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# Evidence from a UTAUT2 perspective on learners' acceptance and behavioural use of an Educational Digital Platform: Hedonic motivation and habit as determinants

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## ABSTRACT

Although there have been significant investments in educational technologies, their usage among school learners remains inadequate, underscoring the necessity to comprehend the factors that are associated with technology acceptance. This study investigated the relationship between hedonic motivation and habit and Grade 10 learners' behavioral intention to use the Educational Digital Platform (EDP) of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), using the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT). Data was gathered from 1483 Grade 10 secondary school learners in Gauteng Province, South Africa, using a quantitative cross-sectional survey approach. The data was analysed using the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis and descriptive statistics. The findings revealed that learners' behavioural intention to use the EDP was positively and strongly correlated with both habit ($r = 0.450$, $p < 0.001$) and hedonic motivation ( $r = 0.492$, $p < 0.001$), with hedonic motivation showing a somewhat greater correlation. According to the research, learners are more likely to embrace the educational technology if they find it entertaining and if using it becomes ingrained in their regular study habits. By expanding the use of UTAUT2 to South African no-fee-paying secondary schools, which is a setting that is under-represented in educational technology research, this study advances scholarship. The study offers context-specific evidence that can guide the development, deployment, and sustainability of the complementary roles of hedonic motivation and habit in influencing learners' behavioural intention.

**Keywords:** Behavioural Intention, Educational Digital Platform, Educational Technology Adoption, Habit, Hedonic Motivation.

## INTRODUCTION

The accelerated digitisation of education has completely changed teaching and learning through increasing access to educational resources, increased learner engagement, and facilitating flexible and customised learning experiences. Governments and educational institutions worldwide were prompted to make significant investments in digital infrastructure. The investment targeted enhancing the quality

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of education and securing fair access to learning opportunities through the development of learning management systems, educational digital platforms, artificial intelligence, and mobile learning technologies. As a result, educational technology is becoming a major force behind educational innovation and a crucial tool for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4, which supports universal access to high-quality, inclusive education.[1] According to Venkatesh et al. and Fourie et al., despite these advancements, comprehending the elements that affect learners' adoption and continued usage of educational technologies remains a crucial research priority.[2]

Despite the sporadic access to educational technology, its application is still inconsistent in many educational contexts. Since learners' behavioural intentions are influenced by cognitive, motivational, and behavioural aspects, research shows that investments in digital infrastructure may not always lead to meaningful technology adoption.[3] Contrary to their acknowledged educational value, online learning platforms, mobile learning systems, artificial intelligence applications, and other digital learning technologies continue to see lower-than-expected levels of sustained use.[4] These results imply that a deeper comprehension of the fundamental elements that encourage learners to interact with digital learning environments is necessary to enhance the adoption of educational technology.

In many African education systems, notably South Africa, where governments have made significant investments in ICT-enabled teaching and learning, the problem of educational technology underutilisation is especially noticeable. To increase learners' access to curriculum-aligned digital resources and encourage technology-enhanced learning, programmes like the Educational Digital Platform (EDP) of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) were implemented in South Africa. Evidence, however, indicates that despite these investments, the use of educational technologies is still disproportionate.[5] This gap between learner use and technology availability suggests that educational technology implementation requires knowledge of the behavioural factors that promote long-term adoption in addition to access.

According to UTAUT2, behavioural intention is significantly influenced by hedonic motivation and habit.[6] Although UTAUT2 has been utilised in recent research to study the adoption of educational technology,[7] the majority of these studies have either focused on the entire UTAUT2 model or concentrated on higher education. As a result, there is little empirical data on how hedonic motivation

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[1] UNESCO., *Global Education Monitoring Report 2023: Technology in Education: A Tool on Whose Terms?* (GEM Report UNESCO, 2023), https://doi.org/10.54676/UZQV8501.

[2] Viswanath Venkatesh, James Y. L. Thong, and Xin Xu, "Consumer Acceptance and Use of Information Technology: Extending the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology1," *MIS Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (March 1, 2012): 157–78, https://doi.org/10.2307/41410412; Katherine L Fourie, Jameson Goto, and Geoffrey Lautenbach, "Unlocking the Potential of Large Language Models in Education: Factors Influencing Adoption by Instructional Designers and Academics," *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research* 25 (2026): 02, https://doi.org/10.28945/5693.

[3] Fred D Davis, "Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and User Acceptance of Information Technology," *MIS Quarterly* 13, no. 3 (1989): 319–40; Venkatesh, Thong, and Xu, "Consumer Acceptance and Use of Information Technology: Extending the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology1."

[4] Abdulaziz Alanazi et al., "Exploring Mobile Learning Adoption in Higher Education: A UTAUT2-Based Study with Technostress and Exhaustion as Mediators in Student Engagement," *Sustainability* 18, no. 3 (January 29, 2026): 1353, https://doi.org/10.3390/su18031353; Puneet Kumar Gupta, Swati Raturi, and Artur Strzelecki, "Determinants of Educational Technology Adoption among University Teachers: Extending the UTAUT Framework," *Discover Education* 5, no. 1 (February 11, 2026): 199, https://doi.org/10.1007/s44217-026-01192-8; Hao Zheng et al., "Factors Influencing Behavioral Intention to Use E-Learning in Higher Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Meta-Analytic Review Based on the UTAUT2 Model," *Education and Information Technologies* 30, no. 9 (2025): 12015–53.

[5] L. Fourie, Goto, and Lautenbach, "Unlocking the Potential of Large Language Models in Education: Factors Influencing Adoption by Instructional Designers and Academics"; Thabo Mhlongo, Jeanne Kriek, and Patricia Gouws, "Guiding Principles for the Integration of Smartboards in Grade 12 Classrooms at a Soshanguve Secondary School," *African Journal of Teacher Education and Development* 5, no. 1 (January 27, 2026), https://doi.org/10.4102/AJOTED.v5i1.109.

[6] Venkatesh, Thong, and Xu, "Consumer Acceptance and Use of Information Technology: Extending the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology1."

[7] Benicio Gonzalo Acosta-Enriquez et al., "Acceptance of Artificial Intelligence as a Teaching Strategy Among University Professors: The Role of Habit, Hedonic Motivation, and Competence for Technology Integration," *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies* 2025, no. 1 (January 31, 2025), https://doi.org/10.1155/hbe2/5933157; Gupta, Raturi, and Strzelecki, "Determinants of Educational Technology Adoption among University Teachers: Extending the UTAUT Framework"; Alanazi et al., "Exploring Mobile Learning Adoption in Higher Education: A UTAUT2-Based Study with Technostress and Exhaustion as Mediators in Student Engagement."

and habit affect learners' behavioural intention to use educational technologies in South African no-fee secondary schools.

In light of this, this study used the GDE-initiated EDP to investigate the relationships between hedonic motivation, habit, and behavioural intentions among Grade 10 learners. By applying the UTAUT2 to an understudied school setting and offering empirical data on how intrinsic motivating factors play a role in learners' behavioural intention to use educational technology, the study advances educational technology scholarship. The results also provide useful insights for school leadership and education authorities who want to optimise learners' engagement and encourage the long-term usage of EDP.

Based on this background, the study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. **RQ1:** What effect does hedonic motivation have on learners' behavioural intention to use educational technology?
2. **RQ2:** How do habits affect learners' behavioural intention to use educational technology?

By addressing understudied experiential and behavioural elements in situations where technology is accessible but underutilised, these questions seek to uncover learner-centred determinants of educational technology uptake.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Comprehending learners' acceptance of educational technology necessitates a thorough analysis of the behavioural and motivational aspects that have a bearing on their intention to utilise digital learning platforms. As a result, this section examines behavioural intention, hedonic motivation, and habit within the UTAUT2 framework in order to review the literature supporting the study. It highlights areas of convergence and divergence in earlier research, synthesises information from African and worldwide studies, and underscores the knowledge gap that calls for the current study.

### Behavioural Intention towards Educational Technology

Behavioural intention denotes an individual's deliberate readiness or purpose to use a specific technology and is acknowledged as the precursor to real technology usage.[8] Behavioural intention is a trustworthy measure of learners' preparedness to accept and stick with digital learning technologies in educational technology research. According to the UTAUT2 framework, behavioural intention is the paramount factor that is impacted by behavioural, motivational, and cognitive elements. Recent empirical studies reveal that educational digital tools such as learning management systems, mobile learning apps, artificial intelligence (AI) tools, and online learning platforms are more likely to be embraced by learners with stronger behavioural intentions.[9] In a similar vein, behavioural intention continues to be one of the most reliable indicators of educational technology acceptance in a variety of learning situations, according to Yan and Jafri's meta-analysis of generative AI adoption in educational systems.[10]

Notwithstanding this consensus, behavioural intention does not invariably result in sustained utililisation of technology, especially in developing countries. Despite having good intentions, African studies show that learners' ability to use educational technologies is frequently confronted by poor infrastructure, inconsistent internet connectivity, limited access to digital devices, and unequal digital opportunities.[11] These findings suggest that behavioural intention should be investigated in conjunction

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[8] Davis, "Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and User Acceptance of Information Technology"; Venkatesh, Thong, and Xu, "Consumer Acceptance and Use of Information Technology: Extending the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology1."

[9] Zheng et al., "Factors Influencing Behavioral Intention to Use E-Learning in Higher Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Meta-Analytic Review Based on the UTAUT2 Model"; Gupta, Raturi, and Strzelecki, "Determinants of Educational Technology Adoption among University Teachers: Extending the UTAUT Framework."

[10] Chang Yan Yan and Nuraini Binti Jafri, "Factors Influencing the Intention to Use Generative Artificial Intelligence in Educational Systems: A Meta-Analysis," *BMC Psychology* 14, no. 1 (January 22, 2026): 308, https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-026-03957-0.

[11] Bolaji David Oladokun et al., "E-Learning in the Post-COVID Era: Undergraduate Students' Experience in Nigerian Universities," *Howard Journal of Communications* 37, no. 1 (January 24, 2026): 150–70, https://doi.org/10.1080/10646175.2024.2420115; Samuel Chinaza Agoha, "Managing Challenges and Strategies for Enhancing Procurement and Utilization of Modern Technology for

with behavioural and intrinsic motivating elements that support learners' regular use of educational technologies.

**Hedonic Motivation**

Hedonic motivation denotes the excitement, fun, pleasure, or amusement derived from utilising a technology and constitutes one of the intrinsic motivational structures presented in UTAUT2.[12] Hedonic motivation acknowledges that good emotional experiences help learners to adopt and continue utilising digital technologies, in contrast to extrinsic motivators that highlight performance gains or utility. Enjoyment has emerged as a key factor in determining technology acceptance as educational technologies progressively integrate gamification, multimedia, interactive material, and AI-supported learning environments.

Prior empirical research consistently indicates a positive correlation between hedonic motivation and behavioural intention. According to Acosta-Enriquez et al., university lecturers' acceptance of AI as a pedagogical tool was strongly influenced by enjoyment.[13] Similarly, Oktora et al. found that learners were more likely to stick with online learning environments if they thought they were entertaining.[14] Similar results have been reported for ChatGPT adoption, mobile learning, and AI-supported learning environments, indicating that learners are more likely to adopt educational technologies when the learning experience is fun and engaging.[15]

Nonetheless, conflicting viewpoints suggest that hedonic motivation might not necessarily be the primary factor influencing technological adoption. Or contends that when learners view technology largely as an academic requirement rather than a voluntary learning tool, the impact of enjoyment may decrease.[16] Performance expectancy and facilitating conditions may take precedence over enjoyment in mandatory educational environments. Additionally, there is still a dearth of information from African school contexts, with most of the research that has been conducted thus far concentrating on higher education or developing technology. As a result, little is known about whether hedonic motivation influences behavioural intention in South African secondary school learners in a similar manner.

**Habit**

Habit denotes the degree to which the use of technology becomes automatic due to repeated exposure.[17] In UTAUT2, habit is acknowledged as a significant factor influencing sustained technology usage, as recurrent encounters diminish cognitive exertion and promote habitual engagement with technology. Technology use progressively becomes ingrained in learners' daily learning activities as they gain familiarity with digital platforms.

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Effective Teaching in Secondary Schools in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State," *International Journal of Institutional Leadership, Policy and Management* 7, no. 1 (2025): 94–105; Felicia Bosede Bamire, "Utilization Of ICT Tools In The Supervision Of Teaching And Learning Processes In Public Secondary Schools In Osun State, Nigeria," *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies* 17, no. 2 (2026): 53–62.

[12] Venkatesh, Thong, and Xu, "Consumer Acceptance and Use of Information Technology: Extending the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology1."

[13] Acosta-Enriquez et al., "Acceptance of Artificial Intelligence as a Teaching Strategy Among University Professors: The Role of Habit, Hedonic Motivation, and Competence for Technology Integration."

[14] Tasha Dwi Oktora et al., "The Influence of Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Hedonic Motivation, and Price Value on Students' Behavioral Intention to Use Online Courses at Universitas Negeri Jakarta," *Journal of Strategic Marketing and Innovation* 2, no. 1 (2026).

[15] Wei Wei, Yue Xu, and Zhimin Wang, "CSL Learners' Acceptance and Use of ChatGPT: An Extended Technology Readiness and Technology Acceptance Model," *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 13, no. 1 (January 8, 2026): 154, https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-025-06452-w; Alanazi et al., "Exploring Mobile Learning Adoption in Higher Education: A UTAUT2-Based Study with Technostress and Exhaustion as Mediators in Student Engagement"; Waleed Mugahed Al-Rahmi et al., "Investigating the Adoption of AI-Based MOOCS as A SMART Digital Learning Environment: Using SEM Analysis Approach," *Scientific Culture* 12, no. 2, Part 1 (2026): 556.

[16] Caleb Or, "Theoretical Convergence or Complexity? Integrating Task-Technology Fit into Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 for Educational Technology Adoption </B>," *International Journal of Technology in Education and Science* 10, no. 1 (January 1, 2026): 53–70, https://doi.org/10.46328/ijtes.5181.

[17] Venkatesh, Thong, and Xu, "Consumer Acceptance and Use of Information Technology: Extending the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology1."

Numerous empirical studies have validated the significance of habit in the adoption of educational technology. According to Acosta-Enriquez et al., one of the best indicators of university academics' acceptance of AI is habit.[18] Similarly, Modaso et al. showed that consumers' continuing adoption of digital platforms was substantially influenced by habitual technology use.[19] According to Alanazi et al., learners who consistently used mobile learning technology showed higher levels of engagement and stronger behavioural intentions.[20] According to these results, learners' confidence is strengthened, and their chances of long-term adoption are increased when they use technology frequently.

However, conflicting evidence indicates that the establishment of habitual technology usage relies on ongoing opportunities to engage with educational digital tools. Learners' chances to form a habit of using technology are diminished in many African schools due to inadequate ICT infrastructure, uneven internet connectivity, and unequal resource allocation.[21] As a result, conclusions drawn from educational environments with ample resources do not always apply to public schools with limited resources. Relatively little empirical research has looked at the relationship between habit and behavioural intention among South African secondary school learners utilising government-supported educational digital platforms, despite growing interest in the use of educational technology. Closing this gap is crucial because encouraging the long-term usage of educational digital tools beyond initial acceptance may require habitual engagement.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Theoretical Framework

This research is based on the extended Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2) formulated by Venkatesh et al.[22] In order to provide a more thorough explanation of people's behavioural intention and technology use, UTAUT2 expands on the original UTAUT model by adding hedonic motivation, price value, and habit. Because it successfully explains learners' adoption and ongoing use of digital learning devices across a variety of educational contexts, the framework has been extensively used in educational technology research.[23]

This study focuses on habit and hedonic motivation as UTAUT2 constructs that determine behavioural intention. According to Venkatesh et al., hedonic motivation is the pleasure or delight that learners get from making use of the educational technology, whereas habit is the degree to which technology use becomes habitual as a result of regular use.[24] Prior research has consistently demonstrated that learners are more likely to show stronger behavioural intentions to continue using digital learning platforms if they enjoy using educational technologies and develop habitual technology use patterns.[25] Nevertheless, there is still little data on these relationships among secondary school learners, especially in South African public secondary schools.

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[18] Acosta-Enriquez et al., "Acceptance of Artificial Intelligence as a Teaching Strategy Among University Professors: The Role of Habit, Hedonic Motivation, and Competence for Technology Integration."

[19] Paske V. Modaso, Meyliza H. Dalughu, and Injilia W.G Wua, "Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, and Habits in E-Wallet Adoption: Extended UTAUT2 Testing on Generation Z Consumers in Manado," *Journal of Management and Administration Provision* 5, no. 3 (September 16, 2025): 399–408, https://doi.org/10.55885/jmap.v5i3.682.

[20] Alanazi et al., "Exploring Mobile Learning Adoption in Higher Education: A UTAUT2-Based Study with Technostress and Exhaustion as Mediators in Student Engagement."

[21] Geoffrey Ukala et al., "Exploration Of Teachers'utilization Of Basic Educational Software For The Teaching Of Sciences In Delta State," *Stem Journal Of Anambra Stan* 5, no. 2 (2025): 59–70; Oladokun et al., "E-Learning in the Post-COVID Era: Undergraduate Students' Experience in Nigerian Universities."

[22] Venkatesh, Thong, and Xu, "Consumer Acceptance and Use of Information Technology: Extending the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology1."

[23] Gupta, Raturi, and Strzelecki, "Determinants of Educational Technology Adoption among University Teachers: Extending the UTAUT Framework"; Or, "Theoretical Convergence or Complexity? Integrating Task-Technology Fit into Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 for Educational Technology Adoption </B>"

[24] Venkatesh, Thong, and Xu, "Consumer Acceptance and Use of Information Technology: Extending the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology1."

[25] Acosta-Enriquez et al., "Acceptance of Artificial Intelligence as a Teaching Strategy Among University Professors: The Role of Habit, Hedonic Motivation, and Competence for Technology Integration"; Alanazi et al., "Exploring Mobile Learning Adoption in Higher Education: A UTAUT2-Based Study with Technostress and Exhaustion as Mediators in Student Engagement"; Zheng et al.,

Consequently, UTAUT2 offers a suitable theoretical framework for analysing the relationship that hedonic motivation and habit have on Grade 10 learners' intention to use the GDE-initiated EDP. As a result, the theory serves as a basis for answering the research questions of the study and informs the conceptual model.

**The conceptual Model of educational technology use by learners**

The conceptual model of how learners use educational technology is depicted in Figure 1 below. By illustrating the relationship of hedonic motivation and habit on behavioural intention as well as the potential role of enjoyment on habitual engagement, the model grounds the investigation in UTAUT 2.

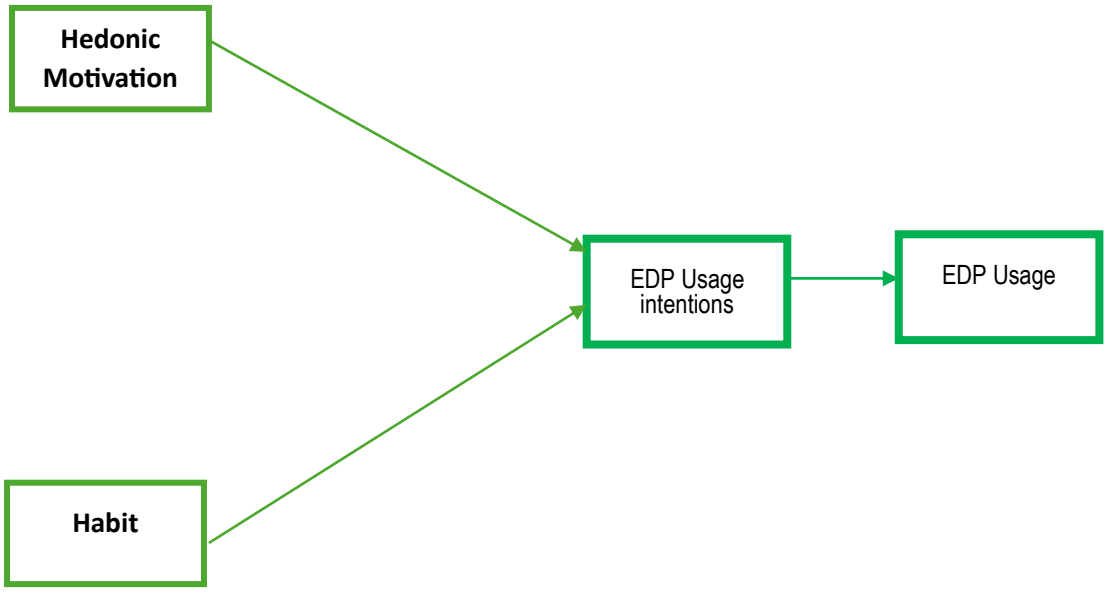


*Figure 1. Conceptual framework illustrating the proposed relationships among hedonic motivation, habit, and learners' behavioural intention to use the Educational Digital Platform. Adapted from Venkatesh et al.*

The conceptual model states that learners' behavioural intentions to adopt educational technology are primarily influenced by two factors: habit and hedonic motivation. Hedonic motivation, which captures affective engagement and intrinsic motivation, can directly increase learners' willingness to use technology. Habit is a reflection of frequent and automatic interactions with educational digital resources, and routine engagement strengthens behavioural intention. The model also acknowledges the potential for a reinforcing role, whereby favourable experiences could strengthen habitual use and encourage adoption even further. This method, which is based on UTAUT2, explains underutilisation in educational settings by combining local, continental, and global empirical observations.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study used a cross-sectional survey design and a quantitative research methodology. The design was deemed suitable for descriptive analysis of the hedonic motivation, habit, and the behavioural intention constructs linked to ICT utilization in secondary school contexts and for investigating learners' adoption of the EDP. To achieve the goals of the study, descriptive statistical methods were used.

"Factors Influencing Behavioral Intention to Use E-Learning in Higher Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Meta-Analytic Review Based on the UTAUT2 Model."

**Research Context and Participants**

The investigation was carried out in eight South African secondary schools that were purposively chosen. The schools were chosen based on their involvement in the Educational Digital Platform (EDP) program, which was started by the Gauteng Provincial Education Department (GPEDU). Since Grade 10 learners represent a crucial stage in secondary school where ICT use is anticipated to help curriculum delivery and evaluation, they made up the target group. Instead of a sampled subset, a census of the accessible population was produced by including all Grade 10 learners in the participating schools.The study involved 1,518 learners in all eight secondary schools in the selected districts within the province. 1,483 valid questionnaires were kept for statistical analysis following data screening and the elimination of incomplete responses.

**Research Instrument**

A structured, self-administered questionnaire based on validated instruments from the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT/UTAUT2) framework was used to gather data. The questionnaire examined the ICT adoption-related factors of hedonic motivation and habit. For Likert items about hedonic motivation and habit, means and standard deviations were collected using a six-point Likert scale. Respondents used this to rate the given statements on a scale of 1 to 6 in order to evaluate these questions. The items can be used as constructs for predicting technology acceptance or as independent behavioural variables. The scales were combined into "Agree/Strongly Agree" and "Disagree/Strongly Disagree" to facilitate interpretation.

**Data Collection Procedure**

Data collection was done during regular school hours with the guidance and direction of the School Management Team (SMT). Learners were made aware of the study's objectives, given the assurance of anonymity and secrecy, and told that participation was entirely voluntary. Data protection and informed consent ethics were closely adhered to.

**Data Reliability**

Using SPSS software version 31, Cronbach's alpha was used in this study to assess the reliability and consistency of the multiple-item scale. Dependability of the entire scale (see Appendix A Total-Items Statistics for more information). To ascertain whether the items in this questionnaire assess the same variable, a Cronbach's alpha analysis was conducted using the undented survey instruments from 1483 individuals.

**Table 1: Internal Consistency Reliability of the Study Instrument (N = 1,483)**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Number of Items |
|---|---|
| 0.822 | 9 |

Furthermore, Table 3 shows that all constructs had Cronbach's alpha values between 0.644 and 0.779. Therefore, it was determined that all constructs had achieved internal consistency.

**Table 2: Internal Consistency Reliability of the Measurement Constructs (N = 1,483)**

| Constructs | Number of Items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|---|
| Hedonic Motivation (HM) | 3 | 0.722 |
| Habit (H) | 3 | 0.608 |
| Behavioural Intentions (BI) | 3 | 0.779 |

**Data Analysis**

IBM SPSS Statistics was used for data analysis. Learners' behavioural intentions to use the educational technology were summed up using descriptive statistics.

## PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The findings are articulated in accordance with the study's research questions. The reliability of the measurement instrument was presented first, and then the study constructs' descriptive statistics. The relationships between hedonic motivation, habit, and behavioural intention to utilise the GDE-initiated EDP are examined using Pearson's correlation analysis.

### Hedonic Motivation

The influence of participants' motivation or desire to use the GDE-initiated EDP is displayed in Table 6.6 below. This determines whether learners found the GDE-initiated EDP to be enjoyable (HM1), fun (HM2), or delightful (HM3).

The concept of pleasure in this study is conceptualised within the more general framework of HM, which describes the level of intrinsic happiness or enjoyment a person feels when utilising a technological system.[26] Pleasure in the context of the GDE-initiated EDP refers to the sensation of engagement, fulfilment, or interest that results from using the platform in a purposeful and encouraging learning environment rather than enjoyment or amusement. Even if the EDP is primarily intended for academic objectives, learners who find the platform entertaining and engaging are more likely to establish good attitudes and sustained behavioural intentions towards its continuous use; therefore, this kind of intrinsic satisfaction is still crucial.

**Table 3: Learners' perceptions of Hedonic Motivation on ICT utilisation (N = 1,483)**

| Item | | Strongly Disagree/ Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree/ Strongly Agree | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HM1 | Count | 155 | 68 | 268 | 992 | 4.62 | 1.297 |
| | Row N % | 10.5% | 4.6% | 18.1% | 66.8% | | |
| HM2 | Count | 122 | 64 | 248 | 1049 | 4.72 | 1.213 |
| | Row N % | 8.2% | 4.3% | 16.7% | 70.8% | | |
| HM3 | Count | 200 | 107 | 258 | 918 | 4.45 | 1.357 |
| | Row N % | 13.5% | 7.2% | 17.4% | 61.9% | | |

**Note:** HM1- Using the offline version of the GDE-initiated Digital Content Platform for my studies was fun
HM2- Using the GDE-initiated Educational Digital Platform for my studies was enjoyable
HM3- I derive a lot of pleasure from using the GDE-initiated Educational Digital Platform

With a mean score of 4.72 and a standard deviation of 1.213, which is somewhat more than one point, allowing for reasonable deviations, the results demonstrate that 1049 (70.8%) respondents found using the GDE-initiated EDP for their studies to be enjoyable. In reference to the HM1 responses, 992 (66.8%) respondents indicated that they found using the EDP that the GDE initiated for their studies to be either very or agreeable. This is also based on a mean score of 4.62 and a standard deviation of 1.297, or just over one point, to account for reasonable deviations. Regarding item HM3, 918 (61.9%) respondents firmly concluded that they greatly like using the GDE-initiated EDP for their research. The responses fell within acceptable limits, with an average of 4.45 and a standard deviation of 1.357.

### Habit of Learners' Behavioural Use of the EDP

Table 6.8 shows recurring behaviour patterns that usually occur spontaneously. This entails determining if learners believe they can use the EDP for all their studies (H2), whether using the EDP for their studies has become second nature to them (H3), and whether using the EDP has become a habit for them (H1). This table determines whether learners adhere to any predetermined protocols when utilising the EDP that is pre-installed on the tablets that the GDE allocated to them.

[26] Venkatesh, Thong, and Xu, "Consumer Acceptance and Use of Information Technology: Extending the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology1."

**Table 4: Learners' perceptions of habit in ICT utilisation (N = 1,483)**

| | | Strongly Disagree/ Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree/ Strongly Agree | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H1 | Count | 357 | 107 | 293 | 748 | 4.07 | 1.494 |
| | Row N % | 22.6% | 7.2% | 19.8% | 50.5% | | |
| H2 | Count | 127 | 61 | 195 | 1100 | 4.83 | 1.255 |
| | Row N % | 8.6% | 4.1% | 13.1% | 74.2% | | |
| H3 | Count | 210 | 85 | 292 | 896 | 4.43 | 1.373 |
| | Row N % | 14.2% | 5.7% | 19.7% | 60.4% | | |

**Note.** H1- The use of the GDE-initiated Educational Digital Platform has become a habit for me
H2- I feel I must use the GDE-initiated Educational Digital Platform for all my studies
H3- Using the GDE-initiated Educational Digital Platform for my studies has become natural for me

Regarding item H2, 1,100 respondents (74.2%) agreed or strongly agreed that the GDE's EDP should be incorporated into all their studies. With an average mean score of 4.83 and a standard deviation of 1.255, the responses varied by more than one point from the mean. In a similar vein, the results for item H3 show that 896 respondents (60.4%) agreed or strongly agreed that using the GDE-initiated EDP in their studies has become second nature.

A mean score of 4.43 and a standard deviation of 1.373, which indicate moderate variation in respondents' perceptions, further corroborate this conclusion. Furthermore, 748 respondents (50.5%) indicated that they would be prepared to continue utilising the EDP that the GDE introduced in response to item H4, indicating a positive behavioural intention. A mean score of 4.07, which supports the general trend of acceptance and integration of the EDP into learners' study routines, validates this goal.

**Behavioural Intentions (BI)**

The examination of learners' intentions (BI1), predictions (BI2), and plans (BI3) to use the EDP for their studies is displayed in Table 5.

**Table 5: Learners' behavioural intentions to use the EDP (N = 1,483)**

| | | Strongly Disagree/ Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree/ Strongly Agree | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BI1 | Count | 103 | 40 | 151 | 1189 | 4.89 | 1.137 |
| | Row N % | 6.9% | 2.7% | 10.2% | 80.2% | | |
| BI2 | Count | 101 | 45 | 195 | 1142 | 4.86 | 1.106 |
| | Row N % | 6.8% | 3.0% | 13.1% | 77.0% | | |
| BI3 | Count | 85 | 40 | 175 | 1183 | 5.00 | 1.101 |
| | Row N % | 5.7% | 2.7% | 11.8% | 79.8% | | |

**Note.** BI1- I intend to use the GDE-initiated Educational Digital Platform in my studies
BI2- I can predict that I will use the GDE-initiated Educational Digital Platform in my studies
BI3- I plan to use the GDE-initiated Educational Digital Platform in my studies

Regarding item BI1, 1189 respondents (80.2%) indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that they intend to use the EDP that the GDE initiated in their study. The mean answer score of 4.89 and the standard deviation of 1.137 show that the responses deviated from the mean by more than one point. Regarding BI3, 1183 respondents (79.8%) indicated that they agreed and strongly agreed that they intended to employ the EDP that the GDE had initiated. Most respondents had the intent to utilise the EDP, according to the mean score of 5.00, while the standard deviation of 1.101 demonstrates that

responses range slightly from the mean score. Additionally, according to the evaluation of item BI2, 1142 (77.0%) respondents were able to predict with confidence that they would use the EDP that the GDE initiated. The mean score of 4.86 confirmed this.

**Relationships Between Hedonic Motivation, Habit, and Behavioural Intention**

A Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between hedonic motivation, habit, and learners' behavioural intention to use the Educational Digital Platform (EDP). The findings are presented in Table 6

**Table 6: Correlation Analysis of Hedonic Motivation, Habit, and Learners' Behavioural Intention to Use the Educational Digital Platform**

| Research Question | Relationship | Pearson's r | p-value | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| RQ1 | between Hedonic Motivation and Behavioural intentions | 0.492 | < 0.001 | Moderate positive, statistically significant relationship |
| RQ2 | between Habit and Behavioural intentions | 0.450 | < 0.001 | Moderate positive, statistically significant relationship |

**Note**. N = 1,483. Pearson correlation coefficients were interpreted according to Cohen's (1988) guidelines.

**RQ1: What effect does hedonic motivation have on learners' behavioural intention to use educational technology?**

A moderate favourable and statistically significant relationship between hedonic motivation and behavioural intention was shown by the correlation analysis ($r = 0.492$, $p < 0.001$). According to this research, learners who expressed greater degrees of pleasure and happiness when using the EDP were more likely to say that they intended to keep using the platform. The moderate strength of the relationship implies that while hedonic motivation is a significant contributing factor of behavioural intention, it is not the sole factor playing a vital role on learners' intentions, suggesting that technology adoption may also be influenced by other variables within the UTAUT framework.

**RQ2: How do habits affect learners' behavioural intention to use educational technology?**

Similarly, habit and behavioural intention were found to have a moderately favourable and statistically significant association ($r = 0.450$, $p < 0.001$). This finding implies that learners who had become accustomed to utilising the EDP on a regular or automated basis were more likely to show greater intentions to continue using the platform. Even though the correlation is marginally smaller than that found for hedonic motivation, it still shows that learners' intentions to use educational technology are significantly associated with habitual engagement.

Overall, the results show that learners' behavioural intention to use the EDP is positively correlated with both hedonic motivation and habit. Interestingly, hedonic motivation showed a somewhat better correlation with behavioural intention ($r = 0.492$) than habit ( $r = 0.450$), indicating that learners' satisfaction with the platform can have a somewhat greater impact on promoting continuing use. These results offer empirical backing for the UTAUT2 framework, which recognises habit and hedonic motivation as significant factors influencing behavioural intention.

## DISCUSSION

This study examined the relationship between hedonic motivation and Grade 10 learners' behavioural intention, and between habit and Grade 10 learners' behavioural intentions to use the GDE-initiated EDP. The study, guided by the UTAUT2, aimed to ascertain whether learners' willingness to keep using the EDP was related to how much they enjoyed the platform and how frequently they used it. Although the strength of these associations varies, the results offer empirical evidence that both habit and hedonic

motivation are substantial determinants of learners' behavioural intention. The research questions guide the presentation of the discussion.

**Research Question 1:** What effect does hedonic motivation have on learners' behavioural intention to use educational technology?

The analysis revealed that learners' behavioural intention to use the EDP and hedonic motivation had a moderately favourable and statistically significant association ($r = 0.492$, $p < 0.001$). This implies that learners were more likely to express stronger intentions to keep using the EDP if they felt more pleasure, satisfaction, and enjoyment while interacting with it. The results show that learners' emotional experiences have a significant role in their adoption of technology, even though the relationship was moderate rather than strong.

The UTAUT2 framework, which recognises hedonic motivation as an underlying predictor of behavioural intention, is theoretically consistent with this result.[27] According to UTAUT2, individuals are more likely to embrace technology that they find delightful because their willingness to interact with it is reinforced by positive emotional experiences. In the context of this study, enjoyment seems to go beyond amusement; it represents learners' favourable experiences navigating the EDP, gaining access to educational resources, and completing the educational tasks. These encounters might lessen reluctance to use technology and promote consistent interaction with the platform.

Additionally, the moderate strength of the relationship implies that learners' behavioural intention cannot be explained by enjoyment alone. Despite their acknowledgement of the platform, learners may still face contextual obstacles that prevent them from continuing to use it, such as unreliable internet connectivity, a lack of devices, or inadequate support. Therefore, even if hedonic motivation makes a significant contribution to learners' behavioural intention, it should be seen as one element of a larger set of factors associated with the adoption of educational technology.

The findings presented here support those of Oktora et al., who discovered that university students' intention to use the online courses was highly associated with hedonic motivation.[28] Similarly, Acosta-Enriquez et al. showed that hedonic motivation was significantly associated with academics' acceptance of AI as a pedagogical tool,[29] while Alanazi et al. reported that enjoyment positively contributed to learners' adoption of mobile learning technologies.[30] Additionally, Yan and Jafri reported through a meta-analysis that users' intention to use generative AI in educational settings is consistently predicted by intrinsic motivation.[31] Collectively, these findings imply that favourable emotional experiences continue to be a significant factor in determining technology acceptability in a variety of educational settings.

Despite these comparisons, the current study adds to the body of knowledge by presenting data from South African no-fee-paying secondary schools, a setting that is still under-represented in studies on educational technology. Learners in resource-constrained public secondary schools may encounter infrastructure constraints that affect technology adoption, in contrast to much earlier research carried out in higher education or technologically advanced settings. Even in situations where resources are limited, learners' willingness to adopt digital learning platforms can be strengthened by creating educational technologies that are engaging, interactive, and learner-centred, as evidenced by the finding that hedonic motivation remained a significant correlate despite these contextual challenges.

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[27] Venkatesh, Thong, and Xu, "Consumer Acceptance and Use of Information Technology: Extending the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology1"; Chrystyna Misiewicz and Jolanta Tkaczyk, "Understanding Hedonic Motivation in The Context of Smart Transportation," *Organizacja I Zarz Dzanie* 73 (2025).

[28] Oktora et al., "The Influence of Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Hedonic Motivation, and Price Value on Students' Behavioral Intention to Use Online Courses at Universitas Negeri Jakarta."

[29] Acosta-Enriquez et al., "Acceptance of Artificial Intelligence as a Teaching Strategy Among University Professors: The Role of Habit, Hedonic Motivation, and Competence for Technology Integration."

[30] Alanazi et al., "Exploring Mobile Learning Adoption in Higher Education: A UTAUT2-Based Study with Technostress and Exhaustion as Mediators in Student Engagement."

[31] Yan Yan and Jafri, "Factors Influencing the Intention to Use Generative Artificial Intelligence in Educational Systems: A Meta-Analysis."

From a practical standpoint, the results suggest that educational technology initiatives should focus on more than just functionality status. Developers and educational authorities should include features that improve learner engagement, such as interactive activities, gamified aspects, customised learning experiences, and instant feedback mechanisms, even though dependable information delivery is still crucial. These qualities are likely to boost learners' satisfaction and promote ongoing, voluntary usage of educational technologies.

**Research Question 2:** How do habits affect learners' behavioural intention to use educational technology?

Additionally, the study found a statistically significant and moderately favourable association between learners' behavioural intention to use the EDP and habit ($r = 0.450$, $p < 0.001$). According to this research, learners who had become accustomed to using the EDP on a regular or automated basis were more likely to have greater intentions to continue using the platform. Habit was found to be a significant predictor of behavioural intentions, even if the link was somewhat smaller than that seen for hedonic motivation.

UTAUT2 states that habit is a measure of how much technology use has become routine as a result of prior experiences. The cognitive work needed to access and use a digital platform decreases when learners interact with it on a regular basis. According to the current findings, learners who engaged with the EDP on a regular basis had moved past initial acceptance and toward more established habits of technology use. Thus, learners' intentions to continue with the use of the platform over time seem to be reinforced by habitual involvement.

Additionally, the moderate correlation suggests that regular use is not automatic but rather develops over time. Regular use of technology in classrooms depends on curricular integration, teacher support, ongoing exposure, and recurrent access to digital resources. Therefore, when platform use gets ingrained in regular learning activities, learners' continuous behavioural intention is likely to strengthen, even though they may initially plan to use the platform because they enjoy it.

These findings are in line with prior studies that emphasised the significance of habit in the adoption of technology. While Modaso et al. showed that habit is positively associated with Gen Z users' significant factor of academics' acceptance of AI in higher education.[32] Alamrani also discovered that learners' intention to continue using learning management systems was strongly associated with habit, highlighting the fact that consistent use promotes long-term adoption of technology.[33] All of these studies point to habit as a strong factor of sustained technology use in various digital contexts.

However, by showing that regular technology use also affects behavioural intention among learners attending South African no-fee-paying secondary schools, the current study adds to our understanding. Unlike many worldwide studies carried out in universities or other schools with adequate resources, learners in this setting can encounter disruptions in their access to digital infrastructure. Regular exposure to educational technologies through classroom practice may help build sustainable habits of technology use, as seen by the result that habit remained significantly connected with behavioural intention despite these contextual realities.

From a practical standpoint, the findings underline the need for establishing the possibilities for consistent and continuous use of educational tools. Instead of using the EDP solely for sporadic enrichment, educators and school leadership should incorporate it into regular teaching and learning activities. Learners' intentions to continue using educational technology are likely to be strengthened by regular classroom use, structured digital tasks, and ongoing learner engagement.

## Theoretical Interpretation

Collectively, hedonic motivation and habit show how UTAUT2 has a complementary dynamic. Initial engagement and a favourable attitude toward the EDP seem to be facilitated by hedonic incentive,

[32] Modaso, Dalughu, and Wua, "Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, and Habits in E-Wallet Adoption: Extended UTAUT2 Testing on Generation Z Consumers in Manado."

[33] Amal Abdulwahab Alamrani, "Factors Affecting Students'continuance Intention In Using Learning Management System: The Moderating Effect Of Habit," 2025.

whereas frequent exposure fortifies habit and results in automatic and continuous usage. This evolution is consistent with research on technology adoption, which views acceptance as a process of growth:

i. Hedonic motivation, or affective involvement, increases behavioural intention.
ii. Habit building is facilitated by repeated engagement.
iii. Long-term integration is ensured by habit, which stabilises behavioural use.

Because the UTAUT2 incorporates both affective (hedonic) and automatic (habitual) factors of usage, it has greater explanatory power than previous technology acceptance models. Thus, the results confirm UTAUT2's explanatory robustness in secondary school settings. They also emphasise how important it is to create educational technologies that are not only pedagogically sound but also structurally integrated into everyday academic activity and engaging through experience. Furthermore, the results suggest that the platform's sustained success for the GDE-initiated EDP may depend on keeping interesting elements that foster enjoyment while also encouraging organised, frequent use in the classroom.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This study's findings reveal that hedonic motivation and habit are significantly associated with learners' behavioural intentions to use the EDP. Therefore, efforts to increase the use of educational technology should go beyond simply providing digital infrastructure and concentrate on developing learning environments that promote both prolonged and pleasurable technology use. To increase learners' enjoyment and engagement, educational technology developers should focus on learner-centred platform design by integrating interactive features like gamification, multimedia resources, individualised learning pathways, progress tracking, and instant feedback. Learners' intrinsic motivation and willingness to stick with digital learning platforms are likely to be strengthened by these design elements.

Additionally, in order to help learners acquire a habit of using technology, schools should encourage the continual integration of the EDP into regular teaching and learning activities. In order to afford learners numerous opportunities to interact with the platform, teachers should integrate it into normal classroom teaching, formative assessments, homework activities, group projects, and revision exercises. Long-term exposure is expected to promote automatic and regular usage of educational technology, strengthening learners' behavioural intentions to continue using the EDP.

Educational authorities should take a comprehensive approach to implementing educational technology at the institutional and policy levels by incorporating methods that improve learner engagement and promote ongoing platform use with infrastructure development. While monitoring and evaluation systems should evaluate not only technology access but also learner engagement, frequency of use, and quality of digital learning experiences, professional development programmes should provide teachers with pedagogical approaches that successfully incorporate digital technologies into regular classroom teaching. Such data can enhance the educational impact of digital investments and guide ongoing improvements to educational technology initiatives.

Subsequent research should expand this work by investigating additional UTAUT2 constructs, such as performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions, to further the understanding of learners' adoption of educational technology. In order to analyse the direct and indirect correlations between UTAUT2 components and look into potential moderating factors like gender, age, learner digital experience, school category, and district differences, researchers may also use structural equation modelling. Longitudinal research would improve knowledge of how hedonic motivation and habits change over time as learners use digital educational tools more frequently.

## CONCLUSION

This research investigated the relationship between hedonic motivation and habit on Grade 10 learners' behavioural intention to use the GDE-initiated EDP within the context of the UTAUT2. The purpose of the study was to ascertain whether learners' intention to continue with educational technology was related to how much they enjoyed using the platform and how frequently they used it.

The analysis showed that learners' behavioural intention to use the platform was positively and significantly correlated with both hedonic motivation and habit. Hedonic motivation presented a marginally greater correlation with bahavioural intention than habit, suggesting that learners' positive experiences and pleasure of using the EDP are crucial in promoting sustained adoption of technology. Simultaneously, the positive correlation between habit and behavioural intention emphasises how crucial it is to incorporate educational technology into learners' everyday learning routines in order to promote prolonged use.

This work enhances the expanding corpus of educational technology research by offering empirical evidence from South African no-fee-paying secondary schools, a context that is notably under-represented in UTAUT2 research. The study shows that intrinsic motivating factors continue to be significant contributing factors to educational technology adoption within resource-constrained school settings, despite the fact that prior research has mostly concentrated on higher education or technologically advanced learning environments. Therefore, by proving the significance of hedonic incentive and habit in understanding learners' behavioural intention within a developing-country educational context, these findings expand the application of UTAUT2.

The findings possess significant practical implications for the adoption of educational technology. It takes more than just the development of technology infrastructure for digital learning platforms to be successfully adopted. In addition to supporting regular classroom integration that encourages habitual use, educational technology should be created to provide meaningful and pleasurable learning experiences. Education authorities and schools can increase learners' readiness to adopt and use educational technologies by combining learner-centred platform design with ongoing pedagogical integration.

In conclusion, enhancing the adoption of educational technology among learners necessitates equal focus on the quality of their experiences and the establishment of enduring patterns of technology use. This study offers evidence that can guide the development, implementation, and assessment of EDPs intended to support significant and long-lasting technology-enhanced learning by highlighting the complementary roles of hedonic motivation and habit.

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