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Impact of Frequency of Physical Education on Obesity in Secondary School Students

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IMPACT OF FREQUENCY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION ON
OBESITY IN SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

A Thesis
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

Liana Webster
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This study examined the relationship between frequency of physical education classes and prevalence of overweight and obesity in secondary school students. This was done by comparing the body mass index (BMI) data of seventh through twelfth grade students in 33 school districts in Southwestern Pennsylvania of varying sizes, socioeconomic statuses, and frequencies of physical education. School districts were selected on the basis of their data being publicly available for each variable.

Analysis of the data showed a relationship between school size and percentage of overweight and obese students (p = .007), and also percentage of overweight and obese students and socioeconomic status (p < .000). There was no statistically significant relationship between frequency of physical education classes and number of overweight and obese students (p = .608), unless school size was controlled for, in which case there was a relationship (p = .01). No significant relationship was found between school size and frequency of physical education (p = .736).