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## The physical condition of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam

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### Abstract

The physical fitness of high school students plays a fundamental role in their comprehensive development of intellect, spirit, and character. Excellent physical fitness helps enhance learning ability, boost immunity, form a healthy lifestyle, and lay the foundation for long-term training and development. The purpose of the research is to establish standards for assessing students' physical fitness status at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam. The research uses methods for synthesizing and analyzing documents, conducting interviews, and applying statistical methods to address the research topics. The research subjects include 200 students (100 male, 100 female) from the 11th grade at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, and 26 administrators, specialists, and teachers with experience and expertise in the field of physical education. The study found six fitness tests for students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School in Can Tho City, Vietnam. These tests included the 30m sprint (seconds), handgrip strength (kg), standing long jump (cm), sit-ups in 30 seconds (reps), standing trunk flexion (cm), 4 x 10m shuttle run (seconds), and 5-minute endurance run (meters); Develop evaluation standards including: scoring scale, classification, comprehensive classification by gender. The evaluation results show that the physical fitness status of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, is classified as: Good-Excellent (4.5%), average (66.5%), weak (29%); classified according to the standards of the Ministry of Education and Training: good (9%), satisfactory (74%), unsatisfactory (17%).

**Keyword:** Current Situation, Physical Fitness, Students, High School, Can Tho, Vietnam

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### 1. Introduction

According to the socialist orientation, people are both the goal and the driving force behind the country's development. As the subject of all creative activities, humans play a decisive role in creating material wealth, cultural values, and promoting social progress. Therefore, comprehensive human development becomes an essential requirement, including

high intellectual development, robust physical health, rich spiritual life, and moral integrity <sup>[1]</sup>.

This viewpoint continues to be affirmed in the XIII Congress Document of the Party, emphasizing that "human resources are the most important," while also setting the requirement for "comprehensive human development" <sup>[2]</sup> and "making breakthroughs in fundamentally and comprehensively

renewing education and training, developing high-quality human resources, and attracting and valuing talented individuals" [3]. This is a strategic orientation that serves as a guiding principle for the entire national education system, in which general education, especially at the high school level, plays a fundamental role in forming and developing the core qualities and competencies of individuals [4].

In addition, the viewpoint that "health is the most valuable asset of a person" affirms the special role of physical factors in the structure of comprehensive development. Health is not only a condition that ensures the activities of learning and labor but also the foundation of personal happiness and the sustainable development of society. Therefore, protecting, caring for, and improving the health of the people is identified as a top priority goal, motivation, and task in national development strategies [5]. In current educational practice, high school students are identified as a force in a stage of vigorous physical development, gradually perfecting their intellect and character while also preparing to transition to vocational training or higher education. This period is the "hinge phase" that plays a decisive role in shaping the future workforce of the country.

However, under current conditions, students are facing many adverse factors such as prolonged academic pressure, a tendency toward inactivity, dependence on technology devices, and a lack of suitable physical training conditions. This causes students to be less physically fit, have uneven development, and have more health problems at school, all of which have a direct impact on how well they learn and how well they develop over time. Also, being physically fit is important for developing traits like willpower, discipline, resilience, and cooperation, which are all important for building personality and citizenship skills in the context of integration and digital transformation. A good physical base not only helps students deal with academic stress better, but it also helps them build a healthy, active, and positive lifestyle [6].

Especially in the context of digital transformation and extensive international integration, the requirements for high school students go beyond knowledge to include self-learning abilities, life skills, adaptability, and citizenship qualities. In this context, physical fitness plays a foundational role, not only ensuring biological development but also directly impacting learning effectiveness, stress endurance, and the overall development of the individual. This is also the "golden period" to develop basic physical qualities such as speed, strength, endurance, and agility while also forming exercise habits and a healthy lifestyle [7, 8].

Although physical education in high schools has been implemented with attention, the effectiveness in developing students' physical fitness remains limited and does not meet the requirements for comprehensive development in the new era. This situation requires in-depth research to accurately assess the current state, identify key factors, and propose scientifically sound and feasible solutions to enhance students' physical fitness. From the above analysis, it can be affirmed that enhancing physical fitness for high school students is not only urgently significant in terms of education but also strategically important for developing a high-quality workforce, contributing to the rapid and sustainable development goals of the country [9]. With the above importance, we chose the research direction titled

*"The physical condition of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam."*

## 2. Materials and Methods

### 2.1 Methods

**Documentary research method:** This method is used to collect information related to the research issue through sources such as books, scientific articles, and published scientific works. The results of referencing and collecting information from various sources are used to build a theoretical foundation, formulate scientific hypotheses, determine objectives, and analyze and discuss research results on the criteria for assessing physical fitness for high school students.

**Interview method:** aimed at collecting information through the opinions of experts and specialists on selection criteria for evaluating the physical fitness of high school students.

**Statistical methods:** aimed at processing and analyzing the data collected during the research process with the support of SPSS 22.0 software.

### 2.2 Participants

200 students (100 male, 100 female) attend the 11th grade at Phan Ngoc Hien High School in Can Tho City, Vietnam.

26 managers, specialists, and teachers with experience and long-standing service in the field of physical education and school sports.

## 3. Results

To assess the physical fitness status of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, the research was conducted based on two main aspects:

- Establishing standards for assessing the physical fitness status of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam.
- Assessment of the physical fitness status of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam

### 3.1. Developing a physical fitness assessment standard for students of Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam

The research proceeds with the following steps:

1. Determine the criteria for assessing physical fitness for students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam.
2. Building physical fitness assessment standards for students of Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam

#### 3.1.1. Determine the criteria for evaluating physical fitness for students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam

Through the study of synthesizing criteria for evaluating students' physical fitness from research works such as: Council of Europe Committee for the Development of Sport [10]; Bednarek, J., Pomykała, S., Bigosińska, M., & Szygula, Z. (2016) [11]; Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (CSEP) (2003) [12]; Amornsriwatanakul A, Nakornkhet K, Katewongsa P, *et al.* (2016) [13]; ASEAN [14]; Australia Council for Health Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER) (1996) [15]; Keating, X. D., *et al.* (2018) [16]; Keating, X. D., *et al.* (2019) [17]; the USA using criteria according to FitnessGram [18]; Osipov, A. Y. *et al.* (2020) [19]; American College of Sports Medicine (1998) [20]; Institute of Sports Science (2003) [21]; Ministry of Education and Training (2008) [22]; Duong Nghiep Chi *et al.* (1998) [20]; Institute of Sports Science (2003) [21]; Ministry of Education and Training (2008) [22]; Duong Nghiep Chi *et al.* (2013)

[23]... Synthesis of research works by domestic authors, based on the practical conditions at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, the study selects evaluation criteria according to Decision 53/2008/BGDĐT, including: 30m XPC run (seconds), grip strength (kg), standing long jump (cm), sit-ups in 30 seconds (reps), standing trunk bend (cm), 4 x 10m shuttle run (seconds), and a 5-minute run (m).

**3.1.2. Building physical fitness assessment standards for students of Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam**

**- Build the C scale**

To determine the level of achievement for each criterion, in order to facilitate a more detailed and specific evaluation, as

well as to compare the physical fitness among students, it is necessary to use a unified evaluation scale. In this study, the C scale is used as the evaluation scale, ranging from 0 to 10 points, commonly used when collecting large samples and not requiring high precision. The C rating scale is a standard scale used for most projects when establishing a rating system [24, 26].

The study examined the criteria for evaluating physical fitness determined on 200 students, calculating the mean value and standard deviation, thereby constructing a scoring scale for evaluating physical fitness indicators according to the C scale for students of Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, presented in tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1:** Scoring criteria for evaluating the physical fitness of male students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam

Scoring criteria	Rating scale									
	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Standing long jump (cm)	226	221	217	212	208	203	198	194	189	184
Handgrip strength (kg)	45.62	44.67	43.73	42.78	41.84	40.89	39.95	39	38.06	37.11
Sit-ups (reps/s)	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12
Run 30m from a standing start (s)	5.14	5.25	5.37	5.48	5.6	5.71	5.83	5.94	6.06	6.17
4x10m shuttle run (s)	11.01	11.27	11.53	11.79	12.05	12.31	12.57	12.83	13.09	13.35
5-minute endurance run (m).	1069	1047	1025	1003	981	959	937	915	893	871

**Table 2:** Scoring criteria for evaluating the physical fitness of female students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam

Scoring criteria	Rating scale									
	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Standing long jump (cm)	176	171	167	163	159	154	150	146	141	137
Handgrip strength (kg)	33.21	32.3	31.39	30.48	29.57	28.66	27.75	26.84	25.93	25.02
Sit-ups (reps/s)	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	12
Run 30m from a standing start (s)	6.11	6.22	6.34	6.45	6.57	6.68	6.8	6.91	7.03	7.14
4x10m shuttle run (s)	11.4	11.66	11.93	12.19	12.46	12.72	12.99	13.25	13.52	13.78
5-minute endurance run (m).	979	957	935	913	891	869	848	826	804	782

**- Developing comprehensive physical fitness assessment standards for students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam.**

Based on the number of evaluation criteria, the 5-point scale convention mentioned above, and the determination in

section 3.1.1, the study has 6 criteria. Table 3 presents the comprehensive physical fitness classification table for students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam.

**Table 3:** Comprehensive evaluation standards for classifying the physical fitness of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam

Classification	Excellent	Good	Average	Weak	Below Weak
Total score	≥ 54	From 42 to nearly 54	From 30 to nearly 42	From 18 to nearly 30	<18

**3.2. Assessment of the physical fitness status of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam**

**3.2.1. Evaluation of the physical fitness of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, according to the evaluation standards.**

To evaluate and compare each criterion for assessing the physical fitness of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, the results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Results of physical fitness classification of students at Phan Ngọc Hiền High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, according to evaluation standards

12	Classification	Male (100)		Female (100)		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Standing long jump (cm)	Excellent	7	7	2	2	9	4.5
	Good	15	15	24	24	39	19.5
	Average	49	49	42	42	91	45.5
	Weak	22	22	24	24	46	23
	Below Weak	7	7	8	8	15	7.5
Handgrip strength (kg)	Excellent	6	6	7	7	13	6.5
	Good	25	25	26	26	51	25.5
	Average	37	37	32	32	69	34.5
	Weak	25	25	31	31	56	28
	Below Weak	7	7	4	4	11	5.5
Sit-ups (reps/s)	Excellent	7	7	7	7	14	7
	Good	15	15	15	15	30	15
	Average	38	38	42	42	80	40
	Weak	37	37	33	33	70	35
	Below Weak	3	3	3	3	6	3
Run 30m from a standing start (s)	Excellent	6	6	5	5	11	5.5
	Good	33	33	20	20	53	26.5
	Average	31	31	45	45	76	38
	Weak	25	25	26	26	51	25.5
	Below Weak	5	5	4	4	9	4.5
4x10m shuttle run (s)	Excellent	4	4	4	4	8	4
	Good	23	23	27	27	50	25
	Average	46	46	41	41	87	43.5
	Weak	18	18	22	22	40	20
	Below Weak	9	9	6	6	15	7.5
5-minute endurance run (m).	Excellent	5	5	8	8	13	6.5
	Good	28	28	23	23	51	25.5
	Average	37	37	39	39	76	38
	Weak	21	21	25	25	46	23
	Below Weak	9	9	5	5	14	7

Table 4 shows that all the above criteria have percentages of students classified as average or below, accounting for over 70%. This indicates that the physical fitness of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, is relatively low, specifically:

- **Speed quality:** The 30m XPC run test has an average or below-average rate of 68%, while the rate of good or above ratings only accounts for 32%.
- **Strength qualities:** The grip strength test indicated that only 32% scored fairly or better, while 68% scored average or below. Standing long jump test: the percentage of those scoring above average is only 24%, while the percentage of those scoring below average is up to 76%; sit-up test: the percentage of good results is only 22%, while the percentage of average or below results is up to 78%.
- **Endurance quality:** The 5-minute run test shows that about 30% of students achieved a classification of "good" or higher, with an average rate of 38%, while the rate of "weak" students is 23%.
- **Dexterity:** The 4x10m shuttle run test shows that only 29% of students are at a satisfactory level or higher, while 63.5% are at an average level or lower.

### Comprehensive evaluation

The study aims to assess the physical fitness status of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School in Ninh Kieu District, Can Tho City, using the application standards developed by the researchers. Based on the test results and the evaluation score tables 1 and 2, and combined with the comprehensive evaluation table 3, the study classified the

physical fitness status of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam. The results of the physical fitness classification are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Classification of the physical condition of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam

Quantity	Classification									
	Excellent		Good		Average		Weak		Below Weak	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Male (n = 100)	0	0	4	4	68	68	28	28	0	0
Female (n = 100)	0	0	5	5	65	65	30	30	0	0
Total n = 200	0	0	9	4.5	133	66.5	58	29	0	0

The results in Table 5 show that the physical fitness of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, is mostly rated as average, with 66.5% of students falling into this category, 0% rated as excellent, 4.5% rated as good, 29% rated as poor, and 0% rated as very poor.

### 3.2.2. Evaluation according to the standards of the Ministry of Education and Training

According to Decision No. 53/2008/QĐ-BGDĐT, which promulgates regulations on the evaluation and classification of the physical fitness of students [22], based on six specific contents: handgrip strength, supine sit-ups, standing long jump, 30 m high-start run, 4 x 10 m shuttle run, and 5-minute endurance run. The study has been classified according to each criterion and is specifically presented in Table 6.

**Table 6:** Results of the classification of each physical fitness criterion of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, according to the standards of the Ministry of Education and Training.

Evaluation criteria	Classification	Male		Female		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Standing long jump (cm)	Good	5	5	12	12	17	8.5
	Accomplished	72	72	74	74	146	73
	Unaccomplished	23	23	11	11	34	17
Handgrip strength (kg)	Good	0	0	20	20	20	10
	Accomplished	72	72	69	69	141	70.5
	Unaccomplished	28	28	11	11	39	19.5
Sit-ups (reps/s)	Good	2	2	12	12	14	7
	Accomplished	80	80	74	74	154	77
	Unaccomplished	18	18	14	14	32	16
Run 30m from a standing start (s)	Good	0	0	1	1	1	0.5
	Accomplished	81	81	88	88	169	84.5
	Unaccomplished	19	19	11	11	30	15
4x10m shuttle run (s)	Good	15	15	16	16	31	15.5
	Accomplished	62	62	67	67	129	64.5
	Unaccomplished	23	23	17	17	40	20
5-minute endurance run (m).	Good	1	1	14	14	15	7.5
	Accomplished	78	78	73	73	151	75.5
	Unaccomplished	21	21	13	13	34	17

Based on the results in Table 6, the following:

- Good classification rate: in all indicators, the levels are low (the highest 15.5% in the 4x10m shuttle run indicator and the lowest 0.5% in the 30m XPC run indicator).
- Classification rate Accomplished: over 70% in most criteria, with the lowest being the 4x10m shuttle run at 64.5%.
- The failure rate according to the Ministry's standards for the following criteria, standing long jump, and 5-minute run at one's own pace, is 17%. Meanwhile, the criteria for lying back sit-ups and the 30m XPC run have a failure rate of about 16%; the highest failure rates are in the 4x10 m shuttle run and the grip strength test, both with a failure rate of around 20%.

**General assessment of physical fitness according to the regulations of the Ministry of Education and Training**

The overall classification results according to the evaluation standards of the Ministry of Education and Training are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7:** Summary of classification according to the standards of the Ministry of Education and Training

Classification	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Good	4	4	13	13	17	9
Accomplished	74	74	74	74	148	74
Unaccomplished	22	22	13	13	35	17
Total	100	100	100	100	200	100

The overall classification results according to the standards of the Ministry of Education and Training in Table 7 show that the physical fitness of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, has a good rate of 9% and a satisfactory rate of 74%, while the rate of students who do not meet the standards is quite high at 17%.

From the practical experience of teaching physical education to students today, developing physical qualities for students is an essential task for every teacher. The main purpose is to comprehensively develop physical qualities, enhance the

functional capacity of the body's systems, create a foundation for overall physical development, and facilitate the acquisition of motor skills during lessons, thereby improving the level of training.

Regarding the physical education work for high school students nowadays, the annual assessment of their physical fitness has not received adequate attention from the schools, despite the Ministry of Education and Training having set specific evaluation standards. Meanwhile, evaluating the physical fitness levels of students is extremely practical, contributing to the scientific foundation for the national strategy for physical education development.

Within the scope of each specific school, assessing students' physical fitness facilitates the evaluation of the effectiveness of physical education teaching, serving as a basis for developing the curriculum or selecting methods and means of physical education for students. Based on this perspective, the basic assessment of physical fitness has an inseparable organic relationship in the process of physical education in schools. To assess the physical fitness status of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Ninh Kieu District, Can Tho City, the study was conducted in the following directions:

First: Based on the application of physical fitness evaluation criteria according to Decision 53/2008 of the Ministry of Education and Training, the project has developed scoring standards and classification standards to assess the physical fitness status of high school students. The study classified the physical fitness of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School into the categories of excellent, satisfactory, average, weak, and poor. The test results show that the number of students with physical fitness levels classified as satisfactory to excellent accounts for 4.5%; those classified as average account for 66.5%, while those classified as poor account for 29%.

Secondly: the project conducts a physical fitness assessment of students according to the evaluation standards outlined in Decision No. 53/2008/QĐ-BGDĐT by the Ministry of Education and Training and compares the results with the physical fitness assessment based on the criteria developed by the project to evaluate the physical fitness status of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School. The comparison results indicate that the number of students with weak or poor physical fitness accounts for nearly 29%. This rate is higher than the classification standards for physical fitness set by the Ministry of Education and Training, which correspond to a non-achievement level of nearly 17%. This indicates that the physical fitness of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School is still at a fairly low average level.

**4. Conclusion**

The research results have identified physical fitness assessment tests for students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, including: 30m XPC run (seconds), handgrip strength (kg), standing long jump (cm), supine sit-ups in 30 seconds (repetitions), standing trunk flexion (cm), 4 x 10m shuttle run (seconds), and 5-minute endurance run (meters).

The physical fitness evaluation standards for students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam have been established, including: scoring scale, classification, and comprehensive classification by gender.

The physical fitness status of students at Phan Ngoc Hien High School, Can Tho City, Vietnam, is classified as: Good (4.5%), Average (66.5%), Weak (29%); it is classified according to the standards of the Ministry of Education and

Training: Good (9%), Accomplished (74%), Unaccomplished (17%).

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