

**The Role of the Physical and Sports Teachers in Promoting Healthy Behavior Among Secondary School pupils in the Light of Health Perceptions -A field Study in the Eastern Province of Algiers, Centre -**

دور أستاذ التربية البدنية والرياضية على ضوء المدركات الصحية في تعزيز السلوك الصحي لتلاميذ  
الطور الثانوي- دراسة ميدانية بالمقاطعة الشرقية للجزائر وسط-

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**Abstract**

The research aims to identify the level of health perceptions among teachers of physical education and sports and its role in promoting the healthy behaviour of secondary school pupils. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the descriptive approach was used in addition to a health perception scale of healthy nutrition, sports health, and healthy habits and behaviours that was administered to a random sample of 40 teachers of physical education and sports from secondary schools distributed in the eastern province in the centre of Algiers during the academic year 2020/2021. The results obtained through the use of appropriate statistical methods show that the level of health perceptions among teachers of physical education and sports is low and that their role in promoting the healthy behaviour of secondary school pupils is not activated. The paper concludes with a set of recommendations aiming to raise the health perceptions of teachers.

**Keywords:**

Health, health perceptions, teacher of physical education and sports, healthy behaviour, secondary school pupil.

الملخص:

يهدف البحث إلى التعرف على مستوى المدركات الصحية لدى أستاذ التربية البدنية والرياضية ودوره في تعزيز السلوك

الصحي لتلاميذ الطور الثانوي، ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة اعتمد الباحث على المنهج الوصفي، وتطبيق مقياس المدركات الصحية في أبعاد (التغذية الصحية، الصحة الرياضية، العادات والتصرفات الصحية)، على عينة عشوائية قوامها 40 أستاذ للتربية البدنية والرياضية موزعين على الثانويات التابعة للمقاطعة الشرقية للجزائر وسط للموسم الدراسي 2021/2020، أسفرت النتائج بعد المعالجة بالأساليب الإحصائية المناسبة أن مستوى المدركات الصحية جاء بدرجة منخفضة وأن دور أستاذ التربية البدنية والرياضية غير مفعّل في تعزيز السلوك الصحي لتلاميذ الطور الثانوي وتوجت الدراسة بجملة من التوصيات من شأنها الرفع في مستوى المدركات الصحية للأساتذة.

- الكلمات المفتاحية : -الصحة، المدركات الصحية، أستاذ التربية البدنية والرياضية، السلوك الصحي، تلميذ الطور الثانوي

### \* Introduction and problematic of the study:

Today's health problems are closely related to the current lifestyle and daily behaviours that have an impact on public health, due to the radical changes in the modern lifestyle which are characterized by the outrageous use of mechanization and technological means in various areas of life. The latter led to a decline in the level of physical activity, and the widespread of unhealthy dietary behaviours, which are the main cause behind the emergence of the diseases of the 21<sup>st</sup> century which, in turn, are the main cause of death in the world. Consequently, many international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations, and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) have unanimously agreed to develop and establish global strategies and policies that aim at preventing and reducing the proportion of chronic diseases associated with physical activity and dietary behaviours (Sima Hamadah, 2013, p. 1).

In order to establish good health practices in the community, the starting point should be health concepts that contribute to the development and promotion of healthy behaviour which is the main indicator in measuring the extent of development of any health system. This indicator is the product of health

education and awareness which stems from public health that is an important part of the educational system of a country. Health education aims to train the young generation in matters related to health issues, develop their cognitive abilities and positive attitudes towards personal health and the health of others, and provide them with proper healthy behaviours and coping skills in everyday situations so that the latter become a lifestyle adopted mechanically by all groups without exception.

To reach that aim, many countries have developed projects that aim at changing the health behaviour at the public level. Examples of such projects include the American Healthy People 2010 Project which focuses on intervention which aims to build a behaviour that promotes health and preserves the resources that the individuals have in order to allow them to overcome diseases and stress. The project depends on health education that aims to bridge the gap between knowledge of health and disease and the factors related to them and actual behaviour in daily life (Zaatout Ramadan, 2005, p. 6). Additionally, the World Health Organization (1995) confirmed the formation of a committee of experts to raise health awareness and promote health through schools. The aim of this committee was to come up with recommendations, to set standards, and to activate policies that enable health and educational organizations and schools to optimize their potential to improve the health of children, adolescents and educational personnel. The committee came up with a report issued in 1997 in the name of 'Promoting Health through Schools', and the European branch of the World Health Organization established the Health Promotion Schools Network (Kenza Hamdi and Mebni, 2019, p. 686).

From this standpoint, the strategic role that the school plays as one of the most important institutions of social upbringing is evident in the formation and preparation of the young people in various areas of life, particularly health, as it

is considered one of the channels of promoting the public health of the community. Developed countries have followed a philosophy that promotes the healthy behaviour of community members, which in turn contributes to solving health problems and reducing the burdens related to them through educational programs and activities such as the subject of physical education and sports. This subject is considered one of the most important subjects of the educational system; it aims to form the young generation in many fields including health due to the close relationship between physical education and health. Therefore, the teacher of physical education and sports has the responsibility to care for the healthy behaviour of pupils in the related courses by providing them with theoretical knowledge and raising health issues that develop pupils' attitudes towards adopting healthy behaviour in the form of regular practice of sports activity, healthy nutrition, and following good health habits.

Several studies have investigated the role physical education and sports teachers in promoting pupils' health behaviors and habits. Farhank Faraj Muhammad Gharib's 2013 study entitled "The Level of Health Perceptions among Physical Education Teachers in the Sulaimani Centre". The research aims to identify the level of health perceptions in the domains of nutritional health and sports health among physical education teachers. The researcher used the descriptive method. In order to gather data, the researcher used a scale on a sample that consisted of (52) physical education teachers in the Sulaimani centre. The researcher reached several results, the most important of which was the difference in the level of health perceptions and according to the specified parts in the scale, it was found that the level of health perceptions was quite good.

The study of Rabouh Salih and others (2019) which is entitled "Study of Health Behaviours of Secondary School Pupils through Physical and Sports Activities" aims to identify the impact of practicing physical and sports activities on health

behaviours. The researchers used the descriptive method, and the data were gathered through the use of a health behavior scale which was conducted on a sample of (903) pupils from three secondary schools. It was found that there were statistically significant differences between practicing and non-practicing pupils concerning health care, public health, and the social dimension of public health.

The Study of Mona Faisal Al-Qahtani (2017) which is entitled “Assessing Healthy Lifestyles in Female University Students: Eastern province, Saudi Arabia” aims to explore female undergraduates’ healthy behaviors, to explore significant differences in their healthy behaviors, and to discover potential correlations between students’ healthy behaviors and their demographic variables. The Arabic version of the Health-Promotion Lifestyle Profile (HPLP-II) questionnaire was adapted for use in measuring health-promoting lifestyles and it was distributed to a sample of (375) undergraduate female students. The study found that the overall score for HPLP-II was low and it was concluded with a set of recommendations which necessitate educators in charge of decision making to introduce physical and health education to the general curriculum.

In view of this information, the study attempts to answer the following question:

-Does the teacher of physical education and sports control the health perceptions of his secondary school pupils and does he have an active role in promoting their health behaviours?

Under this question, the following sub-questions can be asked:

-Does the teacher of physical education and sports control the sports health perceptions of secondary school teachers and contribute in promoting their health behaviours?

-Does the teacher of physical education and sports control the nutritional health perceptions of secondary school pupils and contribute in promoting their health behaviours?

-Does the teacher of physical education and sports control the health habits and behaviours of secondary school pupils and contribute to promoting their health behaviours?

-The main hypothesis of the study is:

-The professor of physical education and sports does not control health perceptions and his role is inactive in promoting the healthy behavior of secondary school students.

While the partial hypotheses are:

-The professor of physical education and sports controls the sports health and his role is active in promoting the healthy behavior of secondary school pupils.

-The professor of physical education and sports does not control the sports and nutritional health perceptions and his role is inactive in promoting the healthy behavior of secondary school pupils.

-The professor of physical education and sports does not control the health perceptions in the dimension of healthy habits and behaviors, and his role is not activated in promoting the healthy behavior of secondary school pupils.

The study aims to unveil the level of health perceptions in the fields of healthy nutrition, sports health and the healthy behaviours and habits of teachers of physical education and sports. It also aims at finding out the extent to which physical education and sports teachers contribute in promoting the health behaviours and habits of secondary school pupils.

The importance of this research in scientific terms lies in providing an addition to libraries regarding the health perceptions of physical education teachers, and it helps researchers who are interested in the health aspect of society.

In practical terms, this research contributes to diagnosing the strengths and weaknesses in the health perceptions of teachers and pointing out their role in promoting the health aspect of young people in addition to the possibility of evaluating and making better decisions that serve this matter.

**Research terminology:**

**Health:**

**Conventional definition:** Health is defined by Perkins as the state of the relative balance of the functions of the body resulting from the coping of the body with the harmful factors it is exposed to, which is considered to be a positive process that the body's forces carry out to maintain its balance (Ban Abdul Rahman Ibrahim and Al-Aaraji, 2017, p. 2).

**Procedural definition:** The researcher defines it as the real state in which the individual is, whether he is healthy or ill. It is expressed in degrees in opposite directions: either in the optimal direction, i.e. recovery and good health, or in the opposite direction, i.e. the worst, which may end up with death, the most severe degree of illness.

**Health perceptions:**

**Idiomatic definition:** It is the individual's mental perception that reflects his/her position on a certain phenomenon or thing. It is a specific idea or outcome representing a specific meaning or abstraction of an idea formed towards specific phenomena, things or topics (Issam al-Din Metwally Abdullah, 2017, p.226).

**Procedural definition:** The researcher defines it as health-related knowledge or a set of concepts in various fields that a teacher of physical education and sports must master and teach to pupils, which enables him/her to inculcate in them good health behaviours.

**Teacher of Physical Education and Sports:**

**Idiomatic definition:** Amin Anwar Al-Khouli defines the teacher of physical education and sports as the person who achieves ideal roles in his relations with his/her pupils, culture, society, school, and the field of physical education and sports, and this depends on the insight of the physical education teacher and his/her vision towards his academic system and profession as well as on the educational contexts and the school educational atmosphere (Amin Anwar Al-Khouli, 2008, p. 145).

**Procedural definition:** The researcher considers the teacher of physical education and sports as one of the main actors in the field of education, as s/he helps pupils to develop in many ways, the first of which is the kinesthetic domain in addition to the social, emotional and health domains.

**Healthy behaviour:**

**Idiomatic definition:** Noeldner (1989) indicates that healthy behaviours include all types of behaviour that aim at developing the health potentials of the individual (Noureddine Battat, 2018, p. 39).

**Procedural definition:** The researcher defines healthy behaviour as the sum of daily behaviours and habits that aim at maintaining health.

**Secondary school pupil:**

**Procedural definition:** The secondary school pupil is defined as that individual whose intellectual capabilities and qualifications allow him to succeed and pass from middle to secondary school, and continues his studies regularly in the available disciplines in secondary school levels.

**1- Research methodology and procedures used:**

**1/1-Pilot study:**

The pilot study represents the cornerstone which enables the researchers to be familiar with the various aspects of the topic, especially those related to the practical side, as it enables him/her to consider all the foundations of the



research by giving an overview of the aspects of the field study. The pilot study also enables the researcher to experiment with the tools prepared for the study through checking the extent of their clarity, their suitability, and it allows for the measuring of the level of validity and reliability of the tool used in the study.

From this point, a pilot study was conducted with the aim of:

- Counting the target population which is the total number of teachers of physical education and sports in secondary schools, who are distributed across all secondary schools in the eastern province of the centre of Algiers during the academic year 2020/2021. The aim here is to decide on the appropriate sample and its size based on the size of the whole population.
- Testing the validity of the research tool represented in the health perceptions scale regarding healthy nutrition and sports activity by checking the clarity of the items and their suitability for the purpose, and ensuring the scientific conditions for the study tool by calculating their validity and consistency,

### **1/2-The scientific method followed:**

The approach adopted by the researcher is considered one of the most important foundations that must be taken into account in order to give a scientific value to the research. It is important to state here that the nature and quality of the research imposes on the researcher to choose a particular method. A method is defined as the way followed by the researcher in his study of the problem to discover the truth (Ammar Bouhoush and Al-Dinaibat, 2014, p.99). For each study or research, there is a scientific method used which entails a set of conditions, standards and rules that the researcher must follow. Accordingly, the nature of the research necessitates the use of the descriptive method.

The descriptive method is defined by Obeidat and others (2005) as the study of a particular phenomenon or reality as it exists; it describes it accurately, and expresses it qualitatively and quantitatively (Youssef Hamdy, 2020, p.99).

### 1/3- Target population:

The target population represents all or part of the similar elements on which the researcher wishes to apply his/her study, and this depends on the approach and the method used. It is defined as the collection of all the elements or individuals covered by the study, and which relates to the problem that has been identified (Farid Kamil Abu Zina and others, 2007, p.20).

Accordingly, the target population of the current study gathers 40 secondary school teachers of physical education and sports distributed in the eastern province of the centre of Algiers during the academic year 2020/2021.

### 1/4-The research sample:

Among the problems that face any researcher during the study is dealing with the entire population. Consequently, resorting to automatic sampling is indispensable as it allows the researcher to save time and effort.

The sample is defined as a part from the whole, and it is a proportional representation of the total study community. The study is conducted on it, and then the results obtained are generalized to the whole population.

### 1/5-Study variables:

**-The independent variable:** The independent variable is the main variable that is assumed to be influencing the dependent variable. It is defined as the variable that the researcher controls by fixing all the variables, except for one, or it is the variable that the researcher assumes to be the cause, or one of the causes, of a specific outcome, and its study may lead to knowing its effects on another variable (Abdel-Yamine Boudawood & Atallah, 2009, p.139).

In the current study, the independent variable is the health perceptions of a teacher of physical education and sports.

**-The dependent variable:** The dependent variable is known as the variable that presents itself as an issue that can be studied and is a part of the title of the

research; we also call it (the result) that we can witness (Muhammad Abdel-Fattah Al-Sayrafi, 2009, p. 53). It is the variable that follows the independent variable and is affected by it. In this study, it is health behaviours.

**-Data gathering tools:**

The tools used to collect the data and information necessary for any scientific research in any study and in order to reach the desired results are varied. Consequently, the researcher chooses the most appropriate tools for his/her study. As far as the study of the level of the awareness of health perceptions of the teachers of physical education and sports and their role in promoting healthy behaviours among secondary school pupils is concerned, a scale of health perceptions regarding sports activity, healthy nutrition, and healthy habits and behaviours (designed by Metwally Abdallah, 2017) was used. However, the scale was modified and adapted by the researcher to suit the Algerian context.

The scale, consisting of 32 items, is a cognitive test to reveal the level of awareness of health perceptions in the aforementioned dimensions. The answer to the scale consists of ticking one of five options (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree). The scores given are (5, 4, 3, 2, 1), provided that the upper degree of the scale is (160) and the lower degree of the scale is: (32) while the default average for the scale is (96).

**Table 1. The scale scoring method**

Responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Grades	05	04	03	02	01

**Source: Prepared by the researcher.**

**1/6-The scientific foundations for the scale:**

**-Reliability:** Muhammad Hassan Allawi (1996) indicates that the degree of validity is the most important factor for scales and tests, and it mainly relates to the test results (Bukhalifa Hamza, Bin Sheikh, 2019, p. 196).

- **External reliability:** we presented the scale in its initial form to a group of experienced and competent teachers for the purpose of expressing their opinions on the extent to which the tool fulfills the purpose in terms of the compatibility of the items of the scale and the field of study, whether the items fit the dimensions to which they belong, and whether the wording and clarity of the scale fit the Algerian context.

The pilot study has resulted in the approval of the scale, with some notes recorded regarding changing the wording of some items, modifying others, and rearranging the items according to the dimensions to which they belong. Since the percentage of agreement in the observations among the examiners approached 90%, and after making the required adjustments, the scale was represented, and it was approved for field application.

**Table 2: The scale’s number of dimensions, and number and type of items.**

Dimensions	Number of items	Positive expressions	Negative expressions
Sports health	07	04	03
Healthy nutrition	12	06	06
Healthy behaviours	14	08	06

**Source: Prepared by the researcher.**

-**Validity:** Validity means obtaining the same results after the process is conducted several times on the same individuals, and in the same circumstances. The validity factor was calculated according to the following methods:

- The Test-Retest Method: This method is based on applying the questionnaire in two stages through its application and re-application. Accordingly, we have applied the scale in its final form on an exploratory sample of the study population estimated at (10 teachers), which was excluded from the study afterwards. We, then, re-applied the scale, with a time lap of (10) days, on the

same individuals and in the same conditions. The value of the validity factor was (0.93) at the significance level of 0.01, which is considered a high value.

- **Cronbach Alpha coefficient method:** The validity of the scale was also confirmed by calculating the Cronbach Alpha coefficient; its value reached (0.95) which is very high.

- **Self-validity:** The calculation of the validity of the health perceptions scale was based on the calculation of self-validity, which equals the square root of the reliability coefficient and equals (0.96).

Through the validity and reliability coefficients obtained, which mostly exceeds the value of (0.70) which is very close to the value of (1), we conclude that the scale is reliable, valid and fit for the study.

**1/7-Statistical Processing Tools:**

The data gathered have been processed quantitatively by the statistical software package for social sciences (SPSS) version 22, by calculating the following equations: percentages, arithmetic average, and standard deviation

**2-Presentation, interpretation and discussion of results:**

**2/1-Presentation, analysis and interpretation of the results related to the first hypothesis:**

**Table 03: Results of the first dimension: Sports health perceptions.**

First dimension	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation	Hypothetical average	Percentage	Evaluation
Sports Health	23.35	3.11	21	66.71%	High

**Source: Prepared by the researcher.**

After the statistical analysis of the data contained in table 3, which shows the results of the first dimension (the level of awareness of health perceptions), we note that the value of the arithmetic average has reached a value of (23.35),

which is greater than the value of the hypothetical average (21), with a standard deviation of (3.11). Also, the response rate was estimated at (66.71%). Consequently, it becomes clear to us that the teacher of physical education and sports in secondary schools is characterised by a high level of awareness of sports health perceptions, which enables his/her to enhance the health behaviours of pupils in this dimension. Accordingly, the researchers concluded that the first hypothesis of this research paper is confirmed.

**2/2-Presentation, analysis and interpretation of the results related to the second hypothesis:**

**Table 04: Results of the second dimension (nutritional health perceptions)**

Second dimension	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation	Hypothetical average	Percentage	Evaluation
Healthy eating	34.5	1.73	36	57.5%	Low

**Source: Prepared by the researcher.**

Through the statistical analysis of the data contained in table 04, which shows the results of the second dimension (level of nutritional health perceptions), we observe that the value of the arithmetic average has reached (34.5) which is greater than the value of the hypothetical average (36), with a standard deviation of (1.73), and the response rate was estimated at (57.5%). From these results, it is clear to us that the teacher of physical education and sports in secondary schools is characterised by a low level of awareness in the perceptions of nutritional health which negatively affects his/her attempt to promote the healthy behaviours of pupils in this dimension. Accordingly, the researchers concluded that the second hypothesis of this research is confirmed.

**2/3Presentation, analysis and interpretation of the results related to the third hypothesis:**

**Table 05: Results of the third dimension (Health habits and behaviours)**

**The Role of Physical Education and Sports Teachers in Promoting Healthy behaviours in Secondary School Students in the Light of Health Perceptions**

Third dimension	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation	Hypothetical average	Percentage	Evaluation
Health habits and behaviours	39.25	2.77	42	65.41%	Low

**Source: Prepared by the researcher.**

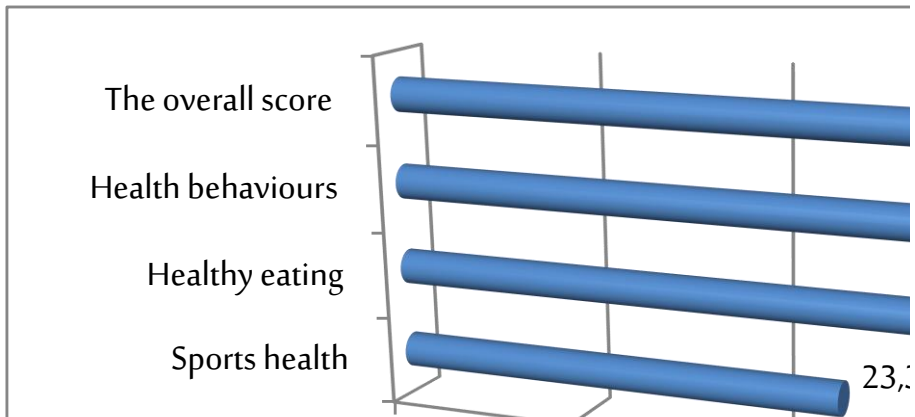
Through the statistical analysis of the data contained in table 05, which shows the results of the third dimension of the scale (Perceptions' level in health behaviours), we note that the value of the arithmetic average has reached a value of (39.25) which is smaller than the value of the hypothetical average (42), with a standard deviation of (2.77). Also, the response rate was estimated at (65.41%). From here, it is clear to us that the teacher of physical education and sports in secondary schools is characterised by a low level of health perceptions in the part related to health behaviours. The researchers have, then, concluded that the third hypothesis of this research paper is confirmed as well.

**Table 06: The results of the health perceptions of physical education teachers in all dimensions.**

Dimensions (Perceptions)	Arithmetic average	Standard deviation average	Hypothetical mean	Percentage	Evaluation
Sports Health	23.35	3.11	21	66.71%	High
Healthy eating	34.5	1.73	36	57.5%	Low
Health behaviour	39.25	2.77	42	65.41%	Low
Overall score	32.36	2.53	33	63.20%	Low

**Source: Prepared by the researcher.**

**Figure 1: Represents the degree of evaluation of each dimension and the overall score of the scale**



**Source: Prepared by the researcher.**

Through the data obtained and the statistical analysis contained in table 06 and figure 01, which show the results of the level of health perceptions of teachers of physical education and sports and the total score of the scale, it is clear to us that the level of health perceptions is low, the value of the arithmetic average of the scale in all dimensions displays a value of (32.6) which is smaller than the value of the hypothetical average for the scale as a whole (33), with a standard deviation of (2.53) and a percentage of (63.20). This leads us to judge the role of the physical education and sports teacher in promoting the healthy behaviour of secondary school pupils as minor and inactive. Accordingly, the researchers confirm the main hypothesis of the study. These results corroborate those of the study conducted by Mona Faisal Al-Qahtani (2017) which found that students do not have good health behaviours which is mainly due to the absence of the teachers' role in this domain. The result is also consistent with the study of Joe Maris (2014) which concluded that physical education teachers have an inactive role in promoting the healthy lifestyle of pupils. However, the results differ from the study of Ken Green and Miranda Thurston (2002) which showed that most teachers express their positive role in encouraging the healthy, active lifestyle of pupils and pay attention to their health. The study also differs from the one of



Farhank Faraj Muhammad Gharib (2013) which concluded that the level of health perceptions among teachers was good. The study of Hanan Ali Hasnin and others (2018) also found that the level of the sample's health perceptions was very high.

### **3- Conclusion:**

After analyzing the findings and in light of the results of the study, the researchers conclude the following:

- The level of sports health perceptions among teachers of physical education and sports was high.
- The level of perceptions of nutritional health among teachers of physical education and sports was low.
- The level of health perceptions in the dimension of health behaviours among teachers of physical education and sports was low.
- The overall score for assessing the level of health perceptions among teachers of physical education and sports is low.
- The role of the teacher of physical education and sports is not activated in promoting the health behaviours of secondary school pupils.

### **4- Recommendations and suggestions:**

- The necessity to hold forums and seminars by the responsible authorities for teachers of physical education and sports to discuss health-related issues.
- Reviewing and reconsidering the training programs offered to physical education teachers in training institutes in the part related to biomedical sciences.
- The necessity of holding training courses by specialists for physical education teachers on a regular basis for the purpose of continuous training and staying updated.

- Conducting similar studies on other categories of teachers, such as teachers of natural sciences and those of Islamic sciences.

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