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Difficulties in Achievement Assessment in Physical and Sports Education at the Middle School Level A Field Study in Some Middle Schools in the Wilaya of Oran

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Abstract:

This study aims to identify the difficulties of achievement assessment in physical and sports education at the middle school level. To achieve this, we adopted the descriptive method. The study sample consisted of 30 male and female teachers, and we used a questionnaire as the primary tool. To convert the data into statistical results, we applied several tools including validity and reliability coefficients and Pearson's simple correlation coefficient. The main findings of the study indicate a significant lack of teacher experience in conducting achievement assessment in physical education, which causes difficulties in implementing it effectively. Additionally, 57% of the teachers reported that their schools do not have a sports field to conduct physical education classes.

Keywords: Achievement Assessment; Physical and Sports Education; middle school education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Physical and sports education today is no longer merely a recreational physical activity aimed at strengthening muscles and joints. Rather, it has evolved into a scientific endeavor aimed at educating and preparing the individual in all aspects—physical, mental, emotional, moral, psychological, and social—ensuring the development of a well-balanced and fully integrated personality. The school is one of the key educational and social institutions responsible for driving this development. Hence, it is essential to give due importance to the physical and sports education lesson and its various activities, as it constitutes the practical implementation of developing educational objectives based on sound scientific principles to ensure the achievement of both general and specific learning goals and to attain the desired level of development. (ghazi, 2022, p. 31).

The educational system adopted by the state constitutes the foundational pillar that plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual's development and life trajectory (nabil & doudo belkacem, 2019, p. 93)

As is widely acknowledged, the physical and sports education teacher represents the cornerstone and pivotal element of the educational process. This teacher is responsible for achieving the subject's objectives by employing a variety of methods, techniques, and teaching tools aligned with the educational situations outlined in the curriculum, and suited to learners' abilities, capabilities, interests, and inclinations. This alignment is essential for achieving the desired goals of shaping individuals holistically—psychomotor, emotional-affective, and cognitive domains—which form the foundation of physical and sports activity objectives. However, what remains a point of contention among educational stakeholders is how to assess these goals and what the appropriate methods are for evaluating each domain, and consequently, how to make judgments regarding the outcomes of the educational process. (ghazi, 2021, p. 54)

It is well known that assessment constitutes the fourth element of the curriculum and is a crucial and essential component of the educational process. What distinguishes it from the other elements is its tangible influence on all the others. Any progress or development in the field of education cannot occur without referring to it. Thus, assessment is the primary tool for collecting information and evidence used to make judgments about all aspects of the educational process and to implement necessary reforms and improvements aimed



at enhancing both efficiency and effectiveness. Given its importance, assessment has several objectives, including pedagogical and educational goals. (abdelafid, 2023, p. 98)

Assessment is the only teaching component that allows us to evaluate the outcomes and results of the educational process. It also plays a crucial role in identifying unsuitable objectives, modifying or changing the methods and strategies used, and detecting the difficulties learners face throughout the educational stages, thus providing appropriate solutions. Additionally, assessment supports the individual's overall development. It aims to identify both strengths and weaknesses within curriculum components. Undoubtedly, assessment is a continuous process that runs parallel to instruction and the curriculum being implemented. (majid, 2022, p. 27)

Assessment is conducted beforehand to identify prior knowledge and obstacles; during instruction for monitoring, support, and training; and afterward to measure the level of mastery. (G.D & nicole cormone magnaldi, 2011, p. 51)

Problem Statement:

Due to the global changes occurring in various fields—especially in education—and the confusion this has caused among many thinkers and researchers, education has become a central subject of inquiry. Nowadays, the normative measure of a nation's strength is often judged by the strength of its educational system. The educational process relies heavily on a crucial step in its curriculum: assessment, which is the key to the success of the entire teaching process and to achieving the desired goals of every educational institution. (bakhit, 2021, p. 99)

Accordingly, ministries of education across various countries strive to improve and develop tools of measurement, evaluation, and assessment in the educational field, particularly through projects aimed at enhancing the skills of assessing students' academic achievement tests. Proper measurement of educational inputs is essential, as it lays the foundation for scientific evaluation of outcomes and, subsequently, for formulating plans to improve the educational system and achieve the policy objectives of each nation's education strategy. (magdy, 2020, p. 84)

Based on the above, the process of assessment in the Arab world has received significant attention from its scholars and researchers. It has been studied to uncover both strengths and weaknesses, much like in other developed



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countries. These efforts have explored effective and successful procedures that support the educational process, considering assessment to be a critical educational input that significantly influences academic outcomes. For instance, many Algerian educational institutions have worked to improve their official publications, laws, and standards in relation to pedagogical assessment within the educational system.

Drawing from the researcher's specialization and observations on this topic during his internship with middle school teachers, the following central question was posed:

General Question :

-Does achievement assessment in physical and sports education face difficulties at the middle school level?

Sub-Questions :

-Is the allocated instructional time sufficient for achievement assessment of a single class, given the high number of students in middle school?

-Does the lack of pedagogical tools hinder the achievement assessment process in physical education at the middle school level?

-Research Hypotheses

-General Hypothesis:

-Achievement assessment in physical and sports education faces difficulties at the middle school level.

-Sub-Hypotheses:

-The allocated instructional time is insufficient for assessing a single class due to the high number of students in middle school.

-The lack of pedagogical tools complicates the achievement assessment process in physical education at the middle school level.

- Significance of the Research

The importance of this research lies in the following points:

-The nature of the topic, which represents an essential component of civic values.

-Highlighting the role of achievement assessment during physical and sports education sessions in reinforcing the objectives of both group and individual activities among students.

- Research Objectives:

Through our handling of the subject and understanding of the nature of the problem, we identified the following research objectives:



- To highlight the extent of the difficulties faced in achievement assessment in physical and sports education at the middle school level.
- To clarify the impact of the allocated instructional time and its insufficiency due to the large number of students in middle school.
- To demonstrate the extent to which the lack of pedagogical tools hinders the achievement assessment process in physical education at the middle school level.

2. Definition of Concepts and Terms:

2.1 Evaluation (Assessment):

-Terminological Definition:

Evaluation is a planned process to obtain information, data, or facts about a specific subject (such as the learner), using a scientific method to make judgments for the purpose of arriving at quantitative estimates and qualitative evidence that support decision-making and improvement. (gamal, 2013, p. 55)

-Operational Definition:

It is a systematic process based on practical foundations aimed at issuing accurate and objective judgments about the inputs and outputs of any educational system.

-Summative Assessment:

Also known as final, cumulative, certificate-based, or terminal evaluation, this type of assessment is conducted at the end of a phase, semester, or lesson. It reflects the learner's acquired knowledge, skills, and competencies. (lallouche, 2023, p. 279)

-Operational Definition of Summative Assessment:

It is an organized process conducted at the end of a term to determine the final level of a student in the physical and sports education lesson

2.2 Physical and Sports Education:

-Terminological Definition:

It is a process aimed at improving human performance through selected physical activities. Through these activities, individuals acquire optimal physical, mental, and social skills, as well as physical fitness. (otman, 2020, p. 122)

-Operational Definition:

These are the activities and exercises performed by middle school students during physical and sports education classes.

2.3 middle school: Gharib and Ben Chehna characterize it as the second phase in the continuum of learning that students undergo throughout their educational trajectory (souhila & fadel kais, 2024, p. 719)



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Terminological Definition: The intermediate education stage represents the level at which the researcher investigated the challenges associated with summative assessment practices.

Operational Definition:

3. Previous and Related Studies:

Study by El Eid Karrine and Abdelhamid Maouch (2017)

Title: "Difficulties of Assessment among Middle School Teachers – A Field Study"

The study aimed to identify the difficulties of assessment faced by middle school teachers. It used a descriptive approach and applied a questionnaire on assessment difficulties (developed by Youssef Khneish, 2006) to a sample of 40 male and female teachers in M'sila province during the 2014/2015 academic year.

-Main results:

-Teachers face significant assessment difficulties related to training, program intensity, setting and using assessment tools, legislative aspects, and analysis and interpretation of results.

-No statistically significant differences were found based on teacher training background (training institutes vs. universities).

-No statistically significant differences were found based on gender.

The study concluded with several recommendations based on educational and psychological literature and prior research. (aid & maoush abdelamid, 2017)

-Study by Fateh Yaakoubi and Hakim Ghellab (2017)

Title: "The Reality of the Use of Pedagogical Assessment Methods by Physical Education Teachers in Secondary Education"

This study aimed to examine how physical education teachers in M'sila use pedagogical assessment methods in secondary education and to identify the obstacles they face. Using a descriptive-analytical approach, the study was conducted on 38 teachers.

Main findings:

-Lack of teacher training

-Insufficient class time

-Large number of students per class (fateh & ghaleb hakim, 2017)

-Study by Issam Layaad et al. (2019)

Title: "The Reality of Physical Education Evaluation at the Middle School Level within the Competency-Based Approach – A Field Study of Some Middle



Schools in Bordj Bou Arreridj”

This study aimed to understand the reality of physical education assessment at the middle school level from the teachers’ perspective and to identify the challenges of formative assessment.

Sample: 33 physical education teachers from middle schools in the municipality of Bordj Bou Arreridj. The full population was surveyed (comprehensive sampling). A closed questionnaire was used, and a descriptive method was followed.

Main results:

- Current assessments rely heavily on numerical grading
- Evaluation is mainly tied to academic progression decisions
- Difficulties stem from lack of teacher training, time constraints, and large class sizes (issam, 2019)

4. Research Methodology and Field Procedures:

4.1 Exploratory Study:

This preliminary step aimed to give the researcher an overview of the field. The researcher conducted field visits to several middle schools to gather relevant information for the study.

4.2 Scientific Method Used

The researcher adopted the descriptive method, which was suitable for the study's nature.

4.3 Study Variables

- Independent Variable:

The factor that the researcher aims to examine for its impact on the studied phenomenon — in this case, summative assessment.

- Dependent Variable:

The outcome affected by the independent variable — here, it is the physical and sports education class.

4.5 Research Population and Sample

The study sample consists of middle school physical education teachers.

- **Sampling Method:**

Teachers were randomly selected. The sample included 30 male and female teachers.



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4.6 Data Collection Tools

The descriptive method relies on data and measurement tools that help collect, classify, and analyze data to draw conclusions. Accordingly, a questionnaire containing a set of questions was administered to middle school physical education teachers.

4.7 Psychometric Properties of the Study Tools

Before distributing the questionnaires, the researcher discussed the questions with a group of specialized teachers to ensure scientific accuracy, considering validity, reliability, and objectivity. Some questions were revised, modified, or deleted, and the questionnaire was reformulated properly.

Reliability:

To calculate the reliability coefficient, the questionnaire was distributed to a pilot sample of 10 teachers (excluded from the main sample). The questionnaire was then redistributed two weeks later to assess its consistency and reliability

Construct Validity

To verify the construct validity of the questionnaire used in our study, we calculated the square root of the reliability coefficient. Table (01) presents the psychometric properties of the research instrument:

Table 1. Psychometric Properties of the Study Questionnaire

Dimension	Reliability	Construct Validity
Dimension 1	0.85	0.92
Dimension 2	0.88	0.94
Overall	0.87	0.93

Source: Aouinti houari

As shown in Table 01, the reliability values for the questionnaire dimensions and the overall instrument range between 0.85 and 0.88, while the construct validity values range from 0.92 to 0.94. These results indicate that the questionnaire used in this study demonstrates high levels of both validity and reliability.

Temporal and Spatial Scope of the Study

Every field study has specific temporal and spatial frameworks. In our research, these are defined as follows:

- Temporal Scope: The study was conducted during the year 2023.



- **Spatial Scope:** The fieldwork was carried out in middle schools located in the Wilaya (province) of Oran.

Main Study

After selecting the sample, the researcher administered the questionnaire to the targeted teachers. The questionnaire was distributed to all sample members after scheduling appointments and visiting the institutions where the participants were located. Data collection took place between March 18, 2023, and May 5, 2023.

Statistical Methods Used

Once all questionnaires were collected, responses were coded and sorted by calculating the frequency of answers for each question. Percentages were then computed using the following statistical methods:

- **Chi-Square Test (χ^2):**
Used to compare observed and expected frequencies.
- **Pearson's Simple Correlation Coefficient (r):**
Used to measure the strength of the relationship between two variables (X and Y)

5. Presentation and Analysis of the Field Study

5.1 Presentation and Analysis of Personal Data

- **Sample Distribution by Gender:**
The sample included 13 male teachers (43%) and 17 female teachers (57%), indicating a higher representation of females in the study.
- **Sample Distribution by Teaching Experience:**
The majority of teachers (50%) had between 6 and 10 years of experience, while only 17% had more than 10 years of experience. This suggests that most of the participants had a medium level of professional experience.

5.2 Analysis and Presentation of Results the first axis

The scheduled time volume included in the curriculum is insufficient for summative assessment for a single class due to the high number of students in the middle school stage.

Table 2. shows the statistical analysis of Axis 1.

Question	Yes	No	Yes %	No %	Chi ² Calculate	Chi ² Tabulate	DF	Error Margin	Significa nce
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Q1	9	21	30%	70%	4.80	3.84	1	0.05	Significant
Q2	4	26	13%	87%	16.13	3.84	1	0.05	Significant
Q3	8	22	27%	73%	6.53	3.84	1	0.05	Significant
Q4	5	25	83%	17%	13.33	3.84	1	0.05	Significant
Q5	8	22	27%	73%	6.53	3.84	1	0.05	Significant
Q6	18	12	60%	40%	1.20	3.84	1	0.05	Not Significant
Q7	26	4	87%	13%	16.13	3.84	1	0.05	Significant
Q8	9	11	63%	37%	2.13	3.84	1	0.05	Not Significant
Q9	23	7	77%	23%	8.53	3.84	1	0.05	Significant

Source: Aouinti houari

From the above table, we notice that the largest percentage of teachers, representing 70%, do not adhere to the scheduled time allocated for the achievement evaluation of middle school students, while the smaller percentage of 30% do. The calculated Chi-square value is 4.80, which is higher than the table value of 3.84 at 1 degree of freedom and an error rate of 0.05. This value is statistically significant, indicating that there are statistically significant differences in the teachers' responses, in favor of those who do not adhere to the allocated time for achievement evaluation of middle school students.

Regarding the second question, we observe that the majority of teachers, representing 87%, do not believe that the scheduled time in the curriculum for physical education achievement evaluation allows for covering all students in a class, while the smaller percentage of 13% think it does. The calculated Chi-square value is 16.13, which is greater than the table value of 3.84 at 1 degree of freedom and an error rate of 0.05. This value is statistically significant, meaning there are statistically significant differences in the responses, in favor of those who think that the scheduled time allows for covering all students in a class.

Regarding the third question, we observe that the majority of teachers, representing 73%, believe that the physical education curriculum does not align with the requirements of the educational stage it is intended for, while the smaller percentage of 27% think it does. The calculated Chi-square value is 6.53, which is greater than the table value of 3.84 at 1 degree of freedom and an error rate of 0.05. This value is statistically significant, indicating that there are statistically



significant differences in the responses, in favor of those who believe the curriculum does not align with the requirements of the educational stage.

For the fourth question, we note that the majority of teachers, representing 83%, believe that the class size is the reason for not achieving the goals set for achievement evaluation in physical education, while the smaller percentage of 17% do not believe this is the case. The calculated Chi-square value is 13.33, which is greater than the table value of 3.84 at 1 degree of freedom and an error rate of 0.05. This value is statistically significant, indicating that there are statistically significant differences in the responses, in favor of those who believe class size is the reason for not achieving the evaluation goals.

Regarding the fifth question, the majority of teachers, representing 73%, believe that the time allocated for achievement evaluation is not suitable for middle school students and does not align with the goals of the curriculum, while the smaller percentage of 27% think it is suitable and aligns with the goals. The calculated Chi-square value is 6.53, which is greater than the table value of 3.84 at 1 degree of freedom and an error rate of 0.05. This value is statistically significant, indicating that there are statistically significant differences in the responses, in favor of those who think the time allocated is unsuitable.

For the sixth question, the majority of teachers, representing 60%, believe that the achievement evaluation methods are related to ensuring all students in the class are included in the evaluation process, while the smaller percentage of 40% disagree. The calculated Chi-square value is 1.20, which is lower than the table value of 3.84 at 1 degree of freedom and an error rate of 0.05. This value is not statistically significant, indicating there are no statistically significant differences in the responses.

For the seventh question, the majority of teachers, representing 87%, believe that the lack of experience in conducting achievement evaluation in physical education causes difficulties in achieving it, while the smaller percentage of 13% disagree. The calculated Chi-square value is 16.13, which is greater than the table value of 3.84 at 1 degree of freedom and an error rate of 0.05. This value is statistically significant, meaning there are statistically significant differences in the responses, in favor of those who believe the lack of experience causes difficulties.

Regarding the eighth question, the majority of teachers, representing 63%, believe that individual differences are the main cause of difficulties in achievement evaluation for middle school students in physical education, while



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the smaller percentage of 37% disagree. The calculated Chi-square value is 2.13, which is lower than the table value of 3.84 at 1 degree of freedom and an error rate of 0.05. This value is not statistically significant, indicating no statistically significant differences in the responses. For the ninth question, the majority of teachers, representing 77%, believe that the comprehensiveness of achievement evaluation (sensory-motor, cognitive, and social) is necessary to assess students' levels, while the smaller percentage of 23% disagree. The calculated Chi-square value is 8.53, which is greater than the table value of 3.84 at 1 degree of freedom and an error rate of 0.05. This value is statistically significant, indicating there are statistically significant differences in the responses, in favor of those who believe that the comprehensive evaluation of the sensory-motor, cognitive, and social aspects is necessary for assessing students' levels.

5.3 Presentation and Analysis of the Results of the Second Axis:

"The absence of pedagogical means hinders the process of summative assessment in physical education at the middle school level."

Table 3. shows the statistical analysis of the second axis:

Question	Yes	No	% Yes	% No	Calculated χ^2	Critical χ^2	df	Error Margin	Significance
Q1	13	17	43%	57%	0.53	3.84	1	0.05	Not significant
Q2	14	16	47%	53%	0.13	3.84	1	0.05	Not significant
Q3	05	25	17%	83%	13.33	3.84	1	0.05	Significant
Q4	05	25	17%	83%	13.33	3.84	1	0.05	Significant
Q5	16	14	53%	47%	0.13	3.84	1	0.05	Not significant
Q6	06	24	20%	80%	10.80	3.84	1	0.05	Significant
Q7	10	20	33%	67%	3.33	3.84	1	0.05	Not significant
Q8	12	18	40%	60%	1.20	3.84	1	0.05	Not significant
Q9	05	25	17%	83%	13.33	3.84	1	0.05	Significant
Q10	30	00	100%	0%	30.00	3.84	1	0.05	Highly significant

Source: Aouinti houari

From the above table, we observe the following:

-Q1: 57% of teachers reported that their institution lacks a physical education field, while 43% said otherwise. The calculated χ^2 (0.53) is less than the critical



value (3.84), indicating no statistically significant difference in teachers' responses.

-Q2: 53% of teachers stated their schools lack specific sports spaces (long jump area, shot put field), while 47% said they are available. The calculated χ^2 (0.13) is not significant, showing no statistical difference.

-Q3: 83% reported that the space allocated for physical activities is insufficient, compared to 17% who found it adequate. The χ^2 value (13.33) is significant, suggesting a clear perception of spatial inadequacy.

-Q4: 83% said there is no overcrowding, while 17% disagreed. The calculated χ^2 (13.33) is significant, favoring the view that classrooms are not overcrowded.

-Q5: 53% indicated their institutions provide the necessary pedagogical tools, while 47% disagreed. The result ($\chi^2 = 0.13$) is not statistically significant.

-Q6: 80% believed that the available tools are insufficient for all students, while 20% disagreed. The χ^2 (10.80) is statistically significant, indicating a widespread perception of resource insufficiency.

-Q7: 67% viewed the existing tools as outdated, whereas 33% considered them new. The result ($\chi^2 = 3.33$) is not statistically significant.

-Q8: 60% felt the tools do not meet safety standards, while 40% thought otherwise. The χ^2 (1.20) is not significant.

-Q9: 83% said adverse weather prevents conducting physical education classes, while 17% said it does not. The result ($\chi^2 = 13.33$) is significant.

-Q10: All teachers (100%) stated that overcrowding leads to scheduling P.E. classes at inconvenient times. The high χ^2 value (30.00) confirms the statistical significance.

5.4 Discussion and Interpretation of Results:

Discussion of Axis One:

Based on the first hypothesis:

"The allocated time is insufficient for the summative assessment of a single class due to the large number of students in middle school education."

- From Table 05: 87% of teachers believed the scheduled time is not enough to include all students in assessment.
- From Table 07: 83% of teachers attributed the failure to achieve summative goals to the large class size.

This aligns with the findings of Amer Hemlawi's study, "Assessment of Physical Education Sessions Under Second Generation Curricula from the Perspective of



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First-Year Middle School Teachers", which identified major assessment challenges due to limited time and overcrowded classes. Similar conclusions were drawn in studies by Issam Layad (2019) and Fateh Yaakoubi (2017).

Conclusion: The first hypothesis is confirmed.

Discussion of Axis Two:

Based on the second hypothesis:

"The absence of pedagogical means hinders the process of summative assessment in physical education at the middle school level."

-57% of teachers reported the absence of sports fields.

-83% found the available spaces inadequate for conducting activities.

-Many also pointed to tool insufficiency, safety issues, and weather-related obstacles.

These findings support the conclusions of Fateh Yaakoubi's study, "The Reality of Using Educational Assessment Methods by Physical Education Teachers in Secondary Education", which emphasized that a lack of time, equipment, and large student numbers hinder effective evaluation. Yaakoubi also stressed the vital role of pedagogical tools in student assessment.

Conclusion: The second hypothesis is confirmed.

General Conclusion

- The instructional time allocated in the curriculum for summative assessment in physical education allows for the inclusion of all students in a single class.
- The high number of students in each class is a key reason for failing to achieve the planned objectives of summative assessment in physical education.
- The period allocated for summative assessment is unsuitable for middle school students and does not align with the goals of the curriculum.
- The lack of experience among teachers in conducting summative assessment in physical education causes difficulties in its effective implementation.
- A majority of teachers, representing 57%, believe that their institutions lack a playground for conducting physical education sessions.
- The size of the spaces designated for sports activities is insufficient, which hinders the smooth execution of physical education classes.

Future Hypotheses and Recommendations

- Expand the scope of the study to include new variables (such as gender, age, geographical area, teaching methods, modern technological tools, and assessment techniques), as these factors have clear and significant effects.
- Submit a request to the Algerian Ministry of National Education to revise educational curricula that are currently unhelpful in the teaching process.
- Increase focus on the subject of summative assessment for middle school students and explore its relationship with other contextual variables.
- Shed light on the summative assessment process and identify the key principles upon which middle school institutions base their evaluation systems.
- Extend the study to cover other educational levels, such as primary and secondary stages, so that the results can be generalized and applied across the Algerian educational system in the future.

6. CONCLUSION

Through the analysis and discussion of the previously presented results, we conclude that there are evident difficulties in implementing summative assessment in physical education at the middle school level. This confirms the validity of the first and second hypotheses.

The study was conducted in a number of middle schools in the Wilaya of Oran, involving a sample of 30 male and female teachers. Based on the results obtained from the questionnaire distributed to the teachers, the following suggestions were proposed to professionals in this field:

- Broaden the scope of the study by considering new influencing variables (such as gender, age, region, teaching methods, technological tools, and evaluation techniques).
- Request the Algerian Ministry of National Education to revise and update ineffective educational curricula.

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