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Primary School Principals' Attitudes toward Physical Education and Their Relationship to Physical Education Teacher Performance in Chettia, Chlef

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Abstract:

This field study examined primary school principals' attitudes toward physical education and sport in Chattia, Chlef, and tested their relationship to physical education teacher performance. Using a descriptive-analytical design, the study surveyed 15 principals through a structured questionnaire and analyzed the data with frequencies, percentages, chi-square, and Pearson's correlation coefficient. The findings showed a positive attitude toward the subject, but less favorable attitudes toward the teacher, especially regarding scientific and professional standing. No statistically significant relationship was found between principals' attitudes and teacher performance.

KEY WORDS : PRINCIPALS' ATTITUDES; PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT; PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER; TEACHER PERFORMANCE; PRIMARY SCHOOL.

الملخص:

هدفت الدراسة إلى تشخيص اتجاهات مديري المدارس الابتدائية نحو التربية البدنية والرياضية في بلدية الشطية بولاية الشلف، واختبار علاقتها بأداء أستاذ التربية البدنية كما يدركه المديرون. اعتمدت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي وشملت عينة قصدية من 15 مديرًا، واستُخدمت استبانة عولجت بياناتها بالتكرارات والنسب المئوية واختبار كاي مربع ومعامل ارتباط بيرسون. أظهرت النتائج اتجاهًا إيجابيًا نحو المادة، مقابل اتجاه أقل إيجابية نحو أستاذها، خاصة فيما يتعلق بمكانته العلمية والمهنية. كما لم تظهر علاقة دالة إحصائيًا بين اتجاهات المديرين وأداء الأستاذ.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اتجاهات المديرين؛ التربية البدنية والرياضية؛ أستاذ التربية البدنية؛ أداء الأستاذ؛ المدرسة الابتدائية.

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1- Introduction:

The attitudes of educational actors influence the quality of everyday school decisions because they reflect cognitive, affective, and behavioral representations of both the school subject and the people responsible for teaching it. In this context, physical education and sport should not be reduced to a supplementary activity; it is an educational field that contributes to learners' physical, psychological, and social development.

The field observation behind the original study suggested a gap between theoretical recognition of the importance of physical education and sport and the practical status granted to it within the primary school, whether in organization, follow-up, or support for the subject teacher. The central study question therefore asked: What is the nature of primary school principals' attitudes toward physical education and sport, and how are these attitudes related to the performance of the physical education teacher from the principals' perspective?

The topic is important because Arab and Algerian research has addressed students' and teachers' perspectives more frequently than principals' attitudes, even though the principal plays a decisive role in curriculum implementation, resource allocation, and school climate. Previous studies reported mixed findings. Al-Hammami and Abd al-Rahman Ahmad Zafar reported generally positive attitudes among Saudi principals toward school physical education, whereas Yahya Muhammad Hassan Abdu reported a more negative orientation in Egypt. Nilili Ramzi Fahim also showed that attitudes differ across educational actors and positions.

2- General objective of the study:

The study pursued three interrelated objectives: first, to diagnose principals' attitudes toward physical education and sport as a school subject; second, to diagnose their attitudes toward the physical education teacher; and third, to test whether a statistically meaningful relationship existed between these attitudes and teacher performance as perceived by principals.

The scientific importance of the study lies in clarifying the distinction between valuing a subject in principle and granting full professional recognition to the teacher who delivers it. Its practical

importance lies in informing school leadership, supervision, and teacher-support practices in the primary school.

3- Procedural definition of the concepts mentioned in the research:

The first concept: principals' attitudes toward physical education and sport. In the present study, this concept refers to the principals' evaluative orientations toward the curricular value, educational role, and organizational status of physical education and sport within the primary school, as measured through the questionnaire items administered to the sample.

The researcher concludes: attitudes were operationalized as measurable positive or negative judgments concerning the subject and its institutional standing.

The second concept: physical education teacher performance. In this study, teacher performance refers to the level of professional execution attributed by principals to the physical education teacher in relation to lesson preparation, specialization, school contribution, and fulfillment of the educational role, as reflected in the performance-related items of the instrument.

The researcher concludes: performance was treated as a perceived professional outcome that could be compared with principals' attitudes without assuming that attitudes alone determine it.

4- The methodological procedures used in the study:

4-1 Method and tools:

The study adopted the descriptive-analytical method because it was appropriate to a research problem that required observing attitudes as they exist in the field, describing them, analyzing them, and testing their possible relationships without manipulating variables.

The field of the study was limited to primary schools in the municipality of Chattia, Wilaya of Chlef. The population consisted of primary school principals within this geographical area, and a purposive sample of 15 principals was selected on the basis of accessibility and relevance to the study setting.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire organized around two main axes: attitudes toward physical education and sport

as a subject, and attitudes toward the physical education teacher. Additional items were included to estimate teacher performance from the principals' perspective. Statistical processing relied on frequencies, percentages, the chi-square test, and Pearson's correlation coefficient.

Table N°1**:** Methodological characteristics of the field study

Component	Description
Study type	A descriptive-analytical field study.
Spatial setting	Primary schools in the municipality of Chattia, Wilaya of Chlef.
Sample	15 primary school principals.
Sampling method	Purposive (intentional) sample.
Data collection instrument	Structured questionnaire measuring attitudes, with additional items on teacher performance.
Statistical analysis	Frequencies, percentages, chi-square test, and Pearson's correlation coefficient.
Main outputs	Positive attitude toward the subject, relatively negative attitude toward the teacher, and no significant relationship with performance.

4-2 Presentation and analysis of results:

The results were organized around two main axes: principals' attitudes toward physical education and sport as a subject, and principals' attitudes toward the physical education teacher. A final result concerned the correlational test between attitudes and teacher performance.

Table N°2: Principals' responses toward physical education and sport as a subject (N = 15)

Statement / Indicator	Yes	No	Interpretive reading
The importance of including physical education in the school curriculum	14 (93.33%)	1 (6.67%)	Strong positive indicator
Its teaching is based on scientific foundations	10 (66.67%)	5 (33.33%)	Moderately positive indicator
It contributes to pupils' holistic development	13 (86.67%)	2 (13.33%)	Strong positive indicator
It should be regarded as a core subject	14 (93.33%)	1 (6.67%)	Strong positive indicator
It does not rise to the level of other subjects	9 (60.00%)	6 (40.00%)	Relatively negative comparative indicator

It is a waste of pupils' time	2 (13.33%)	13 (86.67%)	Clear rejection of the negative proposition
Its removal from the curriculum would be acceptable	2 (13.33%)	13 (86.67%)	Clear rejection of deletion

. **Source:** Mohammed KHERROUBI (2026)

Table 2 shows that principals generally ascribe clear educational value to the subject. Most acknowledged the importance of including it in the curriculum, its contribution to holistic development, and rejected the view that it is a waste of time or a subject that could be removed. At the same time, a notable share still considered the subject lower in status than other subjects, which reveals the persistence of hierarchical representations inside the school institution.

Table N°3: Principals' responses toward the physical education and sport teacher (N = 15)

Statement / Indicator	**Yes**	**No**	**Interpretive reading**
The subject can be taught by any teacher	2 (13.33%)	13 (86.67%)	Recognition of the importance of specialization
The teacher needs advanced studies in the field of work	5 (33.33%)	10 (66.67%)	Limited support for professional development
Teaching the subject does not require intellectual effort	1 (6.67%)	14 (93.33%)	Recognition of mental and practical effort
The teacher must prepare lessons in advance	14 (93.33%)	1 (6.67%)	Recognition of prior preparation
The teacher has a role in maintaining order during the school day	14 (93.33%)	1 (6.67%)	Confidence in the organizational role
The teacher is less knowledgeable than teachers of other subjects	14 (93.33%)	1 (6.67%)	Sharp negative indicator concerning scientific status
Disciplining disruptive pupils is the teacher's most important duty	2 (13.33%)	13 (86.67%)	Rejection of reducing the role to punitive control

Source: Mohammed KHERROUBI (2026)

Table 3 indicates that principals' image of the physical education teacher is not one-dimensional. It combines recognition of specialization, lesson preparation, and intellectual effort with a clearly negative representation of the teacher's scientific standing compared with teachers of other subjects, alongside limited support for continued academic development.

Table N°4: Synthetic summary of hypothesis testing

Hypothesis / Axis	Summary
Principals' attitude toward the subject	Overall positive, while a relatively subordinate representation of the subject's status compared with other subjects remains.
Principals' attitude toward the teacher	Relatively negative, especially regarding the teacher's scientific and professional standing.
Relationship between attitudes and teacher performance	No statistically significant correlation was recorded according to the Pearson results reported in the original study.

The original statistical analysis reported that the calculated correlation value was lower than the tabulated value. On this basis, the hypothesis of a significant relationship between principals' attitudes and teacher performance was rejected. Professional performance therefore appears to be shaped by additional organizational, material, and human factors within the school environment.

4-3 Discussion and interpretation of the results:

The results reveal a practical paradox: principals generally acknowledge the importance of physical education and sport as a subject beneficial to pupils from health and educational perspectives, yet this acknowledgement does not automatically translate into equivalent recognition of the teacher responsible for it. In other words, school culture may separate the value of the subject from the professional image of the teacher who implements it.

The positive attitude toward the subject may be explained by its official inclusion in the curriculum and by increased awareness of its preventive, educational, motor, social, and emotional benefits. By contrast, the relatively negative attitude toward the teacher suggests the persistence of stereotypical perceptions about the profession. Considering the teacher less knowledgeable than teachers of other subjects is a symbolic judgment that weakens professional status, even when principals simultaneously recognize the need for specialization and preparation.

This finding partly converges with previous literature that distinguishes between attitudes toward physical education as a subject and attitudes toward the person who teaches it. It also explains why a generally positive attitude toward the subject alone is insufficient to guarantee stronger teacher performance or fuller professional

integration within the school. Performance is shaped within a broader environment that includes facilities, school time, administrative support, professional relations, and supervision patterns.

The absence of a significant relationship between principals' attitudes and teacher performance is consistent with a multifactorial understanding of performance. Even when some principals hold negative perceptions, teacher performance may depend more directly on training, experience, school characteristics, the availability of resources, and the level of participation in the organizational life of the institution.

Table N°5: Synthetic comparison between the current study and selected previous studies

Study	Context	Central finding	Relation to the current study
Al-Hammami & Abd al-Rahman Ahmad Zafar	Saudi Arabia	Generally positive attitudes among principals toward school physical education.	Agrees with the present study in the dimension related to the subject itself.
Yahya Muhammad Hassan Abdu	Egypt	Negative attitudes among principals toward physical education.	Differs in the evaluation of the subject, but partly converges in some representations related to the teacher.
Nilili Ramzi Fahim	Egypt	More positive attitudes among female physical education teachers than among supervisors and headmistresses.	Supports the idea that representations differ according to educational actor and institutional position.
Ben Sayebi Youssef	Algeria	Negative attitudes among some physical education teachers toward their own subject.	Supports the possibility that teachers' own representations interact with the image of the subject within the institution.

Study limitations. The generalizability of the findings is constrained by the small sample size, the use of purposive sampling, the restriction of the field to one municipality, and the reliance on principals' responses without direct observation or systematic comparison with teachers' perspectives.

Conclusion:

The study demonstrates that primary school principals' attitudes toward physical education and sport are not homogeneous. They are clearly positive when the issue concerns the subject itself, but become less positive when the issue concerns the teacher and the teacher's scientific and professional status. The study also does not support the existence of a statistically significant relationship between these attitudes and teacher performance.

A key practical inference follows from this result: improving physical education and sport in the primary school does not depend solely on praising the subject in educational discourse; it also requires rebuilding the image of its teacher within school organization, improving working conditions, and enabling genuine opportunities for professional development and participation in the educational life of the institution.

Recommendations for school and administrative action:

- Organize orientation and training sessions for primary school principals on the educational and pedagogical roles of physical education and sport.

- Provide continuing training opportunities for the physical education teacher and link them to promotion and evaluation pathways.

- Include the subject teacher in councils and educational meetings and avoid limiting the role to disciplinary or secondary organizational tasks.

. Improve the physical infrastructure, facilities, and means required for physical and sports activities in primary schools.

- Promote an institutional vision that treats physical education as an integral part of school learning rather than a marginal activity or supplementary time slot.

Future research prospects. Future studies may expand the sample size and geographical scope, combine quantitative and qualitative tools such as interviews and classroom observation, compare principals' views with those of teachers and parents, and examine the impact of training programs directed at school principals in the field of physical education and sport.

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