Evaluation of the Teaching Competencies of Motor Learning Instructors from the Students' Perspective

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Abstract

Study Purpose. The aim of the study is to develop a specialized questionnaire to evaluate the professional teaching competencies required of motor learning instructors from the perspective of students at the College of Basic Education – Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences. It also seeks to identify the responses of the sample, represented by third-year students from both the morning and evening programs, based on their perspectives within the same department.

Material and methods. The study included 224 third-year students, representing 100% of the population in both programs. The sample was divided into three groups: exploratory (24 students), preparatory (100 students), and application (100 students), all selected randomly. A structured questionnaire was developed based on prior studies, covering six domains with 22 items. The tool was reviewed by five motor learning experts, with items approved by over 75% retained. Reliability was confirmed via Cronbach's alpha, and data were analyzed using SPSS, employing percentage values, chi-square tests, and descriptive statistics.

Results. The findings indicated that most motor learning instructors utilize modern instructional aids, including presentation technology and data show tools, to enhance the learning process. They also focus on positive reinforcement and collaborative activities among students to strengthen relationships and promote engagement. Brainstorming through unexpected questions is also used to stimulate thinking.

Conclusions. The study found that motor learning instructors frequently use modern instructional tools, such as presentation technology and data show aids, to enhance teaching effectiveness. They also apply structured assessments to ensure fair grading and rely on clear theoretical explanations. Allowing students to express their opinions objectively and promoting group work contributed to improved educational outcomes and a more interactive learning environment.

Keywords: Professional Competencies, Motor Learning, College of Basic Education.

Introduction

Successful teaching that yields positive results is the cornerstone for achieving effective educational outcomes. Learning, particularly in the field of physical education, relies on understanding movement and presenting it in a simplified manner that facilitates students' comprehension and acquisition. The teacher is considered one of the fundamental pillars of the educational process and its very foundation. Many of the greatest scientists and inventors were taught by highly qualified teachers who left a lasting mark on the development of their characters, enabling them to achieve success and excellence (Abdul-Adheem, 2019). Possessing professional teaching competencies strengthens teachers' ability to engage students and improve their skill-based and academic performance. The availability of correct and effective teaching competencies among physical education instructors is one of the most important positive steps in enhancing the quality of university-level teaching in the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences. Motor learning is a theoretical subject that depends on the instructor's competencies and scientific expertise to effectively manage the lesson in an engaging manner, ensuring the proper delivery of educational content to students in a clear and compelling manner. The availability of essential teaching competencies in a university instructor fundamentally depends on their possession of accurate and effective instructional skills and abilities, which ensure the clear and successful delivery of educational. Studies also indicate that teaching competencies are defined as 'a set of knowledge, experiences, skills, and behaviors possessed by the teacher, related to planning, implementing, and evaluating instruction, as well as utilizing modern educational technologies' (Abdul-Haris, 2023). Classroom management is achieved by encouraging student participation and fostering positive interaction between students and the instructor. This process is supported by the instructor's mastery of scientific content and technical knowledge, as well as their ability to communicate effectively. A qualified instructor must possess a thorough understanding of the fundamental theories and concepts of motor learning and related sciences, along with the capacity to convey knowledge clearly and confidently in a way that is both comprehensible and inspiring to students. Several studies have revealed gaps in the application of these competencies among motor learning instructors, which may negatively affect students' comprehension levels and their ability to develop motor skills. Furthermore, ineffective interactive teaching methods and the absence of modern technological tools have been shown to undermine student motivation in motor learning courses. The significance of this study lies in exploring the essential professional teaching competencies that motor learning instructors should possess, which students can expect and deem necessary for effective teaching. These competencies play a crucial role in enhancing the learning process and achieving better academic performance in the subject.

Building on this foundation, the research problem is centered on addressing the following question:

What are the most essential professional teaching competencies that motor learning instructors should possess, as viewed by students in the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the College of Basic Education?

1- Developing a specialized questionnaire to evaluate the essential professional teaching competencies required for motor learning instructors from the perspective of students in the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the College of Basic Education.

2- Identifying the responses of the sample from the perspective of students in the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the College of Basic Education.

To achieve this, the research is structured within the following domains:

1- Human Domain: Students at the third-year level who are attending both morning and evening in the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the College of Basic Education.

2- Temporal Domain: From May 6, 2023, to July 26, 2023.
3- Spatial Domain: Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, College of Basic Education, Al-Mustansiriya University.

Materials and methods
Study participants

The researcher identified the target population for the study as all third-year students from both the morning and evening programs in the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the College of Basic Education, Al-Mustansiriya University. The total number of students in both the morning and evening study programs was 224, representing 100% of the study population. The sample was selected randomly through a lottery method, in which student names were drawn to ensure equal opportunities for all students to participate without bias. After selecting the sample, the researcher divided it into three main groups: the exploratory group, the preparatory group, and the application group. The exploratory sample consisted of 24 male and female students. Its purpose was to gather initial data regarding students' perspectives on teaching competencies, helping to identify essential variables such as the time needed to complete the questionnaire and the appropriate conditions for its administration. The preparatory sample was randomly selected and consisted of 100 male and female students. Its purpose was to serve as a preliminary group for testing the research tools (such as questionnaires and expert interviews), ensuring the clarity and feasibility of the questions. The remaining students formed the questionnaire application sample, which also included 100 male and female students. This group represented the primary sample targeted by the study, and their responses were analyzed to derive the final results, as illustrated in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1. Presents the research sample and study population of third-year students enrolled in both morning and evening academic programs

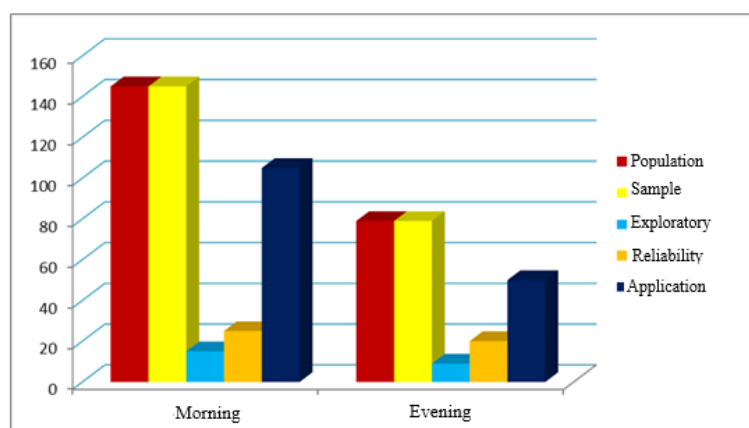| Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences	Study Program	Population	Sample	Exploratory Sample	Reliability Sample	Application Sample
Third-Year Students	Morning	145	145	15	25	105
	Evening	79	79	9	20	50
Total		224	224	24	45	155
Percentage	100%	100%	100%	10.9%	20%	69.1%
				100%		

Figure 1. Illustrates the distribution of the research sample

Study organization
Pilot Study

The researcher conducted the pilot study on May 6, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. in one of the classrooms at the College of Basic Education. The initial version of the scale was distributed to a randomly selected group of 24 students, representing 10.7% of the total population. The aim was to assess the strength, clarity, and difficulty of the statements. The responses indicated that all items were clear and understandable to the students in the pilot sample.

Research Instrument

To achieve the research objective of analyzing the responses of the sample from the perspective of students in the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the College of Basic Education, the researcher designed a structured questionnaire for data collection. This process involved an extensive review of relevant literature and previous studies related to the research variable.

The researcher categorized the questionnaire into six domains, consisting of 22 statements. The questionnaire was then presented to a panel of five experts specializing in motor learning. Statements that received an approval rating of more than 75% were retained, while those scoring below this threshold were excluded.

Table 2. Presents the number of proposed domains, their corresponding percentages, and the Chi-square (χ^2) value

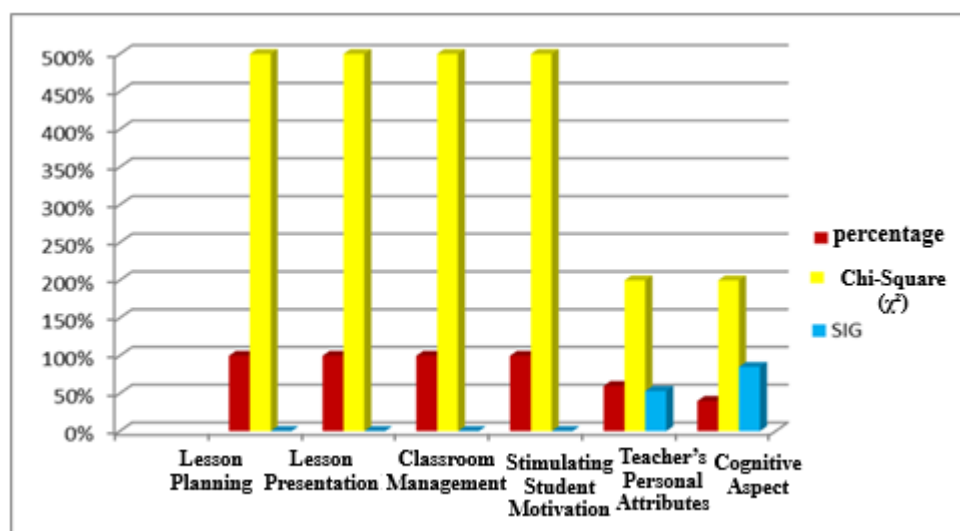| Domains of the Professional Teaching Competencies Scale						
No.	**Domains**	**Expert Opinions**		**Percentage**	**Chi-Square** (χ^2)	**SIG**	**Significance**
		Agree	**Disagree**				
1	Lesson Planning	5	0	100%	5	0.000	Significant
2	Lesson Presentation	5	0	100%	5	0.000	Significant
3	Classroom Management	5	0	100%	5	0.000	Significant
4	Stimulating Student Motivation	5	0	100%	5	0.000	Significant
5	Teacher's Personal Attributes	3	2	60%	2	0.532	Not Significant
6	Cognitive Aspect	2	3	40%	2	0.852	Not Significant

Figure 2. Domains of the Professional Teaching Competencies Scale

Scientific Foundations of the Questionnaire
Questionnaire Validity

The researcher presented the developed questionnaire for review by a panel of five subject-matter experts **(**Appendix 1**)** to establish face validity**.**

Questionnaire Reliability

The researcher evaluated the questionnaire's reliability using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, administering it to a sample of 45 students, representing 20% of the study population, as indicated in Table 3.

Table 3. Displays the questionnaire's reliability items for the Professional Teaching Competencies Scale.

No.	Lesson Planning	Percentage
1	The subject teacher plans the lesson in advance before teaching the motor learning subject.	%70
2	The instructor prepares the necessary lesson materials using presentations, a data show projector, and visual aids.	%74
3	The instructor formulates thought-provoking questions to engage students by prompting them with spontaneous questions.	%82
4	The instructor explains the course material progressively in a clear and structured manner, avoiding unnecessary complexity.	%72
5	The instructor effectively organizes the lesson content through quizzes and direct questioning.	%86
No.	Lesson Presentation	Percentage
1	The motor learning instructor presents the subject matter in a simplified and accessible manner, avoiding unnecessary complexity.	%87
2	The motor learning instructor explains the material theoretically in a structured, logical, and clear sequence.	%69
3	The motor learning instructor employs brainstorming techniques by posing spontaneous questions to students unexpectedly.	%76

| 4 | The motor learning instructor encourages students to express their opinions accurately and confidently, without fear or hesitation. | %77 |
| 5 | The motor learning instructor prioritizes the use of modern technologies to explain the subject matter to students. | %88 |

No.	Classroom Management	Percentage
1	The motor learning instructor ensures proper classroom discipline and order throughout the lesson.	%78
2	The instructor professionally manages and disregards minor negative behaviors and incidents exhibited by students.	%78
3	The motor learning instructor encourages students to share their feedback and express their opinions about the subject matter in an objective manner.	%87
4	The motor learning instructor actively promotes collaborative work among students.	%67
5	The instructor avoids ridiculing students during lessons and interacts with them in a supportive, respectful, and nurturing manner.	%77

No.	Stimulating Student Motivation	Percentage
1	The motor learning instructor effectively stimulates students' motivation in an appropriate manner.	%76
2	The motor learning instructor consistently provides students with positive reinforcement.	%86
3	The motor learning instructor utilizes diverse instructional strategies effectively to enhance student engagement.	%77
4	The motor learning instructor encourages students to express their opinions freely and confidently, without hesitation or fear.	%81
5	The motor learning instructor effectively accommodates individual differences among students in a professional manner.	%80

Response Options

The response options for the scale were determined based on the five-point Likert scoring key. After being reviewed by a panel of experts, the key was approved, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Response Options for the Scale

Response Option	To a Very Great Extent	To a Great Extent	To a Moderate Extent	To a Slight Extent	To a Very Small Extent
Scoring	5	4	3	2	1

Main Experiment

The finalized version of the scale was distributed to a sample group of 155 students (both male and female), representing 69.1% of the total study population, on June 20, 2023, at the College of Basic Education – Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences Following data collection, 15 incomplete or invalid questionnaires were excluded, leaving a total of 140 valid responses for statistical analysis.

Statistical analysis

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), utilizing a set of statistical methods appropriate for the nature of the study. Percentage analysis was used to examine the sample's responses based on their distribution across different categories. Additionally, the Chi-square (χ^2) test was applied to determine the significance of

differences between variables. Furthermore, the arithmetic mean (Mean) and standard deviation (Standard Deviation) were calculated to illustrate the variability of responses regarding the research variables. The data were statistically analyzed using percentage analysis, the Chi-square (χ^2) test, the arithmetic mean, and the standard deviation to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the findings.

Results

The research objective of examining the sample's responses from the perspective of students at the College of Basic Education – Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences was verified by calculating the arithmetic mean and standard deviation for the lesson planning domain. This analysis was based on the responses of 140 students (male and female), as shown in Table 5.

The following table displays the statistical values obtained, which reflect the variation in the sample responses to each statement within the lesson planning domain.

Table 5. Presents Arithmetic Means and Standard Deviations for the Lesson Planning Domain

No.	Lesson Planning Domain Statements	- Mean (M)	- Standard Deviation	Rank
1	The subject teacher plans the lesson in advance before teaching the motor learning subject.	3.214	1.034	3
2	The instructor prepares the necessary lesson materials using presentations, a data show projector, and visual aids.	3.541	0.821	1
3	The instructor formulates thought-provoking questions to engage students by prompting them with spontaneous questions.	2.873	1.541	5
4	The instructor explains the course material progressively in a clear and structured manner, avoiding unnecessary complexity.	2.974	1.201	4
5	The instructor effectively organizes the lesson content through quizzes and direct questioning.	3.321	0.932	2
	Total	3.184	1.105	

Table 5, which presents the arithmetic means and standard deviations for the lesson planning domain, shows that the overall mean score for all items was 3.184, with a standard deviation of 1.105. The researcher believes that lesson planning competence is one of the most essential and vital teaching competencies that must be present in motor learning instructors. The instructor should prepare the lesson in advance and provide instructional aids prior to content delivery, as this facilitates the effective transmission of educational material to students. This domain ranked first among the components of lesson planning.

Table 6. Presents the Arithmetic Mean and Standard Deviation for the Lesson Presentation Domain.

No.	Lesson Presentation Domain Statements	- Mean (M)	- Standard Deviation	Rank
1	The motor learning instructor presents the subject matter in a simplified and accessible manner, avoiding unnecessary complexity.	3.101	1.092	4

2	The motor learning instructor explains the material theoretically in a structured, logical, and clear sequence.	3.541	0.812	2
3	The motor learning instructor employs brainstorming techniques by posing spontaneous questions to students unexpectedly.	2.003	1.411	5
4	The motor learning instructor encourages students to express their opinions accurately and confidently, without fear or hesitation.	3.321	0.981	3
5	The motor learning instructor prioritizes the use of modern technologies to explain the subject matter to students.	3.765	0.532	1
	Total	3.146	0.965	

As shown in Table 6, which presents the arithmetic means and standard deviations for the lesson presentation domain, the overall mean for all items was 3.146, with a standard deviation of 0.965. The results indicate that motor learning instructors use modern technologies—such as presenting the lesson using a data show or other contemporary tools—which facilitate the explanation of the material and enhance students' understanding. This item ranked first among the components of lesson presentation.

Table 7. Presents the Arithmetic Mean and Standard Deviation for the Classroom Management Domain.

No.	Classroom Management Domain Statements	- Mean (M)	- Standard Deviation	Rank
1	The motor learning instructor ensures proper classroom discipline and order throughout the lesson.	3.123	0.872	2
2	The instructor professionally manages and disregards minor negative behaviors and incidents exhibited by students.	2.764	1.543	4
3	The motor learning instructor encourages students to share their feedback and express their opinions about the subject matter in an objective manner.	3.433	0.762	1
4	The motor learning instructor actively promotes collaborative work among students.	2.321	1.981	5
5	The instructor avoids ridiculing students during lessons and interacts with them in a supportive, respectful, and nurturing manner.	2.973	1.231	3
	Total	2.922	1.277	

As shown in Table 7, which presents the arithmetic means and standard deviations for the classroom management domain, the overall mean for all items was 2.922, with a standard deviation of 1.277. The highest-rated item within this domain was the motor learning instructor's encouragement of students to express their observations and opinions about the subject matter objectively.

Table 8. Presents the Arithmetic Mean and Standard Deviation for the Domain of Stimulating Student Motivation

No.	Statements in the Domain of Stimulating Student Motivation	- Mean (M)	- Standard Deviation	Rank
1	The motor learning instructor effectively stimulates students' motivation in an appropriate manner.	2.211	0.871	3
2	The motor learning instructor consistently provides students with positive reinforcement.	2.001	0.100	5
3	The motor learning instructor utilizes diverse instructional strategies effectively to enhance student engagement.	2.982	0.400	1
4	The motor learning instructor encourages students to express their opinions freely and confidently, without hesitation or fear.	2.091	0.981	4
5	The motor learning instructor effectively accommodates individual differences among students in a professional manner.	2.532	0.476	2
	Total	2.363	0.565	

As shown in Table 8, which presents the arithmetic means and standard deviations for the domain of student motivation, the overall mean for all items was 2.363, with a standard deviation of 0.565. The highest-rated item within this domain was the motor learning instructor's effective use of diverse educational situations with students in an appropriate and purposeful manner.

Discussion

The results presented in Table 5 indicate that the lesson planning competency is one of the most fundamental skills that a motor learning instructor must acquire. Well-structured and effective lesson planning plays a crucial role in achieving teaching and learning objectives. Moreover, it facilitates the delivery of theoretical content to students in an organized and clear manner, ensuring that it meets their academic needs. Moreover, achieving educational objectives depends on the instructor's ability to identify and articulate lesson objectives clearly and accurately. Additionally, selecting appropriate instructional content that aligns with the nature of the subject matter and students' academic requirements contributes to enhancing their understanding and assimilation of the academic material (Nayef & Rasheed, 2021).

Studies have emphasized the importance of teaching competence and continuous training for teachers, as regular evaluation enables them to reflect on their practices in order to improve the teaching and learning process and foster their professional development. Through their competence, teachers are able to effectively plan and prepare lessons and stimulate students' motivation (González-Fernández et al., 2024).

The study by Abdullah (2024) also emphasizes that identifying errors that occur during a lesson is a vital part of the instructor's role in enhancing students' learning experiences and improving their performance. This process involves observing students' performance during the lesson and recording observations and impressions about how they apply the skills.

Lesson planning is one of the key responsibilities that teachers must prioritize, as it is essential for achieving educational objectives. The success of this process largely depends on the teacher's competence and experience. A study by Blömeke et al. (2020) emphasized that teacher competence is a combination of knowledge, skills, personal characteristics, self-

perceptions, motivation, values, and personality traits that empower teachers and enable them to demonstrate professionalism and effective behavior.

A lack of knowledge and experience negatively affects the teacher's ability to plan and manage lessons effectively. This was confirmed by the study of Tataroğlu-Taşdan et al. (2022), which found that limited teacher knowledge and motivation, along with negative beliefs about the value of lesson planning, negatively affected teachers' lesson planning practices. Moreover, teachers' professional backgrounds and long-standing habits may also be among the factors contributing to the challenges faced in the educational process.

The results presented in Table 6 indicate that the competency of lesson presentation in motor learning by instructors constitutes one of the fundamental components of any lesson. The researcher believes that effective communication and clarity in delivering theoretical content to students—alongside the optimal use of appropriate teaching methods in physical education—enhance linguistic clarity, thereby facilitating comprehension and deeper understanding.

The study by Ridha et al. (2024) highlights the importance of aligning lesson presentation with the use of diverse teaching methods to effectively communicate with students. It emphasizes that prior preparation of the lesson is a crucial factor in organizing the content and instructional tools used during the explanation—such as visual aids, illustrative diagrams, and progressive slides—which contribute to stimulating students and actively engaging them in the learning process.

Recent studies, including that of Aparicio-Herguedas and Navarro-Asencio (2023), have underscored the importance of establishing an active and central role for students in training, while recognizing the role of teachers as facilitators and guides, and taking into account students' abilities and potential throughout the process.

Several studies, including that of Alnahdi (2020), have emphasized the importance of assessing teachers' professional competencies by providing them with targeted training and enhancing their effectiveness through the development of specialized training programs. These programs aim to deepen understanding of the realities of the educational process and the ongoing developments within it. The study further underscores the significance of students' emotional intelligence, which contributes to improving teachers' professional competencies and fostering a stronger student–teacher relationship—both of which are essential to achieving lesson objectives and motivating students.

The results in Table 7 indicate that classroom management competence represents a fundamental aspect of establishing a successful learning environment. Classroom management encompasses the methods and techniques employed by the instructor to organize the classroom in a manner that promotes interaction and maintains focus on learning activities during the lesson. This is further supported by Nabhan (2008), who pointed out that motivating students by involving them in classroom dialogues and discussions contributes to enhancing their engagement and improving their academic performance.

Recent developments have underscored the continued need for teachers to adapt, despite the various challenges facing the educational process, particularly through the integration of modern tools and technologies to keep pace with current advancements. This need became especially evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted auditory and verbal communication between students and teachers. Nevertheless, the crisis highlighted the potential of modern technology to strengthen trust between the two parties and demonstrated the importance of teachers' ability to employ effective teaching methods, strategies, and digital tools to support students. It also emphasized the development of students' interpersonal skills, while teachers increasingly recognized and valued their evolving competencies in the use of modern technological resources (Moreira et al., 2023).

The findings indicated that teachers' behaviors play a fundamental role in improving lesson planning and classroom management through the use of effective teaching methods. The

studies recommend that teacher preparation programs take this into account by promoting both emotional and cognitive behaviors, with the aim of developing context-specific planning skills and enhancing instructional performance (Metsäpelto et al., 2021).

The results in Table 8 indicate that fostering motivation among third-year students through the motor learning course is an important factor in effectively encouraging and engaging them. The researcher believes that enhancing students' active participation in the classroom can be achieved by linking the course content to their everyday lives. This includes presenting theoretical material in a way that connects with real-life situations and the practical sports activities applied during their training. This view is supported by the study of Rabie (2008), which emphasizes that the use of modern educational applications and technologies by instructors promotes student participation and engagement. Delivering content in an engaging way and organizing interactive classroom activities appropriately significantly enhances students' motivation and commitment to learning.

The study suggests that teachers can create a classroom environment that fosters student motivation by establishing a motivational language aligned with students' level of engagement. Such an environment encourages students to think independently and supports instructional approaches that emphasize guided facilitation rather than providing direct answers (Li et al., 2022).

A well-structured lesson design, along with the use of appropriate tools and techniques that focus on students' motivation and engagement, is essential for achieving learning objectives. Recent studies have confirmed that developing an effective lesson plan that emphasizes students' thinking processes and learning while integrating a variety of instructional strategies—significantly enhances lesson quality. Encouraging students to respond to thoughtfully designed questions during the lesson fosters critical thinking, enhances cognitive engagement, and boosts motivation. Placing emphasis on students' thought processes and employing innovative teaching methods leads to more effective and meaningful learning outcomes (Amador & Lamberg, 2013).

Recent findings and studies have shown that lesson methodology not only enhances students' conceptual understanding and learning outcomes but also boosts their self-confidence and ability to engage in mathematical reasoning. It also promotes effective collaboration, which contributes to improving the overall quality of instruction (Aryanti, 2024). Moreover, the findings indicated that enhancing student learning outcomes across diverse educational settings has a profound impact on their learning journey and underscores the increased effectiveness of assessment practices among teachers (Apostol et al., 2023).

Conclusions

The results revealed that motor learning instructors at the College of Basic Education possess a good level of professional teaching competencies, particularly in areas such as lesson planning, lesson presentation, and other instructional domains. However, there is variation in the level of these competencies among instructors, which appears to be influenced by differences in professional experience and training.

The study highlighted that effective lesson planning, student motivation, and positive classroom interaction are among the fundamental factors for the success of the educational process. The use of visual aids plays a significant role in helping students comprehend lessons and achieve better learning outcomes.

It is crucial for motor learning instructors to further promote active learning strategies, particularly by emphasizing consistent positive reinforcement within the classroom.

Based on these conclusions, the study recommends offering continuous training programs for instructors that focus on enhancing effective lesson planning and adopting interactive teaching strategies to remain updated on the latest methodologies in the fields of

physical education and motor learning. It further encourages the integration of modern technologies—such as instructional videos and data show devices into lesson presentations, as they play a crucial role in boosting student motivation. Additionally, the study underscores the importance of employing discussion- and dialogue-based approaches to better understand students' needs and promote deeper engagement.

The recommendations also highlight the need for future research to explore teaching competencies across various domains of physical education. Moreover, the study calls for the development of clear and standardized criteria for evaluation and training, which should be adopted by educational institutions to assess the professional competencies of motor learning instructors, thereby enabling them to enhance their instructional effectiveness in alignment with these benchmarks.

Acknowledgment

Conflict of interest

The author declares that they have no conflicts of interest that could influence the outcome of this study.

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