

THE IMPACT OF BLENDED LEARNING STRATEGIES ON STUDENTS' COGNITIVE ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE OF SOME BASIC FOOTBALL SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the impact of blended learning on the cognitive achievement and performance of some basic football skills among first-year students at the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, University of Babylon. The study stemmed from the need to develop traditional teaching methods by integrating face-to-face and e-learning, thereby contributing to improved learning of sports skills and raising the level of cognitive achievement. The researcher employed an experimental approach with a two-group equivalent design. The sample consisted of 40 students divided into an experimental group that studied using the blended learning strategy and a control group that studied using the traditional method. The study utilized a cognitive achievement test and tests to measure passing, tackling, and shooting skills, ensuring their validity, reliability, and objectivity. The educational program was implemented over eight weeks and included the use of educational videos and electronic applications before lectures, in addition to explanations and practical training on the field. The results showed statistically significant differences favoring the experimental group in cognitive achievement and the level of performance of basic skills compared to the control group, confirming the effectiveness of blended learning in enhancing sports learning. The research concluded that integrating technology with direct education provides a more interactive learning environment, increases students' motivation and self-confidence, and contributes to improving the acquisition of motor and cognitive skills, with a recommendation to apply this strategy in teaching other sports and to conduct further studies to verify its effectiveness in different fields.

KEYWORDS: Blended learning, Academic achievement, Basic football skills.

INTRODUCTION

Sport is one of the basic pillars in building advanced societies. It is not only a means of entertainment or physical activity, but rather represents an educational, educational and health tool that contributes to the development of the individual in all physical, psychological, mental and social aspects. Interest in sports today has become an urgent necessity to keep pace with scientific and technological development, as preparing generations capable of adapting to life's changes requires developing their physical, skill and cognitive abilities, which place physical education and sports sciences in an important position within educational systems.

Education is one of the main axes on which the educational process is based, as it is how the individual acquires skills, knowledge, and attitudes, and contributes to building his personality and developing his abilities. In the sports field, education is not limited to the cognitive aspect only, but also includes learning sports movements and skills, which require various educational strategies that suit the nature and levels of the learners.¹

Among these modern strategies has emerged the concept of blended education, which combines traditional face-to-face education with e-learning methods, which provides a flexible educational environment that combines direct interaction and technological technologies, and enhances the effectiveness of acquiring mathematical skills, as it employs various educational media in a way that suits the needs of students.

Interest has also increased recently in using cognitive achievement and modern educational tests in the field of physical education, as it works to develop the cognitive aspects of students during the performance of motor skills, especially in the game of football, which helps the learner to form a clear mental picture of motor performance, and thus improve the accuracy of implementation and reduce errors while learning sports skills.²

Football is one of the team games that is characterized by competition and excitement to perform the basic football skills that are performed during the matches. Therefore, it has become mandatory for students to learn to link the basic skills together to achieve optimal performance.

The importance of the research comes from the fact that it is a scientific attempt to employ a modern educational strategy (blended education) in teaching some basic football skills to students, thus contributing to raising the efficiency of the educational and training process, and providing the sports educational field with scientific results that teachers and coaches can benefit from in improving their educational methods. The importance of the research also lies in its contribution to finding practical solutions to the challenges facing by learning basic skills.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Through the researcher's review of previous research and sources and his own observation, he found that most of the educational methods used in teaching basic skills in football in colleges of physical education are methods that depend on the professor more than on the use of modern tools and means in education, including the smart board and Internet networks, especially in the practical aspect during education and integrating the practical and theoretical aspects during application, and because each of us has his own system of education (visual - auditory - sensory), on the basis of which The things that surround us are known and perceived. The researcher decided to use a different strategy in education, which is (blended education), and to conduct a field study to find out the pros and cons, and to work on preparing an educational program that contains modern information that the student receives from the teacher through the use of modern tools and methods in education that are concerned with the theoretical aspect on the one hand and the practical aspect on the other hand, which is concerned with all aspects of the skill. The question arises here: Can blended learning affect the cognitive achievement and performance of the basic skills under research for students?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- To identify the impact of the blended learning strategy on students' cognitive achievement and performance of some basic football skills.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

- There is a positive impact of the blended learning strategy on students' cognitive achievement and learning of some basic football skills.

RESEARCH SCOPE

- **Human Scope:** First-year students at the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, University of Babylon, for the academic year 2025-2026.
- **Time Scope:** From December 1, 2025, to May 14, 2026.
- **Spatial Scope:** The football field at the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, University of Babylon.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It is "that intellectual organization involved in the scientific study or it is the intellectual steps that the researcher takes to solve a specific problem"³ and the researcher used the experimental method with the design of two equivalent groups with pre-test and post-test to suit the nature of the research.

Table 1: Show design for the experimental and control groups in the pre- and post-tests according to the educational program used

S	Pre-test	Educational program	Post-test
1	Knowledge acquisition Basic football skills	Blended learning strategy	Knowledge acquisition Basic football skills
2	Knowledge acquisition Basic football skills	The strategy used by the teacher	Knowledge acquisition Basic football skills

RESEARCH POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Sample selection is a crucial pillar in the scientific research process, as it represents the target population or the strategic focus upon which the researcher's work is based⁴.

The target population consisted of first-year students at the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, University of Babylon, for the academic year 2025-2026. The research sample was randomly selected by lottery, comprising (40) students. The sample was divided into an experimental group of (20) students and a control group of (20) students. Students who failed, those with frequent absences, and those participating in the pilot study were excluded.

METHODS, EQUIPMENT, AND TOOLS USED

- Arabic and foreign sources and references.
- Personal interviews.
- The World Wide Web (Internet).
- Questionnaires.
- Observation and experimentation.
- Tests and measurements.
- Special forms for recording test results.
- Five (5) footballs.
- Colored tape.
- Measuring tape (in centimeters).
- Whiteboard/screen.
- Two (2) whistles.
- One (1) Dell laptop calculator.
- Results recording forms.
- Stationery (paper and pens).
- One (1) Canon camera.
- iPhone 13 Pro Max mobile phone.

FIELD RESEARCH PROCEDURES

DEFINING THE COGNITIVE ACHIEVEMENT TEST

To compare the two research groups in their mastery of cognitive achievement, a set of basic steps can be followed when standardizing the cognitive achievement test and how to link the test units to measure the overall aspects of the trait or ability. The researcher used the Cognitive Achievement Test for Football Skills, developed by Zaid Samsam Turki (2019), which consists of (30) items.⁵

METHODS OF SCORING AND CALCULATING THE TEST SCORE

The method of calculating the score obtained by the respondent on the test is a crucial step. Item scoring varies from one test to another, depending on the structure of the items and the number of answer choices. In the current test, the test-taker is awarded (1) point when they select the (correct) option and (0) point when they select the (incorrect) option. The total test score is calculated by summing the scores of the correct options selected by the student while answering the test items, with the highest scores being (30) points.

PILOT TEST

One of the important recommendations made by scientific research experts to obtain accurate and reliable results is conducting a pilot test. The researcher conducted the pilot test, administering the test to a small sample of (10) students selected from the research population. The purpose of the pilot test was to assess the accuracy of the research work and to identify the following:

1. The difficulties and obstacles the researcher faced while administering the test.
2. Clarifying the test administration method to be adopted and how data would be recorded.
3. Developing the capabilities of the support team.
4. Determining the time required to administer the test.

Following this, knowledge achievement forms consisting of 30 items were distributed to determine the scientific validity of the test and its suitability for the research sample. The test instructions and how to answer each item were explained. The total time required to complete the test items was (15 minutes).

After the test items were completed, the researcher collected the forms and calculated the scores obtained by the test-takers. The following conclusions were reached:

1. The scale was suitable for the sample level, as evidenced by the students' ability to answer the items and the clarity of the items.
2. The average time taken to complete each item on the scale was 15 minutes.
3. The scale's scientific coefficients were determined.

The results of this experiment included:

Achieving the desired objectives and providing the researcher with a clear understanding of the nature of the work and its application. The test's scientific coefficients of validity, reliability, and objectivity were determined as follows:

PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES OF THE TEST

- **Test Validity:** The researcher used face validity after presenting the test to experts in the fields of psychology, testing, measurement, and motor learning, who agreed on the suitability of the test items.
- **Test Reliability:** To calculate the reliability coefficient, the researcher used the split-half method on a pilot sample of (10) students. Each student received two scores by dividing the test into two halves: the first half consisting of odd-numbered items and the second half of even-numbered items. The correlation between these two scores (the scores of each half of the test) constitutes internal consistency for only one half of the test. The correlation value between the two halves of the cognitive achievement test was (0.91), indicating a high degree of reliability. This is because the calculated correlation coefficient for the test is higher than the critical value of (0.707) at a significance level of (0.05) and with (6) degrees of freedom.
- **Scale Objectivity:** After experts agreed on the validity of the scale items to determine the clarity of the test items for the pilot sample, this indicates that the test possesses a high degree of objectivity.

BASIC FOOTBALL SKILLS:6

The basic skills that are the subject of this research were identified according to the curriculum for the football subject at the [grade level missing in original text]. The first and prescribed by the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the University of Babylon for the academic year (2025-2026).

IDENTIFYING THE BASIC SKILLS TESTS UNDER INVESTIGATION

After identifying the basic skills used in the research (passing, catching, and shooting), the researcher presented a set of tests for these skills, totaling (3) tests for each skill, to a group of experts and specialists using a questionnaire prepared for this purpose. After data entry and statistical analysis to determine their relative importance, the most important test for each skill was selected, which is the test with the highest percentage. Table (2) illustrates this.

Table 2: Shows the relative importance achieved for the tests under investigation in football

+	Basic skills	Test sequence	Candidate tests	The importance of variables (0-10)		The advantage in the test
				Overall importance level (120)	Percentage of the grade	
First	Scroll	1	Passing the ball between two opposing players to a teammate (a crucial pass)	98	81.66%	√
		2	Hit the ball towards three overlapping patched circles from a distance of 20 m	72	60%	
		3	Roll the ball for a distance of (5m), then pass it towards a small target for a distance of 15m.	63	52.50%	
Second	Ball Trapping	1	Extinguish the ball thrown inside the (2×2) square	95	79.16%	√
		2	Ball Trapping the ball inside the foot while it is in the air	75	62.33%	
		3	Stopping a thrown ball with the chest	61	50.83%	
Third	scoring	1	Shoot (3) balls towards the goal drawn on the wall divided into three rectangles from (10) m	65	56%	
		2	The scoring test from standing on the soccer goal is divided into strips, and each square has a score that the player receives if he succeeds in scoring the ball.	91	75.83%	√
		3	Scoring on target with (3) consecutive shots from a distance of (18) yards	70	58.33%	

DESCRIPTION OF THE SKILL TESTS USED IN RESEARCH

Test Name: The Decisive Pass Test towards two targets 1 meter apart and 10 meters apart .⁷

- Test Purpose: To measure passing accuracy.
- Equipment Used: Three soccer balls, two targets 1 meter apart, and a measuring tape.
- Performance Description: The subject stands with the ball 10 meters away. Upon hearing the signal, they pass the first ball, then the second, and finally the third, which remains stationary, towards the targets, as shown in Figure 1.
- Performance Conditions:
 - The test begins with ball number 1 and ends with ball number 3.
 - A step must be taken backward before passing.
 - The student performs the action by passing the first ball, then stepping backward, then passing the second ball, then stepping backward, and finally passing the third ball. Registration method: The score is calculated by three assessors by adding up the scores of the skill components (preparatory - main - final) through the technical performance evaluation form out of (10) points.

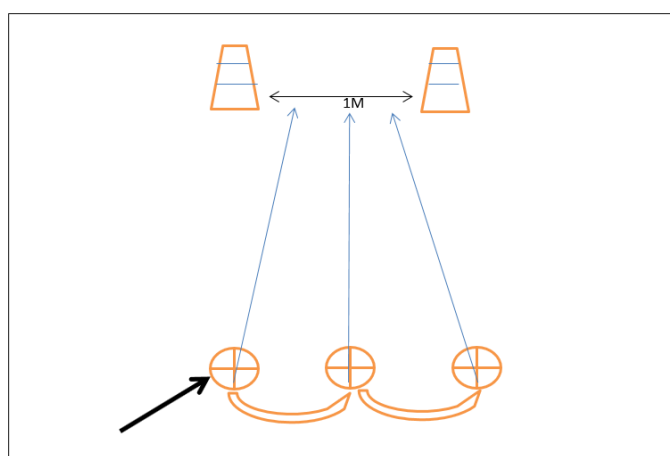


Figure 1: Demonstrates football passing skill test

Football Skill Test :⁸

1. Test Name: Skill Test Learning Test.
 - Test Purpose: To measure the accuracy of the skill of catching.
 - Equipment Used: (5) footballs, a designated testing area (2x2) m, white borax.
 - Performance Procedure: The subject stands behind the line of the designated testing area. The coach stands with the ball on the opposite side, (6) m from the designated testing area. After giving the starting signal, the coach throws the ball (high) to the subject, who advances from the starting line into the testing area, attempting to stop the ball with any part of the body except the arms. The subject then returns to the starting line and starts again. This process is repeated five times consecutively, as shown in Figure (2).
 - Performance Requirements: The ball must be thrown with an upward arm motion. If the person makes a mistake in throwing the ball, the attempt will be repeated and will not be counted.
 - Scoring: Two points are awarded for each correct attempt.
 - Each subject has (5) consecutive attempts. - The total score for the test is (10) points.
 - The assessment score is calculated by three assessors, and the scores for the skill components (Preparatory, Main, and Final) are added together.

The attempt will not be considered valid in the following cases:

1. If the test-taker fails to stop the ball.
2. If the test-taker crosses any line of the damping zone by more than one foot.
3. If the test-taker stops the ball illegally.

1. Football Shooting Test ⁹: Stationary Football Shooting Test

- Test Purpose: To measure shooting accuracy in football.
- Equipment Used: Football field, (10) balls, tape to mark the testing area, measuring tape.

- Test Procedure: (15) footballs are placed in different locations on the line and inside the penalty area, as shown in Figure (5). The player shoots at the marked areas in the test, according to their importance and difficulty, sequentially one after the other, while running.
- The test starts with ball number (1) and ends with ball number (10).
- The attempt is not considered valid if none of the marked targets are hit. Registration method: The evaluation score is calculated by three evaluators by combining the scores of the skill parts (preparatory - main - final) through the technical performance evaluation form (*) out of (10) points.

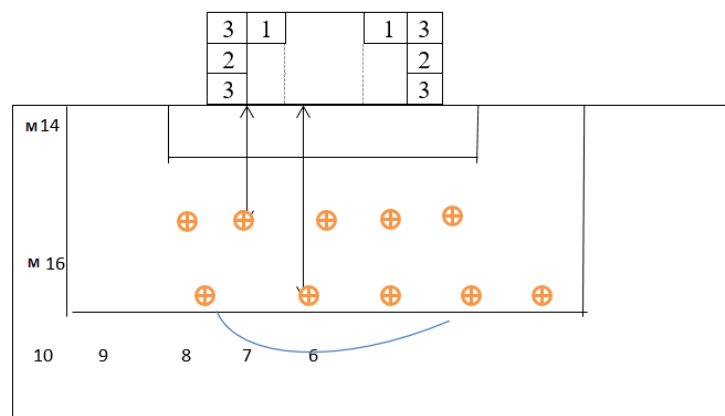


Figure 2: shows the football scoring skill test

PILOT TEST FOR SKILLS TESTS

The pilot test is a smaller-scale experiment similar to the actual test. Therefore, the researcher conducted the pilot test on January 26, 2026, at 10:00 AM with the same sample group on whom the researcher had conducted the pilot test for the cognitive achievement scale. The pilot test serves as practical training for the researcher to personally identify the strengths and weaknesses. The purpose of conducting the pilot test is as follows:

1. To ensure the continuity of the test administration.
2. To confirm the ability of the sample group to complete the test.
3. To confirm the competence of the team assisting in administering the test.
4. To establish the scientific basis of the test.

SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS OF SKILL TESTS

- **Validity:** To ensure the validity of the tests, the researcher presented them to a group of experts and specialists to verify their content. These experts and specialists agreed that the tests accurately measure the characteristic they were designed to measure. A valid test is defined as "a test that measures what it was designed to measure"¹⁰.
- **Reliability:** Reliability refers to "the degree of accuracy or consistency that the test measures in relation to the phenomenon for which it was designed"¹¹. It can also be defined as "the ability of the test to produce similar results under relatively small variations in measurement conditions when administered to the same individuals" (3). To ensure the reliability of the tests, the researcher selected (10) students from the research population on Wednesday, February 18, 2026. Seven days later, on February 25, 2026, the test was re-administered to them, as Marwan Abdul Majeed Ibrahim indicated: "To determine the reliability of the test, it is re-administering seven days after the first test"¹². The calculated (r) value was found to be very high and acceptable.
- **Objectivity:** Objectivity means "the absence of influence on test or measurement results from the subjective factors of the grader, such as their mood and relative assessment"¹³. It means avoiding all personal, subjective, or external factors that affect test results. An objective test gives a single result regardless of the number of graders because it consists of specific units or questions, and its answers are unanimously agreed upon. To ensure the objectivity of his tests, the researcher employed two reviewers (evaluators) to record the test results. After obtaining the results, statistically analyzing them, and calculating the simple correlation coefficient (Pearson's correlation coefficient) between the two reviewers' scores, a high degree of correlation was found. The t-test was used to determine the significance of the results, indicating that the tests are highly objective. The following table shows the correlation coefficients between the reliability and objectivity of the tests.

Table 3: Shows the correlation coefficients between the reliability and objectivity of the tests

Tests	Scroll	Ball Trapping	Scoring
Consistency	0.86	0.87	0.81
Objectivity	0.93	0.94	0.92

HOMOGENEITY OF THE RESEARCH SAMPLE

Table 4: Shows the homogeneity of the research sample

Variables	Units	Experimental group		Control group		Calculated value of (F)	Statistical significance
		Mean	Std	Mean	Std		
Mass	kg	63.33	7.26	67.17	9.83	1.84	Homogeneous
Age	year	20.20	1.05	20	1.2	1.31	Homogeneous
Height	cm	175.12	5.56	166	6.81	1.50	Homogeneous

* The tabulated F-value at 24.24 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.05 is 1.98.

MAIN EXPERIMENT

PRE-TESTS

To evaluate the experiment and establish two homogeneous and equivalent experimental and control groups in terms of the variables under investigation and students' cognitive achievement, the researcher conducted a pre-test of cognitive achievement on Tuesday, March 10, 2026. Test forms were distributed to the students, along with a brief explanation of how to answer the questions. The forms were then collected and scored to determine each student's score. Following this, the researcher conducted pre-tests of the skills under investigation on Sunday, March 15, 2026, at the sports field of the College of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, University of Babylon. Based on the results of the pre-tests, equivalence was established between the two groups of the research sample using the (t) test for the experimental and control groups to determine the difference between the means and standard deviations, and Table (6) shows this.

Table 5: Shows the equivalence of the two research groups

Variables	Units	Experimental group		Control group		Value of (t)		Significance
		Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Calculated	Tabulated	
Scroll	Degree	4.45	0.76	4.37	0.95	0.49	2.00	Random
Ball Trapping	Degree	3.84	0.87	3.80	0.91	0.15		Random
Scoring	Degree	3.78	0.95	3.71	0.92	0.14		Random

* Below the significance level of (0.05) and with (48) degrees of freedom.

IMPLEMENTING THE EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM USING THE DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION STRATEGY

The researcher prepared (8) instructional units according to the SCAMPER strategy, after reviewing the curriculum for the first stage and applying the differentiated instruction strategy to the content of this curriculum. The researcher prepared special learning units for the experimental group, following the steps of the differentiated instruction strategy. The curriculum was implemented on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, with each unit lasting 90 minutes. This strategy involves engaging the learner in the educational process to learn some basic football skills. The main part of the learning unit focuses on the student and the teacher. In the teaching section of the first unit, the teacher introduced the students to basic football skills, identifying the core skills to be taught: passing, tackling, and shooting. The teacher explained the concept of passing, when using this skill, the important principles to consider when executing a pass, and its different types. Following this, the teacher implemented a blended learning strategy, combining two main modes: asynchronous e-learning (off the field) and live instruction (on the field). The implementation steps were as follows:

First: Preparation and Electronic Implementation Phase (Outside the Live Learning Environment):¹⁴

1. Content Design Digitally Guided: The instructor filmed the motor skills under investigation using a digital method that considered technical performance, supported by explanations and explanatory texts for the more challenging technical points.
2. Distribution via Mobile Learning Environment: The Telegram application was used as a platform for delivering the content due to its technical features that allow for uploading high-quality video files without being restricted by storage space, thus serving the concept of mobile learning (M-learning).
3. Timing of Visual Dissemination: A fixed timeframe was set for sending the video clips to students 48 hours before the live lecture. The researcher aimed for this procedure to activate "pre-learning mental preparation" and give students ample opportunity for repeated viewing and the formation of an initial motor perception of the skill according to their individual learning pace.

Second: The Direct Application and Practice Phase (In-Classroom):¹⁵

1. Reinforcement and Digital Modeling: At the beginning of the lecture, the display screen was used to re-present the video clips of the skill to the students collectively, in order to achieve a gradual transition from individual understanding to group application, and to reinforce the critical technical points.
2. Live Modeling and Practical Application: The instructor provided a live movement demonstration and a direct explanation of how to perform the movement, giving students ample opportunity for practical application and hands-on practice in a live learning environment.
3. Immediate Feedback: This blended learning approach allowed the instructor to utilize the entire lecture time to monitor student performance and provide immediate guidance and correction (concurrent and summative feedback) to ensure the consolidation of correct skill performance and minimize technical errors.

POST-TESTS

After completing the application of the blended learning strategy modules over a period of (8) weeks, a post-test was administered to the research sample. The researcher endeavored to replicate the same conditions in terms of time, location, equipment, tools, implementation method, and support team as possible to the pre-test. The post-test was conducted on Sunday, May 3, 2026, to assess cognitive achievement and performance in basic football skills.

STATISTICAL METHODS

The researcher employed the following statistical methods:

1. Percentage.
2. Mean.
3. Standard Deviation.
4. Mode.
5. Skewness.
6. Simple Correlation Coefficient (Pearson's Coefficient).
7. Chi-Square Test.
8. T-test for parallel and independent samples.

RESULTS

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF PRE- AND POST-TEST RESULTS FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ON THE INVESTIGATED VARIABLES

To identify differences in pre- and post-test results among the experimental group on the investigated variables, the researcher used a paired-samples t-test, as shown in Table (6).

Table 6: Shows the means, standard deviations, calculated and tabulated t-values, and statistical significance of the pre- and post-test results for the experimental group

S	Variables	Units	Pre-test		Post-test		Value of (t)		Statistical significance
			Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Calculated	Tabulated	
1	Scroll	Degree	4.48	0.77	7.72	1.30	13.12	1.71	Sig.
2	Ball Trapping	Degree	3.86	0.89	6.85	1.32	8.61		Sig.
3	Scoring	Degree	3.75	0.96	6.91	1.33	11.15		Sig.
4	Cognitive achievement	Degree	11.87	1.81	17.72	1.73	12.90		Sig.

* Below the significance level of (0.05) and at degrees of freedom (24).

Table 7: Shows the means, standard deviations, calculated and tabulated t-values, and statistical significance of the pre- and post-test results for the control group

S	Variables	Units	Pre-test		Post-test		Value of (t)		Statistical significance
			Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Calculated	Tabulated	
1	Scroll	Degree	4.33	0.95	6.45	0.82	8.14	1.71	Sig.
2	Ball Trapping	Degree	3.85	0.92	5.33	0.86	5.22		Sig.
3	Scoring	Degree	3.74	0.93	5.30	0.98	4.97		Sig.
4	Cognitive achievement	Degree	11.91	2.05	15.00	2.40	14.29		Sig.

* Below a significance level of (0.05) and at a degree of freedom of (24).

Table 8: Shows the values of the means, standard deviations, calculated and tabulated t-values, and statistical significance of the post-test results for the experimental and control groups

S	Variables	Units	Experimental group		Control group		Value of (t)		Statistical significance
			Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Calculated	Tabulated	
1	Scroll	Degree	7.70	0.93	6.46	0.82	4.97	2.00	Sig.
2	Ball Trapping	Degree	6.86	1.30	5.34	0.86	4.87		Sig.
3	Scoring	Degree	6.90	1.32	5.30	0.98	4.85		Sig.
4	Cognitive achievement	Degree	19.20	3.60	16.01	2.09	3.83		Sig.

* Below the significance level of (0.05) and with (48) degrees of freedom.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

Based on what is presented in Tables (5, 6, 7), Table (5) shows that the experimental group that used the blended learning strategy had a significant effect on the results shown for the three skills (passing, extinction, and aiming), in addition to cognitive achievement. This occurred because this strategy is one of the modern cognitive strategies that enhances the student's cognitive aspect and makes them the focus of the educational process. This fostered positive attitudes towards learning and creativity among learners, instilling in them self-confidence and positive self-esteem. This helped them transfer the impact of learning and generalize acquired experiences into effective and positive situations, especially when there are similarities between the skills being studied.¹⁶ The greater the degree of similarity between the skills, the greater the transfer of learning, since learning the basic principles of movement will facilitate the transfer to many athletic movements, even if they are difficult, as it depends on the learner's ability¹⁷. The significant impact demonstrated by the results shown in Table (6) for the control group, which was used by the subject teacher, resulted from the fact that the experiment lasted (8) instructional units. Furthermore, the subject teacher presented the educational material in a systematic and appropriate manner, tailored to the learners' abilities and physical and skill-based capabilities. Providing regular and scientifically sound exercises has a significant impact on learning the performance of the skills the subject teacher aims to impart to their students. This aligns with Al-Hilah's view that student education should be a systematic and scientific activity based on well-studied logical and psychological principles, grounded in challenge, excitement, and enjoyment, stemming from the students' needs¹⁸.

In addition, the subject teacher's seriousness and commitment to achieving an acceptable level of learning using feedback during the lesson, along with the students' attendance and eagerness to participate, contributed to raising their learning level. The results shown in Table (6), indicating the experimental group's superiority over the control group in the research variables (passing, extinction, and targeting) and cognitive achievement, stem from the fact that students learning through the blended learning strategy developed self-confidence and self-esteem. This fostered positive attitudes towards learning the researched skills and increased their motivation. Al-Rubaie emphasized that students' self-analysis and self-confidence benefit those performing the work (the students), potentially leading to teacher satisfaction. This, in turn, encourages students to perform their activities more effectively and helps them evaluate themselves as much as possible. This, in turn, generates high self-confidence and self-reliance in correct performance.¹⁹ Therefore, enabling students to perform a number of practical activities and actively participate in them will lead them to deduce knowledge independently. This results in advanced learning, the organization of their interactive learning environment, and an increase in their cognitive achievement due to the interaction between their prior and new knowledge, which is a crucial component of meaningful teaching.

The results shown in Table (7) indicate that the experimental group outperformed the control group in terms of skill variables (passing, extinction, and targeting) and cognitive achievement. Since differentiated instruction led to students acquiring knowledge successfully, and to better remembering, understanding, and retrieving it, it created suitable conditions among the students themselves. This is what Ibrahim Muhammad Aziz pointed out, that learning strategies such as blended learning work to actively engage the student in the lesson by utilizing their full potential and cognitive abilities.²⁰

CONCLUSIONS

1. The strategy employed by the teacher played a significant role in improving cognitive achievement and the performance of the studied skills.
2. The blended learning strategy outperformed the traditional strategy in improving cognitive achievement and the performance of basic football skills.
3. The blended learning strategy had a significant and positive impact on improving students' cognitive achievement and the performance of the studied skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The blended learning strategy should be adopted in teaching skills in other sports.
2. Further studies should be conducted that utilize blended learning without other

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