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Reliability and Validity of a Short Scale for Assessing Self-Rated Physical Fitness in Filipino University Students

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Abstract

The global decline in physical fitness among youth requires the inclusion of physical fitness monitoring into health surveillance systems. Traditional clinical and field-based physical fitness assessments are often costly and time-consuming. A short scale assessing self-perceived health-related fitness has been developed as an alternative to field testing. However, further validation is needed, particularly within higher education contexts. The study aims to assess the reliability and validity of the International Fitness Scale (IFIS) for evaluating physical fitness among Filipino university students. A sample of 283 students from a small state university in Davao City, Philippines, completed the IFIS and performed a series of field-based physical fitness tests. These tests include the 20m multistage shuttle run for cardiorespiratory fitness, handgrip dynamometry and standing long jump for muscular fitness, the 4x10 shuttle run for agility/speed (motor fitness), and a modified sit-and-reach test for lower body flexibility. Results indicated that the IFIS demonstrated highly acceptable internal reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of .802 and item-total correlation ranging between .373 and .724. Bivariate correlation analyses showed a significant relationship between self-perceived physical fitness and various objective measures of physical fitness. These findings underscores the potential use of the IFIS in monitoring physical fitness among university students.

Keywords: fitness surveillance, college students, physical activity, cardiorespiratory endurance, exercise

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