

Pinchas, Y.. and lidor. R. (2001). Long-term effectiveness of structured fitness programme on students physical achievements, motivation and awareness of fitness essence. **Education and Context Vol. No 25**. Pp, 173-186.

LONG-TERM EFFECTIVENESS OF STRUCTURED  
FITNESS PROGRAMME ON STUDENTS' PHYSICAL  
ACHIVEMENTS, MOTIVATION AND AWARENESS OF  
FITNESS ESSENCE”

The Western society may be characterized as a sedentary society where the majority of people eat more than they need, are overweight, and do not exercise. This calls for physical education teachers who exercise regularly and who are knowledgeable of exercise-related aspects (e.g., health, self image, good feelings). This is not the case, however, as most physical education teachers reflect the sedentary society in which they live.

To address this need for teachers who exercise regularly and who are knowledgeable of exercise-related aspects, this study evaluated the effects of an intervention program that was offered in a physical education college. The program consisted of two components. The first one was consisted of theoretical lessons in which the participants were provided with theoretical knowledge about physical exercise-related aspects such as health, motivation, good feelings, self-image, etc. The second component consisted of practical lessons, in which the participants were provided with the opportunity to exercise via different modes (e.g., competitions, games), and thus to become more aware of the different theoretical aspects learned within the framework of the first component. The program was offered as a mandatory course as a part of the curriculum for first-, second-, and third-year.

The study hypothesized the following three hypotheses: (1) participation in the program would improve the participants' physical fitness; (2) a greater scope of participation in physical exercise would be found in those who took the program, and (3) participation in the program would result in increased awareness and motivation and a positive change in attitude as to the importance

of physical exercise. Data was obtained via the following tools: (1) physical-fitness test battery, consisting muscle strength test, flexibility test, wrist-span measurement, skin fold measurement, weight, height, posture, aerobic fitness test; (2) questionnaires, including questions focusing on participation in physical activities within different frameworks, awareness of different exercise-related aspects (e.g., health, self-image), attitudes towards physical exercise, and motivation to be engaged in physical exercise.

Results only partially supported the first hypothesis about the improvement in physical fitness. Data analysis suggests that one reason that may explain the ineffectiveness of the program is the insufficient time allotted to the program (i.e., one hour and a half per week for one semester). In addition, the analysis suggests that, in most cases, the positive effects of the program disappeared after one semester. The second hypothesis, however, gained support. One important finding was that those who took the program reported to be more engaged in physical exercise within the college framework, compared to those who did not take the program. This finding suggests that the students do not get enough practical hours within the general curriculum. The third hypothesis gained full support. The program had positive effects on those who took it. Data analysis suggests that they increased their awareness of the relationship between exercise and related aspects. The participants also developed more positive attitudes towards being engaged in physical exercise, and they increased their motivation towards exercise.