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EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION IN TEACHING MAPEH – BASIC VOLLEYBALL SERVES

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Abstract

Explicit Instruction is a systematic teaching strategy that emphasizes modeling, step-by-step instruction, and guided practice. This study investigated the effectiveness of Explicit Instruction in teaching basic volleyball serves in MAPEH among Grade 8 students of Naga National High School, City of Naga, Cebu, Philippines. The research employed a mixed-methods design and sampled 70 students selected through purposive sampling. A validated performance rubric was used to assess students' pre-test and post-test performance in five skills: underhand, overhand, float, topspin, and jump serves. A semi-structured questionnaire was also administered to gather students' learning experiences after the intervention. Pre-test results showed students' initial performance ranging from below-average to average levels across all serving skills, while post-test results improved significantly, with most students attaining above-average to exemplary levels. Paired-sample t-test results for all five skills revealed a significant difference between pre-test and post-test performance ($p < .001$), confirming the effectiveness of Explicit Instruction in developing serving skills. Thematic analysis of students' responses yielded six major themes: skill development and performance improvement, guided and step-by-step learning process, increased engagement and active participation, enhanced motivation and confidence, a supportive learning environment, and a positive perception of Explicit Instruction relative to other methods. Students consistently associated clear demonstration, guided practice, and consistent feedback with improved confidence and skill mastery. The study concludes that Explicit Instruction is a high-impact teaching strategy that significantly improves students' performance in the five basic volleyball serves, and its findings were used to design a structured lesson guide for MAPEH teachers. Further research is recommended to explore its application to other MAPEH skills and across grade levels.

Keywords: *explicit instruction, MAPEH, mixed-methods design, skill acquisition, volleyball serves*

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Introduction

Physical Education is one of the four components of MAPEH, alongside Music, Arts, and Health, and volleyball is among its central content areas. Volleyball is a fast-paced, team-oriented sport that integrates physical conditioning, technique, and tactical reasoning, and it demands technical, mental, and tactical skill in addition to physical fitness (Sattler et al., 2015; Shieh et al., 2023). As the sport has evolved toward faster sets, more powerful serves, and more sophisticated defensive coordination (Garcia et al., 2023, as cited in Silva, 2025), acquiring the necessary skills has become increasingly challenging for students with limited access to structured training.

Ensuring Filipino learners' access to quality basic volleyball instruction is grounded in policy. Article XIV, Section 19 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution directs the State to promote physical education and sports programs to foster self-discipline and an alert citizenry (Tagare & Villaluz, 2021, as cited in Velez, 2023), and this mandate is reinforced by Executive Order No. 64 (1993), which adopted the national "Sports for All" policy and directed schools to make physical fitness and sports accessible to every student regardless of age, gender, or skill level. Within this policy context, teachers and researchers are expected to formulate strategies that effectively build foundational sport skills (Ennis, 2015), motivating continued research into how Filipino learners acquire and master basic volleyball skills.

In many Philippine classrooms, students have difficulty performing basic volleyball skills — serving, passing, setting, spiking, digging, and blocking — under traditional instructional approaches that offer only brief demonstrations, minimal step-by-step guidance, and insufficient corrective feedback. These conditions have been associated with inconsistent technique, limited mastery, low confidence, and stalled progression among learners. Explicit Instruction offers a systematic alternative: teachers state the learning objective and criteria, activate students' prior knowledge, and provide clear expectations for what students are to learn and demonstrate, an approach with documented efficacy for motor-skill acquisition and physical education outcomes (Johnson et al., 2017; Velez, 2023). This gap between the limitations of traditional methods and the documented potential of Explicit Instruction motivated the present study, which investigated the effectiveness of Explicit Instruction as a teaching strategy for MAPEH – Basic Volleyball Serves among Grade 8 learners.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on three complementary theories of skill development. DeKeyser's (2007) Skill Acquisition Theory holds that learning a motor skill such as the volleyball serve progresses from declarative knowledge (knowing the mechanics of the serve) to procedural knowledge (executing the serve automatically) through structured practice and feedback; Explicit Instruction supplies the sequenced demonstrations, explanations, and guided drills through which this progression occurs. Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory emphasizes that learning occurs within a social context through observation, imitation, and modeling — in this study, students observed the teacher's demonstration, mentally processed the movement pattern, and then attempted to reproduce it, a process that Gorgulu and Gokcek (2021) link to increased self-efficacy when paired with supportive feedback. Sweller's (1994) Cognitive Load Theory holds that learning is more effective when extraneous information is minimized. Because the volleyball serve is a complex skill for beginners, Explicit Instruction reduces cognitive load by breaking the skill into manageable steps and presenting information clearly, allowing learners to focus their limited working memory on the essential serving mechanics (Sweller et al., 2019). Together, these theories frame Explicit Instruction as a strategy that moves learners from initial exposure to automatized, confident performance of the basic volleyball serves.

Consistent with Cognitive Load Theory, novice players are working-memory-bound, so step-by-step demonstrations, clear cues, and immediate feedback reduce extraneous load and support schema formation for serving skills (Sweller et al., 2019; Forte et al., 2019). Research on Explicit Instruction under competitive pressure similarly shows that clearly and favorably framed instructions improve performance stability, whereas negatively

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framed or avoidant cues raise cognitive burden and error rates (Gorgulu & Gokcek, 2021). Prompt, targeted feedback on elements such as hand posture and toss height further accelerates skill learning and self-efficacy (Sigrist et al., 2016), and studies in physical education report that students who receive Explicit Instruction show significantly greater gains in serving accuracy and consistency than those receiving less structured instruction (Lee et al., 2018). This body of literature provided the empirical rationale for testing Explicit Instruction against the specific technical demands of the underhand, overhand, float, topspin, and jump serve.

Statement of the Problem

This study determined the effectiveness of Explicit Instruction in teaching MAPEH – Basic Volleyball Serves among Grade 8 students of Naga National High School, City of Naga, Cebu, during the first quarter of School Year 2025–2026, as a basis for designing a lesson guide in MAPEH VIII. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the pre-test performance of students in terms of the basic serving skills: (1.1) underhand, (1.2) overhand, (1.3) topspin, (1.4) float, and (1.5) jump serves?
2. After the use of Explicit Instruction, what is the post-test performance of students in the aforementioned skills?
3. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test performance of students?
4. What are the students' experiences with the use of the strategy?
5. Based on the findings, what lesson guide in MAPEH VIII can be presented?

Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant difference in students' skill performance before and after the use of Explicit Instruction in teaching the basic volleyball serves among Grade 8 students of Naga National High School for School Year 2025–2026.

Significance of the Study

This study underscores the role of volleyball in the Physical Education curriculum in developing students' motor skills, tactical thinking, physical fitness, and active lifestyle habits. Its findings are intended to benefit school administrators seeking to strengthen the delivery of the MAPEH curriculum; MAPEH faculty seeking evidence-based teaching strategies for basic volleyball skills; parents supporting their children's skill development; students as the direct beneficiaries of improved instruction; and future PE researchers and the researcher, for whom the findings offer a basis for further studies and skills-enhancement programs.

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Methods

Research Design

This study used a mixed-methods design that integrated quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative phase, conducted first, measured students' performance in the basic volleyball serving skills before and after the implementation of Explicit Instruction and provided statistical evidence of the strategy's effectiveness. The qualitative phase used a semi-structured questionnaire to gather students' learning experiences after the intervention, explaining, validating, and enriching the quantitative results. The study followed an input–process–output framework: inputs were students' pre- and post-intervention skill performance and their learning experiences; the process comprised a transmittal letter to the school head, data collection through pre-test and post-test performance tasks, and statistical analysis; and the output was a Lesson Guide for MAPEH VIII – Basic Volleyball Serves.

Research Environment

The study was conducted at Naga National High School, Barangay West Poblacion, City of Naga, Province of Cebu. Established in 1947 and later constituted as an independent Schools Division Office implementing unit in 2015, Naga National High School is the largest public secondary school in the City of Naga, offering the Special Science Program, Technical-Vocational Program, and Basic Education Program. The school has approximately 1,600 junior high school students and 987 senior high school students for the 2025–2026 academic year.

Respondents

The respondents were Grade 8 students enrolled at Naga National High School for School Year 2025–2026. Of 11 sections comprising 460 Grade 8 students, two sections (n = 70) — the researcher's own MAPEH/PE classes — were selected through purposive sampling. The sample consisted of 28 male students (40%) and 42 female students (60%), as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. **Distribution of the Respondents**

Variable	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Male	28	40
Female	42	60
Total	**70**	**100**

Research Instrument

Students' skill performance was measured using a modified four-point analytic scoring rubric adapted from Esperon's (2024) study on Direct Instruction in Teaching Swimming, applied to the five basic volleyball serves. Each respondent performed the serves individually while the researcher and two trained evaluators rated the performance using the same rubric for both the pre-test and post-test. Students' learning experiences after the intervention were gathered using a semi-structured questionnaire — the same instrument used by Manlangit (2024) in "Jigsaw Learning in Teaching Dribbling for PATHFIT 3" — adapted to the context of the basic volleyball serves.

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Data Gathering Procedure

Following approval of a transmittal letter by the school principal, data collection proceeded over four weeks, with students meeting the researcher four times per week, structured around the phases of Explicit Instruction:

Phase 1 – Introduction/Learning Intentions (Week 1). The researcher stated the lesson objectives and criteria, activated students' prior knowledge, and administered the pre-test. Students were assigned identification numbers and, one at a time, executed the underhand, overhand, float, topspin, and jump serves while the researcher and two evaluators rated their performance; results were tallied and followed by a feedback session.

Phase 2 – Teacher Lecture-Demonstration/Modeling (Week 1, Days 3–4). The teacher modeled each serve step-by-step with a clear explanation of stance, toss, contact, and follow-through — underhand, overhand, and float serves on Day 3, and topspin and jump serves on Day 4 — while students observed before practicing.

Phase 3 – Guided Practice (Week 2). Students, divided into five groups, rotated through serve stations every ten minutes while the teacher provided prompts, cues, and immediate corrective feedback, gradually reducing assistance as accuracy improved.

Phase 4 – Independent Practice (Week 3) and Assessment/Feedback (Week 4). Students practiced independently with minimal teacher prompting to strengthen retention, after which the post-test was administered using the same procedure and rubric as the pre-test. Students' learning experiences were then collected through the semi-structured questionnaire and transcribed into individual response files for thematic analysis.

Statistical Treatment of Data

Descriptive statistics — frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation — were used to describe students' pre-test and post-test performance levels for each of the five serving skills. A paired-sample t-test was used to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed between students' pre-test and post-test performance, appropriate because the same group of students was assessed before and after the intervention. Qualitative responses were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's six-step thematic analysis to identify recurring codes and themes in students' learning experiences.

Scoring Procedure

Performance was scored using a four-point rubric: a score of 4 (3.26–4.00) denoted Exemplary Performance (0 errors); 3 (2.51–3.25) denoted Above Average performance (1–2 errors); 2 (1.76–2.50) denoted Average performance (3–4 errors); and 1 (1.00–1.75) denoted Below Average performance (5 or more errors). Respondents were informed of the rubric categories and their verbal interpretations prior to both the pre-test and the post-test.

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Results

Pre-Test Performance in the Basic Volleyball Serves

Before the intervention, students' baseline performance across all five serving skills clustered at the Below Average to Average levels, with the more technically demanding serves showing the weakest baseline performance.

Table 2. Pre-Test Performance: Underhand Serve

Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Level
3.26–4.00	2	2.86	Exemplary
2.51–3.25	14	20.00	Above Average
1.76–2.50	28	40.00	Average
1.00–1.75	26	37.14	Below Average
Total	70	100	
Weighted Mean		2.01	Average
Standard Deviation		0.64	

Students entered the study with an average level of underhand-serve performance (M = 2.01, SD = 0.64); only 2.86% demonstrated exemplary execution, while 37.14% scored Below Average, indicating that even the most basic serve required structured instruction for most students.

Table 3. Pre-Test Performance: Overhand Serve

Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Level
3.26–4.00	3	4.29	Exemplary
2.51–3.25	5	7.14	Above Average
1.76–2.50	20	28.57	Average
1.00–1.75	42	60.00	Below Average
Total	70	100	
Weighted Mean		1.70	Below Average
Standard Deviation		0.63	

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Overhand-serve performance was weaker still (M = 1.70, SD = 0.63), with 60% of students scoring Below Average, reflecting the greater arm power and toss accuracy the skill demands.

Table 4. Pre-Test Performance: Float Serve

Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Level
3.26–4.00	1	1.43	Exemplary
2.51–3.25	1	1.43	Above Average
1.76–2.50	5	7.14	Average
1.00–1.75	63	90.00	Below Average
Total	70	100	
Weighted Mean		1.25	Below Average
Standard Deviation		0.45	

The float serve produced the lowest pre-test scores of the five skills (M = 1.25, SD = 0.45); 90% of students scored Below Average, consistent with the skill's demand for minimal, controlled ball rotation.

Table 5. Pre-Test Performance: Topspin Serve

Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Level
3.26–4.00	0	0.00	Exemplary
2.51–3.25	3	4.29	Above Average
1.76–2.50	9	12.86	Average
1.00–1.75	58	82.86	Below Average
Total	70	100	
Weighted Mean		1.49	Below Average
Standard Deviation		0.45	

No student achieved an Exemplary rating on the topspin serve at pre-test (M = 1.49, SD = 0.45), and 82.86% scored Below Average, underscoring students' limited preparedness for this more advanced technique.

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Table 6. Pre-Test Performance: Jump Serve

Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Level
3.26–4.00	2	2.86	Exemplary
2.51–3.25	5	7.14	Above Average
1.76–2.50	10	14.29	Average
1.00–1.75	53	75.71	Below Average
Total	70	100	
Weighted Mean		1.47	Below Average
Standard Deviation		0.64	

The jump serve, the most technically advanced of the five skills, also showed predominantly Below Average performance at pre-test (M = 1.47, SD = 0.64), with 75.71% of students scoring in that range. Overall, the pre-test results indicate that students had limited foundational mastery of serving skills — particularly float, topspin, and jump serves — prior to the intervention, providing a baseline against which post-intervention gains were measured.

Post-Test Performance in the Basic Volleyball Serves

After four weeks of Explicit Instruction, all five serving skills showed marked improvement, with most students moving from below-average or Average levels to above-average or Exemplary levels.

Table 7. Post-Test Performance: Underhand Serve

Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Level
3.26–4.00	43	61.43	Exemplary
2.51–3.25	23	32.86	Above Average
1.76–2.50	3	4.29	Average
1.00–1.75	1	1.43	Below Average
Total	70	100	
Weighted Mean		3.27	Exemplary
Standard Deviation		0.55	

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Underhand-serve performance rose to the Exemplary level (M = 3.27, SD = 0.55), with 94.29% of students scoring Exemplary or Above Average, the strongest post-test results among the five skills.

Table 8. **Post-Test Performance: Overhand Serve**

Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Level
3.26–4.00	38	54.29	Exemplary
2.51–3.25	17	24.29	Above Average
1.76–2.50	12	17.14	Average
1.00–1.75	3	4.29	Below Average
Total	70	100	
Weighted Mean		3.13	Above Average
Standard Deviation		0.70	

Overhand-serve performance improved to the Above Average level (M = 3.13, SD = 0.70), with 78.57% of students scoring Exemplary or Above Average.

Table 9. **Post-Test Performance: Float Serve**

Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Level
3.26–4.00	34	48.57	Exemplary
2.51–3.25	18	25.71	Above Average
1.76–2.50	14	20.00	Average
1.00–1.75	4	5.71	Below Average
Total	70	100	
Weighted Mean		3.00	Above Average
Standard Deviation		0.69	

The float serve, which had the lowest pre-test baseline, improved to Above Average (M = 3.00, SD = 0.69), with 74.28% scoring Exemplary or Above Average.

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Table 10. **Post-Test Performance: Topspin Serve**

Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Level
3.26–4.00	12	17.14	Exemplary
2.51–3.25	23	32.86	Above Average
1.76–2.50	26	37.14	Average
1.00–1.75	9	12.86	Below Average
Total	70	100	
Weighted Mean		2.59	Above Average
Standard Deviation		0.68	

The topspin serve improved to Above Average (M = 2.59, SD = 0.68), while retaining the largest proportion of students at the Average level (37.14%), suggesting more gradual gains in this skill.

Table 11. **Post-Test Performance: Jump Serve**

Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Level
3.26–4.00	25	35.71	Exemplary
2.51–3.25	15	21.43	Above Average
1.76–2.50	20	28.57	Average
1.00–1.75	10	14.29	Below Average
Total	70	100	
Weighted Mean		2.74	Above Average
Standard Deviation		0.87	

The jump serve likewise improved to Above Average (M = 2.74, SD = 0.87), with 57.14% of students scoring Exemplary or Above Average; the comparatively higher standard deviation reflects continued variability, as the jump serve's demand for strength, timing, and coordination left some students still consolidating the skill even after guided and independent practice.

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Significant Difference Between Pre-Test and Post-Test Performance

Table 12. Significant Difference Between Pre-Test and Post-Test Performance of the Respondents

Skill	Mean Pre-test	Mean Post-test	Mean Diff.	t	p	Effect Size	Decision	Interpretation
Underhand Serve	2.01	3.27	1.26	15.9	<.001*	1.90	Reject Ho	Significant difference
Overhand Serve	1.70	3.13	1.43	16.0	<.001*	1.91	Reject Ho	Significant difference
Float Serve	1.25	3.00	1.76	23.4	<.001*	2.79	Reject Ho	Significant difference
Topspin Serve	1.49	2.59	1.10	16.2	<.001*	1.94	Reject Ho	Significant difference
Jump Serve	1.47	2.74	1.27	15.0	<.001*	1.79	Reject Ho	Significant difference

**p < .05, significant difference; Ho = null hypothesis.*

All five skills showed a statistically significant increase in mean performance from pre-test to post-test ($p < .001$ for all comparisons), leading to rejection of the null hypothesis. Mean gains ranged from 1.10 (topspin serve) to 1.76 (float serve), t-values ranged from 15.0 to 23.4, and all five skills produced very large effect sizes (1.79–2.79), with the float serve showing the most dramatic improvement. These results indicate that the difference between pre-test and post-test performance is both statistically significant and practically substantial, consistent with prior findings that Explicit Instruction yields significant pre-test-to-post-test gains in volleyball passing and reception skills (Adriani et al., 2025; Lola et al., 2020).

Students' Learning Experiences with Explicit Instruction

Thematic analysis of the 70 students' responses to the semi-structured questionnaire, conducted following Braun and Clarke's six-step process, yielded six major themes describing students' learning experiences, emotional reactions, and perceptions of Explicit Instruction.

Theme 1: Skill Development and Performance Improvement

Students consistently reported that the modeling and step-by-step breakdown of each serve helped them move from guessing to confidently applying the correct stance, arm swing, and timing.

"Before employing the explicit teaching technique, I had no idea how to play volleyball or serve; thus, the impact is enormous. However, I am now able to play volleyball correctly after learning the fundamentals of serving." (Res. No. 1)

"I would say my serving skills improved a lot because I can now perform the serve with better form and accuracy." (Res. No. 23)

Theme 2: Guided and Step-by-Step Learning Process

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Students valued the sequenced, incremental structure of instruction, reporting that breaking each serve into manageable steps reduced confusion and supported the foundational phase of learning before full-skill execution.

"My serve changed significantly as a result of Sir's step-by-step instruction." (Res. No. 5)

"In my experience, Sir Jef gave us step-by-step instructions on how to serve after first assessing our abilities and allowing us time to practice during formal training." (Res. No. 15)

Theme 3: Increased Engagement and Active Participation

Students reported higher enjoyment, excitement, and participation during Explicit Instruction activities, even when they found particular skills challenging.

"Even though I'm not very talented, I learned a lot and got better at playing, and it was enjoyable." (Res. No. 47)

Theme 4: Enhanced Motivation, Confidence, and Positive Attitudes

Explicit Instruction fostered a positive learning climate in which students felt capable and motivated, with several respondents describing renewed effort and perseverance despite early difficulty.

"I struggled with the jump serve, but with clear guidance and constant repetition, I got better at it." (Res. No. 29)

Theme 5: Supportive Learning Environment

Students frequently credited both teacher feedback and peer collaboration for their improvement, indicating that social support functioned alongside the structured instructional sequence.

"I can say that my teacher and my classmates helped me master the fundamental volleyball serves, but there were moments when I found it difficult to serve because I lacked the strength to strike the ball forcefully." (Res. No. 41)

Theme 6: Positive Perception of Explicit Instruction Compared to Other Methods

Several students explicitly contrasted Explicit Instruction with prior, less structured teaching experiences, describing it as clearer and easier to follow.

"Yes, I felt more engaged in learning the basic volleyball serve skills through the explicit instruction, because it helped me understand more about the basic volleyball serve than the traditional teaching method." (Res. No. 15)

Taken together, the six themes indicate that Explicit Instruction improved not only students' measurable serving performance but also their engagement, confidence, and perception of the learning process, reinforcing the quantitative findings reported above.

Discussion

The findings of this study affirm that Explicit Instruction is an effective strategy for teaching MAPEH – Basic Volleyball Serves. Students entered the intervention with predominantly Below Average to Average proficiency, particularly in the more technically demanding float, topspin, and jump serves, and exited with performance concentrated at the Above Average to Exemplary levels across all five skills, a pattern statistically confirmed by very large effect sizes (1.79–2.79) on the paired-sample t-test. This pattern is consistent with, and extends to a Philippine secondary-school MAPEH context, prior findings that Explicit Instruction produces significant pre-test-to-post-test gains in volleyball passing (Adriani et al., 2025) and reception skills (Lola et al., 2020).

The results are well explained by the three theories underpinning the study. Consistent with DeKeyser's (2007) Skill Acquisition Theory, students' progression from Below Average pre-test scores to Above Average or Exemplary post-test scores reflects a shift from declarative to procedural knowledge achieved through the study's

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structured phases of demonstration, guided practice, and independent practice. Consistent with Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, students' qualitative accounts of learning by observing and imitating the teacher's modeling, and of gaining confidence through repeated feedback, indicate that observational learning and self-efficacy were active mechanisms of skill gain, corroborating Gorgulu and Gokcek's (2021) finding that explicit modeling and supportive feedback enhance self-efficacy in volleyball serving. Consistent with Sweller's (1994) Cognitive Load Theory, the step-by-step breakdown of each serve into manageable components appears to have reduced extraneous cognitive load and allowed students to focus limited working memory on essential serving mechanics, a mechanism reflected directly in students' reports that step-by-step teaching "helped" and reduced confusion. Because the three theories converge on, rather than compete for, an explanation of the results, the findings offer theoretically coherent support for Explicit Instruction as a motor-skill teaching strategy.

The uneven pattern of gains across the five serves is also informative. The float serve showed both the lowest pre-test baseline and the largest mean gain and effect size, suggesting that skills with the most room for improvement benefited most visibly from the structured intervention. By contrast, the topspin and jump serves — while still showing statistically significant, large-effect gains — retained the largest residual proportions of students at the Average level and the highest post-test variability (SD = 0.68 and 0.87, respectively). This is consistent with these two serves' greater demands for strength, timing, and coordination, and with prior research indicating that technically demanding serving skills require prolonged, targeted practice beyond an initial instructional cycle to reach full mastery (Pawlik et al., 2024; Basri et al., 2025). This suggests that, while Explicit Instruction is effective across all five skills, the more physically demanding serves may benefit from an extended or repeated instructional cycle.

The qualitative findings help explain how these gains occurred. Students' accounts across the six themes converge on a consistent narrative: clear, step-by-step demonstration reduced initial confusion; guided and independent practice, supported by consistent teacher and peer feedback, allowed skills to be consolidated; and the resulting sense of progress and support sustained motivation and positive attitudes toward practice, even for students who found particular serves difficult. This pattern is consistent with research linking supportive learning environments to reduced anxiety and more positive learning experiences (Afonso et al., 2023) and with evidence that social support from peers and teachers is a key contributor to motor-skill acquisition (Wang & Liu, 2025). Several students explicitly contrasted Explicit Instruction with less structured prior teaching experiences, echoing the broader literature's contention that unstructured strategies can overwhelm beginners with high cognitive demands in the absence of sufficient prior knowledge (Chinn et al., 2023).

Practically, these findings informed the design of a structured Lesson Guide for MAPEH VIII – Basic Volleyball Serves, sequencing pre-assessment, teacher lecture-demonstration, guided practice, and independent practice across a four-day instructional cycle, so that other MAPEH teachers can apply the same evidence-based sequence in their own classes.

This study is limited by its single-school, purposively sampled context (n = 70, two sections), which constrains generalizability, and by its short, four-week intervention window, which may understate the mastery achievable for the most technically demanding serves given more extended practice. Future research should examine the strategy's effectiveness across additional MAPEH skills, grade levels, and school contexts, and should consider extended or repeated instructional cycles for skills such as the topspin and jump serve.

Conclusion

Explicit Instruction is an effective strategy for teaching MAPEH – Basic Volleyball Serves to Grade 8 students. Students who entered the study with low proficiency, particularly in the technically demanding serves, showed statistically significant and practically large improvement across all five serving skills after four weeks of step-by-step demonstration, guided practice, and structured feedback, leading to rejection of the null hypothesis.

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Students also reported that the strategy made learning clearer and more enjoyable, helping them build confidence and remain motivated. These findings are consistent with, and mutually reinforce, the study's three underpinning theories — Skill Acquisition Theory (DeKeyser, 2007), Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), and Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 1994) — which together indicate that Explicit Instruction supports motor-skill mastery by structuring the progression from declarative to procedural knowledge, by enabling observational learning and self-efficacy, and by managing cognitive load during skill acquisition.

Recommendations

1. Teachers should consistently apply well-structured teaching strategies — step-by-step demonstration, guided practice, and consistent corrective feedback — when teaching basic volleyball serves and other technically demanding MAPEH skills.
2. Schools should support teachers' participation in MAPEH-related workshops and seminars, and provide the equipment and resources needed to implement Explicit Instruction in physical education classes.
3. Explicit Instruction should be adapted for teaching other complex motor skills in volleyball and other sports to compare its effectiveness across skill types.
4. Future researchers should examine the long-term retention of skills acquired through Explicit Instruction and its effectiveness across varied grade levels and school contexts, particularly for physically demanding skills such as the topspin and jump serve that may benefit from an extended instructional cycle.

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