

EDITORIAL

I always used to complain about how time doesn't seem to pass. But now it feels like I'm in the hyperspeed scenes from sci-fi movies and my clunky spaceship is falling apart. The second month of the new year is already here and while I think I'm doing a somewhat decent job of being productive so far, I have completely lost touch with most of my hobbies.

This is jarringly different to how I used to spend most of my time up until the pandemic hit. My days consisted of watching pretentious arthouse movies, drawing, learning new things, and so on. Having said that, the privilege of having the time, security, and safety of indulging in those activities definitely played a huge role.

Nowadays, my days mainly consist of trying to be healthy and well-rested while balancing work and academics. It has not ended in a big comical explosion (yet) so I guess I must be doing something right. Here's hoping that I find the time to indulge in hobbies once more before my spaceship breaks down.

– Fatima Jahan Ena, Sub-Editor, SHOUT



PLAYWATCH

GAMES



Why previous generation *Pokémon* games are still relevant

A.M. FAHAD

Whether it be the anime franchise or the games, *Pokémon* has been a significant part of our childhood, with the video games being among the most influential RPGs of all time. But even though there's a new *Pokémon* game every year, people keep going back to the older generation games. The question is, why? Is it entirely nostalgia, or is there something more to it?

Before we delve into that, we need to clarify how a *Pokémon* generation works.

The first generation of *Pokémon* games dates to *Pokémon Red* and its counterparts. These games contain the Pokedex of the original 151 *Pokémon* introduced in the first region, Kanto, home to a large number of fan favourites. The second generation of the series contains a new Pokedex and a different region, Johto, with games like *Pokémon Gold*, *Silver*, and *Crystal*. The third generation introduces the Hoenn region with critically acclaimed fan-favourite games like *Pokémon Emerald*, *Ruby*, and *Sapphire*. And on goes the list.

Usually, when we go back to playing older video games, we are driven by nostalgia. *Pokémon* is not entirely different. But what separates these games from others is not solely nostalgia, but also replay value.

In contrast to the newer *Pokémon* games, the older games appealed to a broader audience. The gameplay was simple and more RPG-like, the art style was unique in its own right, and the soundtracks were mesmerising. While it's true that the newer games also contain catchy scores, likeable characters, and improved gameplay, they generally lack substance.

Take *Pokémon Sword* and *Shield* as an example. The world in this game is large and barren, with the design focusing

less on explorable areas and linear map building. Newer *Pokémon* games are starting to follow this trend, with *Pokémon Legends: Arceus* being an exception.

The dissimilarities between the older rivals and the newer ones are also significant. Rivals in previous generations had detailed personality traits that made them attractive. In *Pokémon Red*, for example, your rival is an obstacle you encounter and overcome throughout the game. The second-generation rival, Silver, was a criminal who significantly changes throughout the game, showcasing his character development both as a person and as a trainer, unlike newer games where rivals lack character depth and are simply irksome.

Another noteworthy feature in older *Pokémon* games would be the puzzles and challenges. Every *Pokémon* fan remembers the frustration from the ice-path sliding puzzles and the dopamine release after navigating the correct paths. Gym challenges posed similar difficulties while being creative and unique in their own ways. *Pokémon Emerald*, for example, shares the story of an exciting world without blasting the game with over-the-top cutscenes. Games like *Pokémon Crystal* take you on an adventure with minimal hand-holding.

While it's true that the newer *Pokémon* games are mechanically better, it's also true that they're falling into a spiral of repetitive releases of aesthetically unlikable, one-time playable, and linear genre of video games devoid of the fun of free exploration and exciting challenges. This is something the developers need to look at to improve the quality of future releases.

Fahad is a poet, a cat parent, and a self-proclaimed Pokémon master. Challenge him to a Pokémon showdown battle at [instagram.com/fvehed/](https://www.instagram.com/fvehed/)

TITLE OF YOUR MIXTAPE



A

Eugene
Sufjan Stevens

Empty Note
Ghostly Kisses

Door
Caroline Polachek

Babylon
Oneohtrix Point Never,
(Sandy) Alex G

B

Into the Iris
Dads In The Park

Push
Enrique Iglesias ft. Lil Wayne

Come & Get It
Selene Gomez

Bahir Bole Dure Thakuk
Habib & Nancy

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