The Competency of the Military Fitness Training Leaders in the Hellenic Army

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Abstract

Background: The Military Fitness Training Leader (MFTL) is considered a parameter that affects the efficiency of the Hellenic Army Physical Readiness Training (APRT).

Purpose: The competencies of 5 different types of Greek MFTLs were assessed and compared according to the opinions of the Regular Army Personnel.

Material and Methods: ANOVA corrected by post hoc comparisons were used to compare the selected opinions coming from 2864 survey questionnaires. The statistical significance was indicated up to 0.05 to compare the differences for all 5 types MFTLs graded by 3 different groups: Senior Officers, Junior Officers, and Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers.

Results: The Senior Officers scored the "Officer" as the best MFTL and the "Physical Education Graduate" as the highest contributors to the APRT's effectiveness. Junior Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers scored the "Physical Education Graduate" as being more useful as MFTL, although being seldom applied to APRT programs. The Officers' military experience and leadership specialisation combined with the Physical Education Graduate's professionalisation has been revealed as the main characteristics of an effective profile for a MFTL.

Conclusion: The results, reinforced by similar research in the field, indicate that the Hellenic army should focus on creating professional standards to achieve a more efficient MFTL training program.

Conflict of Interest: There were no financial or personal conflicts of interest for this study. The results of the present study do not constitute endorsement of the product by the author or the Journal.

Key Words: Army Physical Readiness Training, Regular Army Personnel, Military Fitness Training Leader, Army Organisation Efficiency, Survey Questionnaire.

Introduction

The effectiveness of the military depends on the army's personnel quality resulting from their training and skills level rather than the quantity of men, weapons or materials. It refers to the soldiers' and officers' acquired skills and competencies needed to accomplish the required military missions by executing appropriate strategies.[1] The majority of the armies' Headquarters, as well as the Hellenic Army General Staff (HAGS) and their administrative sectors, declare that the organisation of the Army Physical Readiness Training (APRT) programs and its assessment is one of the basic factors to guarantee the armies' efficient readiness. APRT refers to the implementation of appropriate physical training programs aiming for the development of the physical abilities and competencies of the army personnel. All aspects of the army's mission may be accomplished based on the personnel's physical preparedness and strengthening, while remaining healthy and uninjured, which guarantees the operational readiness of each Army Force.[2] The APRT consists of a set of army training exercises and drills as well as physical fitness training and sport activities. To achieve high levels of operational effectiveness and readiness, army members are required to be physically fit and meet the standards of various physical fitness tests, so that they are able to perform general military, defence and security duties brought by the demands of their military occupation. The higher the level of physical fitness and readiness the army achieves, the more it will develop into an agile, versatile, lethal, and survivable force, thus the APRT's effectiveness is one of the army's primary focuses.[3,4,5,6,7] The planning, the appropriate management and implementation mode constitute the basic requirements for the holistic efficiency of the APRT programs, taking into consideration all the parameters which influence (positively or negatively) the APRT's achievement.[3,4,8,9,10,11]

Based on the above statements further research was done to design a frame work indicating the parameters

influencing the organisation and implementation effectiveness of the APRT in the Hellenic Army. Thus, one of these parameters was the competency of the Military Fitness Training Leader (MFTL).[12,13,14]

A review of relative references concludes that every Fitness Leader had to be a qualified fitness specialist for planning, implementing and evaluating physical training programs aiming for the development of cardiovascular conditioning, muscle strengthening and endurance, stretching, relaxation of the body, etc. She/he had to have considerable expertise in a diversity of sports and had to demonstrate tactical and technical competences. She/he had to be able to explain and demonstrate all athletic activities, as well as know the best methods of presenting and performing them. In APRT, the MFTL has to be the Fitness Leader who has all the above necessary competencies and moreover, to be an expert of the army's physical fitness aims, programs and conditions needed for army training. Thus, the MFTL has to achieve the appropriate skills to demonstrate and lead all physical readiness army training exercises, drills and activities, as well as teach the appropriate techniques. The professional, the well-prepared and confident leader aiming for physical readiness training gains the respect and cooperation of all troops.[5,15] Consequently, for an effective management and implementation of APRT programs, it is essential to have well qualified personnel as MFTLs to whom the army administration entrusts the delivery of the APRT programs.[15] The majority of the armed forces in other countries conduct Army Fitness Schools which recruit army personnel and conduct courses that specialise in this duty.[9,16,17,18,19]

A primary measurement concerning the role of the Greek MFTL's competency showed that in the Hellenic Army there are 5 different army grades (types) of MFTLs: (a) the "Officer", (b) the "Permanent Commissioned Officer", (c) the "Cadet Army Reserve", (d) the "Physical Education Graduate", and (e) the "Permanent Enlisted Soldier".[20]

In the Hellenic Army, the troop personnel ordered by its unit or brigade commander to perform the duty of MFTL, come from different Regular Army Grades and usually have considerable experience in a variety of athletic sports and APRT requirements. At the same time the leader has to follow other duties in the troop or platoon in accordance with her/his rank. In the Hellenic Army there are three classes of personnel, the Regular Army Personnel, the volunteers (Army Reserve), and the Conscripts. Three classes are included in Regular Army Personnel. One of these classes includes the Senior Officers (professional officers, graduates of the Hellenic Military Academy). They are typically the army personnel who command units and can be expected to operate independently for short periods of time (infantry battalions, cavalry or artillery regiments, warships, air squadrons, platoons or companies). Senior Officers commonly fill staff positions for the superior command. The next class is the Junior Officers (professional commissioned officers, graduates from the Hellenic Permanent Commissioned Officers' School). They are the third or fourth lowest ranks of the officers. The units under their command are generally not expected to operate independently for any significant length of time. Junior Officers usually fill staff roles as platoon leaders or subordinates of higher commands post. And lastly, the third class is that of the Non-Commissioned Officers and the Permanent Enlisted Soldiers. The Non-Commissioned Officers are often referred to as "the backbone" of the armed services because they are the primary and most visible leaders of most military personnel. They are the primary leaders responsible for executing a military organisation mission and for training military personnel to execute their missions. Their training and education typically includes leadership and management as well as service-specific and combat training. They begin their careers in a position of authority or by promotion through the enlisted ranks but generally lack practical experience. However their advice and guidance is particularly important for Junior Officers. The Permanent Enlisted Soldiers are volunteer enlisted soldiers that are enlisted for a certain period of time. The amount of time depends on the army engagement requirements in the Hellenic Army as well as their specialisation (profession) and competencies before and after recruitment. The Non-Commissioned Officers and the Permanent Enlisted Soldiers are considered the primary link between permanent army personnel (Senior Officers and Junior Officers) and Conscripts. The Hellenic military organisation currently, as in some other countries, has universal Compulsory Military Service for males 18 years of age and older, who serve for 9 months. Women may serve in the Hellenic Army as permanent members or Non-Commissioned Officers, but cannot be in Compulsory Service. Non-Commissioned Officers and Permanent Enlisted Soldiers wear special rank insignia to differentiate them from Conscripted soldiers and Army Reserve. The structure of the Hellenic Army Ranks has its roots with British military traditions and follows NATO standard rank scale.[3,4,12,14]

The study mentioned above conducted by Kontodimaki et al.[20], also revealed that the MFTLs' competencies are related to three MFTL's professional criteria points: (a) contribution, (b) frequency and (c) effectiveness. These criteria should demonstrate a

relative logical interrelationship. The MFTL who is considered the best qualified contributor, should also be the most frequent implementer of the APRT programs and consequently should be graded as the most adequate (effective) MFTL.[20]

Based on this logical perception, the purpose of the present study was to compare the Greek Regular Army Personnel groups' assessments on the 3 professional criteria of MFTL's effective competency measured as contribution, frequency and effectiveness for all types of MFTLs (five army grades most frequently assigned as MFTLs within the Hellenic Army's APRT programs). The responders (MFTLs and APRT's participants) had to grade each MFTL's competency on 3 points: (a) how much she/he is confident they can contribute as an MFTL to the APRT implementation, (b) how frequently she/he is applied to the position of MFTL and (c) how adequate she/he is to implement effectively the APRT programs as MFTL. To date, there are very few studies conducted on the APRT using Regular Army Personnel in the Hellenic Army's service (career officers, low-rank officers or soldiers) as sample groups. None of these studies measured the opinions of the sample groups in comparing the MFTL's effective competency.

Participants and Method

The Sample

Two thousand eight hundred sixty four (2864) Greek Regular Army Personnel filled out a specific questionnaire for this research. The sampling was conducted according to the stratified methods in order to include a wide spectrum of Greek Regular Army Personnel who participated in APRT programs daily. The sample was split into 3 groups of Regular Army Personnel: Senior Officers, Junior Officers, and professional Non-Commissioned Officers/permanent Enlisted Soldiers.[21,22,23] Each of the above Regular Army Personnel has different professional duties and army career experience. Consequently, it seemed interesting to examine the potential differences which emerged from their opinions on the MFTL's competency. From the total sample of this research as shown in Figure 1, 13.3% (n=381) correspond to Senior Officers, 19.4% (n=557) correspond to Junior Officers and 67.3% (n=1928) to Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers.

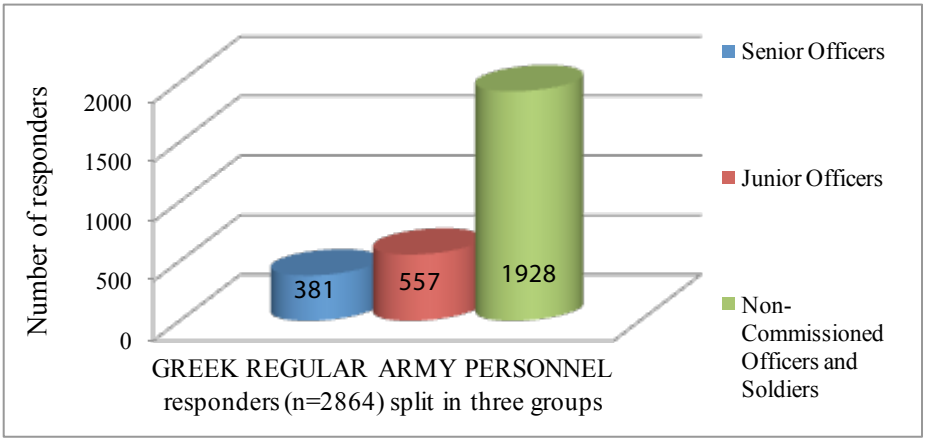
Implementation

The whole process, step by step, was monitored through official correspondence amongst the HAGS, the Hellenic Military Academy and the researcher, to facilitate and smoothly implement the research plan. The questionnaires were sent from the Hellenic Military Academy, the higher military educational institution in Greece, to the Military Major Formations by military post. Every post package was accompanied by the HAGS's official permission, including a classified table indicating the necessary number and criteria of participants, calculated in accordance to the scientific process (number of personnel according to their military specialisation, military ranks and grades, etc.). A random sampling was conducted by anonymous and voluntary completion of the survey questionnaires which were received by the participants in sealed envelopes and which included a cover letter giving respondents all the instructions as to how to fill out the questionnaire.[21,22,23]

Means of Assessment

For the assessment of the MFTL's competency on the APRT efficiency in the Hellenic Army, the appropriate part of the standardised Kontodimaki, Mountakis, Travlos, & Stergioulas questionnaire was used.[24] This questionnaire included ten parameters that influenced the effective organisation and

Figure 1.



implementation of APRT in the Hellenic Army.[12,13,14] It was drawn up in the Greek language and was adjusted to be used for investigation in Greek Forces.[13,24] The questionnaire used consisted of 15 closed-type questions with reliable and tested characteristics (a= 0.80) piloted before use in this study (a= 0.86).[13,14,21,22,24,25,26,27]

The troop personnel usually ordered to perform the duty of the MTFL in the Hellenic Army came from different Regular Army Grades: (i) "Officer", (ii) "Permanent Commissioned Officer", (iii) "Cadet Army Reserve", (iv) "Physical Education Graduate", and (v) "Permanent Enlisted Soldier" (5 researchable variables). All the above types of MTFL are measured along three (3) points of competency in performance and management of APRT programs: (a) the contribution of each one as MFTL to the efficient implementation of APRT programs, (b) each one's frequency of application as MFTL during the implementation of the APRT programs, and (c) the estimation of the adequacy of each one as MFTL when the implementation of APRT program had been completed. Each of the above main questions included five sub questions concerning the different troop personnel (5 Regular Army Grades) ordered to perform the duty of the MTFL, as mentioned before. There were 15 researchable variables in total.[9,29,30]

The five-graded *Likert* type scale was used for the responses to the questions, beginning with the lower point "1" which signified "not at all" and/or "never" up to the highest point "5" which signified "extremely" and/or "almost always".[13,24] Details of the questionnaire are given in Appendix A.

Variables and Statistical Analysis

Means (M) and standard deviations (SD) for the total of the above fifteen (15) researchable questions (variables) were calculated. Subsequently, the one-way analysis of variance (ANO*VA*) corrected by *Bonferroni post hoc* comparisons were conducted to investigate if there were any differences among the three (3) groups of Regular Army Personnel's opinions (Senior Officers, Junior Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers) against each one of the 15 researchable variables. SLPHAatistical significance was set at $p \leq 0.05$.[21,22,23,30,31] All statistical analyses were conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Chicago, Illinois, USA) version 17.0.

Results

The Mean values (M), the Standard Deviations (±SD) and the results of the one-way ANO*VA* (the F-ratio of two Mean Square values and the p-values) corrected by the Bonferroni post hoc (*) paired comparisons (which computes confidence intervals for all paired comparisons) among Regular Army Personnel's opinions are presented in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

MFTLs' contribution

Statistically significant differences ($p \leq 0.01$) were shown for all the MFTLs concerning their contribution to the efficient implementation of APRT programs amongst the Regular Army Personnel's evaluations (Table 1). The Senior Officers and the Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers evaluated as the "Officer" and the "Physical Education Graduate" were the greatest contributors to the efficient implementation among all the MFTL types, whereas the Junior Officers assessed as the "Physical Education Graduate" and the "Permanent Commissioned Officer" were the greatest contributors to efficient implementation among all the MFTL types.

MFTLs application frequency

Statistically significant differences among Regular Army Personnel evaluations were shown also for all the MFTLs concerning their application frequency during the implementation of APRT programs, except for that for the values of the" Cadet Army Reserves" ($p>0.05$). They are not reported, as very frequently MFTLs are assigned (Table 2). The Senior Officers and the Non-Commissioned Officers/ Permanent Enlisted Soldiers declared that the most frequently assigned MFTL in the APTR programs are in the "Officer" and the "Permanent Commissioned Officer" category, whereas Junior Officers reported the "Permanent Commissioned Officer" as the most frequently applied MFTL and the "Officer" as the second most frequent.

MFTLs' effectiveness/adequacy

Finally, the differences among the Regular Army Personnel's opinions on the MFTLs effectiveness/ adequacy were not reached as statistically significant ($p>0.05$) for most of the pairs corrected by the Bonferroni post hoc test, except for that of the "Officers" effectiveness (Table 3). More specifically, the "Officer" was graded with the higher values mainly given by the Senior Officers. In contrast, Junior Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers/ Permanent Enlisted Soldiers graded the "Physical Education Graduate" as the most effective/adequate MFTL, even if there was a significant difference between these values.

Table 1. Comparisons on every Military Fitness Training Leader's Competency concerning their CONTRIBUTION TO IMPLEMENTATION of Army Physical Readiness Training Programs among 3 groups of Greek Regular Army Personnel (Senior Officers, Junior Officers, and Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers) measured on a 5 point scale (Liker type) (degrees of freedom=2861)

3 groups of Regular Army Personnel:			Senior Officers	Junior Officers	Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers
Army grades as MFTLs:	F-ratio	p-value	Means ±SD		
Officer	36.307	0.000	3.98±1.2***	3.46±1.3***	3.32±1.4***
Permanent Commissioned Officer	19.091	0.000	3.59±1.2***	3.53±1.2***	3.25±1.3***
Cadet Army Reserve	11.238	0.000	2.69±1.3***	2.29±1.2***	2.4±1.3***
Physical Education Graduate	5.632	0.004	3.73±1.6**	3.67±1.6**	3.47±1.7**
Permanent Enlisted Soldiers	66.629	0.000	2.39±1.3***	2.23±1.2***	2.93±1.5***

According to ANO*VA* analysis and Bonferoni post hoc paired comparisons:

***p<0.001 significantly different within all groups of Regular Army Personnel

**p<0.01 significantly different within all groups of Regular Army Personnel

*p<0.05 significantly different within all groups of Regular Army Personnel

Table 2. Comparisons on every Military Fitness Training Leader's Competency concerning their APPLICATION FREQUENCY DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION of Army Physical Readiness Training Programs among 3 groups of Greek Regular Army Personnel (Senior Officers, Junior Officers, and Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers) measured on a 5 point scale (Liker type) (degrees of freedom=2861)

3 groups of Regular Army Personnel:			Senior Officers	Junior Officers	Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers
5Army grades as MFTLs:	F-ratio	p-value	Means ±SD		
Officer	39.090	0.000	3.89±1.2***	3.29±1.3***	3.22±1.4***
Permanent Commissioned Officer	13.642	0.000	3.20±1.2***	3.48±1.2***	3.17±1.3***
Cadet Army Reserve	.169	0.845	2.47±1.2	2.42±1.3	2.45±1.3
Physical Education Graduate	7.185	0.001	2.23±1.6***	2.51±1.6***	2.58±1.6***
Permanent Enlisted Soldiers	66.126	0.000	2.11±1.3***	2.26±1.9***	2.83±1.5***

According to ANO*VA* analysis and Bonferoni post hoc paired comparisons:

***p<0.001 significantly different within all groups of Regular Army Personnel

**p<0.01 significantly different within all groups of Regular Army Personnel

*p<0.05 significantly different within all groups of Regular Army Personnel

Table 3. Comparisons on every Military Fitness Training Leader's Competency concerning their EFFECTIVENESS/ ADEQUACY of IMPLEMENTATION of Army Physical Readiness Training Programs among 3 groups of Greek Regular Army Personnel (Senior Officers, Junior Officers, and Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers) measured on a 5 point scale (Liker type) (degrees of freedom=2861)

	3 groups of Regular Army Personnel:		Senior Officers	Junior Officers	Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers
Army grades as MFTLs:	F-ratio	p-value	Means ±SD		
Officer	3.913	0.020	3.68±1.1*	3.30±1.2*	3.24±1.3*
Permanent Commissioned Officer	3.581	0.028	3.13±1.1	3.27±1.2*	3.11±1.2*
Cadet Army Reserve	3.874	0.021	2.34±1.1	2.24±1.1*	2.39±1.2*
Physical Education Graduate	18.070	0.000	3.44±1.8	3.59±1.6***	3.37±1.7***
Permanent Enlisted Soldiers	3.913	0.020	2.13±1.2*	2.25±1.2	2.87±1.7*

According to ANOVA analysis and Bonferoni post hoc paired comparisons:

***p<0.001 significantly different within all groups of Regular Army Personnel

**p<0.01 significantly different within all groups of Regular Army Personnel

*p<0.05 significantly different within all groups of Regular Army Personnel

Discussion

Many interesting points emerged from the results according to the Regular Army Personnel assessment measuring the competency of every MFTL type responsible for military training management in the APRT programs, based on their contribution to the implementation of APRT programs, the frequency of their application as MFTL, and their efficiency/ adequacy as MFTL when the implementation of APRT program had been completed.

Firstly, the MFTL's competency comparison amongst the opinions of the Regular Army Personnel (Senior Officers, Junior Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers) seems worth noting because it constitutes a self-assessment study. The Senior Officers are the army personnel who command units, have important experience in army leadership and thus their opinion carries the biggest weight when assessing the MFTL's evaluation for competency and professional performance. Subsequently, it is essential to take into consideration the opinions of Junior Officers, because they are the platoon leaders, the main subordinates of leadership and training following the Senior Officers in army professional experience. Finally, the Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers are the army personnel with the least army experience, but the majority of each troop or army training group consists of them (the backbone of each army unit) as shown in Figure 1.[3,4,12] In addition, all the above personnel are daily participants in the APRT programs within the Hellenic Army.

According to Senior Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers/Permanent Enlisted Soldiers, the "Officers" and the "Physical Education Graduates" contributions to the Fitness Leadership duty is very important because these MFTL types are reported as adequately trained for the efficient implementation of APRT programs. Although in practice, they are not reported as equally assigned to manage the APRT programs as MFTLs. This might be due to the fact that there are not many "Physical Education Graduates" in the Hellenic Army. In contrast, the most frequently assigned as MFTLs were the "Officer" and the "Permanent Commissioned Officer" as reported by all the responder groups, even though there were statistically significant differences among the related values. It is also worthy to mention that the Junior Officers agreed with the above groups by reporting the "Physical Education Graduate" as the best contributor to the APRT programs. However, they graded themselves as the second best contributors and that they were applied more frequently to the APRT programs among the other types of MFTLs.

Finally, by combining the results concerning the MFTLs' contribution to the Fitness Leadership duty and their effectiveness/adequacy, it is shown that the "Officer" and the "Physical Education Graduate" are the most indispensable and efficient MFTLs for the military organisation in the Hellenic Army. These findings might have come about from the professional skills (army leadership) and fitness specialty of each of these two types of MFTLs.

In reinforcement of the above findings, the results of a similar project which measured the professional

competency of each Physical Fitness Leader among the different Hellenic Army Units' oriented to the army demands seem to agree.[32] More specifically, the study showed the "Officers" and the "Permanent Commissioned Officers" were also applied as MFTLs in the APRT more frequently in the boot camp and combat training Army Units, and were mentioned as highly contributing and efficient. In contrast, the "Physical Education Graduate" was judged the most contributing, effective and adequate MFTLs in the rest of the Army Units, where the army basic training and army specialisations were completed. It seemed that the "Physical Education Graduates" were more efficient in giving additional type or training modes and maintenance of the acquired army physical fitness.[32]

Likewise, a study conducted at Land Forces Command units in the Canadian army regarding the organisation and conduct of Physical Fitness Training showed that the "Permanent Commissioned Officers" mainly delivered the APRT programs, although they had been inadequate in qualifications, knowledge and skills to ensure the APRT programs' efficiency. 33 Utilising the findings of that study, the Canadian Armed Forces developed military educational programs and seminars such as the "Military Fitness Training Instructor", the "Advanced Fitness Training Assistant" (AFTA) and the "Basic Fitness Training Assistant" (BFTA) promoting Fitness Leaders, Fitness and Sports Instructors, Physical Exercise Specialists, Regional Adaptive Fitness Specialists, Strength and Conditioning Specialists, and Fitness Coordinators to enrich the fitness qualification of their military personnel oriented to this specialty.[17,18,34]

The US Army (USAPFS) uses similar actions to implement the appropriate doctrine and military physical fitness training for their soldiers either through the Master Fitness Training program (Exercise Leaders Course) or through revisions of the Field Manuals, Training Circular's and Army Doctrine Reference Publications. These processes provide the necessary leadership skills, which address the importance of army fitness leadership as it applies to the APRT.[9,32,35] Moreover, many well organised armed forces have created Army Fitness Schools, and recruit the best qualified candidates to prepare appropriate personnel specialised in MFT Leadership.[17,18,19]

The Hellenic Army had created a few decades ago the Hellenic Army Fitness School, which was preparing candidates as MFTLs to apply the APRT programs in the Hellenic Army units. However it is no longer in operation.[32] In its replacement, the HAG upgraded the fitness curriculum in the Hellenic Military Academy where only the Senior Officers are allowed to attend and graduate[36]. However, the MFTLs' education and knowledge seem to be indispensable for all the military organisations, provided that they have acquired specialisation in the APRT programs' objectives, implementation and effectiveness. Consequently, it would be in the best interest of the Hellenic Military Academy to develop an educational program for intermediate Officer and Senior Officer trainees including theory and practical skills focussed on MFT Leadership of APRT based on the military environment, the basic military skills and the army leadership and command[19]. The availability of advanced studies in MFT Leadership that leads to a postgraduate degree (i.e. military master's degree) to further the Regular Army Personnel's professionalisation (e.g. administration officer, supply officer, commanding officer and department head) seems important to enrich the fitness qualification for the Hellenic Army[19] Finally, the recruitment of "Physical Education Graduates" as Soldier MFTL specialists, after having completed a relevant course on military training education and doctrine, could also be an interesting suggestion to help the APRT programs' application in the Hellenic Army units.[18,33] These kinds of studies, within the scope of assessing military physical training management, can be considered a blueprint for creating a body of fitness leaders in the Hellenic Army operating within given professional standards, something which requires a long term educational plan and a commitment on the part of the administration of the Armed Forces in regard to APRT effectiveness.

Conclusions

One of the interesting points of the present study was that the MFTL competency's results were revealed through an internal assessment among leaders and trainees within the Regular Army Personnel. In the Hellenic Army, all the army personnel are required to take part in the APRT programs as trainees while in their training cycle of army specialisation, as well as in active duty and recruitment up to their retirement. Thus the leadership of the APRT programs is given to several Regular Army Grades (Officers or Non Commissioned Officers) within the troops considered to be more experienced in monitoring, managing and implementing these programs. The results did not confirm the expected logical interrelationship among the three competencies points referred to: contribution, implementation frequency and effectiveness among the MFTL's types. On the contrary, there were statistically significant differences among the Army Personnel's opinions on the above competency's points. Officers graded other Officers higher than Non Commissioned Officers graded Officers, and Soldiers rated Soldiers

higher than Officers rated Soldiers. Each responder group graded higher the relative MFTL type, whereas "Physical Education Graduates" appeared as the most competent and adequately qualified MFTL rated by all the responders. Troop commanders ("Officers" or "Permanent Commissioned Officers") seem to be less specifically trained in the management and leadership of Military Physical Fitness Training than "Physical Education Graduates". However, "Physical Education Graduates" were not equally posted as MFTL in the implementation of the APRT programs. These independent competency assessments among the different army groups and their uncorrelated results, reinforced by similar research, give the impression that the experience in performing APRT programs and the specialisation in the army training and doctrine are the main criteria of the MFTL competency in the Hellenic Army. Consequently, it seems that the personnel's appropriate preparedness and the duty selection system in the Hellenic Army are uncorrelated concerning the MFTL's adequacy. This fact indicates that this duty selection is not clearly oriented and determined as in other armed forces in other countries where the MFTL meets strict professional standards. Thus, it is suggested that the Hellenic Army administration might consider focussing on these deficiencies by setting professional standards and appropriate MFTLs training specialty courses in the Hellenic Military Academy's curriculum.

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Appendix A

The responders were asked to answer on the following survey questions using the Likert type scale for grade each of the five types of Military Fitness Training Leader.		
CONTRIBUTION TO IMPLEMENTATION	(1) How confident are each one of the Regular Army Grades below when ordered to perform the duty of Military Fitness Training Leader (MFTL), and can contribute to the efficiency of the Army Physical Readiness Training (APRT) programs:	Likert type scale
	(i) Officer	1 2 3 4 5
	(ii) Permanent Commissioned Officer	1 2 3 4 5
	(iii) Cadet Army Reserve	1 2 3 4 5
	(iv) Physical Education Graduate	1 2 3 4 5
	(v) Permanent Enlisted Soldier	1 2 3 4 5
APPLICATION FREQUENCY	(2) How often, do each of the Regular Army Grades below perform the duty of MFTL of the APRT programs:	Likert type scale
	(i) Officer	1 2 3 4 5
	(ii) Permanent Commissioned Officer	1 2 3 4 5
	(iii) Cadet Army Reserve	1 2 3 4 5
	(iv) Physical Education Graduate	1 2 3 4 5
	(v) Permanent Enlisted Soldier	1 2 3 4 5
IMPLEMENTATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS / ADEQUACY	(3) How qualified are each one of the Regular Army Grades below to perform adequately and sufficiently the duty of MFTL of the APRT programs:	Likert type scale
	(i) Officer	1 2 3 4 5
	(ii) Permanent Commissioned Officer	1 2 3 4 5
	(iii) Cadet Army Reserve	1 2 3 4 5
	(iv) Physical Education Graduate	1 2 3 4 5
	(v) Permanent Enlisted Soldier	1 2 3 4 5

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