

Instructional Management Skills of Physical Education Teachers: Basis for an Enhanced Instructional Program

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Abstract

This research examined the instructional management competencies of Physical Education (PE) educators in Region IV-A, Philippines, based on Jacob Kounin's Instructional Management Theory. The study highlighted five fundamental constructs: with-it-ness, smoothness, momentum, overlapping, and group focus—skills essential for sustaining student engagement and reducing behavioral problems. A descriptive quantitative study approach was utilized to gather data from 120 physical education instructors in public and private secondary schools across the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon. A validated survey instrument assessed instructors' impressions, with data analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-tests, and one-way ANOVA. The

results revealed elevated levels of perceived instructional management abilities across all dimensions, with no statistically significant variations identified based on demographic characteristics like age, gender, teaching experience, educational attainment, and school type. These data indicate a consistent implementation of teaching tactics by PE teachers, regardless of their backgrounds. The research advocates for the creation of a cohesive and improved instructional program to strengthen and advance the professionalism of physical education teaching methodologies. The approach can provide a basis for ongoing enhancement in classroom engagement, behavior management, and overall instructional efficacy in secondary schools in the Philippines.

Keywords: *instructional management, physical education, Kounin, teacher effectiveness, classroom behavior, secondary education, Philippines*

Introduction

Instructional management plays a crucial role in ensuring the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes, particularly in subjects like Physical Education (PE), where the learning environment is often dynamic, interactive, and behavior sensitive. Unlike conventional classroom settings, PE classes demand a high level of classroom control, student engagement, and activity flow, making instructional management skills vital competency for teachers. Effective instructional strategies not only support cognitive and psychomotor development but also foster positive behavioral outcomes among students.

In the Philippine educational context, the implementation of the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum has introduced significant reforms, including a stronger emphasis on life skills, student-centered learning, and differentiated instruction. These changes have necessitated that educators, especially PE teachers, adopt more strategic and responsive instructional practices that cater to diverse learner needs. The Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) further reinforces the need for continuous professional development in instructional competencies, particularly in the areas of classroom management and learner engagement.

In the light of this study, the sub-questions were to be answered:

1. What is the profile of the Physical Education teachers in terms of age, gender, length of service, highest educational attainment, and type of school (public, private)?
2. What is the Physical Education teachers' perception on the Level of Instructional Management Skills as to Jacob Kounin's Instructional Management Theory in terms of With-it-ness, Smoothness, Momentum, Overlapping, and Group Focus?
3. Is there a significant difference in the perceived level of the Instructional Management Skills of Physical Education Teachers when their profile is taken as test factor?
4. Based on the findings of the study, what enhanced instructional program can be proposed?

Given these curricular and professional demands, there is a compelling need to evaluate the instructional management skills of PE teachers, particularly within Region IV-A—one of the country's most populous and educationally active regions. This study aims to assess the current levels of instructional management competencies among PE teachers in this region using the theoretical lens of Jacob Kounin's Instructional Management Theory. The findings will inform the design of a more targeted and enhanced instructional program to support teacher development and student achievement in PE.

Review of Related Literature

Instructional management skills are essential for achieving instructional success, particularly in activity-centered disciplines such as Physical Education (PE). These competencies extend beyond mere classroom control and encompass the ability to foster student engagement, motivation, and academic performance (Yasin & Mustafa, 2020). Effective instructional management includes strategies for managing transitions, maintaining student focus, and minimizing off-task or disruptive behavior. These practices are particularly vital in PE settings, where lessons are often conducted in open spaces and involve a high level of physical activity and interaction.

Jacob Kounin's Instructional Management Theory (1970) remains one of the most influential frameworks in classroom management literature. Kounin identified five interrelated skills that collectively contribute to effective lesson delivery and classroom control: with-it-ness, smoothness, momentum, overlapping, and group focus. These elements promote a proactive approach to instruction. With-it-ness refers to a teacher's situational awareness and ability to detect and address issues before they escalate. Smoothness and momentum relate to the continuous flow of instruction and the prevention of unnecessary delays or disruptions. Overlapping involves multitasking—attending to multiple classroom events simultaneously—while group focus emphasizes the engagement of all learners through inclusive teaching techniques and strategic questioning.

Empirical support for Kounin's model is evident in the work of Raganas and Collado (2016), who used the framework to assess instructional management skills of elementary school teachers in Batuan City. Their study demonstrated a significant correlation between effective instructional strategies and improved student outcomes. Similarly, Egeberg et al. (2021) found that with-it-ness and group management were critical to

creating positive, student-centered learning environments. Thompson (2019) further noted that students' perceptions of their teachers' classroom control were directly linked to academic engagement and behavior.

Instructional management is especially critical in PE due to the subject's dynamic and socially interactive nature. According to Cothran and Kulinna (2003), PE teachers often supervise large classes in expansive or non-traditional learning spaces, making it imperative to establish clear expectations, structured routines, and responsive behavior management techniques. Research by Adkins et al. (2015) and Grube et al. (2018) highlights the value of well-timed transitions, multitasking, and concise behavioral guidelines in promoting student cooperation and maximizing activity time in PE classes.

In the Philippine context, the shift to the K–12 Basic Education Program has elevated the need for effective instructional practices across all disciplines, particularly in subjects like PE that emphasize life skills and holistic development. Dizon et al. (2019) reported that the educational reform necessitated enhanced teaching strategies to align with learner-centered pedagogies. The Department of Education's Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) further supports this direction by outlining teacher performance expectations at various career stages and mandating ongoing professional development in instructional planning, delivery, and assessment.

This study builds upon the foundational work of Kounin and contemporary local and international research. By examining the instructional management skills of PE teachers in Region IV-A, the study addresses the need for localized, evidence-based interventions to support professional growth and improve educational delivery in a post-reform teaching environment.

Methodology

Research Design and Approach

This study employed a descriptive quantitative research design, intended to systematically characterize the instructional management skills of Physical Education (PE) teachers in Region IV-A, Philippines. Descriptive research is particularly suited for identifying trends, characteristics, and patterns in each population without manipulating variables (McCombes, 2022). It provides a comprehensive snapshot of existing conditions by collecting and analyzing quantifiable data.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The study involved 120 PE teachers from public and private secondary schools across Region IV-A, comprising the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon. A convenience sampling method was used to select participants based on accessibility, geographical proximity, and willingness to participate. This non-probability technique was deemed appropriate due to logistical constraints and the widespread geographical distribution of potential respondents.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using an adapted and validated questionnaire originally developed by Raganas and Collado (2016), based on Jacob Kounin's (1970) Instructional Management Theory. The instrument assessed five key dimensions of instructional management: with-it-ness, smoothness, momentum, overlapping, and group focus. Each domain included multiple indicators rated on a 4-point Likert scale: (4) Always, (3) Often, (2) Sometimes, and (1) Never. Prior to deployment, the instrument underwent a review for content validity and reliability to ensure clarity and consistency of measurement.

Data Collection Procedure

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from relevant educational authorities. Both digital (Google Forms) and printed versions of the questionnaire were distributed to accommodate teacher preferences. Participants were given two weeks to complete the survey. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents, and confidentiality of responses was maintained throughout the research process.

Data Analysis

Data were processed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Frequency distributions and weighted means were used to summarize demographic profiles and determine the perceived level of instructional management skills. To test for statistically significant differences in perceptions based on demographic factors (age, gender, length of service, highest educational attainment, and school type), Independent-Samples t-tests and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were conducted. These analyses enabled the identification of potential variations across demographic subgroups.

Results

The analysis of the responses from 120 Physical Education (PE) teachers in Region IV-A revealed high levels of perceived instructional management skills across all five domains: with-it-ness, smoothness, momentum, overlapping, and group focus. Weighted mean scores for each domain fell within the "often" to "always" range on the 4-point Likert scale, indicating that respondents regularly demonstrate these instructional management competencies in their teaching practice.

Descriptive statistics showed that teachers consistently applied proactive strategies in classroom management, with slightly higher mean scores observed in the domains of with-it-ness and group focus. This suggests a general attentiveness to classroom dynamics and efforts to maintain group engagement during physical activities.

Inferential analysis using Independent-Samples t-tests and One-Way ANOVA revealed no statistically significant differences in perceived instructional management skills when respondents were grouped according to demographic variables, including age, gender, length of teaching service, educational attainment, and school type (public or private). These findings suggest a shared perception of instructional management practices across diverse teacher profiles.

Discussion

The findings underscore the strong presence of instructional management practices among PE teachers in Region IV-A, consistent with the principles of Kounin's Instructional Management Theory (1970). The high mean ratings across domains confirm that teachers are generally equipped with strategies that promote effective classroom control, lesson flow, and student engagement.

The absence of significant demographic differences indicates that instructional management skills are not necessarily influenced by a teacher's background or professional experience. This may be attributed to standard professional development programs or shared training experiences mandated by the Department of Education across both public and private institutions. It also reflects a strong internalization of classroom management principles aligned with national standards such as the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST).

These findings align with earlier studies (e.g., Raganas & Collado, 2016; Yasin & Mustafa, 2020), which highlighted the importance of instructional management in influencing student performance and classroom climate. Furthermore, the results reinforce the relevance of Kounin's model, especially the components of with-it-ness and group focus, in activity-based subjects like PE where movement, interaction, and situational awareness are critical.

Given the uniformity of skill levels across teacher groups, the study recommends the implementation of an enhanced instructional program that builds upon existing strengths while addressing subtle areas for growth—such as smoother transitions and more integrated multitasking strategies. Such a program can support continuous professional development and contribute to improving instructional quality and student learning experiences in Physical Education.

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