

XXX Introduction of the importance of leveling systems:

- Leveling systems contribute to the feeling of accomplishment when playing a game and making progress.
- The main points are customization and showing growth in the character. This way, the player feels properly immersed and engaged with the game.
- players get a constant sense of advancement and achievement.

Leveling systems can be used to:

- Pace story telling and challenges
 - o Players can't reach a certain area or challenge until they hit a certain level – guides players where to go
- Give rewards to the players
 - o Every level, the player get something new, like ingame currency, energy,
- Milestone of player's progress
 - o Giving players decorations or cosmetics for the higher levels they obtained

Factors and specific features to motivate player engagement with the player system and how it can impact their enjoyment and longevity of the game

Xxxxx Factors that Motivate Player Engagement

- Reward
- Competition
- Intrinsic value of growth
- Escapism

An ideal leveling system would be an open-ended system with linear leveling elements. People love customization and player choice, and players also love getting stronger and seeing the amount of hours that they put into the game be rewarded.

Xxxxxx – The Feeling of Leveling up

The best systems include customization and showing growth in the character. This way the player feels properly immersed and engaged with the game. It should “drive players forward and create a compelling journey of growth and achievement.” The promise of a more powerful weapon, growth of your character, a more interesting and challenging level, or a higher leaderboard position keeps the game alive in the player's mind, driving retention.

It's the:

- Satisfaction of completing a difficult quest or mission
- Excitement of adding rare item to your collection
- Thrill of leveling up/getting strong

Xxxx – Customization & Growth through leveling up

Players love showing how their opinion and intelligence shapes the game. In general, people like seeing how their personality affects the game through customization. Additionally, they like when leveling up provides new content to enjoy. They also like receiving milestones for their progress. Here are examples of great leveling systems in games. People love seeing and then reaching their goals, and leveling provides a great way to simulate that feeling.

- Gothic 1 & 2 = learn points with every level up and find trainers in the world who can teach you certain skills. You start as a guy using two hands being barely able to swing a one handed sword, to being a hero. Also, the skillset and stance changes as they level up. The higher the fighting ability, the more confident the character swings his sword and more combos you can string together
 - In this case, the journey of such a large growth that comes with the leveling system in the game contributed to the game feel of progression and satisfaction.
 - Similar type of games that have a large sense of growth with leveling systems: Children of Morta, Souls Games
- Fallout = allocate points and pick a point. Perks have a massive affect on gameplay.
 - In this case, the strong sense of customization adds to the feeling the player has of control and immersion within the game.
- Dungeon Siege 1 & 2 = The more you use a certain skill, the more it levels up
 - In this case, the leveling system responds to the players' playstyle, adding a feeling of customization in the game, thus feeling like your actions more in the game, making the player feel more immersed
- Pokemon = Leveling is meant to smoothly guide towards the progression of the game.
 - They keep things interesting by adding new moves and evolutions that affect your gameplay strategy. The player has complete freedom in how they use their pokemon.
- Final Fantasy 9 = Separate experience systems for everything.
 - There is an exp bar for equipment, abilities, and skills. Makes for a very customizable character, gives low equipment a purpose, and grinding feels less tedious.

Xxxxxx – Introducing Features By Leveling Up

A mobile game that has a lot of features is great for captivating a player's interests for the long haul, however presenting these elements all at once can overwhelm players. Thus, adding a level system to gradually introduce these elements will be beneficial. It keeps players engaged by making them have a solid grasp on existing mechanics while introducing more complex mechanics as they play. The player should receive a constant sense of advancement and achievement

A great way to do this is gating certain features behind progression. It creates anticipation and incentivizes the player. For instance in Tanbii, being able to see far off islands that the player can't reach yet would be a great example.

Xxxxxxx – Balancing Skill & Progression

You also want to balance skill and progression-based gameplay. This way progression feels rewarding but doesn't diminish player's skill, intelligence, or strategy.

One good way of doing this is continuously adding more interesting and difficult challenges the more the player progresses. For example, the player gets some new ability at "x" level. This new ability makes the very next step of the game easier. Afterwards, the player includes this new ability in their strategy for more complicated levels.

Another good way to do this is adding a competitive element to the game. Having a kind of ranking system that gives players more points the more they accomplish in game and/or how much they reduced their carbon footprint. The higher in rank, the more tokens and rewards they earn, like limited time cosmetics and decorations. You want to reward the players who play the game more.

Xxxxxx – Different type of Progression Systems

The following slides are different types of systems game implement of how they make the player progress through the game. We can use these to influence new ideas on how different types of progress can entice the player and make them level up.

- Collection System: thrill of discovery and collection drives player progression and engagement
- The more new items and characters they collect, the stronger they are and the more things to do.
 - Ex: game characters in Genshin Impact, cars in CSR Racing
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- Leveling up characters type: Appeal to the growth aspect of gamers by leveling up avatars by boosting abilities and unlocking new skills
 - Ex: League of Legends: Wild Rift - character level ups are strategic decisions that influences the tides of battle
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- Quests and missions: directed goals that guide players progression. "Each completed task brings the player closer to a coveted reward."
 - Ex: Clash of Clans has a quest system that keeps players engaged in its world to push them towards progression
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- Building and Decoration: building and decoration is a form of profession. "Encourages strategic planning, resource management, and creativity, allowing players to create unique cities that truly feel like their own."
 - Ex: SimCity, Playrix, Homescapes and Gardenscapes
 - I recommend implementing this in Tanbii by adding more possible customization in the starting island
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- Storyline and Narrative Types: Advancement in the story is reward itself
 - Example: Life is Strange
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- Skill Trees Types: Branching pathway of abilities or skills that players unlock over time. This adds personalization to the player's experience.

- o Example: Shadow Fight - intricate skill trees allows players to customize their fighting style “which strengthens the sense of character ownership and progression.” You choose which skills and combat styles you use during play

- Achievement Systems: Mircogoals outside of the game’s main narrative or mission structure.
 - o Ex: Angry Birds that offer extra challenges in their levels in their star system. The better the player does in their level, the more stars they get. “It entices players to push beyond their normal gameplay habits and adds an additional layer of depth to the overall progression.”

- Social Leaderboards: Inject a competitive element into the game
 - o Ex: Clash Royale reward top ranking players with exclusive benefits

- Guild or Team Type: tracks achievements of a group of players
 - o Ex: Clash of Kings, where joining alliances and participating in joint activities leads to team victories and progression
 - o Ex: Dragon Ball: Legends: Guilds face off against one another and they earn points by performing specific actions in the game. The winner with the most points get exclusive rewards

- Gear & Equipment upgrade Type: Collecting and upgrading gear and equipment to improve their in game abilities.
 - o Ex: Archer0: Able to get new weapons and skills and upgrade them to suit your playstyle in game

- Time-Gated Progression type: relies on real world time to advance the game - usually for building structure, growing crops, or healing characters

XXXXX Align Progression with Game Mechanics

As the player levels up, the challenges must increase in an interesting way. Not only in difficulty, but also how the player implements their strategy and skill. You can do this by adding different kinds of enemies and environments the players can engage with.

XXXX What makes a bad leveling system?

Games should be a relief for a player and shouldn’t be a cause for unwanted stress. So when a game makes a player grind too much and is too tedious without enough reward, it can exhaust the player.

This can also happen when leveling up doesn't really add anything new but basic stat changes. It doesn't feel as rewarding as it could be. Players need to earn new abilities, things, and content to make them feel like they're making a change in their virtual world.

The following are examples of poor level design in games:

Spacebourne:

Game adapts to upgrades making upgrading a waste of time. XP means nothing when enemies simply get stronger with the player.

Solution: Make upgrades and abilities more customizable. Add different abilities for different playstyles.

The Saga Games

Able to visit any area of the game any time you want which comes with making all enemy scaling equally difficult. Some bosses have less liquid states to prevent players from beating them early on. But then encounters a bigger issues of crawling through a dungeon of enemies at the players' level, only to hit a brick wall at the boss intended to fight later. At this point, the intended freedom point of the game works against the player.

Solution: Follow a Zelda BotW enemy system. Player can go anywhere they want, but they are blocked by difficult enemies that do not scale to the player.

Diablo 3 & Kingdoms of Amalur: The Reckoning

World scales with you, leveling up only does good for stats, but just makes the player constantly change their gear.

Solution: Again, make the player more customizable, like abilities. Give experience points to gear so the player can bring their favorite gear with them as they level up.

In conclusion, the main thing that players dislike are:

- Not enough change when leveling up so it feels useless
- The game adapts too much to the player
- Leveling up is only good for gear
- Relying too much on stats related to level and not player's skill.

It requires a proper balance of leveling of providing a good challenge, adding strength and abilities to the user, and a sense of progression.

Don't make encounters harder without making them more interesting. What's another element you can add/revisit as the player grows and reaches new levels?

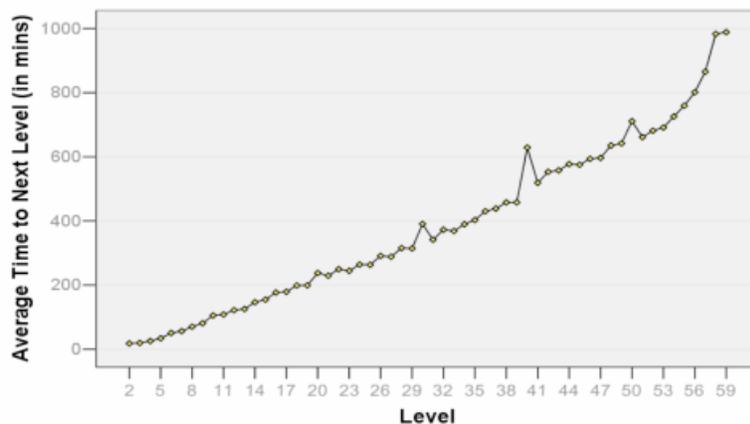
Xxxx Linear level progression or a more open – ended system?

Based on the above research, I would say an open-ended system with linear leveling elements would be the way to go. People love customization and player choice, and players also love getting stronger and seeing the amount of hours that they put into the game be rewarded.

An example of this would be to have a kind of customizable skill tree. In this skill tree the player chooses skills relevant to their playstyle. Additionally, as the player increase their level, they unlock new areas, get general stat increases, able to get better gear with more abilities, and earn milestones. One can balance this by making small stat changes each level, but having a skill point every several levels.

How often they expect to level up:

In general, the player should level up quickly at first, and then it takes longer the higher level they are.



The follow graph is the average time it takes In MMOGs, such as World of Warcraft, that attracts millions of players.

https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Average-accumulated-play-time-by-level_fig3_221519549

Personal Suggestions:

I think we can learn from my favorite leveling system in mobile games: Archero. It provides high customization and linear progression

- Players upgrade their stats by using ingame currency that is earned by completing levels, defeating enemies, and leveling up. The player clicks the button to upgrade, and a random upgrade is upgraded
- A wide variety of gear and abilities that enables the player to customize how they play.
 - Gear can also be upgraded in level by ingame currency
 - It can also be upgraded in rarity by having multiple gear of the same rarity. For example, if the player has 3 green of the exact same rings, they can be upgraded to blue rarity. This increases the strength and the level cap of the ring.

- The actual number for the level the player is is more used as a milestone. Every level you get coins and tokens to get increased chances of better gear

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