



Research Article

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Assessment of Physical Fitness Levels in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teacher Education Students at IAIN Kendari

La Ode Adhi Virama¹, Raehang¹, Irman Amin¹, Muhammad Aman¹, Dewangga Yudhistira²

¹ Institute Agama Islam Negeri Kendari, Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Kendari, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia

² Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia

Abstract

The transition to university life often leads to significant changes in daily routines and lifestyle, which can negatively affect students' physical fitness. Prior research indicates a global trend of declining physical activity, particularly during the transition from school to university. This study aims to assess the physical fitness levels of students in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teacher Education Program (PGMI) at IAIN Kendari and identify areas requiring strategic interventions to enhance their physical well-being. A descriptive quantitative approach was used to evaluate the fitness levels of 300 PGMI students. Samples were selected through purposive sampling, focusing on third- to fifth-semester students without severe health conditions. The Indonesian Student Fitness Test (Tes Kebugaran Pelajar Nusantara, TKPN) was used, assessing endurance, arm and abdominal strength, speed, and flexibility. Data were analyzed descriptively based on TKPN categories: "Excellent," "Good," "Fair," "Poor," and "Very Poor." The results showed that 78% of students were classified as having "Poor" (44.33%) and "Very Poor" (31.66%) fitness levels. Only 7% achieved "Good" (5.66%) or "Excellent" (2.33%) fitness, while 16% were in the "Fair" category. These findings highlight a concerning lack of physical fitness among the majority of students, suggesting an urgent need for targeted physical activity programs to address this issue. The low physical fitness levels among PGMI students underscore the necessity for structured and sustainable interventions, such as integrating physical fitness programs into the curriculum. Universities should play a pivotal role in fostering an active lifestyle by providing supportive environments and facilities. These efforts can not only enhance students' physical fitness but also contribute to their long-term health and well-being.

Keywords: Physical Fitness, PGMI, Student, Indonesian Student Fitness Test.

INTRODUCTION

The college period represents a crucial transition period in one's life, where significant changes occur in lifestyle and daily habits. During this time, students often face challenges in balancing academic demands, social activities, and maintaining their physical health. Physical fitness, as one of the fundamental health indicators, is often neglected amid busy schedules and academic workload ^[1]. Recent research findings regarding global physical activity behavior show that 40% of the Filipino population tends to be physically inactive ^[2]. Furthermore, research findings reveal that the majority of the population in Europe (34-87%) ^[3], Australia (43,4%), and the United States (60%) ^[4] lead lifestyles with minimal regular physical activity.

Meanwhile, recent scientific findings note a decline in physical activity within society, with the most significant changes occurring during the transition period from school to university ^[5-7]. Research findings from students across 23 countries in Central and Eastern Europe reveal that only 32% of male students and 18% of female students meet the physical activity standards established by WHO ^[1]. A study in Spain also shows that 45% of students are insufficiently physically active, particularly among female students ^[8].

According to Kubieva et al. ^[9] study results indicate that students experience problems with BMI (Body Mass Index) and body strength, regardless of their physical activity levels. Low cardiorespiratory fitness is a key indicator that can be addressed through lifestyle changes. Low cardiorespiratory fitness is a key indicator that can be addressed through lifestyle changes ^[10], particularly through increased physical activity and improved dietary patterns ^[11]. Studies indicate that 46.7% of university students do not engage in physical activities, while 16.7% are classified as inactive ^[12]. Other research also confirms an increase in sedentary lifestyles among university students ^[13].

***Corresponding author:**

La Ode Adhi Virama
Institute Agama Islam Negeri
Kendari, Pendidikan Guru
Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Kendari,
Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia
Email:
laodeadhiVirama@iainkendari.a
c.id

Based on the high academic pressure and limited time for physical activities among students, this study aims to examine the physical fitness conditions of students in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teacher Education Program at IAIN Kendari.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive approach to assess the physical fitness levels of students in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teacher Education Program (PGMI) at IAIN Kendari. This approach aims to provide an objective overview of the students' physical fitness conditions based on the results of fitness tests conducted.

Population and Sample

The population of this study comprised all active students of the PGMI program at IAIN Kendari. The sample was selected using purposive sampling based on the following inclusion criteria: (1) Students in their third to fifth semester; (2) No history of serious health issues that could affect the physical fitness test results; (3) Willingness to participate as respondents.

Research Instrument

The assessment of physical fitness levels was conducted using the Nusantara Student Fitness Test (TKPN) instrument for the 20–25 age group. The TKPN includes five measurement aspects: (1) A 12-minute run to assess endurance; (2) Push-ups to measure arm muscle strength; (3) Sit-ups to measure abdominal muscle strength; (4) A 50-meter sprint to measure speed.

Research Procedure

The study began with identifying samples based on the inclusion criteria and providing participants with explanations regarding the study's objectives, procedures, and benefits. Equipment and facilities such as stopwatches, mats, and running tracks were prepared beforehand. Participants then underwent a series of physical fitness tests following the TKPN guidelines, which included measurements of endurance, strength, flexibility, and other aspects within a specified timeframe, with results meticulously recorded for each test.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the students' physical fitness levels based on TKPN categories: "Excellent," "Good," "Fair," "Poor," and "Very Poor." The study was conducted in adherence to ethical research principles, including obtaining informed consent, maintaining participant data confidentiality, and ensuring voluntary participation. These measures aimed to provide an accurate depiction of the physical fitness levels of PGMI students at IAIN Kendari.

RESULTS

The physical fitness description of students in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teacher Education Program, calculated using descriptive percentage formulas, is presented in the following table:

Table 1 and Figure 1 shows that the physical fitness levels of PGMI Program students are categorized as follows: 95 students (31.66%) in the Very Poor category, 133 students (44.33%) in the Poor category, 48 students (16%) in the Fair category, 17 students (5.66%) in the "Good" category, and 7 students (2.33%) in the Excellent category.

The results of the study indicate that the majority of PGMI students at IAIN Kendari, 78%, fall into the Poor and Very Poor categories, reflecting an overall low level of physical fitness. On the other hand, only 7% of students reached the Good and Excellent categories,

indicating that optimal physical fitness is almost unattainable. The low percentage of students with optimal fitness suggests the need for strategic efforts, such as implementing structured physical activity programs, to significantly improve students' health and physical performance.

Table 1: Physical Fitness Levels of Students in the PGMI Program

Category	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent (%)
Excellent	7	2.33	7	2.33
Good	17	5.66	24	8
Fair	48	16	72	24
Poor	133	44.33	205	68.33
Very Poor	95	31.66	300	100
Total	300	100		

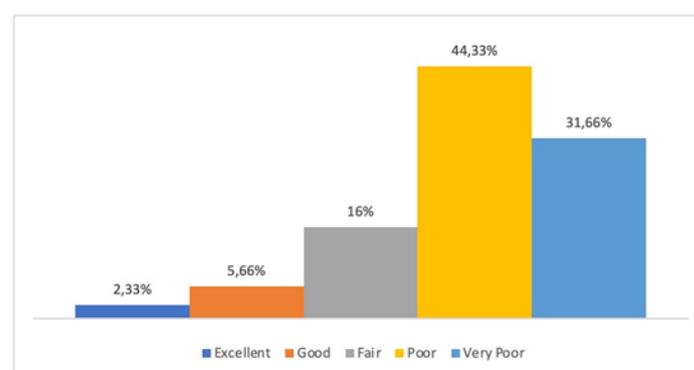


Figure 1: Physical Fitness Levels of PGMI Program Students Diagram

DISCUSSION

This study assesses the physical fitness levels of PGMI students at IAIN Kendari, with the results showing that the majority of students fall into the "Poor" and "Very Poor" categories. These findings indicate the need for significant interventions to improve physical fitness. The university, as a strategic environment for promoting physical activity, plays a crucial role in encouraging healthy lifestyles and enhancing students' physical fitness.

These results are in line with the findings of Kaminska et al.,^[14] who stated that students from faculties with sports programs tend to have better physical fitness compared to those from other faculties due to the high level of physical activity in their curriculum. In this context, PGMI IAIN Kendari could adopt a similar approach by incorporating physical fitness programs into its curriculum.

In comparison, research by Osipov et al.,^[15] shows that students with higher levels of physical activity have better physical fitness. This data reinforces the importance of physical activity-based interventions, as proposed by Zou et al.,^[16] including programs like traditional dance, hiking, or water-based exercises, which have been proven to improve strength, balance, and flexibility.

Furthermore, these results also reflect the challenges highlighted by Mitrović et al.,^[17] who stated that a lack of physical activity can significantly decrease physical fitness. Therefore, ongoing physical fitness programs need to be implemented to ensure that students maintain an adequate level of fitness^[17-20].

Several limitations in this study should be considered. Cultural differences, educational systems, and student activities may influence the research outcomes. For instance, students who are busy with part-time jobs or academic tasks may have limited time to regularly participate in physical activities. Therefore, universities must create a supportive environment and provide facilities to encourage physical fitness.

The results of this study reinforce the urgency of developing structured and sustainable intervention-based physical education programs. These programs aim not only to improve the physical fitness of students but also to support their long-term health, as proposed by Rossomanno et al., [21] that monitored programs can have a significantly positive impact.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the majority of students in the Primary School Teacher Education Program (PGMI) at IAIN Kendari have low physical fitness levels. As many as 78% of students fall into the "Poor" and "Very Poor" categories, while only 7% reach the "Good" and "Very Good" categories. These findings indicate the importance of strategic interventions, such as integrating physical fitness programs into the curriculum, to improve students' physical health.

Structured physical activity interventions, such as regular exercise routines or sports-based programs, can help students achieve better physical fitness levels. These results also highlight the need for university support in providing facilities and an environment that promotes an active lifestyle. With proper implementation, these programs not only improve physical fitness but also support students' long-term health.

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Conflicts of interest

None declared.

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