The students look enthusiastic, happy and more active when participating in the activities presented through this application. Interactive games displayed on the projector, such as quizzes and puzzles, are able to grab students' attention and make the classroom atmosphere more lively. This shows that Wordwall has great potential to increase student engagement in learning.

In addition to students, the results of interviews with classroom teachers also show that the Wordwall application is quite well known and even used. The teacher mentioned that this application has many variations of games that are displayed through the projector, and it is proven to be able to attract students' interest. The teacher said that Wordwall can help in conveying learning materials in a more engaging way. This is in accordance with the opinion of Mu'minah & Arif Gaffar (2020), who stated that learning media can arouse students' interest in learning and make it easier to understand difficult material. These findings are reinforced by research by Nissa & Renoningtyas (2021) which shows that the use of Wordwall can increase students' learning motivation by 35%. Research by Olisna et al. (2022) also found an increase in students' commendable morals after the application of Wordwall in character learning and there were 20 students.

Table 1. Observation Aspect

Observation Aspect	Before Wordwall	After Wordwall
Student Participation	Students are passive, not enthusiastic about following lessons	Students are active, many are scrambling to answer
Enthusiastic	Easily distracted and less attentive	Focus increases, students pay attention to quizzes on the screen

Material Understanding	Students Difficulty understanding concepts verbally	Visualizations help students understand
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However, the teachers also revealed the challenges in using Wordwall, especially in technical terms. Teachers feel a little overwhelmed when they have to operate the application, such as pressing answer clicks quickly, while at the same time having to manage the class. This is one of the important notes that the use of technology in learning requires readiness from teachers, both in terms of technical skills and classroom management. Therefore, training on the use of digital media such as Wordwall is very necessary for teachers to optimize their use.

The results of observations and interviews in this study show significant changes in various aspects of the learning process after teachers apply Wordwall as an interactive medium. These changes can be observed concretely in five main dimensions: student participation, attention focus, material comprehension, emotional response, and teaching efficiency by teachers.

First, from the aspect of student participation, before the use of Wordwall, students tended to be passive and showed less enthusiasm in following lessons. Once Wordwall is used, students become more active and enthusiastic, even scrambling to answer questions that appear on the screen. This shows that gamification-based approaches are able to trigger the spirit of learning through healthy competition elements.

Second, regarding students' focus on learning, Wordwall has succeeded in increasing students' attention. If previously students were easily distracted and did not pay attention to the teacher's explanations, now they focus more on the interactive quizzes on the screen. The engaging visual format and dynamic gameplay are able to sustainably retain students' attention.

Third, from the aspect of understanding the material, Wordwall provides advantages in terms of visualization and presentation of information. Students who previously had difficulty understanding the material verbally, became faster to grasp concepts through image elements, keywords, and quiz-based repetition. This is especially important for early grade students who have visual and kinesthetic learning preferences.

Fourth, in the dimension of students' emotional response, there is a significant shift in the learning atmosphere. Before Wordwall was implemented, students seemed to get bored easily and get tired quickly. But after use, students show happy expressions, smile, and even laugh, indicating that the classroom atmosphere becomes more pleasant and triggers positive affection for the learning process.

Finally, in the aspect of the teacher's role in teaching, Wordwall has been proven to help teaching efficiency. Teachers no longer need to explain the material repeatedly because the material can be packaged in a quiz format. Additionally, teachers can instantly see student outcomes and engagement in real-time, which is useful for reflection and follow-up planning.

Overall, the use of Wordwall has brought about a real change in the quality of learning in the classroom. This media not only increases student engagement and understanding, but also makes it easier for teachers to manage classes and evaluate learning. These results reinforce the importance of integrating interactive digital media in basic learning, especially in facing educational challenges in the digital era.

3.1 Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the use of the Wordwall application has been proven to be able to increase the involvement and enthusiasm of elementary school students in the learning process. The app provides a variety of interactive educational games that grab students' attention, making the classroom atmosphere more lively and fun. Through observation and interviews, it was found that students showed a positive response to learning activities using Wordwall, while teachers felt helped in delivering material in a more interesting way. Thus, Wordwall not only serves as a learning medium, but also as a means to create more effective and enjoyable learning.

However, the effectiveness of using Wordwall is also influenced by the teacher's readiness to operate the application and manage the class at the same time. Some teachers still experience technical obstacles in its use, so training and mentoring are needed to improve their competence in utilizing this technology optimally. In addition, support for facilities and infrastructure from schools is also very important so that the use of Wordwall can run smoothly. Therefore, the use of Wordwall in learning is not only an innovation, but also a strategic step to answer learning challenges in the digital era, especially in increasing the participation of elementary school students. A possible follow-up would be to conduct further trials with a larger sample count and test the effectiveness of Wordwall in a variety of subjects. Quantitative research is also recommended to measure its impact statistically on student learning outcomes.

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