



Perceptions of professional isolation among physical education teachers and their relationship to their reluctance to participate in the management and arbitration of school sports tournaments organized by the Department of Sports and Scouting Activities

A.T. Safaa Abd Ali Al Bayati

General Directorate of Education of Babylon

sfaalbyaty56@gmail.com

Abstract

The research aimed to identify the nature of the relationship between the professional isolation felt by physical education teachers and their reluctance to participate in the management and arbitration of school sports tournaments held by the Sports and Scouting Activities Department after identifying the level of both their professional isolation and their level of reluctance to participate in school sports tournaments. The researcher adopted the descriptive approach using survey and correlation methods in this research. The researcher defined the community of this research as physical education teachers in schools affiliated with the Babil Education Directorate for the academic year (2023–2024), whose number is (430) teachers, representing middle, preparatory, and secondary schools for boys in Babil Governorate. Based on Thompson's law in calculating sample sizes, the researcher randomly selected (262) teachers to form the primary research sample. The researcher then divided the primary research sample into three sub-samples: the exploratory study sample, which has (12) physical education teachers; the preparation sample, which has (150) physical education teachers; and the application sample, which has (150) physical



education teachers. (100) Physical Education teachers, and to collect the required data, the researcher prepared two questionnaires, the first to measure the level of perceptions of professional isolation among physical education teachers with several paragraphs amounting to (13) paragraphs, and the second to measure the level of the reluctance of physical education teachers to participate in school sports tournaments with several paragraphs amounting to (14) paragraphs. After applying the two questionnaires and obtaining the results, the researcher processed them statistically to extract the levels of the two scales. After analyzing and discussing the results, the researcher concluded a set of conclusions, which are:

- Physical education teachers in schools affiliated with the Directorate of Education in Babylon have high-level perceptions about their professional isolation, whether in the schools to which they belong or the sports and scouting activity departments to which they belong.
- Physical education teachers' participation in school sports tournaments is low due to their high-level reluctance to manage and referee their matches.
- Physical education teachers' perceptions of their professional isolation were positively correlated with their reluctance to participate in managing and refereeing school sports tournaments, which means that the higher their level of professional isolation, the more reluctance they have to participate in these tournaments, and vice versa.

Introduction

Physical education teachers play a crucial role in identifying and nurturing sporting talent among students and providing guidance and support to those who wish to pursue competitive sports at higher levels. Through their guidance, these teachers help students develop their physical skills and instill important character traits such as discipline, resilience, and leadership that are essential for success both on and off the field. Physical education teachers occupy a unique and influential position in school sports, shaping the overall development of students. Their dedication, expertise, and passion for sport and physical education contribute significantly to the spread of a culture of general health among members of the school community and the growth and success of the individuals they teach, leaving a lasting impact on their lives and the wider school community.

Feeling isolated is a complex and disturbing experience for individuals in various fields of work. This phenomenon often manifests as a feeling of disconnection, alienation, or loneliness, which arises when an individual feels a lack of meaningful connection or support within their professional environment. Professional Isolation can affect individuals at all levels of an organization, from entry-level employees to senior executives. It can profoundly impact their well-being, job satisfaction, and overall performance. At the core of this Isolation is the absence of strong social connections, mentorship, or collaboration among colleagues in the workplace. This Isolation can stem from various factors, such as the nature of the work itself, organizational structures that limit interaction, remote work arrangements, or a lack of opportunities to network and build relationships. Individuals experiencing professional Isolation may feel unappreciated, misunderstood, or deprived of the social interaction

and companionship necessary to feel a sense of belonging and fulfilment in the workplace. This Isolation experienced by employees can have far-reaching consequences, as it affects both individual employees and the organizations they work for. Employees who feel isolated can experience difficulties in motivation, engagement, and job satisfaction, leading to decreased productivity and performance. Isolation also contributes to feelings of stress, anxiety, and burnout, which exacerbate adverse effects on mental and emotional health. This is administratively called perceptions of professional Isolation, which Bonnici (2021) states is a state of separation or disengagement that individuals may feel in the work environment. This Isolation can manifest in an employee feeling lonely, as he surrounds himself with colleagues but does not feel any real connection with them. This may result from a lack of social support, which makes the employee feel unsupported or unimportant in the work context. Feelings of Isolation can increase when the employee faces significant pressure from the workload or is subject to conflicting demands, which makes him focus on completing individual tasks rather than collaborating with others. This focus on individual work can lead to a loss of professional identity, as the employee feels unrecognized or unvalued in the work environment. (Bonnici, 2021, p. 33) and (Marshall et al., 2007) add that professional Isolation reflects individuals' feeling of separation from their colleagues and the organization in which they work. This Isolation can manifest in two primary forms: the first is social Isolation, where the employee feels a lack of communication or interaction with his colleagues, leading to a lack of emotional support and a sense of belonging. This type of Isolation can negatively affect the employee's morale and reduce his satisfaction with his work. The second form is organizational Isolation, which is related to the feeling of separation from the information and resources provided by the

organization. Here, the employee may feel invisible or unrecognized by management, which affects his chances of career advancement and appreciation. (Marshall et al., 2007, p. 200)

School sports tournaments organized by the sports and scouting departments are vibrant and dynamic platforms for promoting athletic excellence, teamwork, and sportsmanship among students. These tournaments represent the culmination of dedicated training and competitive spirit, during which students showcase their skills and passion for sports in a vibrant and inclusive environment. These school sports tournaments resonate throughout the school community, bringing together students, teachers, parents, and supporters to cheer on their teams and celebrate the achievements of young athletes. However, the management and organization of these school sports tournaments may encounter some obstacles, most notably the reluctance of physical education teachers to manage and referee these tournaments, which may stem from various challenges and considerations that affect their readiness to assume these roles. Although these teachers are naturally passionate about sports and dedicated to promoting physical activity among students, the demands and pressures associated with managing and refereeing tournaments can constitute significant barriers that contribute to their reluctance. The reluctance of physical education teachers to manage and referee school sports tournaments reflects a complex interaction between factors, including restrictions, Time, work pressures, lack of training, emotional stress, concerns about responsibility and conflict resolution (Shi, 2024) indicates that reluctance to participate in sports activities is manifested in a set of impressions and evaluations expressed by teachers based on their experiences in these events and that teachers tend to evaluate their participation positively, as they see that these activities bring significant

benefits to them and their students. Still, despite this positive evaluation, some challenges appear, including a lack of desire and skills among some teachers, which necessitates the need to improve these aspects to enhance their effective participation in sports events. (Shi, 2024, p. 87)

Research Problem

Despite the scientific and sports competencies possessed by physical education teachers as specialists in various sports activities, the researcher noticed a reluctance on their part to participate in the management and arbitration of school sports tournaments organized by the sports and scouting activity departments for various reasons, in addition to his feeling that these teachers live in an atmosphere of isolation, and a sense of separation from the educational and sports community, which leads to wasting the available opportunities to share resources, experiences, and joint initiatives, which ultimately hinders the cohesive development of physical education and sports programs. The lack of opportunities for cooperation is also one of the common problems among physical education teachers, as they may work separately from other teachers, and their opportunities for joint planning or development are limited. In addition, a misunderstanding of the role of physical education and the need for more professional development designed to meet their specific needs can also lead to isolation. Also, when the school administration or the sports and scouting activity department fails to prioritize the needs of physical education teachers or fully support them, this exacerbates these feelings of isolation. The researcher tried to put these problems into a set of questions, and these questions are:

- What are the perceptions that physical education teachers have that make them feel professionally isolated in their schools and in their dealings with the sports references they refer to? And what is the level of these perceptions?
- Do physical education teachers refrain from participating in managing and arbitration school sports tournaments organized by the Sports and Scouting Activities Department? What are the reasons for their reluctance?
- Identifying the nature of the relationship between perceptions of professional isolation among physical education teachers and their reluctance to participate in the management and arbitration of school sports tournaments organized by the Sports and Scouting Activities Department.

Research Importance

The importance of the research lies in the perceptions of professional isolation among physical education teachers and trying to link it to their reluctance to participate in the management and arbitration of school sports tournaments organized by the Department of Sports and Scouting Activities, as it will provide valuable insights into the specific factors that contribute to the high level of professional isolation among teachers, as well as the reasons for the reluctance to participate in the management of these tournaments, and guide the development of interventions to address these issues, as well as the possibility of shedding light on the barriers that prevent cooperation between the various school and educational departments, which provides strategies to enhance teamwork and mutual support. Therefore, the results of this research can affect the development of school sports policies and obtain the best sports practices, which leads to the implementation of supportive programs and policies designed to meet the needs of physical education teachers by highlighting the problems facing physical education teachers and trying to find

appropriate solutions for them, it is possible to develop targeted professional training and development programs that work to enhance teachers' capabilities and confidence. Therefore, this research can contribute to creating a more comprehensive and supportive work environment and raising the level of teachers' well-being and job satisfaction, in addition to providing a significant opportunity to benefit from the scales that the researcher will prepare to measure each of the perceptions Professional isolation and reluctance of physical education teachers by the relevant educational authorities to apply it in various academic fields affiliated with them.

Research objectives

- Identifying the perceptions of professional isolation felt by physical education teachers in schools affiliated with the Directorate of Education of Babylon.
- Identifying the reluctance of physical education teachers to participate in the management and arbitration of school sports tournaments held by the Department of Sports and Scouting Activities in the Department of Education of Babylon.
- Identifying the nature of the relationship between the level of professional isolation felt by physical education teachers and their reluctance to participate in the management and arbitration of school sports tournaments held by the Department of Sports and Scouting Activities.

Research areas

- **Human field:** Physical education teachers working in middle, secondary, and intermediate schools affiliated with the Babil Education Directorate for the academic year (2023–2024).
- **Temporal field:** The period from (4/15/2024) to (8/1/2024).

- **Spatial field:** Buildings of middle, secondary, and intermediate schools affiliated with the Babil Education Directorate.

Search terms

- **Perceptions of professional isolation**

These are individuals' feelings and thoughts about their disconnection or lack of connection with their colleagues at work. These perceptions relate to feelings of lack of connection or support from colleagues. They may result from factors such as the inability to communicate effectively, discrimination, lack of opportunities for social interaction in the work environment, or lack of appreciation.

- **Reluctance to manage and organize school sports tournaments**

A state of hesitation or reluctance shown by physical education teachers to engage in organizing and managing sports events, such as school sports tournaments and competitions, which comes as a result of a set of factors or circumstances that hinder or limit their ability to participate effectively in planning and implementing school sports activities. These multidimensional obstacles include administrative, temporal, material, psychological, social, and educational aspects.

The methodology provides a clear framework for conducting research, including the study design, data collection methods, and analysis techniques. By detailing the methodology, researchers can demonstrate the rigor and reliability of their study. In this research, the researcher used the descriptive method with survey and correlation methods to suit the nature of the study. (Pandey & Pandey ,2015) state that the descriptive research method aims to describe phenomena, events, or situations as they exist without interfering with

or manipulating factors. This method relies on collecting quantitative or qualitative data through means such as questionnaires, interviews, or observations to understand the current state of the phenomenon being studied. (Pandey & Pandey, 2015, p. 84)

Research community and sample

The concept of research community refers to the entire group of individuals or elements the researcher is interested in studying. This community can be a group of people, such as students or employees, or other elements, such as products or data. The research sample is a part of this community chosen to study its characteristics or behaviors. The sample is determined to represent the research community, allowing researchers to generalize the results extracted from the sample to the community as a whole. (Baran & Jones, 2017, p. 108). The researcher defined the community of this research as physical education teachers in middle, secondary, and intermediate schools affiliated with the Babil Education Directorate for the academic year (2023–2024), whose number is (430) teachers. Based on Thompson's law in calculating sample sizes, the researcher randomly selected (262) teachers from them to form the primary research sample. The researcher then divided the primary research sample into three sub-samples as follows:

- **Exploratory study sample:** The number of individuals in this sample is (12) physical education teachers, representing (4.6%) of the primary research sample.
- **Preparation sample:** The number of individuals in this sample is (150) physical education teachers, representing (57.2%) of the primary research sample.

– **Application sample:** The number of individuals in this sample is (100) physical education teachers, representing (38.2%) of the primary research sample.

Measurement

The research variables were measured using scales prepared by the researcher. These scales were formed from questionnaires. All scales used five-point answer alternatives (1 = I do not agree at all to 5 = I completely agree) and replaced the weight values in the negative paragraphs.

– Research scales

The researcher prepared two scales to measure the level of perceptions of professional isolation among physical education teachers and the level of reluctance of physical education teachers to participate in the management and arbitration of school sports tournaments. He formulated (15) phrases to form the main structure of the professional isolation questionnaire and (15) phrases to survey the reluctance of physical education teachers. The researcher developed these phrases after reviewing a group of literature and scientific sources dealing with professional isolation. (Lyons et al., 2023b) (Peng et al., 2023) (Deschênes, 2023) (Kutoane et al., 2023) (Noh & Lee, 2022) (Bonnici, 2021) (Kutoane et al., 2021) (Sahai et al., 2021) (Lleva Núñez & Camille Cuisia-Villanueva, 2020) (Frey, 2020), As well as a group of sources that dealt with the concept of reluctance to participate in sports tournaments. (Shi, 2024) (Wei & Chang, 2024) (Gong et al., 2024) (Gutierrez et al., 2023) (Nasraddin, 2023) (Al-Ziyadna&Al-Kubaisi, 2019) (Ślusarz et al., 2022) (Karasievyh et al., 2021) (Opstoel et al., 2020) (Aggerholm et al., 2018), The researcher benefited from it in developing the phrases for each of

the two scales and contributing to verifying the validity of the content for the two scales.

After completing the formulation of the questionnaires' phrases, the researcher applied them to a group of individuals from the primary research sample, who represent the exploratory study sample, numbering (12) teachers, to ensure the clarity of the questionnaires' phrases for the research sample, as well as identifying the obstacles that the researcher might encounter in the application process—the time required for the application process, which amounted to an average of (18) minutes. The application process took place on (5/10/2024).

The next step in preparing the two research scales is to apply them to the preparation sample of (150) physical education teachers, with the aim of conducting a statistical analysis of the application results, and benefiting from them in ensuring that both the Professional Isolation Perceptions Scale and the Reluctance to Participate in Sports Championships Scale possess scientific transactions of validity and reliability, as the researcher extracted the validity of internal consistency for each of the research scales, which includes finding the relationship between the score of each of the questionnaires with the total score of the questionnaire to which it belongs, by using Pearson's correlation coefficient, as (Puri, 2019) indicates the validity of internal consistency as the extent to which the measurement tool is able to measure what it is supposed to measure consistently, and it is related to evaluating the importance of homogeneity of the different elements in the tool, so that they all reflect the same concept or characteristic. (Puri, 2019, p. 121), and Tables (1, 2) show the internal consistency results for the two research scales.

Table (1)

Internal consistency of occupational isolation questionnaire statements

P	Correlation of the paragraph with the overall questionnaire score		P	Correlation of the paragraph with the overall questionnaire score	
	Correlation degree	Significance level		Correlation degree	Significance level
1	0.244	0.164	9	0.488	0.000
2	0.207	0.445	10	0.533	0.000
3	0.417	0.004	11	0.582	0.000
4	0.464	0.001	12	0.523	0.000
5	0.788	0.000	13	0.499	0.000
6	0.356	0.014	14	0.622	0.000
7	0.644	0.000	15	0.577	0.000
8	0.584	0.000			

Table (1) shows that the scores of the first and second statements of the questionnaire on perceptions of professional isolation were inconsistent with the total score of the questionnaire, as the correlation coefficients between them reached (0.244, 0.207), significance levels of (0.164, 0.445), so they were deleted from the questionnaire. Hence, the number of questionnaire statements became (13) statements.

Table (2)

Internal consistency of the statements of the reluctance to participate in sports activities questionnaire

P	Correlation of the paragraph with the overall questionnaire score		P	Correlation of the paragraph with the overall questionnaire score	
	Correlation degree	Significance level		Correlation degree	Significance level
1	0.511	0.000	9	0.497	0.000
2	0.525	0.000	10	0.673	0.000
3	0.645	0.000	11	0.583	0.000

P	Correlation of the paragraph with the overall questionnaire score		P	Correlation of the paragraph with the overall questionnaire score	
	Correlation degree	Significance level		Correlation degree	Significance level
4	0.762	0.000	12	0.715	0.000
5	0.262	0.131	13	0.606	0.000
6	0.576	0.000	14	0.472	0.000
7	0.685	0.000	15	0.874	0.000
8	0.631	0.000			

It is clear from Table (2) that the score of the fifth statement of the questionnaire on teachers' reluctance to participate in school sports tournaments was inconsistent with the total score of the questionnaire, as the correlation coefficient between them was (0.262) at a significance level of (0.131), which is an insignificant significance, which required deleting this statement so that the number of questionnaire statements became (14) statements.

After that, the researcher extracted the stability of both the scale of perceptions of professional isolation among physical education teachers and the level of the reluctance of physical education teachers to participate in school sports tournaments by using the split-half method, which is based on dividing the phrases of each of the two scales into two halves and then finding the correlation coefficient between the scores of the two halves of each scale, and then equating the results through the Gutman and Spearman-Brown equations to extract the degree of total stability of the two research scales, and Tables (3, 4) show the stability of the two research scales.

Table (3)

Reliability of the questionnaire of perceptions of professional isolation

Half stability	Gutman equation	constancy
0.731		0.841

Table 4

Stability of the questionnaire on reluctance to participate in school sports tournaments

Half stability	Spearman–Brown equation	constancy
0.684		0.812

After identifying the two research scales possessing scientific characteristics and preparing them according to scientific procedures, the questionnaire on perceptions of professional isolation among physical education teachers settled on (13) statements. The level of reluctance of physical education teachers to participate in school sports tournaments settled on several statements amounting to (14) statements. These statements are answered with answer alternatives: (I agree, I agree, I somewhat agree, I disagree, I do not agree at all).

Application of the research scales

After reaching the final image of the research scales, the researcher applied them to a group randomly selected from the research sample of (100) physical education teachers, representing the final application sample to obtain the necessary results for discussion and analysis. The application process took place during the period extending between (13–16/5/2024). Then, the results were processed statistically using statistical means (percentage, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, simple correlation coefficient (Pearson), Gutman equation, Spearman–Brown equation, hypothetical mean, (t) test for one independent sample), to extract the levels of both perceptions of professional isolation and teachers' reluctance to participate in sports tournaments.



Table 5

Level of statements and questionnaire perceptions of occupational isolation

P	Content	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Hypothetical mean	Value (T)	Significance level	Level
1	I am fully integrated into my school with solid peer relationships and support.	2.85	12.58	3	0.681	0.500	medium
2	I feel that my contributions as a physical education teacher are not appreciated or underestimated within the school community.	2.68	1.319	3	1.430	0.162	medium
3	I find it difficult to establish meaningful relationships with colleagues from teachers of other subjects.	2.59	1.019	3	2.357	0.024	low
4	I work independently rather than collaboratively within the school environment.	3.56	1.050	3	3.103	0.004	High
5	I constantly feel the need for more interaction and	3.82	1.058	3	4.539	0.000	High



P	Content	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Hypothetical mean	Value (T)	Significance level	Level
	support from my peers in the school community.						
6	I have strong relationships with technical supervisors in the sports and scouting activity departments.	3.32	0.878	3	2.149	0.039	High
7	Opportunities for mutual support and joint learning between physical education teachers working in the governorate's schools are weak.	2.68	1.173	3	1.608	0.117	medium
8	My contributions to sports and scouting activities are met with disrespect by those responsible for organizing them.	2.97	1.114	3	0.154	0.879	medium
9	I feel excluded from meaningful discussions and decision-making processes regarding school and scouting	3.50	1.080	3	2.699	0.011	High

P	Content	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Hypothetical mean	Value (T)	Significance level	Level
	sports.						
10	I regularly look for opportunities for professional development and networking within sports-related departments.	3.59	0.988	3	3.470	0.001	High
11	I feel a lack of support and encouragement in my professional environment permanently	3.26	1.109	3	1.391	0.173	medium
12	Technical supervisors provide regular opportunities for collaboration and professional development in this field.	3.06	1.153	3	0.297	0.768	medium
13	Get constructive feedback from technical supervisors on an ongoing basis.	3.29	1.031	3	1.664	0.106	medium
Questionnaire		41.18	5.463	39	2.323	0.026	High

Table (5) shows that the questionnaire on perceptions of professional isolation obtained a high level, as it had an arithmetic mean of (41.18),

which is higher than the hypothetical mean value of (39), at a significant level of (0.026).

Table 6

The level of statements and questionnaire of reluctance to participate in school sports tournaments

P	Content	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Hypothetical mean	Value (T)	Significance level	Level
1	The schedule for holding sports tournaments conflicts with other teaching responsibilities.	4.00	0.739	3	7.895	0.000	High
2	Physical education teachers lack adequate training in managing and refereeing sports tournaments.	3.91	1.164	3	4.566	0.000	High
3	The teacher fears possible conflicts with students and parents during tournaments.	3.44	1.168	3	2.170	0.037	High
4	Teachers feel physically stressed and exhausted as a result of supervising multiple tournaments.	3.18	1.167	3	0.882	0.384	medium
5	Teachers are reluctant to participate due to a lack of professional respect for their expertise in the tournament context.	3.44	1.211	3	2.125	0.041	High



P	Content	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Hypothetical mean	Value (T)	Significance level	Level
6	Teachers fear repeating previous negative experiences in managing and refereeing sports tournaments.	3.53	0.929	3	3.323	0.002	High
7	The relationship between teachers and sports and scouting activities departments is characterized by mistrust or conflict.	2.50	1.052	3	2.772	0.009	low
8	Teachers are dissatisfied with the material and moral benefits of participating in the management and arbitration of school sports tournaments.	3.79	1.175	3	3.941	0.000	High
9	Teachers are moving away from tournament management due to chaos and a lack of clear expectations from sports and scouting departments.	3.21	1.200	3	1.000	0.325	medium
10	Teachers feel underappreciated for their efforts in managing	3.29	1.142	3	1.501	0.143	medium



P	Content	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Hypothetical mean	Value (T)	Significance level	Level
	and judging school sports tournaments.						
11	Sports tournaments lack compensation or recognition of additional responsibilities arising from organizing tournaments.	3.47	0.961	3	2.856	0.007	High
12	Teachers fear responsibility in case of injuries or conflicts during sports tournaments.	3.68	1.147	3	3.438	0.002	High
13	Teachers refrain from participating due to personal health or physical restrictions that affect their ability to manage tournaments.	3.32	1.093	3	1.726	0.094	medium
14	Cooperation and communication between sports and scouting activities departments and school administrations is characterized by weakness.	3.09	0.866	3	0.594	0.556	medium
Questionnaire		47.85	8.683	42	3.930	0.000	High

Table (6) shows us that the level of the questionnaire on reluctance to participate in school sports tournaments was high, as its arithmetic mean reached (47.85), which is higher than the hypothetical mean value of (42), at a significant level of (0.000).

Table 7

The nature of the relationship between the two research variables

Significance level	Correlation coefficient	Variable
0.000	0.533	Perceptions of professional isolation
		Reluctance to participate in school sports tournaments

Table (7) shows that there is a significant positive relationship between each of the perceptions of professional isolation and reluctance to participate in school sports tournaments, with a correlation degree of (0.533) at a significance level of (0.000).

Discussion

The high result obtained by the questionnaire on perceptions of professional isolation among physical education teachers in Babil Governorate, which was indicated in Table (5), can be attributed by the researcher to the adoption of these teachers the principle of individualism and independence in school work instead of collective engagement with colleagues through cooperative work procedures, which is mainly due to the feelings of denial that these teachers encounter from their school work environment, whether in terms of not giving sufficient importance to their achievements and contributions in sports, education, and society within their schools, in addition to their feeling of isolation resulting from weak interaction and communication with colleagues and peers among teachers. There are also a group of external factors that have contributed to the emergence of this result, including the ingratitude that

meets the efforts made by these teachers by the sports education authorities responsible for their work, and the lack of honest and fair recognition of their sports contributions, in addition to the failure of these responsible authorities to make use of the expertise possessed by these teachers, or to involve them in the discussion and decision-making processes related to the school sports activities and championships that they hold, as well as the negative feeling of these teachers as a result of the encouragement and support absent from these authorities, whether school administrations Or the administrations of the sports and scouting departments, in addition to the interruption of communication bridges between physical education teachers in schools and technical supervisors in the sports and scouting activities department, considering them the most critical links in professional sports success.

(Frey, 2020) states that teachers' sense of professional isolation can result from the increasing pressures they face in the work environment. With increasing pressures, many teachers feel disconnected from their colleagues, which leads to a loss of meaning in their work. The lack of social support also leads to teachers not spending enough time with each other, which increases their sense of isolation. In addition, communication and interaction between teachers and their supervisors are vital, as isolation can lead to a loss of desire to work and participate in educational activities, negatively affecting their professional satisfaction. Combining these factors can create a work environment that may lead to teachers feeling professionally isolated, negatively affecting their mental health and teaching performance. (Frey, 2020, p. 13)

When observing Table (6), it appears to us that the level of the reluctance of physical education teachers to participate in school sports tournaments is high,

which the researcher may attribute to the state of lack of planning that prevails in the process of organizing and holding school sports tournaments, as they are mostly held at times that conflict with the teachers' school schedule in terms of their coincidence with school exam times and their preoccupation with supervision and other school work. Perhaps one of the reasons for this result is the weak interest shown by the educational authorities in the Babil Education Directorate in terms of involving physical education teachers in training and development courses and workshops that may contribute to raising their training and refereeing levels in various sports, and the corresponding weakness in the effort to reach such courses by the teachers themselves, and thus their exposure to adverse experiences when managing and refereeing school sports tournaments due to their limited administrative and refereeing experiences, and hence their avoidance of trying to repeat them for fear of being exposed to psychological and professional harm. The avoidance of these teachers may have other reasons, including the state of disregard shown by the organizing committees of the tournaments for their professional sports experiences, and not benefiting from them when organizing tournaments, and trying to Their exclusion from the organizational scene, and when talking about the social conditions that prevail in Iraqi society in terms of the weakness of the culture of accepting loss, or the lack of acceptance of students being injured during participation in school tournaments, which may generate tribal and societal conflicts that push teachers to refrain from participating in refereeing their matches for fear of getting into trouble, or facing the anger of parents who are not aware of sports culture, and with all these problems and obstacles, teachers do not receive any material returns from participating in these tournaments, and sometimes they even lack moral benefits such as letters of thanks and appreciation, all of the above

undoubtedly constitutes an incentive for these teachers to stay away from administrative and refereeing participation in school sports tournaments.

(Shi, 2024) indicates that many reasons may lead to the non-participation of physical education teachers in sporting events, as there may be a lack of desire among these teachers, in addition to the fact that more than the skills of teachers in participating in sporting events may be required. The heavy job burdens that teachers bear may be a factor that makes it difficult for them to allocate time and effort to participate in tournaments, especially if these events conflict with their other educational responsibilities, and the lack of institutional support from the school administration can negatively affect their desire to participate, as teachers need resources and encouragement to engage in sports activities.

(Shi, 2024, p. 94)

Table (7) shows that the correlation between perceptions of professional isolation and reluctance to participate in school sports tournaments was a significant and positive relationship. The researcher attributes this result to physical education teachers feeling isolated in their professional environment, separated from their peers, and underestimating their roles. This may lead to a lack of motivation and participation in activities outside their everyday responsibilities. This feeling of isolation may create barriers for them to cooperate with other departments, whether school or educational, such as the Sports and Scouting Activities Department, which affects their readiness to assume additional roles such as managing and refereeing sports tournaments and thus generates a feeling of lack of support and lack of recognition as reasons for their reluctance to participate in such extracurricular activities.

Conclusions



- Physical education teachers in schools affiliated with the Directorate of Education of Babylon have high-level perceptions about their professional isolation, whether in the schools to which they belong or the sports and scouting activity departments to which they belong.
- The participation of physical education teachers in school sports tournaments is characterized by needing higher participation due to their high reluctance to manage and referee their matches.

Physical education teachers' perceptions of their professional isolation were positively correlated with their reluctance to participate in managing and refereeing school sports tournaments. This means that the higher the level of professional isolation they have, the more reluctance they have to participate in these tournaments, and vice versa.

Recommendations

- The researcher recommends that the sports and scouting activity departments encourage physical education teachers to cooperate regularly by involving them in workshops with peers, in addition to the role of these departments and school administrations in promoting a culture of support through guidance programs and cooperative sports projects between teachers on the one hand, and between teachers and these departments on the other hand, as well as organizing social events to build bonds and a sense of belonging within the profession, which ultimately reduces feelings of isolation among physical education teachers.
- The researcher recommends that the responsible authorities and technical supervisors in the sports and scouting activity departments establish specialized training programs for arbitration, provide clear guidelines for

managing tournaments, and help in dealing with various administrative tasks, in addition to recognizing and appreciating the efforts of teachers who assume these responsibilities, while ensuring that the workload for managing and arbitrating school sports tournaments is reasonable and balanced, and allocating sufficient time to prepare and implement tournaments in a manner that is consistent with teachers' schedules, which helps in promoting a positive attitude towards managing and arbitrating school sports tournaments.

– The researcher recommends that the relevant educational authorities in the Babylon Education Directorate benefit from the two research scales, which reveal feelings of professional isolation among teachers of other academic subjects or employees of the various departments affiliated with them and the reasons for teachers' reluctance to participate in multiple scientific forums.

References

- Aggerholm, K., Standal, Ø. F., & Hordvik, M. M. (2018). Competition in Physical Education: Avoid, Ask, Adapt or Accept? *Quest*, 70(3), 385–400. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2017.1415151>
- Al-Ziyadna, Muhammad Najih Mahmoud Al-Kubaisi, J. S. (2019). Obstacles to organizing sports activities in public schools in Jerash Governorate from the point of view of school principals. *International Specialized Educational Journal*, 8(10), 129–142.
- Baran, M., & Jones, J. (2017). Mixed Methods Research for Improved Scientific Study. In *Sampling in Research* (Issue July, pp. 107–121). <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-0007-0.ch006>
- Bonnici, N. (2021). The professional isolation experienced by novice Heads of Primary State Schools during their professional and organisational socialisation. *Malta Journal of Education*, 2(2), 28–52.
- Deschênes, A. A. (2023). Professional isolation and pandemic teleworkers' satisfaction and commitment: The role of perceived organizational and supervisor support. *Revue*



Europeenne de Psychologie Appliquee, 73(2).
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erap.2022.100823>

Frey, J. J. (2020). A new role for Balint groups in overcoming professional isolation and loneliness. *International Journal of Psychiatry in Medicine*, 55(1), 8–15.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0091217419891275>

Gong, Y., MacPhail, A., & Young, A. M. (2024). Chinese higher education-based physical education teacher educators' professional learning needs for involvement in research activities. *Professional Development in Education*, 50(4), 638–654.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2021.1895286>

Gutierrez, A. T., Tabora, A. R., & Gama, J. L. (2023). Physical Education Teachers in Times of Pandemic. *Journal of Physical Education (Maringa)*, 34(1), 1–14.
<https://doi.org/10.4025/jphyseduc.v34i1.3411>

Karasievykh, S., Maksymchuk, B., Kuzmenko, V., Slyusarenko, N., Romanyshyna, O., Syvokhop, E., Kolomiitseva, O., Romanishyna, L., Marionda, I., Vykhreshch, V., Oliinyk, M., Kovalchuk, A., Halaidiuk, M., & Maksymchuk, I. (2021). Training Future Physical Education Teachers for Physical and Sports Activities: Neuropedagogical Approach. *BRAIN. Broad Research in Artificial Intelligence and Neuroscience*, 12(4), 543–564. <https://doi.org/10.18662/brain/12.4/264>

Kutoane, M., Brysiewicz, P., & Scott, T. (2021). Interventions for managing professional isolation among health professionals in low resource environments: A scoping review. *Health Science Reports*, 4(3), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hsr2.361>

Kutoane, M., Scott, T., & Brysiewicz, P. (2023). “Feeling Like an Island”: Perceptions of Professional Isolation Among Emergency Nurses. *Journal of Emergency Nursing*, 49(6), 881–889. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jen.2023.08.002>

Lleva Núñez, J., & Camille Cuisia-Villanueva, M. (2020). Overcoming the feeling of isolation in distance learning: A collaborative auto-ethnographic Research. *FDLA Journal*, 5(November), 7. <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/fdla-journal/vol5/iss1/7>

Lyons, B. J., Baldrige, D. C., Yang, L.-Q., & Bryan, C. (2023a). Disability Severity,



- Professional Isolation Perceptions, and Career Outcomes: When Does Leader–Member Exchange Quality Matter? *Journal of Management*, Article re, 1–31.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063221143714>
- Lyons, B. J., Baldridge, D. C., Yang, L. Q., & Bryan, C. (2023b). Disability Severity, Professional Isolation Perceptions, and Career Outcomes: When Does Leader–Member Exchange Quality Matter? *Journal of Management*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063221143714>
- Marshall, G. W., Michaels, C. E., & Mulki, J. P. (2007). Workplace isolation: Exploring the construct and its measurement. *Psychology and Marketing*, 24(3), 195–223.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/mar>
- Nasraldin, A. (2023). The role of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Education towards the difficulties of implementing sports activities in schools. *Scientific Journal of Applied Research in Sports*, 4(1), 212–235.
- Noh, E., & Lee, K.–H. (2022). The Empirical Research on Professional Isolation During Remote Work in Context of COVID–19 and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: *Korean Journal of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 35(3), 513–558.
<https://doi.org/10.24230/kjiop.v35i3.513-558>
- Opstoel, K., Chapelle, L., Prins, F. J., De Meester, A., Haerens, L., van Tartwijk, J., & De Martelaer, K. (2020). Personal and social development in physical education and sports: A review study. *European Physical Education Review*, 26(4), 797–813.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1356336X19882054>
- Pandey, P., & Pandey, M. M. (2015). *Research Methodology: Tools and Techniques*. In Bridge Center (First publ). Bridge Center.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/jj.8155055.13>
- Peng, Y., Liu, C., Su, S., & Rosenblatt, A. (2023). The hidden performance costs of professional isolation? A latent change score model of professional isolation during the early stage of COVID–19 pandemic. *Applied Psychology*, 72(3), 1075–1096.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12420>



- Puri, V. (2019). Modern Trends in Research Methodology. International Journal of Research Methodology, 2(1), 117–127. www.ijrm.humanournals.com
- Sahai, S., Ciby, M. A., & Kahwaji, A. T. (2021). Workplace Isolation: a Systematic Review and Synthesis. International Journal of Management, 11(12), 2745–2758. <https://doi.org/10.34218/ijm.11.12.2020.257>
- Shi, Y. (2024). Knowledge and Participation of Physical Education Teachers in the Official Sports Events. Journal of Education and Educational Research, 7(3), 84–97. <https://doi.org/10.54097/6h3za604>
- Ślusarz, R., Cwiekala–Lewis, K., Wysokiński, M., Filipka–Blejder, K., Fidecki, W., & Biercewicz, M. (2022). Characteristics of Occupational Burnout among Nurses of Various Specialties and in the Time of the COVID–19 Pandemic—Review. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 19(21), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192113775>
- Wei, M., & Chang, L. (2024). Involvement of Physical Education Teachers in Community Sport as Public Service. Journal of Education and Educational Research, 8(3), 77–87. <https://doi.org/10.54097/5ft99c68>