



Exploring Project-Based Learning in Moroccan EFL Classes: A Quantitative Analysis of Teachers' Perceptions and Implementation Challenges

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Abstract

Project-based learning (PBL) has brought massive ramifications in the field of English Language Teaching in recent years. PBL so far has proven that it is an innovative teaching plus in the educational sphere and given the continuous calls to integrate PBL in the educational setting. This study seeks to answer some questions related to the perceptions and challenges that Moroccan teachers face while implementing PBL. In this quantitative research, 62 Moroccan teachers were selected based on their availability and convenience. Results have shown that teachers are aware of PBL and its benefits. Nevertheless, the majority of participants face major impediments in implementing PBL successfully. The study also revealed that challenges are associated with perceptions. The results of the study provide important implications for instructors, researchers, policy makers, and teacher trainers.

Key words: Project-based learning (PBL); Benefits; Challenges; Perceptions

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1. INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has brought several innovative pedagogies more than ever. By the same token, a growing emphasis has been put on creative pedagogical approaches to improve EFL learning experiences, and one of them is Project-Based learning (PBL). PBL in EFL classes engages students in collaborative, hands-on experiences and projects that integrate language skills with authentic tasks and real-world contexts (Stoller, 2006). In the Moroccan context, PBL is considered essential in EFL classes, as the Ministry of Education (2007) has recommended its integration (2007). This aligns with the new educational reform known as “the 2020-2026 roadmap”, which encourages using project work as a tool that enhances the spirit of cooperation between the community, teachers, school, and students as well. In fact, in Moroccan English textbooks, students are required to work on a project after every two units.

Despite PBL promising benefits, there exists a scarcity of research specifically focusing on the implementation of PBL in the Moroccan context. Previous studies might have mentioned its importance in passing, but there seems to be a gap in detailed investigations into how PBL is perceived and practiced by Moroccan EFL teachers and the major hindrances hampering its effective implementation.

The objective of this study is to explore the extent to which PBL is implemented in Moroccan EFL classes. In light of this study, two fundamental dimensions were addressed namely; Moroccan EFL teachers' perceptions of Project-Based Learning and their current PBL reported practices. Furthermore, the study will outline some major hindrances encountered while implementing PBL and will accordingly provide some suggestions to overcome them. To meet the aforementioned objectives of the current study, the following research questions have been

developed. The choice of questions instead of hypotheses has been determined by the nature of this study. To meet the above-mentioned objective(s), the study addresses the following three major research questions and the following hypothesis:

- 1) What are the Moroccan EFL teachers' perceptions and reported practices of Project-Based Learning?
- 2) What challenges do Moroccan EFL teachers encounter in implementing Project-Based Learning?
- 3) Is there any statistically significant relationship between Moroccan EFL teachers' perceptions of Project-Based Learning and the challenges they face in its implementation?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Project-based Learning definition and history

While reviewing the definition of project-based learning, it's noticeable that many authors have defined PBL with different voices. According to Bell (2010), PBL refers to an educational method where students engage in hands-on learning to build knowledge together in a group setting, with teachers guiding the process and students taking an active role in acquiring knowledge. Additionally, PBL, as defined by Thomas (2000), involves learning that is focused on solving problems and centered on the students, with emphasis on organizing projects. Within this regard, PBL offers students an opportunity to express their opinions on topics related to their interests, to inquire, to hypothesize, to experiment with various tools, and to apply acquired skills in real-life situations. This approach encourages learners to think creatively, solve problems, and think critically both inside and outside the classroom as pointed out by Katz & Chard (2000). Gary (2015) also described PBL as a collaborative process in which learners work together to build and apply the learned knowledge to investigate, evaluate, and solve problems, thereby becoming responsible for their learning from teachers. PBL is grounded in constructivism, emphasizing learning via hands-on experiences and social engagement (Park & Hiver, 2017). This goes hand in hand with what Lee (2015) said about PBL, that it prioritizes practical, interactive, and student-centered learning that is hands-on.

Kilpatrick (1918), defined PBL as well as the purpose of projects as a means for students to acquire skills and knowledge through experiential learning (as cited in Nawar Mughrabi, 2021), Dewey in 1934 criticized the work of Willam Kilpatrick alongside his followers for misunderstanding the PBL's central aim, emphasizing the vital role of teachers in guiding students' thinking processes rather than simply promoting self-directed learning. PBL is also based on the constructivist learning paradigm developed by prominent thinkers Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky. This method emphasizes the learners' central role in the educational process, actively building

their knowledge and understanding (Santrock, 2011, p. 6). Lev Vygotsky argues that the learning process should have a social component; in other words, learning happens in social situations and knowledge takes place through interaction.

2.2 Theory of PBL and its Common Elements

Blumenfeld, et al. (1991) highlight the importance of assignments and the educational setting, underscoring their essential contributions to academic growth. Through task-oriented problem-solving that takes into account their surroundings, PBL ensures that the students are fully engaged in their learning. (As cited in Licht, 2014), John Dewey introduced the concept of learning by doing in the early 1920s. According to Grant (2011), project-based learning has substantial potential benefits (p. 39). In the same vein, PBL plays a crucial role in fostering soft skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, which are deemed to be necessary for succeeding in the 21st century (Licht, 2014). PBL also has countless advantages in learning settings related to the educational sphere. It is assumed that PBL aligns well with the demands placed on students as advances in both knowledge and technology grow rapidly.

The following components set PBL projects apart from regular classroom projects. These components are also critical for developing 21st-century skills, which govern student learning in a PBL classroom. Firstly, working in groups is essential for a project to be classified as project-based learning; students must collaborate to address an issue. According to Bender (2012), when students gather to work in collaborative groups, they learn from their classmates and the social situation. Secondly, another feature of PBL that is not typically found in traditional projects is student choice and voice. However, Bender (2012) argues that if giving control is an issue, teachers may still construct a project-based learning environment. In such cases, there must be an attempt to provide students with a real option and voice in significant areas of the project. Finally, technology may be a significant component of PBL and should be included in the project design. Taking into account its utility, technology should be emphasized in the project, whether through the use of the Internet to research and acquire material, or the use of video or picture editing tools.

2.3 Research on PBL and PBL Potential Benefits

Given its heralded benefits, it appears that PBL is an intriguing addition to the cost of education. Kalabzová (2015) confirms that PBL is one of the educational methods that may develop several key competencies in complex and informal ways. Here, PBL accommodates a range of skill levels in the classroom, and even very weak pupils might be able to employ other skills that are important for the success of the group. Additionally, PBL gives students a chance to interact with the actual world

and apply the theoretical knowledge they have learned to address real-world problems. Ultimately, PBL facilitates the integration of knowledge from diverse academic topics, and students are expected to acquire several skills from several sources, including books, the Internet, friends, and parents.

PBL has been shown to positively impact learners' soft skills, including motivation and interest, autonomy, and skills related to collaboration, communication, negotiation, and reflection (As cited in Laaboudi & Erguig, 2016). Not only does PBL just enhance soft skills, though, but also it can have a good effect on students' learning of the four language skills. In the same vein, PBL has been reported to help by putting students in contexts and meaningful activities that require the use of real language. As a result, students' proficiency in second languages improves (Railsback, 2002; Fragoulis, 2009).

PBL has empirically outlined the development and advancement of writing skills. In the Aghayani & Hajmohammadi (2019) study, an investigation was carried out in the setting of an Iranian language institute using a quasi-experimental research approach to demonstrate the benefits of PBL and group learning (As cited in Moussaoui & Erguig, 2024). These outcomes are in line with the research conducted by Sadeghi et al. (2016), which looked into the case of writing comparison and contrast paragraphs and concluded that PBL is effective at developing writing abilities.

Second, reading has been included in studies examining how PBL affects students' productive skills in addition to writing. For example, an experimental study by Shiraz and Larsari (2014) examined the effect of project-based learning on EFL students' reading comprehension and whether this effect varied depending on the kind of projects (as cited in Moussaoui & Erguig, 2024). In addition, the results of a study conducted by Kavlu (2016) showed that PBL use considerably enhances the reading abilities of EFL undergraduate learners, further supporting the beneficial effects of PBL on the development of reading skills. In other words, students must discuss what they have read, share ideas, and assist each other. This process can help foster students' reading skills.

Third, the PBL approach helps students improve their listening comprehension in language classes. A Malaysian college hosted a quasi-experimental investigation by Bakar, N. I. A., Noordin, N., & Razali, A. B. (2019) examining how PBL affects ESL students' listening abilities. The findings showed that PBL utilization improved students' listening comprehension abilities and skills.

Fourth, new studies have shown that PBL improves the speaking abilities of second language learners. Research conducted by Maulany (2013) found that PBL is successful in raising students' attitudes towards oral communication and speaking abilities. As opposed to

individual work, a PBL activity necessitates that students interact with one another to set objectives, organize assignments, and offer feedback. Students practice speaking as they debate viewpoints and negotiate meaning by working with their peers on a project (as cited in Moussaoui & Erguig, 2024).

2.4 Teachers' role in using and implementing PBL and some encountered challenges

Numerous educators who advocated for PBL have acknowledged its advantages. However, to meet its learning objectives, PBL needs to be used and implemented carefully. The key to a successful PBL implementation is an instructor's capacity to inspire students, facilitate their learning, and provide proper mentoring to them throughout the process. Mergendoller and Thomas (2005) conducted a study and found that teachers must follow specific procedures to successfully adopt PBL in their classes. Also, teachers should think about allowing students greater autonomy during the learning process so they may collaborate and think critically about the project's goal. Considering the proficiency levels of the pupils, a methodical approach should be taken to both theory and application. Within this regard, PBL teachers must possess a thorough understanding of the ideas and methods associated with this approach (Carter, 2016). PBL's effects on teachers' practices and students' learning were investigated by Alves, A. C., Sousa, R. M., Fernandes, S., Cardoso, E., Carvalho, M. A., Figueiredo, J., & Pereira, R. M. (2016), first-year students in the University of Minho's industrial engineering and management curriculum in 2004–2005 served as the study's sample. After the PBL semester, these instructors' written narratives were used to gather data. It was discovered that teachers had a favorable opinion by underscoring that PBL had a significant impact on the students (as cited in Nawar Mughrabi, 2021). According to Ryan and Deci (2000), teachers are encouraged to support and facilitate students in participating in activities that enhance learning by nurturing motivation and promoting a sense of student accountability over the content. Moreover, educators must fully implement PBL techniques so that they can inspire their pupils (Rogers et al., 2011). Hence, teachers occupy a vital position in ensuring the effective execution of PBL (i.e., teachers are vital to the successful implementation of PBL, as cited by Nawar Mughrabi, 2021).

Nevertheless, while implementing PBL, teachers might face several hindrances. According to a study conducted by KİMSESİZ (2023), it showed that most of the participants (teachers) claimed that improper textbook contents and large class numbers prevented PBL from being used. In addition, participants acknowledged that their understanding of PBL was restricted, and students were not used to working on projects. In addition, almost half of the participants said that PBL demands more

preparation work than other methods. According to the respondents, project subjects should pique students' interests, however, some might not be interesting enough or might even turn out to be dated. Similarly, teachers may struggle to combine providing direction and enabling pupils to make their own decisions Thomas (2000) (as cited in Nawar Mughrabi, 2021). Some instructors may prefer less learner-centered approaches due to insufficient training or personal preferences.

2.5 PBL in the Moroccan context

The recent educational reform in Morocco has brought attention to the significance of PBL by including it the "The Road Map 2022-2026" reform project, which centers on schools, instructors, and students working together to deliver the desired change through the school project. Nonetheless, further studies are still required to fully understand PBL application and effects in Moroccan EFL classrooms, particularly concerning language proficiency (Moussaoui & Erguig, 2024).

According to a mixed method study done by Bouqtyb (2021), which involved 30 students and 8 teachers as a sample, he found that there is a good attitude among teachers and students towards the usage of project work and that is a good technique to teach/learn English, in their opinion. Project work is crucial for the speaking abilities of most pupils. This goes in line with the findings of Stoller (2006), who states that all linguistic abilities are used in this situation. The study's conclusions also show that most students think project work is significant. Additionally, a sizable portion of respondents (teachers) said they use projects to inspire their students and promote their independence. Akharraz (2021) conducted a quasi-experimental study that investigated the effect of using the PBL approach on students' awareness of their home cultures and the English ones. Two complete groups of students at a public school in Morocco were chosen randomly and selected into control and treatment groups. Before and following a 24-week intervention (treatment), a cultural awareness test was administered to evaluate the students' cultural awareness levels. The results of independent sample T-tests demonstrated that the PBL group significantly surpassed the control group in terms of cultural awareness. The research findings suggest that PBL can effectively integrate cultures into EFL classrooms, but its effective implementation necessitates a shift in power dynamics within the language classroom and a paradigm shift in assessment approaches.

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter is about the description of the research methodology used in this study. It includes five main sections: Research design, Participants, Sampling Techniques, Instrument, and Data Collection Procedures.

3.1 Research Design

This research is based on a cross-sectional quantitative research design. Quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It applies to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quantity. Kothari (2004).

3.2 Participants

The participants in this study were 62 practicing Moroccan EFL teachers. The elicited background information presents the portrait of the participants (sex, age, and years of experience).

Table 1
Demographics

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	49%	79.0%
	Female	13%	21.0%
	Total	62	100%
Age	25-30	17%	24.4%
	31-36	24%	38.7%
	+37	21%	33.9%
Experience	1-5	11%	17.7%
	6-10	31%	50.0%
	+10	21%	32.3%

As reported in Table 1, the participants' age ranged between 25 and +37 with the majority of them being between 31 and 36 years old. As for the gender, male teachers (79.0%) outnumbered their female counterparts, as female participants constituted 21.0% of the total sample. Concerning the work experience, half of the respondents (50%) in this sample had 10 years of teaching experience or less, 32.3% of them had more or less than 10 years, while only 17.5% of the teachers had 5 years or less of experience.

3.3 Sampling

The 62 teachers were selected based on their convenience and availability. According to Creswell (2012), convenience sampling is a sampling that the researcher selects participants because they are willing and available to be studied.

3.4 Instrumentation

The data were collected through the use of a questionnaire. The data collection tools, i.e. the survey questionnaires, were carried out individually with the available volunteers through Google Forms and WhatsApp correspondingly at various times.

3.5 Questionnaire

The instrument used in this study was conducted in English. The questionnaire was adapted from a questionnaire by Fatma KİMSESİZ (2023) who focused on investigating the perceptions of EFL instructors of Project-based language teaching in Turkey as well as Tariq

BOUQTYB (2021) who investigated Project work in Morocco. These researchers officially granted permission for us to utilize their questionnaire items, which we then slightly modified to better fit the objectives of our study. The instrument used in the study consists of 26 items that cover attitudinal questions. Briefly, attitudinal questions examine the attitudes, ideas, beliefs, and interests of the people taking part in a questionnaire (Dörnyei, 2007). Questions 1-3 covered demographic information about the participants. Questions 4-6 asked participants to clarify their use of PBL in teaching EFL. Questions 7 to 13 covered items that assess perceptions. Question 14 invited the respondents to identify the steps they use while implementing PBL. The last section or scale (Q 15-Q26) assesses teachers' encountered challenges while using PBL. To test the reliability of the two scales in the instrument, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for internal consistency was run. The results revealed that the items (n=7) in the perceptions scale was calculated $\alpha = .83$ and the items (n=10) in the challenges scale was calculated yielding $\alpha = .89$, which is a good, reliable result. (see appendices)

3.6 Data collection procedures

The questionnaire was distributed to instructors through Google Forms® because it's an easy and practical online tool that could provide access to more participants. After it was filled out by each participant (n=62), it was computed automatically. But the information gathered was coded in Microsoft Excel. Also, after having assessed the questions related to questionnaire data, it was found that there were no missing values. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 26 (Statistical Package for Social

Sciences). Different statistical measures were applied. In other words, frequencies were used to analyze scales. Percentages represented on frequency charts, graphs, and tables provided quantitative data as well as inferential statistics to test assumptions.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

Table 2
Normality tests

Computed Scale	Kolmogorov-Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Perceptions	.207	62	.000	.839	62	.000
Challenges	.083	62	.200*	.970	62	.140

As the table indicates, and to test the normality of the distribution, the researcher opted for the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality to test this assumption since the latter is used with small sample sizes. The researcher conducted the test on both perceptions and challenges. Concerning "Perceptions" and based on the results, the test statistic is 0.839 with 62 degrees of freedom, giving a p-value of 0.000, which shows a statistically significant deviation from normality. As for "challenges", the Shapiro-Wilk test statistic is 0.970, yielding a p-value of 0.140, which is below the traditional 0.05 threshold of significance. Given these findings, it is clear that the notion of normality has been violated. As a result, the researcher resorted to alternative statistical procedures that do not assume normality, like non-parametric tests or transformations, for further investigation and analysis.

5. RESULTS

RQ1: What are Moroccan EFL teachers' perceptions towards PBL?

Table 3
Perceptions

Statements	SA	A	UN	D	SD
1- PBL is a good way to improve students' attitudes towards the English subject.	28 45.2%	21 33.9%	5 8.1%	3 4.8%	5 8.1%
2- I believe that working in projects is a good way for students to learn English.	27 43.5%	27 43.5%	1 1.6%	3 4.8%	4 6.5%
3- Students show more desire to be involved in the English course when PBL is implemented.	18 29.0%	24 38.7%	11 17.7%	5 8.1%	4 6.5%
4-In comparison with mainstream activities (lessons and exams...), PBL activities gain more interests from the parts of students.	16 25.8%	31 60.0%	6 9.7%	4 6.5%	5 8.1%
5-In PBL sessions, students tend to participate, discuss their ideas, and ask more questions in comparison to mainstream activities.	14 22.6%	34 54.8%	4 6.5%	5 8.1%	5 8.1%
6-PBL effectively engages students in meaningful learning experiences.	22 35.5%	27 43.5%	4 6.5%	4 6.5%	5 8.1%
7- Project-based learning helps students develop real-world problem-solving skills	25 40.3%	21 33.9%	7 11.3%	4 6.5%	5 8.1%

These results point to an overall favorable opinion of project-based learning (PBL), which has been shown to

improve students' attitudes towards the study of English, enrich learning opportunities, and foster the development

of problem-solving abilities. For example, a significant 45.2% of respondents strongly agreed that project-based learning (PBL) is an effective technique to enhance students' attitudes towards the English topic, and 43.5% strongly agreed that students may learn English by working on projects. In addition, 40.3% of participants

said that project-based learning assisted students in acquiring practical problem-solving abilities. The results show a high degree of support and agreement for PBL's efficacy in English teaching, with most respondents (54.8% to 60.0%) strongly agreeing or agreeing with the different claims.

RQ2: What are Moroccan EFL teachers' encountered challenges while implementing PBL?

Table 4
Challenges

Statements	SA	A	UN	D	SD
1- I find that students face difficulties, such as lack of motivation, language barriers, or insufficient skills, when engaging in Project-based learning activities.	7 11.3%	25 40.3%	7 11.3%	21 33.9%	2 3.2%
2- According to me, teachers' workload and busy timetables don't allow the integration PBL activities.	15 24.2%	19 30.6%	12 19.4%	13 21.0%	8 12.9%
3-I believe that managing student groups and fostering collaboration poses challenges in Project-based learning.	9 14.5%	26 41.9%	6 9.7%	13 21.0%	8 12.9%
4-I perceive that limited professional development opportunities hinder effective implementation of Project-based learning.	11 17.7%	27 43.5%	7 11.3%	11 17.7%	6 9.7%
5- The administration doesn't provide logistical assistance (printing, posters, resources).	22 35.5%	18 29.0%	4 6.5%	14 22.6%	4 6.5%
6-Teachers who teach examination classes or have high stakes examination classes (National baccalaureate exam) do not or seldom integrate PBL.	20 32.3%	20 32.2%	11 17.7%	9 14.5%	2 3.2%
7-As a teacher, I find it difficult to assess PBL activities (give a score) to students.	7 11.3%	14 22.6%	14 22.9%	16 25.8%	11 17.7%
8-It's difficult to assign PBL activities to large size classes (time, preparation, mixed abilities).	15 24.2%	20 32.2%	6 9.7%	14 22.9%	7 11.3%
9-The topics of PBL are not appealing to students and aren't engaging enough.	6 9.7%	11 17.7%	13 21.0%	23 37.1%	9 14.5%
10- Some students don't have stable access to internet to check resources.	15 24.2%	24 38.7%	12 19.4%	9 14.5%	2 3.2%

Several significant implementation issues for project-based learning (PBL) are highlighted by the survey results. More than half (51.6%) of those surveyed concurred that students encounter challenges during PBL activities, such as low motivation, language limitations, or inadequate abilities. 54.8% of teachers identified their hectic schedules and excessive workloads as obstacles, while 56.4% said that encouraging collaboration and managing student groups provided difficulties. 64.5% of respondents cited a lack of administrative logistical assistance, such as printing and resources, while 61.2% identified limited professional development possibilities as obstacles. Sixty-four percent of high-stakes test teachers said they seldom ever used PBL. 33.9% of respondents said it was challenging to evaluate PBL activities and issue points, and 56.4% agreed that big class numbers make it difficult to manage time, prepare, and accommodate a range of ability levels. While the largest obstacle was students' lack of internet access (62.9%), even though 27.4% of respondents thought PBL themes were not interesting or engaging enough. These challenges must be resolved for PBL to be implemented successfully.

RQ3: Is there any statistically significant relationship between Moroccan EFL teachers' perceptions of Project-Based Learning and the challenges they face in its implementation?

Table 5
Correlations

		Perceptions	Challenges
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.354**
	Perceptions		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.005
	N	62	62
	Challenges		
	Correlation Coefficient	.354**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.
	N	62	62

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As outlined earlier, one concern of this study is to investigate the potential link between teachers' perceptions and challenges towards the implementation of PBL. For this aim, Spearman's rho correlation coefficient test was used to examine the relationship between Moroccan EFL teachers' perceptions of PBL and the challenges they encounter while implementing. The results (see Table 5) have revealed a positive moderate to substantial relationship between the variables. The correlation coefficient is .354, $p=.005$, which shows that as challenges faced by teachers increase, their perceptions tend to change correspondingly. The relationship is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), indicating strong evidence against the null hypothesis of no association between the variables.

Table 6
Quantile Regression

<i>Model Quality (q=0.5)^{a,b,c}</i>							
Pseudo R Squared						.055	
Mean Absolute Error (MAE)						3.7026	
a. Dependent Variable: Perceptions							
b. Model: (Intercept), Challenges							
c. Method: Simplex algorithm							
<i>Parameter Estimates (q=0.5)^{a,b}</i>							
Parameter	Coefficient	Std. Error	t	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Intercept)	10.063	1.8464	5.450	60	.000	6.369	13.756
Compute challenges	.188	.0652	2.876	60	.006	.057	.318
a. Dependent Variable: COMPUTE perceptions							
b. Model: (Intercept), COMPUTE challenges							

After having identified a statistically significant relationship between Moroccan EFL teachers' perceptions and challenges, taking into account that the data do not follow normal distribution, quantile regression was conducted to examine whether challenges predict perceptions. The pseudo-R-squared value of 0.055 indicates that the model explains 5.5% of the variation in the median perceptions score, according to the quantile regression analysis at the median (q = 0.5) for the model predicting perceptions from challenges. The average forecast error, according to the mean absolute error (MAE) of 3.7026, is around 3.70 units. The statistically significant intercept coefficient (t (60) = 5.450, p < .001) is 10.063 (SE = 1.8464). This means that the median of the perception score is 10.063 when the challenge score is zero. The challenges coefficient is 0.188 (SE = 0.0652), which is statistically significant (t (60) = 2.876, p = .006). This means that the median of the perception score rises by 0.188 units for every unit that the challenges score rises. The 95% confidence interval for this effect ranges from 0.057 to 0.318. These results suggest that as challenges increase, there is a modest but significant increase in perceptions.

6. DISCUSSION

RQ1: What are Moroccan EFL teachers' perceptions towards PBL?

The findings are consistent with earlier research. Previous studies have underscored several benefits of project-based learning (PBL) in language education. There is a widespread consensus among teachers that project-based learning contributes positively to learners' attitudes toward learning English a significant portion of

them strongly agree with this idea, which corroborates the conclusions of Fragoulis and Tsiplakides (2009), who stressed how PBL promotes a more exciting and stimulating learning environment. The findings go hand in hand with an earlier study by Susanti, Trisusana, and Retnaningdyah (2019), project-based learning produces excellent results in English education since the instructor may inspire students to acquire the language. It may be applied to improve the effectiveness and significance of teaching and learning English as a foreign language in EFL classrooms. Happy people have more desires and actions, and instructors' desires and actions in learning and teaching activities are influenced by their positive perceptions (Soemanto, 2006). It implies that when educators have a positive outlook, they would find it easy to apply the Project-Based Learning methodology as it makes their minds happy.

RQ2: What are Moroccan EFL teachers' encountered challenges while implementing PBL?

The survey's results, which are in line with those of previous studies, highlight major obstacles to project-based learning (PBL) implementation in Moroccan EFL classrooms. 51.6% of participants expressed concerns about things like low student engagement, language obstacles, and insufficient abilities, which aligns with Thomas' (2000) assessment that these things affect PBL effectiveness. The challenges that educators have in managing student collaboration (56.4%) and their hectic schedules and heavy workloads (54.8%) are comparable to those brought up by Hung et al. (2012) and Blumenfeld et al. (1991). The low levels of professional development opportunities (61.2%) and lack of support from school administration (64.5%) are consistent with Lam's (2011) focus on the need for institutional support. The most crucial initial step in project-based learning is to ask a basic inquiry. Students' attention will be diverted if teachers are not given an engaging lesson plan. According to Alves et al. (2016), teachers are overly focused on the course subject and think that students won't learn if they don't teach. Some teachers find it challenging to connect the course information with the project topic. Furthermore, teachers have a limited amount of time to complete all project-based learning processes in regular classes. As a result, occasionally, certain actions are not taken. This is consistent with the findings of a study by Cintang, Setiowati, and Handayani (2018), which indicated that instructors face numerous challenges, particularly with regard to time management. One of the main reasons teachers don't use project-based learning is time restrictions. According to the research findings, this is the main reason why project-based learning implementation has failed, according to all instructors.

RQ3: Is there any statistically significant relationship between Moroccan EFL teachers' perceptions of

Project-Based Learning and the challenges they face in its implementation?

The results are in line with earlier research that indicated that problems in implementing PBL, for example, lack of resources and inadequate training, may substantially affect teachers' attitudes toward PBL (Ravitz, 2010; Thomas, 2000). The results demonstrated a moderate positive correlation between Moroccan EFL teachers' perceptions of PBL and the challenges encountered during its implementation. The findings suggest that as instructors encounter more challenges in implementing PBL, their views towards it change and take a more significant role. This association underscores the daunting task of effective PBL implementation and how intricacies can cast a looming influence on teachers' perceptions. This corroborates studies positing that those higher barriers, when not complemented with adequate facilitative resources, might lead teachers to develop an adverse perception towards PBL and foster resistance. Conversely, surmounting these impediments through support from administration, personal development, and administrative facilitations could breed positive opinions and ease the adoption of PBL.

7. CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to investigate the implementation of PBL in Moroccan schools; more precisely, how Moroccan EFL teachers perceive and encounter challenges while implementing PBL. It was revealed that the teachers show a good understanding and awareness of the benefits PBL brings to their practices and the EFL class. However, the study has pointed out some hindrances impeding their practice of PBL. Participating in training programs that not only provide Problem-Based Learning (PBL) but also other cutting-edge, learner-centered language teaching strategies and methodologies is vital in this context. The study also found that participants had favorable opinions about PBL's benefits, suggesting that PBL was successful in promoting learner autonomy, motivation, engagement, and involvement. Nevertheless, PBL came with its share of difficulties. The study found that a lack of knowledge on how to direct English instruction within a project-based framework may make teachers reluctant to adopt PBL.

In light of the facts mentioned above, it is critical to discuss the practical implications for improving the use of Problem-Based Learning (PBL). Researching successful PBL integration techniques or participating in training programs is crucial for educators teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). Participating in training courses that emphasize the use of PBL will improve teachers' comprehension of the benefits of this approach to EFL teaching, which will result in improved student motivation, autonomy, engagement, teamwork, and inquiry. Incorporating project-based activities will

also help students improve their language proficiency, oral communication skills, and vocabulary growth.

8. LIMITATIONS

Like other academic endeavors, social science research is not without flaws and restrictions. The study's small participant count makes it difficult to extrapolate the results and generalize the findings. The data collection instrument was restricted to questionnaires. It would be robust if the researcher employed a mixed-methods research design to corroborate the findings. The results could differ if interviews had been included to cross-check the data elicited via questionnaires.

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