# Learning-Oriented Assessment (LOA) Implementation in EFL Tertiary Contexts: Towards a More Task-based Learning (TBL) Environment

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## Abstract

Over the past decade, learning-oriented assessment (LOA) has gained increasing attention as an emerging approach to classroom-based assessment. LOA prioritises learning and focuses on engaging learners actively in assessment and feedback activities. To enhance the learning environment in higher education, it is crucial for teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) to be aware of and implement innovative assessment methods that support student learning, such as LOA. The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to investigate the knowledge, use, and challenges of LOA in tertiary contexts. A total of (93) male and female EFL teachers teaching in tertiary education participated in the study. An adaptation of *The Teachers' Learning-Oriented Assessment Questionnaire* survey (Alsowat, 2022) and items from semi-structured interviews (Fazel & Ali, 2022) were used to collect the data for this study. The findings of this study show that EFL teachers had good knowledge of LOA concepts but suggest that they need further focused training on the implementation of LOA. The study also shows that the teachers faced pedagogical, practical, attitudinal, and institutional challenges that prevented the better implementation of LOA practices.

Keywords: learning-oriented assessment (LOA), task-based learning (TBL), higher education

# 1. Introduction

Assessment is now viewed as an essential part of the learning process and an integral component of any educational context rather than an outside tool that only measures the outcome of the learning process (Ahmed, 2023). The traditional view of the relationship between learning and assessment as a linear one-way process has resulted in the course of learning being more about tests than actual learning. As highlighted by many researchers (e.g., Black & William, 1998; Elder & Miller, 1995; Hattie, 2008; Popham, 2009), learning and assessment have a rather dynamic relationship where the goal is to use assessment and assessment information to promote and improve learning. As summarised by Davison (2019), to build a culture that utilises assessment to enhance learning, assessment should be a continuous and integrated part of the teaching and learning cycle.

Over the years, many terms and concepts that emphasise student learning have been developed (Alsowat, 2022). Concepts such as formative assessment, classroom-based assessment, assessment for learning, and assessment as learning have emerged, placing more emphasis on supporting learning rather than only on the use of assessment to authenticate achievement (Davison & Leung, 2009). In addition, many theoretical frameworks have been proposed to better conceptualise the best way to implement assessment practices in a way that supports learning and that is less concerned with measurements and exams, directing more attention to learning and the learner (Carless, 2009; Carless et al., 2006; Jones et al., 2016; Parkes & Zimmer, 2017; Turner & Purpura, 2017).

Learning-oriented assessment (LOA) (Carless, 2007) is a trending approach to classroom-based assessment that has gained interest over the last few years. LOA places learning and the learner as the focal point of instructional practices rather than focusing on the preparation for exams, that is, as expressed by Hamp-Lyons (2007), shifting from 'exam culture' to 'learning culture' (p. 478). LOA prioritises learning and focuses on engaging learners actively in assessment and feedback activities (Carless, 2015; Turner & Purpura, 2015). The term *learning-oriented assessment* was introduced by Carless (2007) as having three core components:

- 1) Learning-focused assessment tasks: The use of assessment tasks as learning tasks requires them to be linked to real-life activities to guarantee better engagement and more authenticity of language use. For the assessment task to be more learning-oriented, the task should be linked to the learning objectives and complex enough to be challenging and to stimulate learning (Almalki, 2019). Good examples of such tasks are oral presentations, role-playing, and collaborative projects (Ahmed, 2023).
- 2) Development of students' capacity as assessors in peer and self-assessment: This implies students' ability to be actively engaged in self-and peer-assessment activities. Therefore, students must understand the assessment criteria and be provided with models to apply them accurately in assessing themselves and their classmates (Fazel & Ali, 2022). In addition, students should be not only trained to do

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assessments but also given the opportunity to practice self-assessments and peer assessments in a safe and encouraging environment (Sambell et al., 2012).

3) Directed feedback as feedforward to achieve the needed learning objectives: An important component of LOA is feedback as a tool to build student performance. For the feedback to be meaningful, it has to be part of a clear two-way communication between teachers and students (Hyland, 2000). Feedback should be detailed and aimed at future improvements in student learning and performance (Ahmed, 2023; Lam, 2021).

Investigating LOA is of high importance in efforts to create a more task-based language learning environment, particularly in higher education. Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) revolves around engaging students in meaningful, real-life, goal-oriented activities. These activities help students use the language purposefully and meaningfully, where the goal is not merely to practice the language but rather to use the language successfully to get the task done in the same way as in real life (Prabhu, 1987; Willis, 1996). For a task-based learning environment to succeed, Liu et al. (2021) asserted the importance of reviewing assessment and assessment practices, as test-focused learning and test-oriented teaching create resistance to such language teaching approaches.

Furthermore, considering the importance of teachers' assessment literacy and the growing responsibilities of teachers as they adopt such assessment approaches (Ahmed, 2023; Davison, 2019; Fazel & Ali, 2022; Fulcher, 2012; Pitt & Winstone, 2018), investigating teachers' perceptions, knowledge, and use of such new approaches in language assessment is crucial in the efforts to enhance student learning and teacher efficiency.

Alsowat (2022) developed the Teacher Learning-Oriented Assessment Questionnaire (TLOAQ) to collect quantitative data related to the knowledge, practices and challenges of teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) in the application of LOA in the Saudi context. The questionnaire was developed based on Carless's (2007) principles that frame LOA practices. Of the survey participants, 162 teachers responded to the questionnaire, and their responses indicated that they had a moderate level of knowledge of LOA. The study also showed that teachers did not apply LOA principles and practices efficiently and had personal, contextual, and institutional challenges that prevented them from applying LOA. However, the study did not address where the teachers received their information about LOA.

However, Fazel and Ali (2022) conducted a qualitative cross-contextual study to investigate language teachers' knowledge and use of LOA and the challenges they faced in using LOA as framed by Carless (2007) in two contexts (Malaysia and Canada). The authors found that in both contexts, teachers were familiar with the use of assessment to enhance student learning, which is the core principle of LOA. The Canadian teachers mostly received their information through professional development activities, whereas the Malaysian teachers mostly acquired their knowledge from formal academic training. Although the participants from both contexts agreed on the benefits of LOA, they reported challenges such as having limited control over assessment policies and students' difficulty in adapting to LOA-driven class activities because they were used to an exam-oriented culture and a teacher-centred approach to assessment.

Another quantitative study in the Saudi EFL higher education context was conducted by Ahmed (2023). The researcher developed a survey questionnaire with four dimensions to investigate teachers' knowledge of adopting LOA: the assessment design, the application of standardised assessments in large classes, conducting assessments, and the validity and reliability of assessments. The results showed that the teachers' knowledge of LOA was poorly implemented; therefore, the teachers needed training on LOA. However, the teachers were mostly unsure of which assessment components were most relevant to their needs.

Owing to the recency of LOA, only a few studies have examined LOA, its application, and the challenges faced by language teachers in using it, both at the school and university levels (Ali, 2013; Davidson & Coombe, 2022; Fazel & Ali, 2022). Even fewer studies have been conducted in the Saudi EFL context (Ahmed, 2023; Alsowat, 2022). Therefore, the aim of the present mixed-methods study was to examine EFL teachers' readiness and perceptions of the feasibility and implementation of LOA in the context of tertiary education in Saudi Arabia.

# 2. Research Questions

Q1: How familiar are EFL teachers with LOA in the Saudi tertiary context? How did they learn about it?

**Q2:** If at all, how do EFL teachers implement LOA components, as framed by Carless (2007), in their classroom practices in the Saudi tertiary context?

Q3: How do EFL teachers perceive the possibilities and challenges of implementing LOA in the Saudi tertiary context?

# 3. Methodology

A mixed-methods approach was used to examine EFL teachers' cognition, implementation, and perceptions of LOA in the context of tertiary education in Saudi Arabia. As stated by Creswell & Plano Clark (2017), using a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches allows for a better and more insightful understanding of research problems and complex phenomena than only utilizing one of them.

Considering the novelty of LOA in the Saudi EFL context, a mixed-methods approach will help broaden our understanding of what EFL teachers in the Saudi context know or (do not know) and have a better insight into the contextual challenges when it comes to LOA.

# 3.1 Participants

The study participants were 93 (21 male and 72 female) EFL teachers in higher education in Saudi Arabia in the academic year 2022–2023. A random sampling technique was employed. The distributions of their qualifications and years of experience are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Study Sample (n = 93)

Qualifications	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Years of Experience	Frequency	Percent
BA+(CELTA*-DELTA**-Teacher Trainer)	21	22.6	0-5	18	14.9%
MA	27	29.0	6-10	42	45.2%
MA+ (CELTA-DELTA-Teacher Trainer)	27	29.0	11-15	12	12.9%
PhD	18	19.4	More than 15	21	22.6%
Total	93	100	Total	93	100%

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Table 1 shows that in terms of qualifications, most participants were master's degree holders (58.4%), followed by those with EFL professional certificates (22.2%) and PhD holders (19.4%). BA holders represented 15.9% of the participants, all of whom had professional certificates. Most participants had 6 to 10 years of experience (45%), and the lowest proportion (14.9%) of participants had less than 5 years of experience.

#### 3.2 Instruments

The TLOAQ was adapted from the study of Alsowat (2022). The TLOAQ from Alsowat (2022) is suitable for the current study as it covers all dimensions addressed in the current study research questions. The adapted questionnaire has five dimensions all relevant to the current study: 1) Teachers' knowledge of LOA. 2) Teachers' Practices of Assessment Tasks as Learning Tasks. 3) Teachers' Practices of Involving Students in the Assessment Process. 4) Teachers' Practices to Support Students' Active Engagement in Feedback and Feedforward. 5) Challenges of Implementing LOA. However, some statements were removed or rephrased for more clarity. The TLOAQ used in this study has a total of 28 Likert-scale items. Choices on the scale ranged from 1 (Very high) to 5 (Very low). The validity and reliability of the adapted instrument is calculated:

## 3.2.1 Validity

Table 2. Correlations between TLOAO factors

TLOAQ factors	KLOA	AT	SIA	SEFF	CLOA
Knowledge of LOA (KLOA)					
Assessment tasks as learning tasks (AT)	.78**				
Students' involvement in assessment (SIA)	.58**	.79**			
Students' engagement with feedback and feedforward	.62**	.69**	.82**		
(SEFF)					
Challenges of LOA (CLOA)	.34**	.39**	.23*	.35**	

<sup>\*\*</sup>Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

# 3.2.2 Reliability

The values of Cronbach's alpha coefficients were excellent, indicating that TLOAQ was reliable: EFL teachers' knowledge of LOA (.82), practices of assessment tasks as learning tasks (.91), practices of involving students in assessment (.74), practices of engaging students with feedback and feedforward (.79), challenges of implementing LOA (.80), and the whole questionnaire (.84).

Open-ended questions from Fazel and Ali's (2022) questionnaire were adapted to better understand the reality of LOA in the Saudi EFL context. The questions investigated the methods EFL teachers learned about LOA as well as their practices, possible challenges and their perceptions of the feasibility of employing LOA in their classes.

## 4. Data Collection

An online questionnaire addressed to EFL teachers teaching in Saudi Universities was distributed via email and texting apps.

## 5. Data Analysis

The researcher described the participants' characteristics using frequency and percentage. For the quantitative data collected using the close-ended questions in the TLOAQ, means and standard deviations were calculated to demonstrate the teachers' responses to the TLOAQ. According to the mean scores, the items were classified as follows: very low (<1.8), low (from 1.8 to <2.6), moderate (from 2.6 to <3.4), high (from 3.4 to <4.2), and very high (from 4.2 to 5).

Qualitative data were retrieved from the open-ended questions through thematic analyses of the teachers' responses and were coded and categorised using NVivo to identify the common themes. Thematic analysis is a strategy for 'identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns or themes within the data set' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 35). This study employed the framework defined by Braun and Clarke (2006) that specifies six steps of thematic data analysis: (1) researchers must familiarise themselves with the data, (2) develop the initial codes, (3) identify and (4) examine the themes, (5) define and label these themes, and (6) write their reports.

<sup>\*</sup>Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

#### 6. Findings

#### 6.1 Quantitative Data

Tables (3,4,5,6,7) below explain data relating to the overall mean scores of EFL practitioners' perceptions of EFL teachers' cognition and implementation of LOA and their views and the challenges they face in implementing LOA in higher education in the Saudi EFL context. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences SPSS was used to analyse the quantitative data.

# 6.1.1 Teachers' Knowledge of LOA

To answer the first part of the first research question (RQ1), 'How familiar are EFL teachers with LOA in the Saudi tertiary context?', the quantitative data from the questionnaire were analysed.

Table 3. Teachers' Knowledge of LOA

Item No.	Item	n	Mean	SD	Rank	Level
1	I understand the importance of feedback in initiating learning and reaching success.	93	4.65	.65	2	Very high
2	I recognise the connection between assessment, instruction, and learning.	93	4.55	.76	4	Very high
3	I am familiar with similar notions such as assessment for learning, alternative assessment, and formative/continuous assessment.	93	4.19	1.04	5	High
4	I understand the importance of involving students in their learning.	93	4.77	.42	1	Very high
5	I understand the importance of incorporating assessment into language instruction.	93	4.58	.71	3	Very high
Overall		93	4.55	.56		Very high

Table 3 shows data pertaining to the overall mean scores of EFL teachers' responses to the statements that assessed their knowledge of notions associated with LOA. Most items related to the EFL teachers' perceptions of their knowledge were rated >4.2, with an average mean score of 4.55, indicating that the EFL teachers perceived their knowledge of LOA to be very high. However, item 3 was rated <4.2 (mean, 4.19), which is high, and therefore ranked last among the five items.

#### 6.1.2 Teachers' Implementation of LOA, as Framed by Carless (2007), in Their Classroom Practices

To answer the second research question (**RQ2**), 'If at all, how do EFL teachers implement LOA components, as framed by Carless (2007), in their classroom practices in the Saudi tertiary context?', the quantitative data from the questionnaire were analysed.

LOA, as framed by Carless (2007), includes three components: 1) learning-focused assessment tasks, 2) the development of students' capacity as assessors in peer- and self-assessment activities, and 3) directed feedback used as feedforward to achieve the learning objectives.

#### i. Teachers' Practices of Assessment Tasks as Learning Tasks

Table 4. Teachers' Practices of Assessment Tasks as Learning Tasks

Item No.	Item	n	Mean	SD	Rank	Level
1	I prepare real-life tasks that are relevant to learning outcomes.	93	3.90	.93	3	High
2	I offer tasks that require effort and resources to complete.	93	3.84	1.08	4	High
3	I offer language tasks that are interactive.	93	4.19	.94	1	High
4	Tasks are used for both learning and assessment in my classroom.	93	4.06	1.02	2	High
5	I employ collaborative discussion and decision-making tasks with learners.	93	3.81	1.04	5	High
Overall		93	3.96	.86		High

Table 4 presents the teachers' perspectives regarding the use of assessment tasks as learning tasks. The participants generally perceived their practices using assessment tasks as learning tasks to be high (mean score, 3.96). The mean scores of the five items ranged from 4.91 to 3.81. Among the teachers' practices of using assessment tasks as learning tasks, item (3) was ranked as the highest practice (mean score, 4.91), while item 5 was ranked the lowest (mean score, 3.81)

#### ii. Teachers' Practices of Involving Students in the Assessment Processes

Table 5. Teachers' Practices of Involving Students in the Assessment Process

Item	Item	n	Mean	SD	Rank	Level
No.						
1	In my classroom, students are involved in the assessment process and activities.	93	3.84	.92	4	High
2	I assist students in keeping track of their progress.	93	3.97	.94	2	High
3	I support learners' autonomy (i.e. motivating students to study independently and	93	4.26	.72	1	Very
	actively engage in-class activities).					high
4	I encourage students to assess themselves to determine their language learning	93	3.90	.82	3	High
	strengths and limitations.					
5	In various assessment assignments, I teach students how to apply scoring rubrics.	93	3.68	1.15	5	High
Overall		93	3.93	.65		High

Table 5 presents the teachers' opinions of their practices to involve students in the assessment process. Overall, the participants rated their practices to involve students in the assessment process to be high (mean score, 3.93). Among the five items, item 3 was ranked first (mean score, 4.26), while item 5 was ranked last (mean score, 3.68).

## iii. Teachers' Practices to Support Students' Active Engagement in Feedback and Feedforward

Table 6. Teachers' Practices to Support Students' Active Engagement in Feedback and Feedforward

Item	Item	n	Mean	SD	Rank	Level
No.						
1	I provide opportunities for both giving and receiving feedback.	93	4.19	.74	2	High
2	I ask students to evaluate and give feedback on their peers' performance in language activities.	93	3.65	1.13	5	High
3	I provide detailed and descriptive feedback on language skills.	93	4.10	.82	3	High
4	Instead of focusing on grades, I provide feedback that focuses on learning.	93	3.97	.97	4	High
5	I offer purposeful feedback.	93	4.29	1.06	1	Very high
Overall		93	4.04	.69		High

Table 6 explains the participants' views of their classroom practices to engage students in feedback to enhance their learning. In general, the participants rated their practices to be high (mean score, 4.04), ranking item 5 as first (mean score, 4.29) and item 2 as last (mean score, 3.65) among the five items, as shown in the table.

#### 6.1.3 Challenges of Implementing LOA

To answer the third research question (**RQ3**), 'How do EFL teachers perceive the possibilities and challenges in implementing LOA in the Saudi tertiary context?', the quantitative data extracted from the questionnaire were analysed as follows:

Table 7. Challenges of Implementing LOA

Item No.	Item	n	Mean	SD	Rank	Level
1	Language curricula are inappropriate for implementing learning-oriented assessment.	93	3.61	1.07	5	High
2	Students find it hard to perform in unconventional assessment methods.	93	3.81	.90	4	High
3	Due to a top-down assessment policy, teachers don't have much control over assessment.	93	3.84	1.17	2	High
4	Teachers lack training on LOA and how to put it into practice.	93	3.42	1.11	7	High
5	The implementation of learning-oriented assessment is time-consuming.	93	3.39	1.29	8	Moderate
6	The implementation of learning-oriented assessments in large classes is difficult.	93	3.84	1.09	3	High
7	The influence of exam-oriented culture.	93	4.42	.88	1	Very high
8	Potential bias in self/peer assessments.	93	3.61	1.01	6	High
Overall		93	3.74	.67		High

Table 7 shows the challenges of implementing LOA. Overall, the participants rated the challenges as high (mean score, 3.74). Remarkably, item 7 was rated first among these challenges (mean score, 4.42), and item 5 was ranked the lowest (mean score, 3.39).

## 6.2 Qualitative Data

To get better insight, the researchers added two open-ended questions (Fazel & Ali, 2022) to the questionnaire. The participants' responses were coded and categorised using NVivo. Not all participants responded to the open-ended questions.

## 6.2.1 Teachers' Responses

To the first open-ended question, 'How did you learn about LOA (e.g. through co-workers or peers)? In your graduate programme, did you participate in professional development (e.g. workshops and conferences) and self-study (e.g., reading scholarly journals)?', approximately a third (33/93) of the study sample responded.

The participants' answers regarding how they learned about LOA were categorised and analysed. Regarding how EFL teachers in higher education learned about LOA, the teachers' answers varied, and they were categorised into four sources: formal education (graduate/post-graduate or certificate programme), professional development events (conferences, webinars, and workshops), self-study, and mentors and peers. A considerable number of teachers received their information about LOA from professional development events, mostly workshops, either as part of in-house or outside training. They also mentioned learning from attending webinars and conferences.

A good number of teachers who responded to the open-ended questions relied on their own learning and reading in scholarly journals, as one specifically described as 'looking at action research'. In addition, a good number of participants who responded to the open-ended questions learned about LOA through formal education during their graduate, post-graduate, or certificate programme (Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages [CELTA]) studies. In addition, some participants mentioned learning about LOA from mentors and peers.

To the second open-ended question, 'In your opinion, how feasible is it in your setting to use LOA practices/strategies (e.g. self/peer evaluation, conferences, portfolio assessment, etc.)? Which ones? Why?', only 30 study participants responded.

In their responses, the teachers' answers generally contained two LOA practices that were perceived as feasible in the participants' contexts, namely self and peer assessment, and portfolios, as in the following statements:

Peer evaluation might be the most appropriate one in my setting because of classes of a large size and time limits. (M8)

Peer evaluation, it is more understandable to the students. Students know that they won't be given extra marks for taking part in the peer assessment or attending the conference. These assessment practices are done to make them understand the task in depth and be present in their language learning journey. (F19)

I would say portfolio assessment. I usually ask my students to prepare a portfolio at the end of the semester, and I assess their work throughout the semester. (F16)

Portfolio assessment—it is an interesting way of assessment, and it can include different types of assessments. (Interviewee name/number) Portfolio because it shows the student's progress from the beginning of the course till the end. (F17)

The teachers also mentioned challenges that made it difficult for them to implement LOA in their classes. These challenges were in the following domains: pedagogical challenges, practical challenges, attitudinal challenges, and lack of institutional support. The participants described these challenges as follows: 'strict course and assessment plan'; 'huge number of students'; 'not very feasible, without the proper training'; 'I think it's important to train students, otherwise they resist such type of assessment and avoid employing it'; and 'unfeasible due to the highly standardised environment at my place of work'.

#### 7. Discussion

This study examined EFL teachers' cognition and implementation of LOA in the Saudi higher education context. It also investigated their perceptions of the possibilities and challenges of implementing LOA. The teachers' responses showed that they were familiar with concepts relating to LOA. However, the findings show that the teachers were probably more familiar with general concepts related to learning and assessment, as they were less familiar with notions such as assessment for learning, alternative assessment, and formative/continuous assessment, which are closely related to the concept of LOA. These findings support those of previous studies (Ahmed, 2023; Alsowat, 2022) that highlighted the need for more specialised training in assessment and to support teachers in moving away from traditional assessment practices. These gaps in knowledge and skills could be partially justified by the means through which they received their knowledge, which was mostly isolated professional development events (conferences, workshops, etc.) and self-study, which resulted merely in theoretical rather than practical knowledge, which is required to meet their specific needs with no everyday support (Derakhshan et al., 2020). These findings assert the importance of teachers' autonomy and agency but call for more support to help teachers apply their knowledge and build their assessment literacy.

As for LOA practices, teachers leaned more towards practices related to providing feedback rather than those that engage students in assessment. However, the teachers shared that they mostly used peer assessments, self-assessments, and portfolios as the most feasible practices. This could be because these do not intersect directly with the strict testing policies, which were described as one of the most challenging factors, and because they are more practical to use in large classes, which was perceived as a major challenge as well. The most common challenge faced by teachers was the dominance of the exam-oriented culture, which equally affected teachers and students (Alsowat, 2022; Fazel & Ali, 2022; Liu et al., 2021). The dominance of the exam-oriented culture requires a thorough review of the testing policies overall and consideration of proper training for teachers, not only to equip them but also to enable them to train their students on different in-class assessment activities.

## 8. Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to examine EFL teachers' knowledge and practices of LOA and their perceptions of the feasibility of using LOA for creating a more task-based learning environment in the context of tertiary education in Saudi Arabia. The findings highlight the need for focused, contextualised training in LOA and emphasise the need for institutional support not only for training but also for reviewing the teaching conditions and learning environment, including testing policies, teaching materials, facilities, and class numbers.

Moreover, our findings have important implications for pre-service teachers' preparation and in-service teachers' education and development programmes. Teachers need practical support to become successful language assessors, not just test facilitators.

On a macro level, creating an LOA-supportive environment requires much more than training or 'telling' the teachers what to do. Policymakers, educational leaders, administrators, curriculum designers, and material developers are all part of the educational system and shape the educational environment. The good knowledge but limited application of LOA and the challenges revealed in the responses to the open-ended questions suggest that more support is needed to improve the quality of teacher education and training, and to set the right pedagogical, cultural, and physical conditions for the successful implementation of LOA.

Considering that although teachers affect the educational system, they are also affected by other parties, triangulated research that involves stakeholders, policymakers, and textbook publishers can provide better insight into the complexity of assessment, assessment literacy, and assessment practices. As Zeng et al. (2018, p. 231) concluded in their review of initiatives aimed at the successful implementation of LOA, 'the main capacity-building endeavours have been professional learning, leadership, and support as well as collaboration with parents and community', hence the need to include these parties for a comprehensive understanding.

Although we used a mixed-methods approach to get deeper insights, owing to practical limitations, we collected only written responses to the open-ended questions, which were mostly limited (one word-one phrase), with no opportunities to ask follow-up questions. Therefore, semi-structured oral interviews might provide richer data.

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#### **Authors contributions**

Hadeel Al Kamli and Dr. Mansoor Almalki were responsible for the study instruments and design. Hadeel Al Kamli was responsible for data collection. Hadeel Al Kamli drafted the manuscript, and Dr. Mansoor Almalki revised it. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

## Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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