

TEACHERS' ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES FOR QUALITY TEACHING IN MOROCCAN UNIVERSITIES : AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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ABSTRACT:

The Moroccan higher education system plays a crucial role in socio-economic development by producing a workforce. Despite the progress achieved with the reforms of the LMD (Licence-Master-Doctorat) system and the introduction of quality assurance frameworks in this country, several challenges persist. Enhancing the quality of higher education now hinges on the development of university teachers' competencies, which are essential for effective education. This exploratory study, employing a quantitative methodology, seeks to identify the core competencies that university teachers in Morocco must acquire to deliver quality education. A questionnaire was distributed among current teachers and doctoral students (future educators) to gather pertinent data regarding these necessary competencies. The results highlight the need for Moroccan university teachers to adopt an integrated approach that combines pedagogical innovation, the use of digital technologies, interpersonal communication competencies, and active participation in academic research.

KEYWORDS: Higher education, Moroccan universities, University teachers' competencies, Quality education, Quantitative methodology, Competency development

INTRODUCTION:

The higher education system in Morocco, which includes public and private universities as well as specialized schools, plays a fundamental role in the socio-economic development of the country. Since the reforms initiated in the 2000s, particularly the introduction of the LMD system (Licence-Master-Doctorate) and the implementation of quality assurance models through accreditation systems, emphasis has been placed on improving the quality of and access to education. This system produces a qualified human capital, essential for meeting labor market needs, stimulating innovation and research, and contributing to the reduction of social inequalities. However, challenges remain, particularly regarding the alignment between education and employment, as well as equitable access to education, which requires ongoing efforts to maximize its impact on national development.

While the reforms have indeed led to notable advancements, the improvement of educational quality now rests on another key factor: the development of teachers' competencies. In fact, teachers' ability to adapt to new pedagogical demands, especially with the rise of educational technologies and learner-centered approaches, is crucial for raising the standard of higher education in Morocco. This shift in teaching highlights the need for greater teacher engagement, their commitment to the continuous improvement of their pedagogical practices, and the development of relevant competencies to face emerging educational challenges.

As Paquay (2004) points out, there is no universal model of "good teaching," as certain practices are more effective than others depending on the context and the teachers themselves. This underscores the difficulty of establishing universal standards for quality teaching, particularly in a context where the teaching profession is undergoing transformation. In the majority of Moroccan universities, there is no job description or detailed competency profile for teachers, aside from the collective agreement, which clearly defines evaluation criteria or directions for competency development.

The development of relevant competencies among teachers requires a holistic approach, relying on culturally adapted initiatives, relevant continuous training, and effective operational mechanisms. In this context, the question arises: what competencies must university teachers in Morocco acquire to be recognized as quality teachers?

This study proposes to examine the issue of evaluating the competencies of Moroccan university teachers through the following points : An overview of the higher education system in Morocco; The definition of the concept of

competence within a higher education system; The development of a theoretical framework on teacher competencies; The quantification of teacher competency perceptions among teachers and students; and an evaluation of the extent to which these competencies are currently developed and perceived as meeting the current needs of Moroccan higher education.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Overview of the Higher Education System in Morocco

The institutional structure of Morocco comprises two types of higher education institutions: public universities and private universities. These institutions form the pillar of the educational system. Spread across the entire national territory, they offer a wide range of programs in fields such as the humanities, natural sciences, economics, law, and engineering. Currently, there are 12 public universities in Morocco and around a hundred functional private higher education institutions authorized by the Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education, and Scientific Research. Since the reforms initiated in the 2000s, private higher education in Morocco has significantly expanded [1] [2].

As mentioned earlier, the Moroccan university system is organized according to the LMD model (Licence, Master, Doctorate), in alignment with the Bologna Process adopted by several European and African countries [3]. This model promotes student mobility and the international harmonization of degrees. The teaching faculty in Moroccan higher education is restricted to candidates holding a national Doctorate degree. It is divided into two categories: enseignants-chercheurs (teaching-research faculty) and professeurs agrégés (lecturers). The former engage in teaching, research, and supervision activities (such as end-of-study projects and fieldwork) and work full-time at their respective institutions, while the latter are only responsible for teaching duties.

Since the 2000s, higher education in Morocco has undergone several major reforms aimed at improving both its quality and accessibility. These include:

The « urgence » Program (2009-2012), which sought to renovate the higher education system by increasing capacity, improving infrastructure, and reforming curricula. One of the major objectives of this program was to enhance competencies to ensure better quality of teachers and administrative staff through continuous training both in Morocco and abroad.

The Strategic Vision (2015-2030): This long-term plan focuses on modernizing universities, improving the quality of education, promoting scientific research, and aligning programs with labor market needs. One of the aims of this reform is to provide appropriate and coherent training that allows teachers to harmonize the accumulation of knowledge with the development of competencies and capacities.

The Framework Law 51-17 (adopted in 2019), which comprehensively reforms the Moroccan educational system, including higher education, with the ambition of improving governance, the quality of teaching, and equity.

Scientific research in Morocco is primarily concentrated in public universities and research institutes. The country aspires to strengthen its international standing in research but still faces several challenges, such as insufficient funding, lack of international cooperation, and a low rate of scientific publications in top-tier journals. Initiatives like the National Plan for the Development of Scientific Research and Innovation (PNDRSI) have been implemented to address these shortcomings.

In Moroccan universities, disciplinary expertise is the primary criterion for recruiting faculty, and research is valued more highly than teaching. There is no requirement for university professors to undergo pedagogical training, and it is generally assumed that a good researcher is automatically a good teacher, leading to an "on-the-job" learning approach to teaching. However, in some countries, pedagogical training is mandatory, while in others, it remains at the discretion of the institutions or the individual teachers.

University teaching is increasingly evolving toward more diverse and active practices, centered on the learner, in contrast to the traditional content-focused approach [4]. Therefore, it is essential for Moroccan teachers to develop their competencies to meet the new demands of their mission.

The Concept of competence in a Higher education system

In general, the management of "human capital" has gained increasing importance, making competence a central lever to respond to socio-economic transformations, which are evolving at an increasingly rapid pace and are often seen as difficult to predict. The education and teaching sector has not escaped these changes. The concept of competence has become a key element in defining pedagogical objectives and designing curricula, while also serving as a basis for reflecting on student assessment practices.

In the literature, definitions and conceptions of competence are diverse. Some view it as an innate disposition, a set of talents that can be revealed through experience [5]. Others revolve around the triad of "knowledge, know-how, and interpersonal competencies." This perspective relies on the mobilization of various resources. Developing competencies thus requires the acquisition of transferable and generic knowledge, which enables the relevant and judicious selection of appropriate knowledge for a given context or situation [6].

In the same context, Louis Hainaut (1988) defines competence as a set of knowledge, know-how, and interpersonal competencies that allows an individual to perform an activity appropriately. The activity can be broken down into actions performed without conscious control (competencies), behaviors based on rules (rules), and behaviors based on the use of knowledge to handle unusual situations (knowledge), as proposed by Rasmussen in 1986.

✓ **Competence: A knowing how to act**

Linda Allal (1999) and François Lashnier (2000) conceive competence as a complex know-how that relies on the integration and mobilization of various capacities and competencies (cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and social), as well as knowledge, used effectively in situations with common characteristics. Jonnaert, Barrette, & Masciotra (2005) emphasize the coordinated and relevant implementation of resources to address a given situation. Tardif (2006) defines competence as complex know-how, based on the mobilization and combination of various internal and external resources in a family of situations. Develay (2015) describes it as reflective know-how, allowing an individual to assess the relevance of their actions by drawing on their knowledge and experience. Competence does not contradict acquired knowledge; rather, it corresponds to the organization of that knowledge into an operational and functional system, enabling its effective mobilization to solve concrete problems [7]. When a person knows how to act appropriately by drawing on both personal resources and those available in information or expertise networks, we call that person competent [8].

Thus, according to various definitions, competence represents an individual's ability to act effectively and thoughtfully in varied situations by using cognitive, affective, social, and psychomotor capacities, while relying on their knowledge and experience to adapt their actions to specific contexts. Competence manifests through the ability to mobilize and combine knowledge, competencies, and interpersonal competencies to accomplish tasks or activities, particularly with professional goals.

According to educational science researchers, competencies are stable sets of knowledge and skills, typical behaviors, standard procedures, and types of reasoning that can be implemented without new learning [9]. Gillet (1991) defines competence as a set of conceptual and procedural knowledge, organized into operational schemas, that allows effective problem-solving in similar contexts. This definition relies on three recurring elements in educational sciences literature: competence encompasses a set of interconnected knowledge; it is applied to a set of similar situations; and it is oriented toward a specific goal.

Similarly, the Department of non-formal education in Morocco (2010) emphasizes that competence is based on the mobilization of knowledge to solve a family of problem situations. This approach highlights the multidimensional nature of the concept of "competence," even in the context of higher education. Although it is the subject of numerous discussions in scientific works, there is some consensus on its definition.

The following table helps clarify the nuances between "knowledge" and "competence," in order to show that knowledge is essentially theoretical, while competence focuses on the practical application of knowledge in various contexts.

Table 1. Knowledge and competencies in the context of learning

	Knowledge	Competence
Definition	Set of theoretical, conceptual, or factual knowledge.	Ability to mobilize knowledge to handle complex situations.
Nature	Purely intellectual and theoretical.	Practical and operational.
Objective	Acquire information, concepts, or facts.	Effectively apply knowledge to accomplish a task.
Application	Can remain theoretical without being used in a specific context.	Is always applied in concrete and specific situations.
Constituent Element	Comprises facts, concepts, rules, and principles.	Comprises knowledge, know-how (practical competencies), and know-how-to-act (attitudes).
Purpose	To learn and understand a notion or concept.	To solve problems or accomplish tasks in varied contexts.
Transferability	Can be limited to a specific domain.	Is often transferable to several similar situations.
Evaluation	Measures the amount of knowledge acquired.	Measures the ability to effectively use knowledge in real contexts.

Source: Authors

In the context of higher education, competence is not limited to the mere accumulation of disciplinary knowledge, but encompasses the ability to use this knowledge in a practical manner. This includes: knowledge, know-how, interpersonal competencies, and the ability to evolve.

- Knowledge: what the teachers need to master at the area of their expertise.
- Know-how: The technical and methodological competencies necessary for teaching, evaluating, and interacting with students.
- Interpersonal competencies: The professional attitudes and behaviors that facilitate student engagement and motivation, as well as collaboration with colleagues and administration. This includes social and emotional competencies.
- Ability to evolve: The capacity to adapt to technological, pedagogical, and disciplinary changes in a continuous learning approach. Educators must be able to engage in ongoing training throughout their careers to meet the new challenges of higher education.

University educators must develop a set of competencies that address both the demands of the educational system and the global challenges related to pedagogy, research, and innovation. These competencies are aligned with the objectives of human resource development, educational system reforms, and digital transformations in higher education. These competencies can be categorized into several groups, as shown in Table 2.

From the literature, we have compiled a set of competencies that seem relevant for teachers in their mission and to meet the growing demands of higher education, particularly in pedagogy, technological proficiency, scientific research, as well as management and commitment to the continuous improvement of educational practices.

For example, the concept of pedagogical content knowledge [4], which emphasizes that teachers must not only master their discipline but also know how to teach it appropriately. Also, the concept of digital competencies, developed by Gilster (1997) and expanded by frameworks like DigComp, the "European framework of digital competencies for educators," and authors such as Jeannine Gerbault (2012), highlights the importance of mastering technologies for effective pedagogy. The competency model proposed by Tardif (2006) classifies competencies into three main categories: professional, methodological, and social. His work on methodological and adaptability competencies assesses teachers' ability to structure their courses and adjust to changing contexts. Theories on professional and personal development underscore the importance of continuous updating of teachers' competencies in response to new requirements. This is reflected in ongoing training and adaptability to changes, which aim to evaluate the extent to which teachers can adapt to new technologies and institutional reforms.

Table 2. The competencies of university teachers:

	Types	Auteurs	Description
Pedagogical Competencies	Knowledge of pedagogical content Teaching methods	Shulman, 1987 [4] An, Kulm, & Wu, 2004 [10] Loewenberg, Thames, & Phelps, 2008 [11] Bireaud, 1990 [12]	Teachers must combine disciplinary mastery and pedagogical strategies to effectively convey knowledge.
	Assessment of learning	Black & Wiliam, 1998 [13] Michaud & Roy, 2022 [14] Rouli, Berthiaume, & Allin-Pfister, 2017 [15]	Improve teaching by collecting and using student feedback to adjust pedagogical practices.
Disciplinary Competencies	Mastery of disciplines	Boyer, 1990 [16] Jonghe, 2005 [17]	Maintain up-to-date expertise in their discipline and develop research competencies.
Management and Organizational Competencies	Management of the learning environment	Tardif, 2006 [18] Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 2019 [19]	Classroom management and the ability to adapt teaching to various contexts are essential competencies.
Relational and Communication Competencies	Supervision and mentoring	Cox & Richlin, 2004 [20] Gardès, 2018 [21]	Teachers must also act as mentors.
Personal and Professional Development Competencies	Critical reflection and continuous improvement	European Commission, 2013 [22] Schön, 1992 [23]	Analyze and improve their pedagogical practices.
Digital Competencies	Mastery of digital tools	Trilling & Fadel, 2009 [24]	

Source: Authors

This theoretical foundation underlines that teachers in the higher education must develop a wide range of competencies to be effective in their roles. These include pedagogical, disciplinary, organizational and communicational competencies, all of which are essential to meet the growing demands of this sector.

METHODS AND METHODOLOGY:

The evaluation of teachers' competencies is a crucial process that helps to meet the demands of higher education [25]. By assessing teachers' abilities to effectively apply their competencies in complex teaching situations, it becomes possible to pinpoint areas where additional training or professional development is required. This identification of main competencies is even more important in the current context of transformation in higher education in Morocco, where expectations and requirements are rapidly evolving. Thus, the evaluation goes

beyond merely measuring teachers' current performance; it also serves as a foundation for guiding professional development strategies and ensuring that teachers acquire the competencies needed to be recognized as professionals.

This issue lies at the heart of the ongoing changes in Morocco's higher education sector, marked by increased academic, pedagogical, and technological demands. It is not only a concern for teachers but also for students, as they are the primary beneficiaries of teaching practices. The quality of education thus depends on the ability of teachers to meet the growing expectations of students and academic institutions, all of whom are influenced by these transformations.

We developed a questionnaire aimed at capturing a holistic and systemic view of the competencies considered essential for being recognized as a quality teacher in Moroccan universities. This questionnaire was designed to gather the perceptions of two main actors in education, teachers and students. It seeks to explore the competencies currently deemed essential, as well as those that may prove crucial in addressing the future challenges of the Moroccan university system.

✓ **Population and data collection:**

The study population will be drawn from 12 (twelve) Moroccan universities, representing different regions and types of institutions: Mohamed V University (Rabat), Hassan II University (Casablanca), Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University (Fes), Mohammed First University (Oujda), Cadi Ayyad University (Marrakech), Moulay Smail University (Meknes), Abdelmalek Essaadi University (Tetouan), Chouaib Doukkali University (El Jadida), Ibn Tofail University (Kenitra), Ibn Zohr University (Agadir), Hassan First University (Settat), Sultan Moulay Slimane University (Beni Mellal). This selection allows for a broad range of institutions and teaching conditions to be covered.

Regarding the study population for this research, participants were selected electronically. We compiled a database of email addresses (more than 500 email addresses) of university teachers and PhD-students from Moroccan universities, collected from the official websites of each institution. This method ensured the reliability and validity of contacts by relying on institutional sources.

Additionally, the population includes doctoral students, who are considered future teachers. This approach aims to ensure balanced representation of the different stakeholders involved in the issue of teacher competencies within the context of Moroccan higher education. By focusing on doctoral students, we can gather valuable insights into the expectations and requirements these students—future teachers—anticipate, as well as their views on the competencies they need to acquire for success in their academic careers. Their inclusion is essential to understand both their expectations as students and to assess the competencies they consider important for their future professional lives.

Thus, the defined population includes: university teachers, whether permanent or contractual, from various disciplines and faculties, allowing for a diversity of perspectives on the competencies needed for quality teaching; and doctoral students enrolled in programs at various Moroccan universities, representing the next generation of teachers.

Our research will adhere to ethical principles, ensuring participants' confidentiality and their right to anonymity. Informed consent will be obtained prior to participation in the questionnaire, ensuring that respondents understand the study's objectives and how their data will be used.

✓ **Data and specifications:**

The questionnaire developed for this research aims to assess the competencies of teachers within the context of higher education in Morocco, with a focus on how well these competencies align with the evolving needs of the sector. It begins by identifying the university to which the participants belong, allowing for the definition of the level of engagement of Moroccan universities and their interest in this subject. The questions are structured to gather both quantitative and qualitative data, taking into account the perspectives of both teachers and students.

Participants are first invited to express their opinions on the relevance of the current competencies of teachers, followed by an assessment of the specific competencies they deem necessary, such as pedagogical, relational, and digital competencies. Agreement scales and evaluations on a scale of 1 to 5 are used to measure the perceived importance of these competencies, as well as the effectiveness of institutional support in their development. The questionnaire concludes with an open-ended question allowing participants to identify, as they think, the main competence to be acquired, thereby enriching the data collected with qualitative insights.

This methodological approach aims to provide a thorough and informed analysis of the gaps and training needs of teachers, thus contributing to a better understanding of the challenges faced by higher education in Morocco.

The structure of the questions was designed with simple and precise wording to avoid any misunderstanding on the part of the participants. We used a variety of formats (multiple choice, checkboxes, and an open-ended question) while maintaining neutrality, free of any assumptions.

✓ **Tests and Hypotheses:**

The main hypothesis of this study explores the following question: "What competencies must teachers in Moroccan universities acquire to be recognized as quality teachers?" This hypothesis posits that the recognition of a teacher's quality is not purely contingent upon their academic knowledge; rather, it is contingent upon a comprehensive set of essential competencies that significantly enhance teaching effectiveness. These

competencies may include pedagogical competencies, technological proficiency, interpersonal abilities, and a commitment to professional development.

To ensure the validity and reliability of our research findings, we will use SPSS AMOS to conduct a Descriptive Statistical test, specifically focusing on frequency analysis, based on the collected data. This test serves a crucial purpose: it aims to summarize the general trends and profiles of participants, providing insights into the competencies perceived as important by both teachers and PhD-students.

By analyzing the frequency of responses, we will be able to identify commonalities and divergences in perceptions regarding essential competencies for quality teaching. This statistical approach will facilitate a nuanced understanding of the competencies deemed critical within the context of higher education in Morocco, thereby guiding the development of targeted training programs and professional development initiatives. Furthermore, the results will help to highlight potential gaps in current teacher training practices and inform policy recommendations aimed at enhancing the overall quality of education in Moroccan universities.

RESULTS:

Unfortunately, we did not receive responses from all the questioned universities, which may be due to several factors, including the possibility that some university actors (Teachers and PhD- students) did not receive the email, or that others did not express interest in the questionnaire.

Despite this, 106 participants answered the questionnaire and helped us to gather valuable insights into the current state and perceived needs regarding teacher competencies in Moroccan universities.

Table 3: Distribution of Participants by University

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	University Ibn Tofail – Kénitra	2	1,9	1,9	1,9
	University Ibn Zohr - Agadir	1	,9	,9	2,8
	University Mohamed V - Rabat	9	8,5	8,5	11,3
	University Mohammed Premier - Oujda	13	12,3	12,3	23,6
	University Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah - Fès	2	1,9	1,9	25,5
	University Sultan Moulay Slimane – Béni Mellal	76	71,7	71,7	97,2
	University Ibn Tofail – Kénitra	3	2,8	2,8	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

The majority of interactions come from Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah - fez (71.7%), followed by Mohamed V University - Rabat (12.3%). The other universities are less represented, with frequencies ranging from 0.9% to 8.5%. This may indicate an overrepresentation of Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University in the sample.

Table 4: Distribution of Participants by their statut

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Phd students	75	70,8	71,4	71,4
	Teachers	30	28,3	28,6	100,0
	Total	105	99,1	100,0	
Missing		1	,9		
Total		106	100,0		

The majority of participants are doctoral students (71.4%), with a minority of teachers (28.6%). There is one missing respondent in this category.

Table 5: Perception of participants regarding the relevance of current teachers' competencies in relation to the needs of the higher education sector in Morocco.

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	No	72	67,9	67,9	67,9
	Yes	34	32,1	32,1	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

The Table 3 and the Table 4, reflect the results of general and descriptive information introduced to describe our sample. The Table 5, on the other hand, is more specific as it focuses on the key variable of our study: "the competencies of teachers in Moroccan universities." It explores the respondents' opinions on a central topic of our survey: the adequacy of teachers' competencies in relation to the changing needs of the sector.

We observe that a significant majority, 67.9% of responses, indicate that the current competencies of teachers do not meet the changing needs of the higher education sector in Morocco. However, 32.1% of responses believe that teachers' competencies are aligned with these needs. This percentage, while minority, remains notable,

suggesting that some teachers or PhD-students perceive efforts or initiatives aimed at aligning teachers' competencies with current requirements.

The results indicate that an improvement in the competencies of higher education teachers in Morocco seems necessary. The majority negative perception highlights a need for increased investment in competence development. Therefore, it seemed useful to explore the specific expectations of the respondents further to understand which competencies (pedagogical, digital, relational, etc.) must necessarily be developed.

→ **What competencies should be developed the most?**

Table 6: Pedagogical competencies

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	No	26	24,5	25,2	25,2
	Yes	77	72,6	74,8	100,0
	Total	103	97,2	100,0	
Missing	System	3	2,8		
Total		106	100,0		

Table 7: Disciplinary competencies

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	No	70	66,0	68,0	68,0
	Yes	33	31,1	32,0	100,0
	Total	103	97,2	100,0	
Missing	System	3	2,8		
Total			100,0		

Table 8: Interpersonal and communication competencies

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	No	50	47,2	48,5	48,5
	Yes	53	50,0	51,5	100,0
	Total	103	97,2	100,0	
Missing	System	3	2,8		
Total			100,0		

Table 9: Personal and professional development competencies

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	No	56	52,8	54,4	54,4
	Yes	47	44,3	45,6	100,0
	Total	103	97,2	100,0	
Missing	System	3	2,8		
Total			100,0		

Table 10: Digital competencies

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	No	19	17,9	18,4	18,4
	Yes	84	79,2	81,6	100,0
	Total	103	97,2	100,0	
Missing	System	3	2,8		
Total			100,0		

The findings presented in Table 6, Table 7, Table 8, Table 9, and Table 10 indicate that the most prioritized competencies for the development of teachers in Moroccan universities are pedagogical competencies (74.8%) and digital competencies (81.6%). These results highlight the need for teachers to enhance their teaching methods and integrate technology more effectively into their practices. In contrast, disciplinary competencies (32%) and management and organizational competencies (30.1%) are regarded as less critical, implying that teachers are already perceived to possess sufficient expertise in their subject areas and are adequately organized in their work. Furthermore, 51.5% believe that interpersonal and communication competencies are important to enhance, highlighting the essential role of communication in the quality of education. Finally, competencies in personal and professional development receive mixed opinions, with 45.6% of participants favoring their development, indicating that the continuous improvement of teachers.

→ **What pedagogical competencies define a quality teacher?**

Table 11: Integration of technologies

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Not at all agree	3	2,8	2,8	2,8
	Rather disagree	4	3,8	3,8	6,6
	Neutral	10	9,4	9,4	16,0
	Rather agree	23	21,7	21,7	37,7
	Totally agree	66	62,3	62,3	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

Table 12: Preparation of structured courses tailored to the needs of students

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Not at all agree	5	4,7	4,7	4,7
	Rather disagree	5	4,7	4,7	9,4
	Neutral	11	10,4	10,4	19,8
	Rather agree	20	18,9	18,9	38,7
	Totally agree	65	61,3	61,3	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

Table 13: Fostering a positive and inclusive classroom environment

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Not at all agree	2	1,9	1,9	1,9
	Rather disagree	7	6,6	6,6	8,5
	Neutral	11	10,4	10,4	18,9
	Rather agree	26	24,5	24,5	43,4
	Totally agree	60	56,6	56,6	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

Table 14: Effectively managing classroom dynamics

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Not at all agree	4	3,8	3,8	3,8
	Rather disagree	6	5,7	5,7	9,4
	Neutral	13	12,3	12,3	21,7
	Rather agree	30	28,3	28,3	50,0
	Totally agree	53	50,0	50,0	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

Table 15: Use of varied and engaging teaching methods

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Not at all agree	3	2,8	2,8	2,8
	Rather disagree	6	5,7	5,7	8,5
	Neutral	7	6,6	6,6	15,1
	Rather agree	21	19,8	19,8	34,9
	Totally agree	69	65,1	65,1	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

Table 16: Clearly define and communicate the learning objectives

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Not at all agree	5	4,7	4,7	4,7
	Rather disagree	3	2,8	2,8	7,5
	Neutral	12	11,3	11,3	18,9
	Rather agree	25	23,6	23,6	42,5
	Totally agree	61	57,5	57,5	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

The results presented in Table 11, Table 12, Table 13, Table 14, Table 15, and Table 16 highlight several pedagogical competencies deemed essential for quality teaching in Moroccan universities. The preparation of well-structured courses tailored to students' needs is considered particularly important, with 61.3% of participants expressing strong agreement "totally agree" and 18.9% somewhat agreeing "rather agree", underscoring the importance of organization and pedagogical relevance. Furthermore, creating a positive and inclusive classroom

climate is also seen as vital, with 56.6% of respondents strongly agreeing and 24.5% somewhat agreeing, reflecting the significance of the learning environment.

Regarding effective classroom dynamics management, 50% of participants "Totally agree" and 28.3% "rather agree" showing that mastering classroom interaction is also a key competency. The use of varied and engaging teaching methods is highly valued, with 65.1% "Totally agree" and 19.8% "rather agree" suggesting a strong expectation for active student engagement through diverse approaches.

Furthermore, the integration of educational technologies into teaching is perceived as essential, with 62.3% of respondents "Totally agree" and 21.7% "rather agree" underscoring the importance of mastering digital tools to enhance teaching. Clearly defining and communicating learning objectives are deemed necessary by 57.5% of participants who "Totally agree" and 23.6% "rather agree" emphasizing the significance of pedagogical clarity in the teaching process.

These results reflect a broad consensus on these pedagogical competencies, illustrating the expectations for quality teaching in a university context.

→ **What R&D competencies are necessary to be considered a quality teacher?**

Table 17: Participation in conferences and research projects

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Not at all agree	6	5,7	5,7	5,7
	Rather disagree	4	3,8	3,8	9,4
	Neutral	11	10,4	10,4	19,8
	Rather agree	32	30,2	30,2	50,0
	Totally agree	53	50,0	50,0	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

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Table 18: Collaboration with other teachers and researchers

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Not at all agree	4	3,8	3,8	3,8
	Rather disagree	5	4,7	4,7	8,5
	Neutral	10	9,4	9,4	17,9
	Rather agree	32	30,2	30,2	48,1
	Totally agree	55	51,9	51,9	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

Table 19: Supervising students in their research projects

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Not at all agree	2	1,9	1,9	1,9
	Rather disagree	2	1,9	1,9	3,8
	Neutral	7	6,6	6,6	10,4
	Rather agree	21	19,8	19,8	30,2
	Totally agree	74	69,8	69,8	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

The Table 17, Table 18 and Table 19 highlight the importance of active participation in research to ensure quality teaching and to stay updated in one's field of specialization. Also, collaboration with other researchers and educators is essential, emphasizing the significance of networks and the exchange of ideas to enrich academic and pedagogical practices. Supervising students in their research projects is considered even more crucial, with a significant majority of 69.8% of respondents being "totally agree" and 19.8% "rather agree." This reflects that supervision in research activities is indispensable for educators, as it enables them to guide students and contribute to academic excellence through the development of university research.

→ **The Importance of Digital Competencies in Moroccan Universities**

Table 20: The Importance of Digital Competencies

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Not at all agree	5	4,7	4,7	4,7
	Rather disagree	7	6,6	6,6	11,3
	Neutral	20	18,9	18,9	30,2
	Rather agree	30	28,3	28,3	58,5
	Totally agree	44	41,5	41,5	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

Table 21: Does Moroccan university sufficiently supports the development of technological competencies?

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Not at all agree	13	12,3	12,5	12,5
	Rather disagree	16	15,1	15,4	27,9
	Neutral	35	33,0	33,7	61,5
	Rather agree	28	26,4	26,9	88,5
	Totally agree	12	11,3	11,5	100,0
	Total	104	98,1	100,0	
Missing	System	2	1,9		
Total		106	100,0		

The Table 20 and Table 21 reveal that 41.5% of respondents "totally agree" and 28.3% "agree" on the importance of these competencies for teachers in Moroccan universities, indicating a strong recognition of their significance. However, a notable group, accounting for 18.9%, remains "neutral," indicating hesitation or uncertainty regarding the role of digital competencies in their professional practice. In contrast, only 11.3% of participants express a negative opinion.

Regarding institutional support for the development of technological competencies, responses reveal a degree of dissatisfaction. While 26.9% of respondents "agree" and 11.5% "Totally agree" that their institutions provide adequate support, a total of 27.9% do not share this view ("rather disagree" or "Not at all agree"). Additionally, 33.7% of respondents adopt a "neutral" position, which may reflect a lack of clarity or visible commitment from institutions in this area. These results suggest that, although the importance of digital competencies is widely recognized, there are unmet expectations concerning institutional support for their development.

→ **The importance of interpersonal and communication competencies for teachers in Moroccan universities.**

Table 22: Evaluate the importance of interpersonal and communication competencies in being a quality teacher.

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Not at all agree	9	8,5	8,5	8,5
	Rather disagree	3	2,8	2,8	11,3
	Neutral	11	10,4	10,4	21,7
	Rather agree	25	23,6	23,6	45,3
	Totally agree	58	54,7	54,7	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

Table 23: To what extent do you believe these competencies are considered in the teacher training programs at your university?

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Considered	31	29,2	29,2	29,2
	Neutral	20	18,9	18,9	48,1
	Not Considered	55	51,9	51,9	100,0
	Total	106	100,0	100,0	

The analysis of the results in Table 22 and Table 23 regarding the importance of interpersonal and communication competencies reveals a predominantly positive perception among respondents. Over half of the participants (54.7%) fully agree that these competencies are essential for higher education teachers, while 23.6% somewhat agree, reflecting a broad consensus on their significance. The very low percentages of respondents who "do not agree at all" (8.5%) or "rather disagree" (2.8%) further support this view, indicating that few participants question the necessity of these competencies.

However, when it comes to the integration of these competencies into teacher training programs in Morocco, the results reveal a significant concern. More than half of the responses (51.9%) believe that interpersonal and communication competencies are not sufficiently incorporated into training programs, while only 29.2% assert that they are considered. The percentage of neutral responses (18.9%) indicates a lack of clarity regarding how these competencies are addressed.

These findings underscore the need to improve the training programs for higher education teachers in Morocco to better prepare them to develop these crucial competencies that foster a positive and collaborative learning environment.

→ **Main competency that a higher education teacher must acquire**

To encourage deep and varied reflections on the essential competencies of teachers in Moroccan universities, we included an open-ended question aimed at identifying the "main competency that a higher education teacher must acquire." After analyzing the responses, here is a summary grouping all participants' contributions, highlighting several essential dimensions.

✓ Pedagogy and Teaching Methods

Pedagogy emerges as central theme in teacher training, suggesting that the ability to convey knowledge in an accessible and engaging manner is crucial. Several respondents emphasize the importance of adopting diverse and interactive teaching methods, indicating a desire to move beyond traditional formats such as lectures. This reflects a growing awareness that today's students are no longer satisfied with conventional teaching; instead, they aspire for active participation and autonomous learning. Responses also highlight the need to adapt teaching methods to the specific needs of students, underscoring the necessity for educators to be flexible and responsive to the diversity of profiles and expectations.

✓ Technological Competencies

Proficiency in digital technologies is another prominent point, revealing a clear expectation for teachers to integrate these tools into their pedagogical practices. This integration extends beyond mere usage of digital tools; it encompasses the design of learning strategies that leverage these technologies to facilitate student understanding and engagement. The importance placed on this competency also signifies a need to prepare students to navigate an increasingly digital world, thereby enhancing their employability.

✓ Interpersonal Communication

Communication competencies are unanimously recognized as essential for establishing a trusting relationship with students. Effective communication involves not only the transmission of information but also active listening, empathy, and the ability to foster constructive dialogue. This also entails creating a learning environment where students feel valued and encouraged to express their ideas and concerns. Thus, teachers are called to play a facilitative role, contributing to a positive climate that promotes learning.

✓ Engagement in Research

Scientific research is perceived not only as a competency to be developed but also as a means of enriching pedagogical practice. Participation in research allows teachers to stay updated on the latest advancements in their field and integrate these insights into their teaching. This engagement underscores the importance of ongoing training and knowledge updates, which are essential for maintaining academic relevance in a constantly evolving educational landscape.

✓ Versatility and Adaptability

The versatility of teachers, as mentioned by many respondents, suggests that competencies should not be confined to a single discipline or approach. Adaptability in the face of changing contexts—whether technological, academic, or social—is essential. Educators must be capable of navigating various methods, adjusting their practices, and innovating to meet the current challenges of higher education.

✓ Ethical Values and Commitment

Another aspect emerging from the responses is the necessity of training that incorporates ethical values, such as honesty, respect, and responsibility. These values are essential for establishing a healthy and productive relationship between teachers and students, contributing to a learning environment where academic values are upheld. Teachers are perceived not only as conveyors of knowledge but also as role models of ethical and professional behavior.

CONCLUSION

This research on the essential competencies of higher education teachers in Morocco reveals the need to adopt an integrated approach that combines innovative pedagogy, interpersonal competencies, integration of technologies, and engagement in research. The development of these competencies is crucial to prepare teachers to meet contemporary challenges and to ensure quality education capable of addressing the diverse needs of students and the demands of the job market. This reflection should guide training and professional development policies, aiming to create a conducive environment for the growth of teachers and the success of students.;

The essential competencies that a Moroccan higher education professor must acquire include a solid mastery of the subject matter, the integration of new technologies into teaching, as well as pedagogical and relational competencies. Communication with students, the simplification and structuring of courses, and the ability to foster autonomous and critical learning are also paramount. It is important to adapt teaching methodologies according to students' needs while adopting a participative approach to training. Openness to international perspectives, collaboration, scientific research, as well as versatility and interdisciplinary are also key elements.

A good teacher must continuously update their knowledge, develop ethical and linguistic competencies, while remaining aware, responsible, and engaged in achieving the academic objectives of their students. Continuous supervision and respect for students' academic needs complete this set of essential competencies.

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