

Application of Wordwall Media in Civics Education as a Learning Tool at SMP Negeri 6 Tondano

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ABSTRACT

The integration of digital learning media has become increasingly vital in contemporary education, particularly for subjects perceived as monotonous by students, such as Civics Education (PPKn). This qualitative study investigates the application of Wordwall, a web-based gamification platform, as a learning tool in PPKn instruction at SMP Negeri 6 Tondano. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews and documentation. The findings reveal that Wordwall effectively heightens student engagement, curiosity, and learning motivation by offering interactive activities such as quizzes, crossword puzzles, and game-show-style exercises. Teachers employed adaptive strategies, including hotspot provision and small-group arrangements, to address limitations in student device access and internet connectivity. Classroom management practices, including flexible seating and behavioral monitoring, also supported learning effectiveness. Despite infrastructural constraints, the overall implementation of Wordwall contributed positively to creating a more imaginative, inclusive, and engaging learning environment. The study recommends continued integration of Wordwall alongside interactive pedagogical methods and improved school infrastructure to sustain its educational impact.

Keywords: Wordwall; Learning Media; Civic Education; Gamification; Student Engagement.

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INTRODUCTION

Education serves as the cornerstone of national development, equipping individuals with the knowledge, values, and competencies required to participate meaningfully in a democratic society (Darniyanti & Sapitri, 2023). Through education, students are expected to develop intellectual abilities, social awareness, and moral responsibility that enable them to contribute positively to their communities and the nation. As societies become increasingly complex and interconnected, educational institutions are challenged not only to deliver academic content but also to foster the development of responsible and active citizens.

In the Indonesian educational system, Pancasila and Civics Education (PPKn) occupies a strategic position within the national curriculum. The subject is compulsory at all levels of formal education, from primary school to higher education, reflecting its importance in shaping students' understanding of citizenship and national identity. PPKn is designed to cultivate democratic values, strengthen commitment to the principles of Pancasila, and develop awareness of citizens' rights and responsibilities (Zahro, 2023). Consequently, the subject plays a crucial role in preparing young people to participate constructively in social and political life.

Despite its importance, the teaching of PPKn continues to face several challenges in classroom practice. Many students perceive the subject as theoretical, repetitive, and disconnected from their daily experiences. Such perceptions often result in low levels of interest and participation during lessons. Previous studies have reported that students frequently regard PPKn as less engaging than other subjects because learning activities are often dominated by lectures, memorization, and textbook-based instruction rather than interactive learning experiences (Risky et al., 2024).

These challenges highlight the need for innovative instructional approaches that can make civic learning more engaging and meaningful. One important aspect of educational innovation is the effective use of learning media. Learning media function as tools that facilitate communication between teachers and students and help present instructional content in ways that are more accessible and understandable. The appropriate use of learning media has been shown to improve student attention, comprehension, and overall learning outcomes (Akbulut, 2019).

The rapid development of digital technology has created new opportunities for educators to integrate interactive media into classroom instruction. Digital learning platforms provide various features that support active learning and encourage student participation. Among these platforms, Wordwall has emerged as a popular educational tool due to its flexibility and ease of use. The platform enables teachers to create a wide range of interactive learning activities, including quizzes, matching exercises, word games, and other educational challenges that can be accessed both online and offline (Aryani et al., 2021).

A distinctive characteristic of Wordwall is its incorporation of gamification elements into the learning process. Gamification refers to the use of game-design principles and mechanics in non-game environments to increase motivation, engagement, and participation (Zaky, 2025). Features such as points, leaderboards, competition, rewards, and timed activities can create a more dynamic classroom atmosphere. As a result, students are encouraged to become more actively involved in learning activities rather than remaining passive recipients of information.

The application of gamification is particularly relevant in PPKn learning because civic concepts require more than simple memorization. Students are expected to understand, internalize, and apply civic values, democratic principles, and constitutional norms in real-life situations. Interactive learning experiences provided through Wordwall may help students connect abstract concepts with practical contexts while maintaining their interest throughout the learning process. Previous research has shown that digital game-based learning platforms can improve learning outcomes, increase student motivation, sustain attention, and encourage collaboration among learners (Millatina et al., 2022; Mukarromah & Andriana, 2022; Rahmasari et al., 2022).

Furthermore, recent studies have consistently reported positive outcomes from the integration of Wordwall into various educational contexts. Research has shown that the platform can enhance students' learning motivation, increase classroom participation, and create a more enjoyable learning environment through interactive and game-based activities (Safitri et al., 2022; Widhiatama & Brameswari, 2024). Other studies have highlighted its effectiveness in supporting students' understanding of learning materials while encouraging independent and collaborative learning. These findings indicate that Wordwall possesses considerable potential as an innovative instructional medium capable of addressing common challenges associated with student engagement and motivation across different subject areas.

Although research on Wordwall and gamification in education has expanded significantly in recent years, studies focusing specifically on their implementation in Indonesian PPKn classrooms at the junior secondary school level remain limited. To address this gap, the present study investigates the implementation of Wordwall in PPKn learning at SMP Negeri 6 Tondano. Particular attention is given to its influence on student engagement and motivation, the strategies employed by teachers to overcome infrastructural limitations, and the classroom management practices that support effective digital learning. By examining the actual experiences of teachers and students in a real educational setting, this study seeks to provide context-specific insights that can contribute to the development of innovative citizenship education practices and inform educational policy and practice in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach, aimed at understanding the phenomenon of Wordwall media implementation as experienced by teachers and students in their natural classroom environment (Moleong, 2021). Qualitative inquiry was considered appropriate given the study's objective of capturing contextual, process-oriented information about the use of digital learning tools, which resists reduction to quantitative measurement.

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 6 Tondano, located in the District of East Tondano, Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. Data collection took place in October 2025 and centered on PPKn classroom instruction. The primary data source was the PPKn teacher, who was selected purposively based on her consistent use of Wordwall as an instructional tool. Secondary data were gathered through direct classroom observation and documentary analysis of teaching materials and student activity records.

Data collection was carried out through in-depth, semi-structured interviews covering the following themes: (1) the advantages and limitations of Wordwall in classroom practice; (2) strategies employed to manage student behavior and ensure

participation; and (3) challenges and obstacles encountered in implementing digital learning media. Interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and subjected to thematic analysis following the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) model of data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. Member checking was performed to ensure the credibility of the interpretations presented.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Wordwall as an Interactive Learning Platform in PPKn

The findings reveal that the PPKn teacher at SMP Negeri 6 Tondano has consistently integrated Wordwall into her instructional practice as the primary digital learning medium. Wordwall is a web-based platform that allows educators to design and deploy interactive educational activities across diverse formats, including quiz games, crossword puzzles, anagram challenges, and matching exercises (Aryani et al., 2021). These varied formats provide teachers with flexibility in designing activities that match different learning objectives and student proficiency levels.

Observations indicate that when Wordwall activities were deployed, students demonstrated noticeably heightened levels of attention and curiosity. The competitive, game-like structure of Wordwall, which incorporates visible scoring, countdown timers, and leaderboards, functioned as an intrinsic motivator for many students. This aligns with Safitri et al. (2022), who found that Wordwall-based digital game media significantly improved elementary students' learning motivation, attributing the effect to the platform's capacity to transform routine academic tasks into engaging competitive activities. Similarly, Rahmasari et al. (2022) reported that the use of Wordwall gamification in a Pancasila Education course at the university level yielded a statistically significant improvement in learning outcomes, with students becoming more actively involved in lesson review activities.

In the PPKn context, the value of Wordwall extends beyond surface-level engagement. The platform's ability to present civic concepts, such as democratic values, civic rights, and national principles, in the form of interactive challenges encourages students to process and apply knowledge rather than passively receive it. This pedagogical shift, from passive reception to active participation, reflects the broader aspiration of PPKn instruction to cultivate critically thinking, participatory citizens (Millatina et al., 2022). Mukarromah and Andriana (2022) further note that digital learning media serving as a conceptual bridge between abstract civic content and students' everyday experiences is central to achieving the character-formation goals embedded in the PPKn curriculum.

Teacher Creativity and Inclusive Classroom Management

A significant finding from the interview data concerns the infrastructural limitations that constrain Wordwall implementation. Not all students possess personal smartphones, and access to a stable internet connection is unequally distributed, creating a risk of digital exclusion within the classroom. Rather than abandoning the platform, the teacher responded with practical, student-centered adaptations. The most notable strategy was the provision of personal hotspot connectivity to students who lacked mobile data, enabling continued participation. When the ratio of available devices was insufficient, the teacher organized students into small collaborative pairs or groups, allowing two students to share a single device while maintaining engagement.

These adaptive strategies carry significant pedagogical implications. By restructuring device use around collaborative pairs, the teacher inadvertently introduced cooperative

learning dynamics, where students negotiated answers, discussed options, and reached shared decisions. This reflects what Zaky (2025) identifies as a productive interplay between technological constraint and pedagogical creativity: resource limitations, when managed thoughtfully, can prompt instructional innovations that enhance collaborative skills alongside content knowledge. The teacher's approach demonstrates that effective digital learning does not require uniform, individual device access, but rather thoughtful orchestration of available resources.

Classroom management complemented these technological adaptations. The teacher employed deliberate seating arrangements that maximized her visual oversight of all students, ensuring equitable supervision and enabling prompt responses to off-task behavior. Continuous monitoring of student body language, including signs of boredom, restlessness, or disengagement, informed real-time pedagogical adjustments, such as transitioning from individual tasks to group challenges or interspersing brief discussions between game rounds. This vigilant, responsive approach to classroom management aligns with Risky et al. (2024), who stress that effective digital learning in Indonesian secondary schools depends not only on the quality of the platform but equally on teachers' instructional decision-making and behavioral management capabilities.

Physical Infrastructure and its Impact on Digital Learning Quality

Beyond digital infrastructure, the physical conditions of the classroom were found to affect the quality of Wordwall-mediated instruction. Although SMP Negeri 6 Tondano is equipped with LCD projectors for whole-class display, the absence of window blinds or curtains allowed natural light to wash out the projected image, reducing screen legibility, particularly during afternoon sessions when the PPKn class was typically scheduled. This finding highlights an often-overlooked dimension of educational technology implementation: the suitability of the physical environment for digital display.

The teacher addressed this by adjusting projector positioning and scheduling activities that relied most heavily on screen visibility for moments of stronger natural shade. While these workarounds were functional, they represent a form of pedagogical compromise that diverts instructional energy from content delivery toward environmental problem-solving. Darniyanti and Sapitri (2023) emphasize that sustainable educational technology integration requires holistic infrastructure planning, encompassing not only digital connectivity but also the physical classroom conditions that determine whether technology can be deployed as intended. Investment in low-cost physical improvements, such as window coverings, can yield disproportionately large returns in instructional quality.

Student Engagement, Motivation, and Shifting Learner Roles

A recurring observation across interview data and classroom documentation was the transformation in students' learning stance during Wordwall activities. Students who exhibited passive or disengaged behaviors during conventional lecture-based PPKn instruction became visibly more animated, participatory, and competitive when Wordwall sessions were introduced. This behavioral shift corroborates Aryani et al. (2021), who found that gamification platforms generate incidental learning, defined as knowledge acquisition that occurs as a by-product of engaging in an enjoyable activity, a particularly valuable mechanism for subjects like PPKn where motivational deficits are common.

The teacher reported that Wordwall activities also supported formative assessment functions. By analyzing the real-time score data and answer distributions generated by

the platform, she could identify misconceptions and knowledge gaps during the lesson itself, rather than after the fact. This immediate diagnostic capacity allowed for targeted on-the-spot clarification, improving instructional responsiveness. Zaky (2025) and Rahmasari et al. (2022) identify this integration of learning and assessment as one of the most educationally valuable features of gamified platforms: the distinction between instruction and evaluation dissolves, and performance data become tools for adaptive teaching rather than merely summative records.

Beyond cognitive gains, the competitive yet collaborative atmosphere created by Wordwall was observed to foster social dimensions of learning. Students encouraged and assisted one another during group configurations, negotiating civic content as they strategized collectively. This mirrors the 21st-century competency framework embedded in the Indonesian national curriculum, which positions civic education as the site not only for knowledge transmission but for the cultivation of democratic attitudes, including cooperation, reasoned deliberation, and shared responsibility (Millatina et al., 2022). Wordwall, in this reading, becomes not merely a quiz tool but a micro-environment for practicing democratic participation.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Wordwall, when thoughtfully integrated into PPKn instruction at SMP Negeri 6 Tondano, functions as an effective digital learning medium that enhances student engagement, curiosity, and motivation. Its gamification features transform typically passive civic education lessons into interactive, competitive learning experiences that activate student participation and promote deeper content engagement. The teacher's adaptive strategies, including collaborative device sharing, hotspot provision, flexible seating, and continuous behavioral monitoring, were instrumental in ensuring that Wordwall's benefits were accessible to all students despite device and connectivity limitations.

The findings also underscore that effective digital learning depends on more than platform quality. Physical classroom conditions, infrastructural support, and teacher instructional creativity are equally decisive variables. Schools seeking to integrate Wordwall or similar platforms should invest in complementary physical improvements, including adequate window coverings for projection quality, and provide ongoing professional development to equip teachers with both the technical and pedagogical competencies required for inclusive digital instruction.

Beyond its practical implications, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on gamification in citizenship education by providing context-specific evidence from an Indonesian junior secondary school. The findings suggest that digital game-based learning platforms can support not only cognitive learning outcomes but also the development of positive attitudes toward civic learning. By creating a more engaging and participatory classroom environment, Wordwall has the potential to help students connect civic concepts with meaningful learning experiences, thereby strengthening the overall quality of PPKn instruction.

Future research should examine the long-term impact of Wordwall use on PPKn learning outcomes through experimental or quasi-experimental designs, and should explore student perspectives more systematically through focused group interviews or survey instruments. Comparative studies across schools with differing levels of digital infrastructure would also contribute valuable insights into the conditions that maximize

or constrain Wordwall's educational effectiveness in the Indonesian secondary school context.

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