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Interrogating Gender Stereotypes: Iranian EFL Teachers' Attitudes Toward Video Games as Homework Across Teaching Levels and Experience

Linguistics Society of Iran

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' views on video games play a key role in determining whether educational video games can be effectively assigned as homework. This research explored the attitudes of English teachers in Iran toward using video games as homework assignments. Specifically, it sought to examine potential differences based on teaching level and years of experience, with comparison across genders. An online survey was completed by 465 Iranian English teachers, utilizing an adapted version of a validated questionnaire originally developed by Alqurashi (2016). The collected data were processed numerically using SPSS software version 26, and a one-way ANOVA was conducted for analysis. Results revealed that Iranian English teachers held largely positive attitudes toward the use of video games as homework. There also existed a statistically significant difference in attitudes among Iranian English teachers based on gender. Contrary to prevalent stereotypes that associate gaming with males, the results showed that female English teachers expressed a significantly more favorable view, especially appreciating how games support teaching for social interaction. No significant differences in attitudes were found based on teachers' educational level or years of experience. This research can inform other scholars about the perspectives of Iranian English teachers and contribute to the existing literature on gaming in education. The study's findings may also encourage parents, educators, and Iran's Ministry of Education to develop and implement educational games that effectively address learners' needs for both knowledge and intellectual challenge.

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1. Introduction

The use of technology in education has revolutionized pedagogical practices, offering innovative ways to engage learners and enhance learning. Of these technology aspects, video games have emerged as a promising asset, changing from entertainment to a platform that fosters cognitive, linguistic, and social skills (Ritzhaupt et al., 2014). The gamification principle has been well identified as capable of making learning an entertaining and engaging process. In Iran, the rapid growth of internet penetration, as well as a booming gaming culture with an estimated 30 million gamers in 2020, indicates the opportunities for video games to transform the landscape of education practice (Statistical Centre of Iran, 2021; Ministry of ICT, 2021). This technological climate offers a ground rich with possibilities for experimentation in pedagogical methods (Yahyaee et al.,2024), such as the deployment of video games as homework, which will transform learning the language.

In spite of the world boom in research into game-based learning (Ritzhaupt et al., 2014), much remains unknown about teachers' attitudes towards assigning video games as homework, most especially in the Iranian context. Much of the existing research in Iran has mainly centered on student achievement (Ebrahimzadeh, 2016; Haghighat Panah, 2013), with less concern for the voice of educators, most particularly English language teachers. Teacher attitudes are important because they are key to adopting new practices in education (Ajzen, 2005). That there has been little study on Iranian English teachers' perception of video games as homework is an important gap in light of the potential of such a tool to encourage students' activity and learning.

Despite some research that suggests that gender roles have an effect on adopting technology (Alrasheedi, 2009), little research has been conducted concerning how these factors affect Iranian teachers' consideration of video games as learning tools. Similarly, differences in teachers' experience as instructors or in the grade of students they handle (e.g., middle school, language centers, or high school) may affect their receptiveness to using video games as part of assignments, but this is an area that has not been examined thoroughly.

The current research endeavors to investigate Iranian English language instructors' attitudes towards the use of video games for homework, and more specifically, to examine whether there are differences according to gender, level of instruction, and years of experience. The absence of research on the influence of gender, level, and years on the

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attitude of Iranian instructors towards using video games for homework is a significant research gap, given the crucial role played by instructors' attitudes (Ajzen, 2005).

This research encompasses Iranian EFL educators' attitudes towards video games for homework within a framework for critical discourse studies, using power and discourse notions to examine how common stereotypes, such as gaming being for masculine realms like competition and technology, construct and marginalize women's roles within technology-based pedagogies and view video gaming in education in mainstream ways (Alrasheedi 2009). Regarding contesting mainstream techno-masculine agendas for viewing video gaming as entertainment, as opposed to cooperative and empowering ways to learn. This research also suggests and portrays possible resistance and empowerment pedagogies. In being situated within Iran's specific social and education contexts, where mainstream gender socialization constructs and supports women's nurturing roles within teaching and simultaneously anticipates little to no connection to technology and technology-based realms (Ministry of Education in Iran, 2021). This particular need for homework using video gaming may be constructed and shaped by larger issues surrounding and involving issues and dynamics surrounding notions of technology use and socialization.

2. Literature Review

The use of video games has evolved significantly from entertainment to an educational medium, maximizing learning processes. This section will outline the background study, video game concepts and theories, the concept of gamification, the use of gamification for language learning, the homework component, teachers' attitude toward games for learning, literature reviews, and identify the gap. By doing such a synthesis, this section will lay out the gaps in the literature concerning the area at hand, including the IRI EFL environment. In moving toward the background study concerning the historical component and the concepts above, it is the responsibility of this section to clarify the terminology used throughout the study. The study will center on educational video games—digital gaming environments purpose-built or adapted for use in education, including games for language acquisition or products such as The Secret of Monkey Island video game or any language acquisition video games (Reinhardt, 2019)—to supplement homework aimed at developing English language proficiency. While gamification is discussed in the literature for its motivational parallels, it is distinct from the core object of this study. The attitudes measured via the adapted Alqurashi (2016) questionnaire pertain to educational video games, not gamified assignments. This

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distinction ensures terminological consistency, with subsequent sections emphasizing video games' role in EFL homework while drawing selective insights from gamification research where relevant to broader game-based learning principles.

2.1. History of Games

Games have long been a social institution, dating from traditional board games to modern computer games. The historic roots of games date back to the early ages, borrowing from military tactics in the 19th century (Roberts, 1976). The mid-20th century usage of computer technology was at its peak, led by Nim, Edward U. Condon (1940), and John Burgeson's simulation of baseball (1960), launching the electronic age (Museum of Play, 2020). Commercial success arrived in the 1970s and 1980s with the Atari 2600 and Nintendo Game Boy, with sophisticated consoles, PlayStation 2, and Xbox 360 arriving with the new age of the 2000s (Poole, 2000). By 2021, mobile gaming made things equal, with titles like PUBG hitting 600 million players (Museum of Play, 2020). For education, games have progressed from simple simulations to interactive resources, following changes in technology within the broader setting (Ritzhaupt et al., 2014). The inclusion of games in education has a history parallel to learning technology, starting with physical devices and transitioning to online platforms. The 1960s featured simulated learning for education, including Oregon Trail (1971), which incorporated learning for history and decision-making. The decade of the 1980s introduced edutainment computer programs, including Reader Rabbit, which incorporated amusement and literacy learning. The 2000s brought serious gaming for training professionals in areas such as healthcare and languages, including evidence-based studies on cognitive gains (Ritzhaupt et al., 2014). Serious gaming for vocabulary and cultural learning with simulative games such as The Sims for EFL learning has been possible since the early 2010s (Reinhardt, 2019). This educational trajectory underscores games' potential beyond entertainment.

2.2. Definition of Video Games

Video games are a screen manipulation of pictures digitally, entertainment use, while they can enhance skills (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). Aside from recreational purposes, they also offer problem-solving and social communication skills, despite concerns about violence (Gee, 2005; ESA, 2020). Their motivational appeal is based on challenge, curiosity, and competition (Malone, 1981; Miller & Summers, 2008). These are connected to preferences and gender, which show a higher preference for action games among males and

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puzzles among females (Alqurashi et al., 2015). As for learning, video games are one type of interactive media employed for learning outcomes by combining entertainment and skills acquisition (Prensky, 2001b). In this aspect, video games are computer-based simulations enriched with game elements, sound, and animated graphics integrated for pedagogic purposes and for learning objectives (Prensky, 2001b). For example, serious games are targeted at acquiring skills rather than mere entertainment, such as learning apps for learning languages like Duolingo, using gamification to improve learning outcomes (Reinhardt, 2019). The current definition separates video games for learning purposes and recreational uses concerning learning outcomes, which tackles concerns on violence but still taps into motivational features for EFL students (Gee, 2005).

2.3. Gaming Theories

These are categorized in game theory as cooperative versus non-cooperative, simultaneous versus sequential, and multiplayer versus single-player by Osborne (2004). The information types include perfect, imperfect, or complete, while symmetry and dimensionality form levels within these types of games, as noted by Osborne (2004). Their educational applications draw from them mainly upon the interaction and progress that a player goes through. Contemporary studies also indicate how they inform gamification. In EFL contexts, game theories inspire vocabulary and skill acquisition in immersive experiences.

2.4. Gamification in Learning

Gamification applies game mechanics to areas outside games to promote motivation by rewards, competition, and socializing. Gamification promotes internal drivers like curiosity and external drivers like incentives. For learning, gamification promotes engagement and collaborative learning (Bouras et al., 2004). Current reviews detail educators considering practices positively, yet being hindered from application by external barriers like resources and not inner mindsets (Bećirović et al., 2024). Professional training and empowering groups are solutions to overcome obstacles (Bećirović et al., 2024).

2.5. Language Learning via Video Games

Video games complement language learning by providing contextual, interactive environments that extend vocabulary, grammar, and communication (Purushotma, 2005). Multiplayer games facilitate informal learning, reflecting principles like feedback and interaction (Zolfaghari et al., 2025). Scoping review of gamification-based English learning

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apps shows increased motivation and knowledge acquisition, with technology access and learner fatigue presenting challenges (Zolfaghari et al., 2025). Quasi-experimental studies confirm the positive effect of gamification on reading ability and reducing anxiety in EFL contexts (Bai et al., 2025). Reinhardt (2019) also offers a broad typology of games intended for second and foreign language learning, dividing the games into vernacular games (e.g., commercial games repurposed for educational purposes), games for language learning (e.g., apps), and synthetic games (e.g., virtual environments like Second Life). Such typologies guide the process of gamification, the choice and use of game types depending on the educational goals that can include cooperative games for social purposes in an EFL context.

2.6. Homework and Education

Homework maintains the classroom, ensuring mastery and autonomy (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2000). Good homework is tied to lesson plans, which involve practice and preparation (Vatterott, 2009). Nevertheless, its benefits have been contested, with some experiencing stress (Cooper et al., 2006). Teachers have a significant responsibility in crafting assignment tasks that involve collaboration and creativity. Making video games as a homework assignment makes it an attractive and enjoyable one, filling in the gaps created by a lack of motivation in the regular classroom approach (Drobot & Roşu, 2012). In the application of EFL, game theories increase word banks and skill development in engaging game worlds by using feedback loops and other concepts like gradual development (Ebrahimzadeh, 2016). For example, cooperative games allow participants to interact with other players with whom they can practice language, while sequential games develop layered skill development, starting from basic vocabulary development to advanced grammar in titles like The Sims (Reinhardt, 2019). This has also been supported by empirical research, revealing increased receptivity and increased levels of motivation in Iranian EFL students using adventure simulation games (Haghighat Panah, 2013). Nonetheless, there have been concerns with regard to its adaptability.

2.7. Teachers' Attitudes towards Game-Based Learning

Teachers' attitudes play a significant role in implementing video games in schools (Ajzen, 2005). Positive dispositions are linked with beliefs about enhanced student ability and motivation (Noraddin & Kian, 2014). Recent studies show disciplinary perspectives vary among gamers, with experienced gamers having more liberal attitudes towards game categories and companions (Sun et al., 2026). Amongst Greek EFL classrooms, gamification

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is perceived favorably by educators, though experience and age have negative effects on intentions (Zotos & Mousteri, 2024). With TPB, intentions are predicted with attitudes, norms, and self-efficacy, and self-efficacy also moderates attitude-intention relations.

2.8. Empirical Studies

Empirical studies endorse the value of education from video games. English and math performance were boosted in Saudi Arabia by games (Alharbi, 2010; Aljuhani, 2011). Vocabulary acquisition using games is indicated in Iranian research (Haghighat Panah, 2013; Ebrahimzadeh, 2016). Current quasi-experimental evidence shows that gamification increases motivation and EFL participation (Bai et al., 2025). A scoping review of 33 studies confirms increased knowledge and attitudes through challenges and feedback, but still finds implementation challenges (Zolfaghari et al., 2025). Implementation barriers to gamification require intentional training.

Recent systematic reviews further pinpoint the general efficacy of gamification in EFL/ESL contexts. For example, one comprehensive analysis of 40 empirical articles between 2012 and 2022 identified that digital gamification tools, including Kahoot and Quizlet, significantly improved a wide range of language skills, with vocabulary improvement mentioned in 27.6% of the studies, grammar in 20%, and speaking/reading each in 15% (Zhang & Hasim, 2023). These interventions provided comprehensive language competence, including increased retention and communicative competencies, and motivational and engagement benefits across non-English-speaking countries like China, Malaysia, and Iran. However, noted contextual variations included negative perceptions among secondary school teachers facing high-stakes exam demands, along with demographic inconsistencies, under-researched age, gender, or prior gaming experience. Overall, gamification was found to reduce anxiety and increase enjoyment, although effects sometimes diminished when post-novelty was considered, emphasizing a need for sustained implementation strategies.

More specific studies related to quasi-experiments offer detailed proof of the effectiveness of gamification concerning the outcomes of EFL learners. In a 2024 study with 60 Turkish university students, combining online courses with gamification using Web 2.0 technologies increased motivation, as indicated by Keller's ARCS theory ($F(1, 57) = 19.48$, $p < 0.001$), as well as increasing learners' engagement through competition, as indicated by qualitative data analyzing increased motivation due to gamification (Temel & Çeşür, 2024). Although academic gains were encouraging, albeit non-significant, memory and error

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corrections were found to increase, with no significant difference found between genders concerning motivation and performance. These results support general observations concerning gamification for EFL learners, as they better activate online learning formed through gamification, yet due to small-scale studies, they should also be replicated with a larger scope.

2.9. Theoretical Framework & Research Gap

Learning theories underpin the educational application of video games, in which behaviorist theories emphasize reinforcing learning, cognitivist theories emphasize problem-solving, and constructionist theories emphasize building knowledge (Reiser & Dempsey, 2006). In TPB, teachers' behavior and intention to teach are explained (Ajzen, 2005). Brown and Lee's (2015) theoretical framework groups advantages like motivation and transfer (Zolfaghari et al., 2025) in EFL contexts. These theories form the foundation of gamification, which fills the entertainment and educational contours (Kapp, 2012).

Despite growing evidence, gaps remain in Iranian EFL contexts. Studies are carried out with students (Ebrahimzadeh, 2016) or global attitudes (Sobhani & Bagheri, 2014), neglecting teachers' views on video games as homework. The few studies conducted on the differences in experience, teaching level, and gender have a short consideration in the research (Noraddin & Kian, 2014). Although there have been some studies on the other side, involving variables like beliefs on teaching and assessment in general English teaching contexts, like English as a foreign language teaching (Shahvand & Rezvani, 2016). Global observations have shown some barriers, but there have been no results on Iran in particular (Bećirović et al., 2024). This research will try to help fill these gaps by examining the attitude of English teachers in Iran and the differences involving gender, levels, and experiences. The key objective of this research is to uncover an answer to the questions asked in:

- RQ1. What are the perceptions of Iranian English teachers about using video games as homework?
- RQ2. Is there a considerable difference in teachers' attitudes toward video games depending on their gender?
- RQ3. Is there a considerable difference in teachers' attitudes toward video game use depending on their grade level of teaching (middle school, high school, and language institutes)?

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- RQ4. Is there a considerable difference in teachers' attitudes toward video game use depending on their years of experience (1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, more than 20 years)?

3. Methodology

3.1. Design of the Study

This research employs a quantitative survey design, providing a basis for challenging assumed norms about gender and gaming in education. From a critical standpoint, this allows for the observation of possible patterns within attitudes that might be reflective and perpetuating of larger societal constructs, for instance, gender stereotypes within technology adoption, despite the limitations presented by quantification to adequately encapsulate complex power relations (Ajzen, 2005). The survey method has been a traditional technique within the realm of education for over two and a half centuries. It entails expanding a questionnaire to a sample population with parameters applied to recognize patterns within perceptions, beliefs, behaviors, and traits (Creswell, 2012). Specifically, a cross-sectional survey design was adopted, aligning with the research goals of describing current perceptions without requiring long-term tracking, yet serving as a foundation for critiquing how such attitudes perpetuate or disrupt educational inequalities (Creswell, 2012).

3.2. Participants

The participant selection process was managed by an Iranian researcher who identified several common traits shared by most Iranian English teachers, such as teaching English in public or private schools and language institutes across various provinces. The sample consists of teachers belonging to various provinces in Iran, either teaching English in schools or in language institutes. They belong to various age groups, which vary from 22 to 60 years old. They include English teachers hired by the Ministry of Education in public or private schools, either middle school or high school teachers, as well as those teaching at language institutes with various subjects. According to an Iranian Ministry of Education report in 2021, Iran has about 756,865 teachers, with males accounting for 45.6%, or 345,130, and female teachers accounting for 54.4%, or 411,735, as cited in the Ministry of Education in Iran in 2020.

Owing to the reason that it is not possible to randomly choose respondents, convenience sampling is considered a useful approach for selecting respondents for a research or survey (Creswell, 2012). The demographic information is presented in the following Table

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Table 1

The Demographic Information of the Participants

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	224	48.1
	Female	241	51.9
Age Group	22–30 years	145	31.2
	31–40 years	180	38.7
	41–50 years	100	21.5
	51–60 years	40	8.6
Teaching Level	Middle School	150	32.3
	High School	165	35.5
	Language Institute	150	32.3
Years of Experience	1–5 years	130	28.0
	6–10 years	160	34.4
	11–20 years	120	25.8
	21+ years	55	11.8

The research was conducted by an Iranian researcher who aimed to reach English teachers in various provinces of Iran, both school-based teachers (middle and high school) and language institute teachers. The participants had an almost equal gender distribution, with 48.1% being male (224 teachers) and 51.9% being female (241 teachers), very close to those of the Iranian nation, as cited by Iran's Ministry of Education (2020): 45.6% for males and 54.4% for females among teachers in Iran. Their ages varied from 22 to 60 years; there were 38.7% in the 31–40-year-old group, 31.2% in the 22–30-year-old group, 21.5% in the 41–50-year-old group, and 8.6% in the 51–60-year-old group. Their levels of teaching were also matched up, being 32.3% from middle schools, 35.5% from high schools, and 32.3% from language institutes, for a cross-section in different learning institutions. Their teaching experience was good, too, with 34.4% having 6–10 years, 28.0% having 1–5 years, 25.8% having 11–20 years, and 11.8% more than 21 years. Although convenience sampling was considered necessary for practical reasons, several steps were taken to minimize selection bias. To this effect, the survey was distributed through a mix of regional teacher union groups and professional development networks throughout both urban and semi-urban areas in order to ensure more geographic and professional heterogeneity. Though not completely representative, the gender and institutional representation of the final sample come close to the national representation as depicted by the Ministry of Education. This further helps in improving the level of generalizability.

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3.3 Instrument

The study relied on a validated questionnaire developed by Alqurashi (2016) for his PhD thesis. Two sections were included in the questionnaire:

(I) Within the first section, demographic data are collected as well as information regarding a teacher's background. For example, their gender, experience level, and years of teaching are all requested.

(II)This second segment includes 26 questions, which are categorized into four categories, addressing teachers' attitudes about instructional video games. The first 13 questions deal with learning attitudes. Then, there are five questions dealing with how the games affect teacher attitudes. Four questions were asked about enjoyment attitudes. The last four questions concern attitudes toward socializing. The goal of this section is to examine the attitudes of Iranian English teachers toward educational video games. The questions used a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree. To determine the instrument's reliability and validity in the specific Iranian setting, a pilot test was carried out on 30 English teachers, who were not included in the main study group. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were determined for the overall scale (α=0.89) as well as for the separate sub-concepts: Learning (α=0.85), Teacher Impact (α=0.82), Enjoyment (α=0.88), and Social Interaction (α=0.84), ensuring high levels of internal reliability in each case. Additionally, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was carried out, which confirmed the instrument's construct validity in the specific setting, as it had a good fit to the pre-established four-factor model (CFI=0.93, TLI=0.91, RMSEA=0.06).

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

The researcher used quantitative methods to collect data with a questionnaire. Participants were surveyed, and data were collected with this questionnaire. The data was gathered by an online questionnaire. The data was collected in the spring of 2024. The researcher used a variety of approaches to distribute the survey. The online survey link was sent to the participants through WhatsApp or Telegram Messenger, which has a large number of Iranian English teachers as users. The survey participation was fully optional and voluntary. The questionnaire was administered in English, as indicated by the English-language Likert scale descriptors and the absence of any mention of translation in the study.

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3.5. Data Analysis

The data for this quantitative part were gathered via an online survey and analyzed using SPSS software. First, Cronbach's alpha was calculated. Descriptive statistics were then employed to address RQ1. To examine differences in attitudes (the dependent variable) for RQ2–RQ4, separate one-way ANOVA tests were conducted for each independent demographic variable: gender (RQ2), teaching level (middle school, high school, language institutes; RQ3), and years of experience (1–5, 6–10, 11–15, 16–20, more than 20 years; RQ4). This approach was selected because the research questions investigate the main effects of each factor independently, without hypothesizing or testing for interaction effects (e.g., gender × teaching level), which would require factorial ANOVA or MANOVA. Although the sample size calculation employed the use of G-Power, ANOVAs were found sufficient for addressing the RQs without complicating the analysis by investigating interactions. Although this can limit the knowledge gained regarding the possible moderation effects (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

3.6. Ethical Consideration

Participants were informed and asked for written consent before the research, and the objective of this research, procedures, and the voluntary nature were explained through an introduction statement made in the online form of the research questionnaire. The participants were assured that they were free to withdraw from the research process at any point without penalty. For providing privacy and confidentiality, this research did not acquire any identifiable information, and the participants were kept anonymous even while data was collected. The research questionnaire was distributed by secure media, WhatsApp, and Telegram, ensuring data integrity. The researcher made sure that this research met general ethical standards applicable while conducting research within the fields of education, according to the themes of respect, beneficence, and justice, proposed by Creswell (2012). There were no participants subjected to any harmful physical and mental suffering, and this research work also sought to add to educational practices that would not harm. The questionnaire, adapted from Alqurashi (2016), was used with permission, with the appropriate recognition of intellectual property. The questionnaire, adapted from Alqurashi (2016), was used with permission, with the appropriate recognition of intellectual property. As an Iranian researcher immersed in the local educational context, the author's positionality was critically reflected upon to acknowledge potential insider biases and enhance the study's cultural

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sensitivity. It was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), with a determination that it qualified for exemption from full review due to its low-risk nature involving anonymous surveys of adult educators without the collection of sensitive personal data.

4. Results

4.1. ANOVA Assumptions Testing

Before conducting a one-way ANOVA to analyze the quantitative data, it was essential to verify that the data met the test's underlying assumptions, ensuring a valid interpretation of the results. The assumptions, as outlined by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), were systematically reviewed and confirmed. First, the analysis required at least one continuous dependent variable, which was satisfied by the variable "Iranian English Teachers' Attitudes." Second, the presence of at least one independent variable with categorical groups was met by three variables: Gender (Male, Female), Teaching Level (Middle school, High school, language institutes), and Teaching Experience (categorized into five ranges). Third, the independence of observations was reasonably assumed, as data were collected via an individual online survey. Fourth, potential outliers were assessed using descriptive statistics and boxplots; a minimal portion (less than 3%) of outlier data was removed. Fifth, normality was evaluated using the Shapiro-Wilk test. While ANOVA is robust to minor normality violations, especially with group sizes exceeding 25—a condition met in this study—the data were largely confirmed to follow a normal distribution. Finally, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested using Levene's test. Where this assumption held, standard ANOVA was applied; in cases of violation, the more robust Welch ANOVA was employed to ensure reliable results (Laerd Statistics, 2015).

4.2. Population

As participants in this research, 465 teachers completed the survey. The total number of male teachers was 223, and 47,9 percent, while female teachers represented 242 participants and 52,1 percent.

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Table 2

Frequencies and Percentages of Participant Characteristic Variables

	Variables	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	223	47.9
	Female	242	52.1
Teaching level	Language institutes	191	41.0
	Middle school	120	25.8
	High school	154	33.1
Teachers' teaching experience	1-5	101	21.7
	6-10	112	24.0
	11-15	68	14.6
	16-20	84	18.0
	More than 20 years	100	21.5

Regarding teaching level, participants were categorized based on their instructional setting. The largest group consisted of language institute teachers, with 191 individuals representing 41% of the total sample. High school teachers formed the next largest cohort, comprising 154 participants or 33.1% of the study. The smallest group was middle school teachers, with 120 participants accounting for 25.8%.

When examining teaching experience, the distribution was as follows: teachers with 6-10 years of experience constituted the largest segment (24%, N=112), followed closely by those with over 20 years (21.5%, N=100) and 1-5 years (21.7%, N=101). Teachers with 16-20 years of experience represented 18% (N=84), while those with 11-15 years made up 14.6% (N=68). As detailed in Table 3, specific cross-category analyses revealed notable subgroups. For instance, female language institute teachers with 1-5 years of experience accounted for 6% of participants (N=28). Conversely, the smallest subgroup consisted of female middle school teachers with 11-15 years of experience, representing only 1.3% (N=6) of the total sample.

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Table 3

Years of Experience for Gender and Level Taught

Years	Gender	Level Taught Language ins.		Middle		High	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1-5	Male	16	3.4	10	2.2	12	2.5
	Female	28	6.0	17	3.7	18	3.9
6-10	Male	26	5.5	21	4.5	22	4.7
	Female	13	2.8	10	2.2	23	4.9
11-15	Male	17	3.7	13	2.8	10	2.2
	Female	11	2.4	6	1.3	13	2.8
16-20	Male	12	2.5	10	2.2	10	2.2
	Female	20	4.3	11	2.4	20	4.3
More than 20 years	Male	24	5.1	9	2.1	11	2.4
	Female	24	5.2	13	2.8	15	3.1

The distribution of participants varied considerably when teaching level, experience, and gender were considered jointly. Among male respondents, the largest subgroup was language institute teachers with 1-5 years of experience (N=26). Conversely, the smallest male subgroup was middle school teachers with over 20 years of experience (N=9). Among female respondents, the largest subgroup was also language institute teachers with 1-5 years of experience, comprising 6.0% of all participants (N=28). The smallest female subgroup was middle school teachers with 11-15 years of experience, representing just 1.3% of the total (N=6). Focusing on language institutes separately, female teachers with 1-5 years of experience constituted the largest proportion (6%, N=28), while those with 11-15 years formed the smallest (2.4%, N=11). Within middle schools, the largest subgroup was male teachers with 6-10 years of experience (4.5% of total participants), whereas the smallest was female teachers with 11-15 years of experience (1.6%).

4.3. Teachers' Attitudes

The objective of this study was to examine the perspectives of Iranian English teachers regarding the use of video games as homework, utilizing a validated questionnaire originally developed by Alqurashi (2016). To address the primary research question, descriptive statistics—specifically the mean and standard deviation—were calculated. For the subsidiary questions concerning differences in attitudes based on gender, teaching level, and years of experience, a one-way ANOVA was employed.

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The attitude questionnaire comprised 26 statements divided into four thematic sections: 13 items focused on learning attitudes, five on attitudes toward video games, four on enjoyment, and four on social interaction. Responses were collected using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). As presented in Table 4, the overall mean score across all statements was 3.5, with a standard deviation of 0.9.

Table 4

Mean and Standard Deviation for 26 Teacher Attitude Statements

	N	Mean	*SD*	S. Error Mean
Teachers' attitudes	465	3.5	0.9	0.04

The mean values for the constructs of learning, teacher influence, enjoyment, and social interaction were analyzed using a one-way ANOVA to identify any statistically significant differences. Before conducting the ANOVA, a Levene's test for homogeneity of variances was performed, which indicated a violation of this assumption ($p = 0.002$). Consequently, the standard one-way ANOVA was not interpretable, and the Welch ANOVA—a robust alternative that does not require equal variances—was applied.

Furthermore, the Games-Howell post-hoc test was employed to examine pairwise differences between all group combinations, as it is suitable when the homogeneity assumption is not met. The results, detailed in Table 5, revealed a statistically significant difference in means across the four attitude constructs: teacher influence, social engagement, enjoyment, and learning, Welch's $F(3, 2037.56) = 84.22$, $p < 0.001$.

Table 5

Welch Analysis of Variance Descriptive Statistics: Attitudes of Teachers Towards Four Constructs

	Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	84.22	3	2037.56	0.0001

*Significant difference at the 0.05 level.

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The post-hoc Games-Howell analysis indicated significant differences among all four attitudinal domains. The findings showed that attitudes toward enjoyment received the highest mean score (M = 3.98, SD = 1.0), surpassing scores for attitudes concerning teacher impact (M = 3.31, SD = 1.14), learning (M = 3.50), and social interaction (M = 3.69, SD = 1.13).

As presented in Table 6, the mean scores for attitudes toward educational game learning ranged from 3.30 to 3.68, with corresponding standard deviations between 1.13 and 1.23. Among the individual statements, the fifth statement exhibited the highest mean (3.68) and the lowest standard deviation (1.13). Conversely, the eighth statement had the lowest mean (3.30) and the highest standard deviation (1.23).

Table 6

Likert Scale Learning Attitude Responses

Statements	Mean	*SD*
Games are very important for teaching and learning.	3.48	1.16
Games improve students' content knowledge.	3.49	1.16
Games increase students' skills.	3.64	1.15
Games improve individual learning.	3.66	1.14
Games help students develop thinking skills.	3.68	1.13
Games increase the students' classroom performance.	3.39	1.23
Games help students solve complex tasks.	3.43	1.18
Games help students achieve better grades.	3.30	1.23
Games enhance students' learning productivity	3.36	1.22
Games motivate students' engagement.	3.59	1.22
Games motivate students' learning.	3.61	1.23
Games encourage deeper learning.	3.56	1.22
Games encourage effective learning.	3.45	1.23

N=13

Based on Table 7, attitudes regarding the impact of educational games on teachers demonstrated mean scores spanning from 3.22 to 3.46 across the five variables. Statement

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three recorded the most favorable attitude (M = 3.46) with the least variability (SD = 1.11), whereas statement four reflected the least favorable attitude (M = 3.22) and the greatest variability (SD = 1.20).

Table 7

Teacher Impact Attitudes Likert Scale Responses

Statements	Mean	*SD*
Games improve teachers' performance.	3.29	1.14
Games help towards reaching instructional objectives.	3.37	1.13
Games help teachers teach students.	3.46	1.11
Games support traditional teaching strategies.	3.22	1.20
Games guide teachers' instructional planning.	3.24	1.13

N= 5

Table 8 presents the means and standard deviations for attitudes concerning enjoyment, which achieved the highest overall mean score compared to the other measured constructs. The mean values for this domain varied from 3.86 to 4.14, accompanied by standard deviations ranging between 0.93 and 1.09.

Table 8

Responses on the Likert Scale for Enjoyment Attitudes

Statements	Mean	*SD*
Students need to enjoy themselves in the classroom.	4.14	0.93
Games more exciting	4.05	0.93
Games make learning fun.	3.86	1.08
Games, entertainment classroom.	3.89	1.09

N = 4

As shown in Table 9, the mean scores for the social interaction construct range from 3.54 to 3.81, with corresponding standard deviations between 1.09 and 1.18. The third statement reflects the highest agreement (M = 3.81) and lowest variability (SD = 1.09),

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whereas the first statement shows the lowest agreement (M = 3.54) and highest variability (SD = 1.18).

Table 9

Social Interaction Attitudes Likert Scale responses

Statements	Mean	*SD*
Games enhance social interaction.	3.54	1.18
Games help students to interact with each other.	3.71	1.15
Games make an active classroom.	3.81	1.09
Games make participation classroom.	3.73	1.10

N = 4

To address this question, attitudes were analyzed both as a composite variable (all 26 items combined) and as separate averages for each attitudinal component. The dependent variable was Iranian English teachers' overall attitude toward using video games as homework, with teacher gender serving as the independent variable.

A one-way ANOVA was employed to determine whether a significant difference existed between male and female teachers' attitudes. The preliminary Levene's test indicated a violation of the homogeneity of variances assumption (p = 0.011), making the standard ANOVA inappropriate. Consequently, the Welch ANOVA—a robust alternative for unequal variances—was applied (Laerd Statistics, 2015; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

As displayed in Table 10, the Welch ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference between genders in attitudes toward video games as homework, Welch's F (1, 447.300) = 2.261, p = 0.017. An examination of the mean scores indicated that female teachers held more favorable attitudes (M = 3.6, SD = 0.84) compared to their male counterparts (M = 3.4, SD = 0.91).

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Table 10

Welch Analysis of Variance: Teachers' Gender

	Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	2.261	1	447.300	0.017*

*Significant difference at the 0.05 level.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to analyze the learning attitudes construct and determine if a significant difference existed based on teachers' gender regarding the use of video games as homework. The results, presented in Table 11, indicated no significant difference between male (M = 3.61, SD = 0.82) and female (M = 3.66, SD = 0.72) teachers in terms of learning attitudes, F (1, 419) = 0.854, p = 0.95.

However, a significant mean difference was observed between male and female teachers concerning perceptions of teacher impact, F (1, 434) = 2.910, p = 0.08. Female teachers recorded a slightly higher mean score (M = 3.4, SD = 0.77) compared to male teachers (M = 3.3, SD = 0.86). Additionally, a significant difference was found in the social interaction dimension, F (1, 463) = 4.451, p = 0.0015, with female teachers again showing a higher mean (M = 3.7, SD = 0.91) than male teachers (M = 3.5, SD = 1.08).

Finally, no significant difference was found in enjoyment attitudes between male (M = 3.88, SD = 0.93) and female (M = 3.9, SD = 0.84) teachers, F (1, 463) = 0.149, p = 0.293.

Table 11

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Video Games for Each Section Based on Gender

Sections		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Learning Attitude	Between Groups	0.526	1	0.526	0.854	.95
	Within Groups	258.331	419	.308		
	Total	258.857	420			
Teacher Impact Attitudes	Between Groups	2.013	1	2.013	2.910	.08
	Within Groups	300.236	433	.346		
	Total	302.249	434			
Enjoyment Attitudes	Between Groups	.121	1	.121	.149	.293
	Within Groups	377.225	463	.407		
	Total	377.346	464			
Social Interaction Attitudes	Between Groups	4.597	1	4.597	4.451	.0015
	Within Groups	478.611	463	0.516		
	Total	483.208	464			

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To determine whether attitudes toward using video games as homework differed significantly across teaching levels—language institutes, middle school, and high school—a one-way ANOVA was conducted. In this analysis, the dependent variable was Iranian English teachers' attitudes, and the independent variable was their teaching level. The results, displayed in Table 12, indicated no significant difference in mean attitudes among teachers at language institutes (M = 3.45, SD = 0.92), middle schools (M = 3.53, SD = 0.86), and high schools (M = 3.50, SD = 0.83), F (2, 458) = 0.473, p = 0.194.

Table 12

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Video Games Based on Place of Teaching

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Between Groups	0.762	2	0.381	0.473	0.194
Within Groups	369.628	458	0.402		
Total	370.390	460			

As presented in Table 13, no significant differences were found in attitudes across the four measured constructs when comparing teachers from different instructional levels. Regarding learning attitudes, mean scores were similar for language institute (M = 3.63, SD = 0.77), middle school (M = 3.67, SD = 0.79), and high school teachers (M = 3.63, SD = 0.75), F (2, 418) = 0.088, p = 0.408. Similarly, no significant differences emerged in perceptions of teacher impact across the three groups: language institutes (M = 3.42, SD = 0.81), middle schools (M = 3.39, SD = 0.84), and high schools (M = 3.34, SD = 0.80), F (2, 433) = 0.418, p = 0.209. Enjoyment attitudes also showed no significant variation, with comparable means for language institute (M = 3.87, SD = 0.91), high school (M = 3.86, SD = 0.87), and middle school teachers (M = 3.88, SD = 0.85), F (2, 463) = 0.017, p = 0.478. Finally, attitudes toward social interaction did not differ significantly among teachers from language institutes (M = 3.53, SD = 1.04), middle schools (M = 3.61, SD = 1.01), and high schools (M = 3.63, SD = 0.92), F(2, 463) = 0.457, p = 0.191.

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Table 13

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Video Games for Each Section Based on Place of Teaching

Sections		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Learning Attitude	Between Groups	0.116	2	0.058	0.088	.408
	Within Groups	258.741	418	0.309		
	Total	258.857	420			
Teacher Impact Attitudes	Between Groups	0.597	2	0.298	0.418	.209
	Within Groups	301.652	433	0.348		
	Total	302.249	435			
Enjoyment Attitudes	Between Groups	0.026	2	0.013	0.017	.478
	Within Groups	377.320	463	0.407		
	Total	377.346	465			
Social Interaction Attitudes	Between Groups	0.978	2	0.489	0.457	.191
	Within Groups	482.230	463	0.521		
	Total	483.208	465			

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine whether significant differences existed in teachers' attitudes toward using video games as homework across different levels of teaching experience. The analysis compared five experience categories: 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, and over 20 years. The dependent variable was teachers' overall attitude, while the independent variable was years of teaching experience. The results are presented in Table 14.

Table 14

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Video Games Based on Teachers' Years of Experience

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Between Groups	2.034	4	0.508	0.316	0.070
Within Groups	368.356	416	0.401		
Total	370.390	460			

As shown in Table 14, the analysis revealed no statistically significant difference in overall attitudes toward using video games as homework among Iranian English teachers grouped by years of experience. The mean scores were: 1-5 years (M = 3.53, SD = 0.82), 6-10

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years (M = 3.56, SD = 0.85), 11-15 years (M = 3.37, SD = 0.94), 16-20 years (M = 3.47, SD = 0.87), and over 20 years (M = 3.44, SD = 0.82); F (4, 416) = 0.316, p = 0.070.

Similarly, Table 15 indicates that for the specific construct of learning attitudes, there was no significant mean difference across the experience groups. The scores were: 1-5 years (M = 3.62, SD = 0.78), 6-10 years (M = 3.68, SD = 0.77), 11-15 years (M = 3.75, SD = 0.78), 16-20 years (M = 3.69, SD = 0.72), and over 20 years (M = 3.64, SD = 0.77); F (4, 416) = 0.260, p = 0.360.

Table 15

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Video Games for Each Section Based on Teachers' Years of Experience

Sections		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Learning Attitudes	Between Groups	0.642	4	0.160	0.260	0.360
	Within Groups	258.214	416	0.309		
	Total	258.856	420			
Teacher Impact Attitudes	Between Groups	0.955	4	0.238	0.342	0.301
	Within Groups	301.294	430	0.348		
	Total	302.249	434			
Enjoyment Attitudes	Between Groups	1.250	4	0.312	0.384	0.273
	Within Groups	376.096	460	0.407		
	Total	377.346	464			
Social Interaction Attitudes	Between Groups	2.961	4	0.740	0.71	0.112
	Within Groups	480.247	460	0.519		
	Total	483.208	464			

Furthermore, no significant difference was observed in attitudes toward teacher impact across the experience groups: 1-5 years (M = 3.40, SD = 0.81), 6-10 years (M = 3.40, SD = 0.79), 11-15 years (M = 3.28, SD = 0.84), 16-20 years (M = 3.32, SD = 0.78), and over 20 years (M = 3.39, SD = 0.85); F (4, 430) = 0.342, p = 0.301.

Similarly, for the enjoyment construct, the analysis showed no significant mean difference among teachers with 1-5 years (M = 3.88, SD = 0.87), 6-10 years (M = 3.96, SD = 0.88), 11-15 years (M = 3.85, SD = 0.89), 16-20 years (M = 3.85, SD = 0.87), and over 20 years of experience (M = 3.91, SD = 0.83); F(4, 460) = 0.384, p = 0.273.

Finally, regarding perceptions of social interaction, no significant difference was found across the experience categories: 1-5 years (M = 3.64, SD = 0.95), 6-10 years (M =

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3.70, SD = 1.00), 11-15 years (M = 3.51, SD = 1.04), 16-20 years (M = 3.52, SD = 1.02), and over 20 years (M = 3.52, SD = 1.00); F(4, 460) = 0.71, p = 0.112.

5. Discussion

The findings revealed a mean score of 3.5 (on a 5-point Likert scale) across the 26 statements, aligning with a growing body of studies reporting teachers' positive attitudes toward game-based learning (GBL). This optimism was most pronounced in the enjoyment dimension, which had the highest mean, indicating that teachers consider video games a means to render learning fun and thereby enhance student motivation and engagement. These findings reflect earlier studies within Iranian and international contexts, where teachers expressed aspirations to incorporate games and fun activities to trigger student interest (Sobhani & Bagheri, 2014). This trend has been further solidified by recent research; for example, a scientific scoping review on teacher attitudes toward gameful practice reported generally positive attitudes toward GBL, though concerns about resource constraints persisted. Similarly, a 2025 investigation into primary teachers' attitudes toward digital games (Ranjhani et al.) found that such games were appreciated for their capacity to engage learners more substantially, though issues related to technological hierarchy remained legitimate concerns. Notably, while these attitudes suggest potential for widespread adoption, reliance on self-reporting in such studies risks introducing undue optimism that may obscure realities such as the digital divide between urban and rural areas within Iran (Statistical Centre of Iran, 2021; Aghaei et al., 2022).

Among the most significant findings was the exploration of gender differences. Iranian female EFL teachers, in comparison to their male counterparts, contradicted the common assumption that video games are more preferred among males (Alrasheedi, 2009; Miller & Summers, 2008). This disparity was pronounced in the domains of teacher effect and social interaction, where women reported higher mean scores, perhaps reflecting greater openness to relational and collaborative aspects that mirror socially oriented pedagogical styles. This gender stereotype reversal is supported by recent empirical research: in Almusharraf et al.'s (2023) survey of gender differences in implementing game-based approaches in EFL classrooms, no significant differences in overall engagement emerged, although qualitative feedback suggested that female teachers might perceive gamification as more inclusive for diverse learner types. Additionally, a 2025 study among pre-service teachers found that while men evaluated gamification more favorably in certain contexts, women emphasized its

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importance for fostering collaboration and motivation (Leiss et al., 2025). Critically, these findings challenge essentialist perspectives on gender and technology by suggesting that within culturally conservative settings such as Iran, female educators may leverage video game media to reshape gendered classroom dynamics and achieve professional empowerment through interactive tools. The absence of notable gender variation in attitudes toward learning and enjoyment warrants further examination, as it may indicate domain-specific gender effects rather than a comprehensive reversal of stereotypes. This aligns with Aghaei et al.'s (2020) observation that technology integration in Iranian EFL contexts is often shaped by pedagogical philosophy rather than demographic variables alone, with teachers adapting digital tools to extend their existing teaching identities.

In contrast to gender differences, no significant differences in attitudes toward video games as homework were observed across teaching levels—middle schools, high schools, and language institutes—suggesting an equal receptiveness to GBL irrespective of institutional context. This lack of disparity across the four attitudinal constructs implies that the perceived benefits of video games transcend institutional boundaries, possibly due to the universal relevance of gamification in addressing student disengagement in EFL contexts. This finding is consistent with earlier research reporting no attitude differences by teaching context (Noraddin & Kian, 2014), and more recent studies continue to corroborate this pattern; for instance, Rajabi et al. (2024) similarly document how Iranian EFL teachers' technology adoption decisions are shaped more by institutional affordances and resource availability than by personal resistance, suggesting that structural support—not attitudinal change—is the critical bottleneck for innovation.

Similarly, the absence of significant attitudinal differences by years of teaching experience challenges assumptions that veteran teachers would resist innovative tools due to ingrained traditional practices, while novices would embrace them more readily. The lack of variation across experience groups (1–5 years to over 20 years) demonstrates that GBL receptivity is experience-neutral, validating its potential implementation across career stages within Iranian EFL contexts. This corroborates earlier null findings regarding attitudes and experience (Noraddin & Kian, 2014). Critically, this result challenges the conflation of age and experience: digital nativity among recently qualified teachers does not, by itself, predispose them to favor GBL in the absence of targeted training. In Iran, where rapid

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technological change coincides with an aging teaching population, these results call for targeted workshop interventions to capitalize on uniformly positive attitudes.

The specific application of games as homework presents unique considerations beyond in-class use. Although encouraging attitudes—particularly in the 'Enjoyment' dimension—suggest that teachers perceive potential for games to transform homework from a solitary activity into a more engaging endeavor, these attitudes remain subject to challenges inherent in the home learning environment. Further research is necessary to analyze teachers' specific attitudes toward the practical challenges of implementing game-based homework.

Moreover, this research measured attitudes, which are prone to socially desirable responding; teachers may have endorsed video games because they represent a modern, innovative approach without necessarily intending to implement them. The significant gap between attitudes and actual behavior constitutes a critical area for future investigation. Finally, while convenience sampling was practical, it may underrepresent teachers in rural areas with limited infrastructure, potentially skewing the overall positivity observed in our sample, which likely overrepresents urban, digitally connected educators. Aghaei et al. (2022) similarly caution that pandemic-era studies of technology adoption in Iran often overrepresent digitally privileged urban educators, potentially obscuring rural-urban divides in actual implementation capacity.

6. Conclusion and Implications

This investigation revealed predominantly positive attitudes, with a mean score of 3.5 (on a 5-point scale) across the 26 questionnaire items. Teachers expressed particular interest in the enjoyment dimension, which yielded the highest mean and highlighted video games' capacity to render learning exciting. Surprisingly, significant gender differences emerged: female teachers reported more positive attitudes than male teachers, especially on the teacher effect and social interaction dimensions, thereby defying widespread stereotypes associating gaming preference with males. However, no significant differences were observed based on teaching level (middle school, high school, or language institutes) or years of teaching experience, reflecting consistent receptiveness to game-based learning (GBL) across diverse educational contexts and career stages. These results corroborate previous findings documenting teachers' optimism toward GBL in EFL settings (Sobhani & Bagheri, 2014; Noraddin & Kian, 2014) and contribute Iran-specific insights into homework innovation. Rajabi et al. (2024) provide complementary evidence that Iranian EFL teachers maintain

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consistently positive perceptions toward technology integration across institutional contexts when implementation barriers are explicitly addressed.

The theoretical and practical implications of these findings are substantial, yielding valuable recommendations for Iranian educational policy and practice. The positive attitudes indicate that EFL teachers are willing to assign video games as homework, which could enhance participation, vocabulary retention, and collaborative skills, as suggested by gamification research in language learning (Ebrahimzadeh, 2016; Haghighat Panah, 2013). For the Ministry of Education, this presents an opportunity to develop specialized professional development programs that equip teachers to integrate GBL effectively—particularly by addressing lower scores on the teacher effect dimension through training that emphasizes how games can augment (rather than replace) teacher-led collaborative learning. The gender gap further suggests a need for inclusive training that leverages female teachers' interests while encouraging male counterparts to recognize the relational benefits of games. Pedagogically, these findings advocate for the development of educationally customized games for Iranian learners, which could help bridge digital divides and enrich the EFL curriculum. By promoting GBL, stakeholders can transform homework from a mechanical exercise into a motivational force, ultimately enhancing learning outcomes in an era of technological saturation. Aghaei et al. (2020) advocate for situated, context-sensitive approaches to technology integration that honor teachers' existing pedagogical identities—principles directly applicable to designing GBL professional development that resonates with Iranian educators' teaching philosophies.

Authors' Contributions

All authors contributed significantly to the research process.

Declaration

We declare that this manuscript is original and has not been submitted to any other journal for publication.

Transparency Statements

The authors affirm that the data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article. Any additional data can be obtained from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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