

Demystifying Board Games for Teachers

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Abstract : Board games provide affordances of 21st-century skills like collaboration, critical thinking, and strategy. Board games such as chess, Catan, Battleship, Scrabble, and Taboo can enhance learning in these areas. While board games are popular in informal child settings, their use in formal K-12 education is limited. To encourage teachers to incorporate board games, it's essential to grasp their perceptions and tailor professional development programs accordingly. This paper aims to explore teacher attitudes toward board games and propose interventions to motivate teachers to integrate and create board games in the classroom. A user study was conceived, designed, and administered with teachers (n=38) to understand their experience in playing board games and using board games in the classroom. Purposive sampling was employed as the questionnaire was floated to teacher groups that the authors were aware of. The teachers taught in K-12 affordable private schools. The majority of them had experience ranging from 2-5 years. The questionnaire consisted of questions on teacher perceptions and beliefs of board game usage in the classroom. From the responses, it was observed that ~90% of teachers, though they had experience of playing board games, rarely did it translate to using board games in the classroom. Additionally, it was observed that translating learning objectives to board game objectives is the key factor that teachers consider while using board games in the classroom. Based on the results from the questionnaire, a professional development workshop was co-designed with the objective of motivating teachers to design, create and use board games in the classroom. The workshop is based on the principles of gamification. This is to ensure that the teachers experience a board game in a learning context. Additionally, the workshop is based on the principles of andragogy, such as agency, pertinence, and relevance. The workshop will begin by modifying and reusing known board games in the learning context so that the teachers do not find it difficult and daunting. The intention is to verify the face validity and content validity of the workshop design, orchestration and content with experienced teacher development professionals and education researchers. The results from this study will be published in the full paper.

Keywords : board games, professional development, teacher motivation, teacher perception

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