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The Teaching Competencies of Junior Faculty Members at Wasit University from Their Perspective

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Abstract: This study examines the teaching competencies of junior faculty members at Wasit University from their own perspective. Teaching competencies are essential for enhancing the quality of education and improving student outcomes. This research aims to explore the self-assessment of newly appointed faculty members regarding their instructional skills, including planning, implementation, and evaluation of their teaching methods. A mixed-methods approach was used, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to collect data. The results indicate that junior faculty members possess relatively high teaching competencies, with particular strengths in lesson planning, execution, and student evaluation. However, the study also highlights areas where further development is needed, such as in the use of modern teaching tools and student-centered teaching strategies. The findings underscore the importance of continuous professional development and training to enhance teaching practices. This study contributes to the understanding of teaching competencies in higher education and offers recommendations for improving faculty performance through targeted training programs at Wasit University.

Keywords: Teaching Competencies, Junior Faculty Members

1. Introduction

Numerous obstacles that newly appointed Wasit University faculty members must overcome impair their performance and make it difficult for them to carry out their designated duties, especially those related to teaching and academic supervision. Higher education professionals frequently notice that some faculty members lack proficiency, particularly in understanding contemporary scientific supervisory approaches and modern teaching methods. This problem is especially common among people with non-educational backgrounds, which makes it a major barrier that keeps them from fulfilling their academic obligations to students, from this perspective, the problem of this study emerged, aiming to explore the role of training needs in developing the necessary teaching competencies for university faculty members. It highlights that training and knowledge transfer are essential elements in improving the capabilities and competencies of university professors, ultimately leading to positive outcomes in the educational process. The researcher personally experienced these challenges upon entering the profession and recognized that such difficulties can only be resolved through continuous training and learning from the experiences of predecessors. The goal is to enhance teaching competencies, which enable professors to effectively contribute to the development and success of university education. The quality of university teaching largely depends on the extent to which faculty members possess strong professional competencies, new faculty members at Wasit University face many challenges that hinder their performance and make it hard for them to fulfill their assigned responsibilities, particularly those pertaining to academic supervision and instruction. Professionals in higher education usually observe that certain faculty

members are not proficient, especially when it comes to modern teaching techniques and scientific supervisory approaches. This issue is particularly prevalent among those with non-educational backgrounds, making it a significant obstacle that prevents them from meeting their academic responsibilities to students.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of the teaching process is closely linked to a professor's ability to incorporate new pedagogical concepts and employ modern technological tools that bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Teaching competencies emerged as a response to growing concerns that conventional education programs fail to meet the needs of contemporary learners. These programs often do not equip graduates with the necessary skills to adapt to the realities of the modern era. As a reaction to these shortcomings, the competency-based teacher preparation movement arose to address the inadequacies of traditional methods (Khudr, 1991, p. 113), the concept of competency-based teacher education refers to programs that set clear and precise objectives for training newly appointed faculty members by explicitly defining the required competencies. These programs hold new appointees accountable for achieving these competency levels, while trainers are responsible for ensuring that the specified learning objectives are met (Al-Fatlawi, 2003, p. 32).

Accordingly, many educators have emphasized the importance of the teaching competencies of university faculty members, as faculty members play a significant and effective role in achieving the university's established goals and programs and employing them in a way that helps students understand the specifics of their academic programs. Therefore, university instructors must make the necessary effort to hone their professional competencies.

The theoretical significance of this study stems from the importance of its subject matter, as it addresses a critical issue related to proposing a set of teaching competencies necessary for preparing university faculty members in light of various professional competencies that have become a tangible reality, shaped by multiple factors and variables. The importance of the current study is further reinforced by the significance of higher education, particularly the role of faculty members and the process of their preparation and development to equip them with the competencies required to keep pace with ongoing changes, given the crucial role that university faculty members play in the educational process, their ability to fulfill their pedagogical and instructional responsibilities effectively depends on their possession of a set of essential professional competencies. These include cognitive competencies, teaching competencies, interpersonal competencies, technological competencies, and ethical competencies, all of which directly influence their professional performance and, consequently, impact the outcomes of the educational process.

Moreover, higher education is one of the most significant phases of the educational system due to its profound impact on shaping individuals and preparing them to face life's challenges and demands. At this stage, students experience comprehensive personal and academic growth, guiding them toward full citizenship and productive participation in society. It is a crucial phase in the educational journey, as it serves as a foundation for future employment and productivity (Matawa', 1977, p. 143).

The reasons and justifications for choosing the research topic include:

Personal justifications:

A. My deep interest in the topic of teaching competencies among university faculty members, given that I am part of the reality of these active members in this system.

B. My personal desire to expand my knowledge of this issue and extract all the philosophies and strategies that have emerged in this field. I attempt to utilize the knowledge and professional background I have gained from my experience in the university teaching profession.

2. Research Objectives and Hypotheses

1. To measure the overall score for teaching competencies among newly appointed staff at the University of Wasit.

2. To measure the overall score for teaching competencies among newly appointed staff at the University of Wasit, individually.

3. Research Hypotheses

1. There are no statistically significant differences at the (0.05) level in the overall score for teaching competencies attributed to the gender variable.

2. There are no statistically significant differences at the (0.05) level in the overall score for teaching competencies attributed to academic achievement.

3. There are no statistically significant differences at the (0.05) level in the overall score for teaching competencies attributed to the variable of specialization (humanities or scientific).

4. Research Scope

1. Time limits: The year in which the study was conducted, 2024.

2. Subject limits: Teaching competencies of newly appointed faculty members at the University of Wasit.

3. Human limits: The research sample consisted of 100 newly appointed faculty members at the University of Wasit, with academic ranks of "Lecturer" and "Assistant Lecturer."

4. Spatial limits: University of Wasit (including all its colleges and departments).

5. Definition of terms

1. Competency Concept: "Competencies" is derived from the linguistic root meaning "to suffice" or "to complete a task." It is said, "Kafa, yakfi, kifayah" when someone completes an action, and "I asked for help, and they sufficed me." Ibn Manzur (1999).

2. Competencies Definition: It refers to the set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes possessed by an individual, which help them perform their tasks effectively and efficiently (Al-Far, 2011: 17)(Kadhim et al, 2023).

3. Teaching Competencies: These are a set of information, skills, abilities, attitudes, activities, and behavioral patterns that a student applies in any department of the Faculty of Education, enabling them to perform their tasks, roles, and responsibilities during the teaching process (Al-Obeidi, 2003: 14).

4. Teaching Competencies: It refers to the teacher's ability to carry out teaching duties based on acquired skills related to teaching, including planning, implementation, and evaluation (Harushi, 2004: 286).

5. Operational Definition: It is the set of planning, execution, and evaluation skills that a faculty member at Iraqi universities, specifically the University of Wasit, should possess in order to achieve the desired outcomes from the educational process with minimal time, effort, and cost. This is measured by the score obtained by the sample individuals based on their responses to the study instrument.

6. Newly Appointed Faculty Members: These are individuals employed by the Federal Service Council, holding master's or doctoral degrees, who have been assigned teaching duties as specified under the High Academic Qualifications Employment Law No. 59 of 2017. This is in accordance with the ministerial order dated March 16, 2023, and the following ministerial orders (591), (592), (593) dated April 1, 2023, and order (767) dated May 17, 2023.

6. Background

The Difference Between Competency and Proficiency:

The meaning of "proficiency" in the verse "Has it not sufficed for them that He is, over all things, a Witness?" (Quran, Surah Fussilat, 41:53) is that it indicates what is sufficient in the evidence of His oneness. It is also said "So-and-so is sufficient," or "So-and-so is enough in terms of knowledge," meaning they have reached the level of proficiency in that knowledge.

There is considerable confusion between the terms "competency" and "proficiency." Here, we will present the technical meanings of each:

Technical Meaning of Competency:

There are several opinions and definitions regarding the concept of competency. According to Good (2007, p. 111), competency refers to "the ability to apply the fundamental principles and techniques of a specific field in practical situations." Fincher (2010) views competency in economic, organizational, or engineering terms. In engineering, it refers to the ratio between inputs and outputs, while economically it refers to consumption, and organizationally, it pertains to the ability of organizations to sustain themselves with the satisfaction of the individuals within them. In the educational field, competency is defined as "the extent to which the educational system is able to achieve the desired objectives" (p. 312). Teaching competency is defined as "the teacher's knowledge of every phrase they say and its importance" (p. 53).

Technical Meaning of Proficiency:

Good (2007) defines proficiency as "the ability to achieve desired results with minimal effort, time, and cost."

Dura (2010) defines proficiency in teaching as "the integrated ability that includes knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to perform a task or a set of interconnected tasks successfully and effectively" (p. 271). Proficiency refers to what an individual can perform in the present moment, whether mentally or physically, and it may be innate

(such as intelligence or general ability) or acquired through education, training, and learning.

In light of these definitions, proficiency is broader and more comprehensive than competency in the context of the educational process. Proficiency means the ability to achieve goals and desired outcomes with minimal costs of effort, money, and time. It also measures the ratio between outputs and inputs, thus evaluating both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of education. On the other hand, competency is more about the quantitative aspect, as economically, it refers to achieving the highest possible return with the least cost and effort. Proficiency, in an economic sense, includes both a quantitative aspect (the ratio of inputs to outputs) and a qualitative aspect, which refers to the meanings of sufficiency, quality, and ability embedded in that ratio (p. 244).

Al-Fatlawi (2010) defined proficiency operationally as the set of abilities expressed in behavioral terms that include cognitive, skill-based, and emotional tasks. It is the final expected performance level that can be observed and assessed through various observational tools (p. 42).

The term "proficiency" was originally used in military, industrial, and economic fields before being transferred to education. The competency-based education movement employs proficiencies by using an analytical approach to the roles and tasks performed by faculty members, identifying the abilities, skills, and knowledge needed for instructors to perform those tasks effectively (Azraq, 2000: 220).

The concept of proficiency emerged in education in the 1960s, with the first competency-based teacher education programs in the United States as part of the educational reforms. According to these goals, universities must provide qualified teaching staff, as they are fundamental in achieving the university's objectives through their teaching and research expertise. Abdul Wahab (2007) emphasized that universities are based on three pillars: faculty members, students, and infrastructure. Among these, faculty members are crucial because programs, curricula, facilities, and buildings may not achieve their objectives unless faculty members possess high-level competencies, as they are the active element in achieving the university's goals through teaching and research.

The European Higher Education Area (2015) quality assurance guidelines emphasize that higher education institutions should ensure the competency of faculty members, providing opportunities and encouraging their professional development, while also considering the centrality of student learning. This aligns with preliminary European reports on developing quality in education and learning in higher education institutions (2013) under the slogan "Education Matters to Us," which asserts that by 2020, all faculty members in higher education institutions should attend accredited training programs. Continuous professional education is an essential requirement for academic teaching.

The term proficiency is widely used in education. Al-Suwairki (2018) defined it as a set of skills and procedures that a faculty member possesses in the educational context to achieve desired educational objectives. Proficiency includes various types and areas, such as technical proficiency, teaching proficiency, and administrative proficiency. Zaytoon (2005) argued that providing high-quality training and feedback will lead to mastering these proficiencies at a high level. Al-Jamaai (2010) and Al-Fadhil (2010) emphasized that proficiencies are procedural, acquired, and learned through practice, and are linked to achieving educational goals. They are comprehensive, organized, and highly diverse, including both specific and personal knowledge. Proficiencies are only realized through action and are an abstract, hypothetical concept; they cannot be observed except through results.

To effectively fulfill their vital role, faculty members must possess a sufficient level of educational and teaching competencies. Given the diversity of these competencies and their necessary application in the educational context, this study aims to determine the extent to which faculty members possess teaching competencies.

In advanced societies, scholars of competency science preceded the Muslim scholars in the development of competency theories (Shatnawi, 2007: 12). Faculty members are the backbone of the university, and their role extends beyond simply transferring information from the curriculum to the student. They also perform research and serve as adjudicators of intellectual outputs, addressing societal issues, making decisions, shaping curricula, granting degrees, supervising research, student activities, and administrative work. As educators and role models, they hold a central position in university life (Nizam, Abdul Jabbar, 2007: 3). The preparation and training of faculty members hold great significance, aiming for continuous professional development and improving educational practices, as they deal with constantly evolving and changing goals.

Necessary Competencies for Faculty Members in Universities:

1. Cognitive Competencies: These include teaching methods such as the teacher's ability to understand and describe.

2. Human Relations Competencies: Human relations involve a deep understanding of the potentials, capabilities, motivations, and needs of individuals within the educational institution, using these elements to encourage teamwork in an environment of cooperation, transparency, and understanding to achieve institutional goals. The Ministry of Education (2007) defines human relations as the interactions between people, whether positive or negative.

3. Teaching Competencies: These include classroom teaching skills such as using evaluation tools and preparing daily lesson plans (Haddad, 2002: 28).

4. Ethical Competencies: These are essential for Muslim teachers, including sincerity in work. Excellence in work is only achieved through sincerity and piety. Teaching is seen as a noble mission that deserves reward and recognition from Allah. This drives the teacher to work efficiently and competently, following the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the Quran.

5. Technological Competencies: According to a study by Zyoud (2021), electronic learning competencies that teachers should possess include designing efficient electronic tests, creating academic materials for gifted students, using Microsoft Office programs, possessing skills for electronic communication, creating electronic lesson plans, using technology for self-development in a professional capacity, and using email applications effectively. Teachers must also protect computers from viruses and understand technological concepts, video design, and cybersecurity when using the web.

In other words, there are various types of electronic learning competencies that faculty members must possess to enhance the quality of education and improve teaching competencies.

Classification of Teaching Competencies:

According to Abdul Samee and Hawala (2005), Al-Jamaai (2010), and Al-Ali (2011), faculty members must possess teaching competencies in planning, execution, and evaluation, as follows:

A. Planning: This includes several sub-competencies such as:

Defining educational goals linked to the lesson topic, classifying and analyzing educational material, considering prior knowledge and addressing individual differences, preparing daily plans that align with annual plans, choosing appropriate teaching strategies, and determining appropriate assessment methods.

B. Execution: This includes the following sub-competencies:

Presenting the subject matter clearly, sequentially, and coherently, attracting students' attention, considering individual differences, providing an environment conducive to interaction, and using various teaching methods and materials.

C. Evaluation: This includes the following sub-competencies:

Preparing tests that align with set goals, using appropriate assessment tools, analyzing results to identify strengths and weaknesses, providing feedback, and applying continuous assessment after each teaching step, including final cumulative evaluations.

D. The Difference Between Competency and Proficiency:

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Evaluation: This includes the following sub-competencies:

Preparing tests that align with set goals, using appropriate assessment tools, analyzing results to identify strengths and weaknesses, providing feedback, and applying continuous assessment after each teaching step, including final cumulative evaluations.

7. Literature Review

a. The Study by Taba and Khalaf (1999) titled "Assessment of Faculty Members at the University of Aden Regarding Teaching Competencies Based on Academic Rank, Level of Experience, and Opportunity for Prior Training in Educational Qualification." The study aimed to investigate the extent to which faculty members at the University of Aden needed teaching competencies based on academic rank, experience level, and previous opportunities for educational qualification. The researchers used an instrument consisting of eight areas: planning for teaching, dealing with students, educational technology tools, student assessment, topics in psychology, teaching methods and strategies, classroom supervision, and conducting scientific research. The results showed no statistically significant differences at the (0.05) level based on experience, academic rank, or previous training in educational qualification. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended prioritizing the area of teaching planning in training programs at the university.

b. Simon's Study (2003) titled "Evaluation of Teaching Competence and Effectiveness of University Professors from the Perspective of Students in Higher Educational Institutions." The study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of university professors based on students' views. A questionnaire with eight questions was used to gather feedback from a sample of students about the teaching effectiveness of seven professors, who varied in teaching competence according to official reports evaluating their performance. These professors taught a course on Management Information Systems (MIS) over three consecutive semesters. The questions addressed aspects such as communication skills, attitude towards students, the richness and effectiveness of the course content, teaching skills, fairness, objectivity, and flexibility. The results showed no significant differences in students' opinions on the professors' performance in the pre- and post-application of the questionnaire.

c. The Study by Hatab and Al-Quraishi (2007) aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the preparation process for higher education faculty members at the University of Baghdad and their mastery of essential teaching competencies. Six areas were identified, and the results showed a low level of effectiveness in the preparation process for university faculty members, with no significant differences between professors in terms of teaching competencies.

d. Al-Yousifi's Study (2012) titled "Preferred Professional Competencies for University Professors from the Perspective of Students." The study aimed to develop a tool to measure students' views on the preferred professional competencies for university professors. It identified preferred competencies in areas such as personal competencies, lecture preparation, human relations, academic and professional level, assessment, and reinforcement.

e. Al-Suwairki's Study (2018) aimed to determine the level of teaching competencies among faculty members in the Arabic Language Department at King Abdulaziz University, as perceived by the faculty themselves, in light of academic rank variables. The competencies were classified into three areas: planning, implementation, and evaluation. The sample demonstrated high scores in planning, with varying results in implementation and evaluation.

8. Materials and Methods

The researcher adopted the descriptive-analytical approach because the descriptive method is one of the most suitable approaches for human and educational studies. It seeks to identify the current situation of the studied phenomenon, then describe it, and ultimately, it relies on studying the phenomenon based on its actual state, focusing on providing a detailed description (Malham, 2000, p. 324). Descriptive research is a type of research method that studies natural, social, economic, and political phenomena, describing their characteristics qualitatively, their size, changes, and degrees of correlation with other phenomena (Arifij, et al., 1999, p. 107).

Research Population

The research population consisted of the faculty members at the University of Wasit, distributed across its humanities and scientific colleges, including both males and females, for the academic year (2024-2025). The total number of newly appointed faculty members was (590), distributed across twelve colleges in both scientific and humanities disciplines.

Research Sample

The sample is a portion of the population on which the study is conducted, chosen by the researcher according to specific rules to represent the population accurately (Al-Azzawi, 2008, p. 161). Therefore, it is appropriate to select a sample that represents the original population and includes some of its characteristics, as the researcher cannot generalize the results in a casual manner, as it would result in inaccurate findings (Saber & Khafajah, 2002, p. 18). The researcher selected a sample of (100) faculty members for the study using simple random sampling, distributed across (four) colleges, including (2) scientific specialties and (2) humanities specialties. The sample included (100) faculty members, consisting of (40) males and (60) females. Table 1 shows the distribution of the research sample's members by college, according to specialization and gender (males-females).

Table 1: Distribution of the Research Sample Members by College, Specialization, and Gender (Male - Female)

College Name	Specialization	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
College of Education for Human Sciences	Humanities	**15**	**20**	**35**
College of Physical Education		**10**	**15**	**25**
College of Management and Economics	Scientific	**5**	**5**	**10**
College of Science Education		**10**	**20**	**30**
Total		**40**	**60**	**100**

Research Tool

To achieve the research objectives, the researcher developed a questionnaire to measure teaching competencies according to the well-known formulation criteria and guidelines. Given the lack of an appropriate scale for the research sample of newly appointed staff at the University of Wasit, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, and based on the review of literature and previous studies related to the topic, most of the existing scales were designed for specific educational stages or subjects and were not comprehensive. Therefore, the researcher adopted the studies of Al-Obeidi (2020) and Taher (2014). The questionnaire consisted of 30 items, distributed across three areas: (planning, implementation, and evaluation). The planning area contained 10 items, the implementation area contained 10 items, and the evaluation area contained 10 items.

Tool Validity

To ensure the validity of the study instrument, content validity was used. The researcher followed the following procedures:

A. **Tool Validity:** The initial version of the instrument was presented to a group of specialized and experienced reviewers from the faculty members at the University of Wasit in the field of curricula and teaching methods. Suggestions for deletion, modification, or

addition were considered, and the items that received 80% or more agreement from the reviewers were retained. This method is deemed appropriate for assessing the validity of the questionnaire.

B. Reliability of the Tool

The researcher calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficient for internal consistency, which serves as an indicator of reliability, and the split-half coefficient to verify the reliability (accuracy) of the study instrument. Table 2 shows the results of the analysis.

Table 2: Reliability Coefficients of the Study Tool

Field	Cronbach's alpha Reliability	Split half Reliability
Planning	0.933	0.814
Implementation	0.938	0.809
Evaluation	0.875	0.910
Total Tool	0.964	0.875

First: Results of the first objective:

Measuring the average total score of teaching competencies among newly appointed staff at Wasit University.

After conducting the statistical analysis, the results showed that the average teaching competencies of the newly appointed staff at Wasit University was 134.5, with a standard deviation of 7.82 and a standard error of the mean of 0.78. This average is higher than the theoretical average of the tool, which is 129, indicating that the level of teaching competencies among the newly appointed staff at Wasit University was relatively high. Table (3) will show it.

Table 3: Level of teaching competencies

Arithmetic mean	Theoretical mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean
134.5	129	7.82	0.78

Second: Results of the second objective

Measuring the average total score of teaching competencies among the newly appointed staff at Wasit University individually.

A. Planning

The statistical analysis results showed that the average teaching competencies in the planning skill were 45.32, with a standard deviation of 6.7072 and a standard error of the mean of 0.56. This average is higher than the theoretical average of the tool, which is 41.5. This indicates that the difference between the calculated and theoretical averages is significant, favoring the calculated average, which means that the performance of the teachers was relatively high in the planning skill.

B. Implementation

The statistical analysis results showed that the average teaching competencies in the implementation skill were 44.76, with a standard deviation of 6.12 and a standard error of the mean of 0.61. This average is higher than the theoretical average of the tool, which is 41.5. This indicates that the difference between the calculated and theoretical averages is significant, favoring the calculated average, which means that the performance of the teachers was relatively high in the implementation skill.

C. Evaluation

The statistical analysis results showed that the average teaching competencies in the evaluation skill were 44.17, with a standard deviation of 6.32 and a standard error of the mean of 0.63. This average is higher than the theoretical average of the tool, which is 41.5. This indicates that the difference between the calculated and theoretical averages is significant, favoring the calculated average, which means that the performance of the teachers was relatively high in the evaluation skill.

Table 4: Level of teaching competencies, each separately

Arithmetic mean	Theoretical mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean
45.32	41.5	5.59	0.56
44.76	41.5	6.12	0.61
44.17	41.5	6.32	0.63

Results of the first hypothesis: There are no statistically significant differences at the (0.05) level in the average total score of teaching competencies attributed to the gender variable.

Upon examining Table (5), we find that the average score for males was 133.95, with a standard deviation of 9.11, while the average score for females was 134.58, with a standard deviation of 6.96. To determine the difference between the two groups, the t-test for independent unequal samples was applied at a significance level of (0.05) and degrees of freedom (98). The calculated t-value was 0.393, with a significance level of (0.107), which is greater than the adopted significance level of (0.05), indicating that there are no statistically significant differences between males and females in teaching competencies among the newly appointed staff at Wasit University. Table (5) will show it.

Table 5: Results of the t-test for two independent samples to identify the significance of differences in the degree of teaching competencies attributed to the gender variable

Group	No	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of Freedom	Calculated t-value		Statistical Significance ($\alpha = 0.05$)
					Calculated value	Tabulated value	
Males	40	133.95	9,11	98	0.393	0.107	Not statistically significant
Females	60	134.58	6,96				

Results of the second hypothesis: There are no statistically significant differences at the (0.05) level in the average total score of teaching competencies attributed to academic achievement.

Upon examining Table (6), we find that the average score for the Master's group was 134.92, with a standard deviation of 6.15, while the average score for the PhD group was 134.08, with a standard deviation of 9.24. To determine the difference between the two groups, the t-test for independent unequal samples was applied at a significance level of (0.05) and degrees of freedom (98). The calculated t-value was 0.535, with a significance level of (0.063), which is greater than the adopted significance level of (0.05), indicating that there are no statistically significant differences between the Master's and PhD groups in teaching competencies among the newly appointed staff at Wasit University. Table (6) will show it.

Table 6: Results of the t-test for two independent samples to identify the differences in the degree of teaching competencies in academic achievement

Group	No	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of Freedom	Calculated t-value		Statistical Significance ($\alpha = 0.05$)
					Calculated value	Tabulated value	
Master	60	134.92	6.15	98	0.535	0.063	Not statistically significant
PhD	40	134.08	9.24				

Results of the third hypothesis: There are no statistically significant differences at the (0.05) level in the average total score of teaching competencies attributed to the human and scientific specialization variable.

Upon examining Table (7), we find that the average score for the human specialization group was 134.20, with a standard deviation of 7.72, while the average score for the scientific specialization group was 133.68, with a standard deviation of 7.43. To determine the difference between the two groups, the t-test for independent unequal samples was applied at a significance level of (0.05) and degrees of freedom (98). The calculated t-value was 0.338, with a significance level of (0.908), which is greater than the adopted significance level of (0.05), indicating that there are no statistically significant differences between the human and scientific specialization groups in teaching competencies among the newly appointed staff at Wasit University. Table (7) will show it.

Table 7: Results of the t-test for two independent samples to identify the differences in the degree of teaching competencies for the variable of humanities and science specialization

Group	No	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of Freedom	Calculated t-value		Statistical Significance ($\alpha = 0.05$)
					Calculated value	Tabulated value	
Humanities Specialization	60	134.20	7.72	98	0.338	0.908	Not statistically significant
Scientific Specialization	40	133.68	7.43				

Interpretation of Results

1. It is evident from Table (3) above that the newly appointed staff at Wasit University possess teaching competencies in their teaching performance. According to the researcher's opinion, this is due to their commitment to delivering information and creating an interactive atmosphere in the classroom that captures the students' attention and encourages them to acquire this knowledge. This also reflects their orientation towards the teaching profession, their planning of teaching work, and setting academic goals they strive to achieve. Ultimately, this influences the students' academic level and academic achievement.
2. As shown in Table (4), concerning the sub-skills of teaching competencies—namely planning, implementation, and evaluation—there is a high level in each of these skills among the newly appointed staff at Wasit University. According to the researcher's opinion, this is due to the newly appointed staff's focus on planning their lecture topics, preparing and organizing them well, and then implementing them in the way that was planned, which aligns with the students' needs in the classroom. Subsequently, they evaluate the implementation to ensure the best and most suitable outcome.
3. As seen in Table (5), there are no statistically significant differences at the (0.05) level in the average total score of teaching competencies attributed to the gender variable. According to the researcher's opinion, this is because the new appointees' orientation towards teaching (both male and female) was similar, as they all shared a common interest in utilizing their potential and energy to serve the educational process within university institutions, which positively reflects on their students, as seen in the improvement of their academic level and inclination towards university academic studies.

4. As seen in Table (6), there are no statistically significant differences at the (0.05) level in the average total score of teaching competencies attributed to the academic achievement variable (Master's vs. PhD). According to the researcher's opinion, teaching competence is not directly related to academic achievement but to the individual's skills and abilities, which can be developed by the individual. The knowledge required by students can be presented effectively and systematically by those holding Master's or PhD degrees alike, as those with these degrees are prepared to teach undergraduate students.
5. As shown in Table (7), there are no statistically significant differences at the (0.05) level in the average total score of teaching competencies attributed to the specialization variable (humanities vs. science). According to the researcher's opinion, the newly appointed staff are focused on bringing their professional scientific capabilities and teaching competencies into practice, translating their teaching abilities into practices that reflect the students' academic level and making the classroom an interactive space and workshop between students and teachers. Whether the specialization is scientific or humanities, both groups work diligently and persistently in their duties, thus having similar teaching competencies. Just as scientific specializations require effort and persistence from the faculty, humanities specializations require the same because the subject matter is no longer just a lecture but has become a physical and mental skill that reflects modern teaching methods.

From the above, the researcher concludes that students at Wasit University are in an interactive learning environment where the student is an active participant rather than just a receiver of information. This indicates that the newly appointed faculty have the capabilities and potential that must be developed through training in workshops about modern teaching trends, new teaching techniques, and the use of appropriate educational materials for each subject.

9. Conclusions

1. The newly appointed staff at Wasit University possess relatively high teaching competencies.
2. The performance of the newly appointed staff at Wasit University in the skills of planning, implementation, and evaluation was relatively high.
3. There are no statistically significant differences in teaching competencies attributed to the gender variable.
4. There are no statistically significant differences in teaching competencies attributed to the academic achievement variable.
5. There are no statistically significant differences in teaching competencies attributed to the specialization variable (humanities vs. science).

10. Recommendations

1. Organizing scientific seminars and lectures for the newly appointed staff at Wasit University regarding the importance of focusing on teaching competencies.

2. Efforts should be made to improve the environment that leads to enhancing teaching competencies.
3. Attention to teaching competencies should be directed to both scientific and humanities specializations equally.

11. Suggestions

1. Conducting a similar study on another sample, such as teachers of education or teachers of special needs or practitioners.
2. Conducting a study to explore the relationship between teaching competencies and other variables, such as job satisfaction.
3. Conducting a comparative study of teaching competencies between the university's colleges.
4. Conducting a study on the newly appointed staff in other variables.

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