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# The Main Challenges Facing Basic Education Teachers in Several Libyan Schools According to the Charlotte Danielson Framework

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Abstract: This study investigates the challenges faced by basic education teachers in Libyan schools, aiming to provide insights for decision-makers in the Ministry of Education and school administrators to support teachers effectively. Using a quantitative descriptive survey methodology, the research analyzes data from 98 teachers across various Libyan cities and villages, focusing on areas such as lesson planning, classroom management, teaching practices, and professional development. Key findings reveal that while a majority are proficient in formulating lesson objectives and building positive student relationships, there are significant gaps in utilizing educational resources and integrating technology. The study also highlights a lack of significant differences in challenges based on gender, qualifications, and teaching context, suggesting systemic issues within the education sector. The results underscore the need for targeted professional development and support structures to enhance teachers' effectiveness and address the common challenges they face.

Keywords: Basic education, teachers, Charlotte Danielson, framework,

#### INTRODUCTION

Throughout the ages, teachers have played an important role in educating students and transmitting knowledge from one generation to the next. They have also been involved in helping learners acquire mental and life skills in general, as well as fostering religious, moral, and social values among students. The role of the teacher has become even more significant in the age of technology and the widespread use of social media, which shapes students behavior. This has increased the educational responsibility on teachers, who strive to mitigate the impact of these media on students' behavior by promoting positive values, attitudes, and feelings. Additionally, teachers prepare students for future careers and equip them with the skills necessary to compete in the job market.

Just as other professions such as medicine, engineering, agriculture, and economics develop, teaching methods also develop to keep pace with modern curricula and the changing goals and aspirations of society according to changing circumstances and changing needs, especially in the era of knowledge flow and massive and rapid scientific and technical development. Therefore, it is necessary for the teacher to keep pace with this development taking place in

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Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK The field of education and seek to improve its performance, methods, teaching methods and classroom management

updated and fulfilling their roles effectively. One of the most significant challenges is the lack of sufficient opportunities and resources for their educational, academic, and professional preparation (1997 زقوت). Teachers require adequate and continuous training both before and during service. Some studies have indicated that in-service training may be even more critical than pre-service training, as pre-service preparation serves only as an introduction to a series of training programs that teachers should receive during their careers, given the constant emergence of new knowledge, techniques, and methods. (2001)

Additionally, previous studies have shown that the responsibilities placed on teachers are numerous and complex, posing a significant challenge for them to perform their jobs and develop academically and professionally( 2019 الساعدي). A study on the underperformance of first-cycle teachers in Oran, Algeria, revealed that the lack of effective communication between schools and families hindered the ability to assess students' levels and identify challenges and ways to overcome them.

However, the challenges faced by teachers .(2018:الحبري) in Libya may not differ significantly from those highlighted in several previous studies in various contexts. Some of the main challenges include: weak training and development programs, inability of some teachers to integrate technology into their teaching, insufficient support for classroom and extracurricular activities .(2020:البد، 2020)

Furthermore, among the challenges teachers face are a lack of collaboration with colleagues, high student-to-teacher ratios in classrooms, low student motivation, and limited parental involvement, which contribute to feelings of discomfort (2013، الأحمدي)

### Aim of the research

To gain a detailed understanding of the challenges facing basic education teachers in Libya, the researcher has decided to use the framework developed by Charlotte Danielson, which consists of four main domains: planning, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibility. This framework will help identify the key challenges faced by basic education teachers in several Libyan schools within each of these domains. The study also aims to provide suggestions that may help mitigate the impact of these challenges on teacher performance and, consequently, on the educational process as a whole.

### **Problem of the Study**

Given the vital importance of teachers in the educational process, it is essential to create a helpful environment for them to perform their duties and bear the responsibilities placed upon them. This can only be achieved by identifying the problems and challenges they face and working to alleviate these difficulties, so that they do not feel anxious, stressed, or frustrated.

Through the researcher's experience in teaching and close interaction with this group of teachers, it has been observed that some feel discontent, exhibit low motivation, and tend

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Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK toward negligence due to the issues they encounter while carrying out their responsibilities. This situation has led many to consider leaving the teaching profession, potentially resulting in a significant shortage in basic education schools. Therefore, the researcher believes it is necessary to study the problems and difficulties teachers face using a scientific methodology and to propose some suggestions that may help resolve these issues and mitigate their negative impact on performance.

# **Research Questions**

- 1. What are the main challenges faced by basic education teachers in several Libyan schools in the areas of planning, instruction, classroom management, and professional development?
- 2. What differences, if any, exist between male and female teachers regarding the challenges they face, and how do these differences relate to their experience, specialization, qualifications, the grade level they teach, and their teaching location?
- 3. What suggestions can be made to overcome the challenges faced by basic education teachers in several Libyan schools?

### **Importance of the Study**

The importance of this study lies in identifying the key problems and challenges faced by basic education teachers in Libyan schools. We expect that the results of this study will provide valuable information that will assist decision-makers in the Ministry of Education and school administrators in making appropriate decisions, thereby offering the necessary support to teachers so they can perform their jobs more effectively. Additionally, this study may open the door for other researchers to explore this topic from different perspectives.

### **Definition of key concepts**

### **Basic Education Teachers**

Basic education teachers are educators who specialize in teaching foundational skills and knowledge to students typically in the primary (elementary) and lower secondary (middle) education levels. Their primary role is to facilitate learning in core subjects such as literacy, numeracy, science, and social studies, while also fostering social and emotional development (UNESCO, 2014).

Basic education teachers are generally required to hold a bachelor's degree in education or a specific subject area, along with teaching credentials. Continuous professional development is vital for these educators to stay updated on pedagogical strategies, curriculum changes, and technological advancements in education (Hammond et al., 2017).

#### Charlotte Danielson Framework

The Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching consists of 22 instructional components that align with the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards to evaluate teacher effectiveness. These components are organized into four domains: Planning, Classroom management, teaching, and Professional responsibilities developed by Charlotte

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Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK Danielson, an educational consultant and former teacher and administrator, the framework focuses on enhancing teacher effectiveness and designing evaluation systems. The Danielson Group aims to assist the education community in understanding and implementing the Framework, promoting its use in professional development within schools and districts, and enhancing practices that positively influence student achievement. While associated with positive impacts on student engagement and achievement, some critiques highlight its complexity and the potential for inconsistent self-assessment. Overall, the framework is a valuable tool, but addressing its challenges is crucial for maximizing its effectiveness in educational settings (Brian, R. et al. 2015).

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

Basic education teachers encounter a variety of challenges across key domains of their professional practice, including planning, classroom management, teaching, and professional development. Understanding these challenges is essential for developing effective support systems and improving educational outcomes.

### Planning

One of the primary challenges in planning is the need for differentiated instruction to cater to diverse student needs. Stronge et al. (2011) emphasize that teachers often struggle to create lessons that are inclusive and engaging for all students, particularly in heterogeneous classrooms. Additionally, according to Danielson (2013), limited access to resources and insufficient time for lesson preparation further complicate effective planning. Teachers frequently report feeling overwhelmed by the demands of curriculum standards and the need to align their lessons with state assessments (Paine & Ma, 2018).

#### Classroom Management

Classroom management remains a significant hurdle for many educators. Emmer and Evertson (2013) indicate that effective classroom management is critical for creating a conducive learning environment, yet many teachers lack the training necessary to handle disruptive behaviors effectively. Research by O'Neill and Stephenson (2014) highlights that new teachers, in particular, often feel unprepared to establish authority and maintain order, which can lead to increased stress and job dissatisfaction. Furthermore, the shift to inclusive classrooms has added complexity to classroom management, as teachers must address the needs of students with varying behavioral challenges (Simonsen et al., 2010).

#### **Teaching**

In the realm of teaching, integrating technology effectively is a major challenge. Hattie (2012) notes that while technology can enhance student engagement and learning, many teachers lack the skills and confidence to use it effectively in their instruction. This gap can result in a reliance on traditional teaching methods that may not resonate with today's digitally savvy learners. Moreover, teachers often face pressure to improve student performance on standardized assessments, which can lead to a narrowed curriculum that prioritizes test preparation over creative and critical thinking (Hammond et al., 2017).

# **Professional Development**

Professional development is another area where teachers face significant challenges. According to Desimone (2009), effective professional development must be ongoing, collaborative, and aligned with teachers' needs. However, many teachers report that professional development opportunities are often

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Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK one-time workshops that do not translate into meaningful classroom practice. This disconnect can lead to frustration and a lack of engagement in professional growth (Garet et al., 2001). Furthermore, research by Hammond et al. (2017) highlights the need for professional development programs that foster collaboration among teachers, as peer support can enhance the effectiveness of professional learning.

However, many studies have addressed the problems and challenges faced by teachers in Libya across different educational stages. For example,(2012) in his study titled "A Field Study of Some Issues in Teacher Preparation in Libya and Suggestions for Improvement," argues that some of the challenges teachers face today stem from the preparation phase and pre-service training. Among these issues is the open-door policy for student admissions, which allowed students with low secondary school grades to enroll, as well as the admission of struggling students from other colleges into teacher education programs. Furthermore, there is a lack of integration among the three components of preparation: academic, professional, and cultural.

The study's findings also highlighted that the weakness and rigidity of curricula, along with their failure to keep pace with modern teaching methods, are among the challenges facing teachers in Libya. In a study by (2022) الكبار، مصطفى titled "Administrative Problems Faced by Basic Education School Principals," the results indicated that one of the major problems affecting teachers and negatively impacting their performance is the lack of alignment between teachers and school administration, along with the lack of collaboration among teachers and sudden transfers during the academic year.

Additionally, (2019) الجعيدي، نادية in her study "Supervisory Methods and Teacher Competency Development," pointed out that one of the key challenges faced by teachers in Libya is the heavy academic and administrative burdens placed on them, coupled with a scarcity of programs and training courses aimed at enhancing teacher competence, as well as weak collaboration between educational supervision and teachers. The study's results also confirmed that teachers experience difficulties related to personal issues stemming from psychological pressures, notably being held responsible for failures while not being credited for successes.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

This is a quantitative descriptive survey study; it relied on a questionnaire to capture the perceptions of teachers in several Libyan schools regarding the challenges they face within the framework of Charlotte Danielson's educational model. The researcher analyzed the data quantitatively to identify the most significant challenges based on the responses of the sample to the questionnaire.

# **Participants**

Due to the size and wide scope of the study population, which consists of basic education teachers in Libya, and the difficulty of reaching all members of this population, the researcher limited his focus to those who responded to the questionnaire sent online through the Teachers' Union in Libya. All basic education teachers were given the opportunity to participate during the first semester of the 2023/24 academic year across all cities and villages in Libya without exception. A total of 98 teachers from 23 Libyan cities and villages, who reflect the

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Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK characteristics of the study population, participated in the questionnaire. Among them, there were 15 males and 83 females, including 22 teachers working at the elementary school level and 38 at the primary level, with the remainder teaching in both primary and elementary schools. Of the total sample, 67 teachers hold a bachelor's degree in various specializations, while the rest hold a higher teaching diploma, with professional experience ranging from one year to over ten years.

### **Data collection tools**

The study utilized a questionnaire (Appendix 1) to capture the perceptions of teachers in several Libyan schools regarding the challenges they face within the framework of Danielson's educational model. This questionnaire consists of 32 items: 6 items related to the demographic data of the sample, and 26 items concerning the challenges faced by teachers. These challenges are divided into four sections: (A) 6 items for planning challenges, (B) 10 items for teaching challenges, (C) 5 items for classroom management challenges, and (D) 5 items for professional development challenges.

The questionnaire was constructed using a five-point Likert-type scale (ranging from "Excellent" to "Not Capable"), and teachers were asked to select the option that best describes their performance on each of the performance criteria in the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was presented to some colleagues at the Bahrain Teachers College and to several teachers to ensure its clarity, accuracy, and the time required to complete it. Based on their feedback, some wording was adjusted, and the time was set to approximately 5 minutes. The questionnaire was then administered to a group of teachers in Libya who were not part of the study sample to verify its reliability. Cronbach's Alpha was used to calculate the reliability, yielding a high result of 0.957 ( $\alpha =$ ), indicating strong internal consistency and high confidence in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed and sent to teachers in Libya using Microsoft Forms, following official approval from the Teachers' Union in the area where the questionnaire was administered. The data were then collected and analyzed in preparation for presenting and discussing the results.

# **Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics were utilized using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The main statistical methods employed included the Mann-Whitney U Test to identify differences in challenges between male and female teachers based on gender, qualifications, and location. Additionally, the Kruskal-Wallis H Test was used to determine differences in challenges among teachers based on experience, specialization, and educational level.

### Results Related to the First Question:

What are the main challenges faced by basic education teachers in several Libyan schools in the areas of planning, instruction, classroom management, and professional development? Descriptive statistics were used, and the percentages of responses for each performance criterion in planning, instruction, management, and development were recorded, as shown in the following table.

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Competency	No	Performance standards	Performance level		
			Very good	Good	Poor
Planning	1	Able to identify the educational needs of students	81%	19%	0%
	2	Able to formulate lesson objectives well	85%	15%	0%
	3	Able to design appropriate educational activities	69%	29%	2%
	4	Able to design appropriate assessment activities	72%	27%	1%
	5	Able to recognize the learning styles of my students	74%	26%	0%
	6	Able to write a comprehensive lesson plan	82%	17%	1%
Classroom	7	Able to manage class time efficiently	82%	17%	1%
management	8	Able to create a respectful classroom environment	87%	13%	%0
	9	Able to control student behavior in the classroom	89%	11%	%0
	10	Able to capture students' attention during the lesson	92%	8%	0%
	11	Able to establish classroom rules that can be applied smoothly	78%	22%	%0
	12	Able to use appropriate educational resources	75%	25%	%0
	13	Able to encourage student participation during the lesson	91%	9%	%0
	14	Able to build good relationships with my students	96%	4%	%0
Teaching	15	Able to choose a teaching method suitable for the educational situation	86%	14%	%0
	16	Able to use modern teaching strategies that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaborative learning	69%	28%	%3
	17	Able to ask effective classroom questions	87%	12%	%1
	18	Able to provide constructive feedback, guidance, and remarks	67%	31%	%2
	19	Able to increase interaction among students in the classroom	85%	14%	%1
	20	Able to use diverse assessment tools to evaluate student performance	72%	25%	%3
	21	Able to integrate technology into the teaching process	61%	29%	10%
Professional	22	Able to develop myself professionally	84%	13%	%3
development	23	Able to engage in training programs	68%	24%	%8
	24	Able to keep up with developments in the field of teaching	80%	17%	%3
	25	I accept feedback, guidance, and remarks from evaluators	74%	25%	%1
	26	Committed to the ethics of the teaching profession	96%	4%	%0

This table reveals that 85% of the participants are proficient in formulating lesson objectives, while 69% can design appropriate educational activities. Overall, these results suggest that most participants are capable of lesson planning. In terms of classroom management, the study found that 96% of participants are successful in building positive relationships with their students, and 92% can effectively capture students' attention during lessons. However, only 75% are adept at utilizing appropriate educational resources.

When examining teaching practices, the findings indicate that approximately 61% of participants can integrate technology into their teaching. This highlights a potential gap in their ability and experience with technology in the classroom. Additionally, only 67% reported being

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Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK able to provide constructive feedback, guidance, and remarks. Nevertheless, a significant portion of participants do not struggle with selecting suitable teaching methods or asking effective questions.

Interestingly, in the area of professional development, the research findings show that 96% of participants are committed to the ethics of the teaching profession, and 84% feel capable of developing themselves professionally.

### Results related to the answer to the second question:

What are the differences between male and female teachers—if any—in the challenges they face, based on their experience, specialization, qualifications, the educational stage they teach, and their teaching location? Non-parametric statistics were employed, and the results of the Mann-Whitney U Test were observed for differences between two independent groups, as well as the Kruskal-Wallis H Test for differences among more than two independent groups.

The results of the Mann-Whitney test indicate that there are no significant differences in the perception of performance levels between male teachers (mean rank = 36, sample size = 15) and female teachers (mean rank = 51, sample size = 82), with a U value of 425 and a significance level of p = 0.058. The test results also show that there are no significant differences between male (teachers) and female (teachers) in their perceptions of performance levels in three of the four model areas: teaching, classroom management, and professional development. However, there are statistically significant differences in the participants' perceptions of their performance level in the area of planning between male teachers (mean rank = 41, sample size = 15) and female teachers (mean rank = 51, sample size = 82), with a U value of 390 and a significance level of p = 0.024.

The results of the Mann-Whitney test indicate that there are no significant differences in the perception of performance levels between those working in the city (mean rank = 53, sample size = 48) and those working in the villages (mean rank = 45, sample size = 49), with a U value of 999 and a significance level of p = 0.201. The results also confirmed that there are no significant differences between male and female teachers working in cities and those working in villages in their perceptions of performance levels in the four model areas: planning, teaching, classroom management, and professional development.

The results of the Mann-Whitney test further indicate that there are no significant differences in the perception of performance levels between those holding a Bachelor's degree (mean rank = 47, sample size = 66) and those holding a higher diploma (mean rank = 51, sample size = 31), with a U value of 898 and a significance level of p = 0.335. The results also showed that there are no significant differences between those holding a Bachelor's degree and those with a higher diploma in their perceptions of performance levels in the four model areas: planning, teaching, classroom management, and professional development.

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test indicate that there are no significant differences (Chisquare (2) = 4.879, significance level = 0.087) among the three experience categories for teachers (less than five years, five to ten years, more than ten years) in their perceptions of the challenges they face. The results also showed that there are no significant differences among

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Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK the three experience categories in their perceptions of each area of the four models: planning, teaching, classroom management, and professional development.

In the same vein, the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test confirm that there are no statistically significant differences (Chi-square (2) = 4.839, significance level = 0.436) among the different specializations (Arabic Language and Islamic Education, English Language, Mathematics, Sciences, Computer Science, and Classroom Teacher) in their perceptions of the challenges they face. The results also confirmed that there are no significant differences among the different specializations in their perceptions of each area of the four models: planning, teaching, classroom management, and professional development.

Not far from the previous findings, the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test indicated that there are no statistically significant differences (Chi-square (2) = 4.741, significance level = 0.093) between male and female teachers in the three educational stages (primary stage, primary-elementary stage, and elementary stage) in their perceptions of the challenges they face. The results also showed that there are no significant differences between male and female teachers in the three educational stages in their perceptions of each area of the four models: planning, teaching, classroom management, and professional development.

### **DISCUSSION**

The results highlight the competencies of participants in key areas of teaching, revealing strengths and areas for improvement. An impressive 85% are proficient in formulating lesson objectives, but only 69% can design suitable educational activities, indicating a need for enhancement in this area. In classroom management, 96% effectively build positive relationships with students, yet only 75% utilize appropriate educational resources, which may impact teaching effectiveness. The ability to integrate technology is a concern, with only 61% demonstrating proficiency, suggesting gaps in training. Additionally, only 67% can provide constructive feedback, highlighting another area for development. On a positive note, a strong commitment to ethics (96%) and professional growth (84%) suggests that participants are motivated to uphold high standards and improve their skills, fostering a culture of continuous improvement in education.

Moreover, the research results provide valuable insights into the perceptions of male and female teachers regarding the challenges they face in various educational contexts. Here's a discussion of the key findings:

Gender Differences in Perceptions of Performance

The Mann-Whitney U Test results indicate that there are no significant differences between male and female teachers in their overall performance perceptions, except in the area of planning. Female teachers reported higher mean ranks in planning, suggesting that they may feel more competent or confident in this aspect. The significant difference (p = 0.024) highlights a potential area where gender dynamics might influence perceptions, possibly reflecting differing experiences or expectations in planning lessons.

Location and Teaching Context

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Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK The findings also reveal no significant differences in performance perceptions between teachers working in urban versus rural settings (p=0.201). This suggests that the challenges faced are relatively uniform across different teaching environments, which could indicate that systemic issues in education are prevalent regardless of location. Furthermore, no differences were found when comparing male and female teachers in urban and rural settings, suggesting a shared experience in the challenges faced by teachers, irrespective of gender.

# Qualifications and Experience

When examining qualifications, the results show no significant differences between those holding a Bachelor's degree and those with a higher diploma (p=0.335). This indicates that additional qualifications may not substantially alter teachers' perceptions of their performance. Similarly, the Kruskal-Wallis test results regarding experience levels suggest that years of experience do not significantly impact perceptions of challenges (p=0.087). This could imply that both novice and experienced teachers face similar obstacles, possibly due to systemic factors affecting the teaching profession.

## Specializations and Educational Stages

The analysis of different specializations revealed no significant differences in perceptions of challenges (p = 0.436). This suggests that teachers across various subjects may encounter comparable challenges, indicating a need for broader support structures in education that address common issues rather than subject-specific ones. Additionally, no significant differences were found among male and female teachers across different educational stages (p = 0.093), reinforcing the idea that the challenges faced are consistent across gender and educational context.

# **Suggestions for improvement**

- Conducting workshops on integrating technology into teaching practices. These
  sessions should focus on practical applications of digital tools that enhance
  engagement and learning, such as interactive platforms, educational apps, and virtual
  resources.
- Establishing structured collaborative learning communities where teachers can share best practices, resources, and experiences. These groups can facilitate peer mentoring and support, helping teachers to learn from one another.
- Providing training on how to give constructive feedback to students and use formative assessments effectively. Sessions should emphasize strategies for fostering a growth mindset and encouraging student self-assessment.
- Implementing a system for ongoing professional learning that includes regular workshops, webinars, and access to online courses. This can ensure that professional development is continuous and aligned with teachers' evolving needs.

By implementing these suggestions, schools can provide targeted support that addresses the specific challenges teachers face, ultimately enhancing their effectiveness and improving student outcomes.

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#### **CONCLUSION**

While the results show that participants possess many strengths, there are also critical areas for development, particularly in the integration of technology and the use of educational resources. Addressing these gaps through targeted professional development and support could enhance teaching effectiveness and ultimately improve student outcomes. The findings underscore the importance of ongoing training and resources to equip teachers with the skills necessary to navigate the evolving educational landscape.

Overall, the research highlights a lack of significant differences in teachers' perceptions based on gender, location, qualifications, experience, specialization, and educational stages. The findings suggest a need for holistic approaches to address the challenges faced by teachers, with a focus on areas like lesson planning and systemic support, rather than individual characteristics or backgrounds.

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