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## An empirical study on the institutional social and material environment impact on physical education in B-Schools

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### Abstract

In understanding the role played by the collegiate environment in the successful or unsuccessful transition of the inward student, several questions must be addressed. These questions reflect the university's goals, mission statement, and its prospect direction. Furthermore, they provide an understanding of the college's views and vision about student learning. The development of students both academically and socially while they are members of the campus community is tantamount to the university's success. The objective of the study is to analyze the direct and positive relationship between institutional social and physical environment and the participation in physical activities of business school graduate students. Therefore, these questions (What does the institution value? What is the institution's mission statement? What are the interactions between students and university officials?) Must be investigated along with garnering a thorough understanding of the university's physical surroundings so as to best comprehend the impact a university has on its students, especially those making the transition to college. This study is based on the research results of various researchers. Thus, the campus environment and its effects on the student population can be addressed in two settings: social environment, and physical environment.

**Keywords:** empirical study, institutional social, material environment, physical education

### Introduction

In recent years, many universities have revitalized an institutional commitment to a broadening of undergraduate curricula to ensure a diversity of coursework. Such a perspective should, fundamentally, include exposure to quality physical education and physical activity opportunities. This is perhaps more pertinent today than it was a century ago. Today's college students are our future business leaders and policy makers. Their habits, beliefs, and attitudes will be influential in shaping community norms and values. In continuation, the physical education meets the needs of college students in other vital ways too. Besides, the daily exercise can relieve stress; alleviate anxiety and depression, and boost higher-level thinking (Booth *et al.* 2002; Cotman and Engesser-Cesar 2002; USDHHS 1996)<sup>[8, 10]</sup>.

### Objective

The objective of the study is to analyze the direct and positive relationship between institutional social and physical environment and the participation in physical activities of business school graduate students.

### Scope

Majority studies in the past have conducted in school education though less in business school. Linking the business school and physical activity explaining the intervening factors, very less research has come out. Several business schools in India has adopted physical education activities in the form of yoga, outbound learning programs, and inbound learning programs in order to make the business graduate physically agile and mentally sound enough to be part of the vibrant business sector as executives.

### Review of Literature

Almarif (1982)<sup>[1]</sup> investigated personal motives and sociological factors which were socio-economic status, sports facilities availability, significant others participation in sports, significant others approval for participating in sports, birth order and factors influencing selection of sports.

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His subjects were 600 male and female Iraqi athletes, between the ages of twelve and twenty-five. The results showed that male athletes tended to come from lower socio-economic families, whereas female athletes tended to come from upper middle and higher socio-economic families. Both males and females tended to rate some of the personal motives similarly but sport group differences were found on many personal motives for the sports participation and the results are as follows : (1) No significant differences were found between the mean scores of the male sport groups concerning two personal motives namely competence and fitness, health, (2) Significant differences were found between the female sports groups on all the ten personal motives, No significant differences were found between the mean scores of male and female volleyball athletes on seven personal motives namely, competent, social, athletic, compete/ challenge, potent and prestige. (4) No significant differs were found between the male and female basketball athletes on all the personal motives except on the potent motive where the males scored higher than females. (5) No significant differences were found between the male and female table-tennis athletes on all the personal motives except on athletic and winner/prestige. Meeriman (1985) [22] determined the relationship of the influence of social systems, attitude toward physical activity and physical education placement to the degree of participation in physical activity of emotionally disturbed high school students. 206 emotion of adjustment disturbed male and female students aged 14-21 attending public schools in New York City served as subjects. The degree of participation was measured by the Physical Activity Socialization Inventory. Attitude toward physical activity was measured by the Children's' Physical Attitude toward Physical Activity Inventory. The analysis of data revealed that (1) the influence of social system was related to the degree of participation. (2) The attitude toward physical activity was related to the degree of participation. (3) The influence of social systems and attitude toward physical activity, in combination contributed to variance in participation. (4) Attitude toward physical activity and physical education placement in combination contributed to variance in participation. (5) The influence of social systems, attitude toward physical activity and physical education placement, in combination contributed to variance in participation and (6) the total variance of participation occurred for the three predictor variables, the influence of social system makes the largest unique contribution.

### Social Environment

According to many studies, there is a positive association between physical activity behavior and social support from family, friends, peers and program staff in supervised settings (Trost *et al.*, 2002) [31]. A teacher extend may extend significant support to the students in the educational social environment such as the following: Incorporate physical activity to help reinforce literacy and numeracy skills, that provide students with active, hands-on opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of the concepts and strategies taught in the literacy and numeracy programs; incorporate material from other subject areas into daily physical activity which provides students with opportunities to learn through physical activity some of the concepts taught in other areas of the curriculum ; integrate curriculum expectations from the health and physical education curriculum with those from one or more other subject areas that provide students with an opportunity to participate in physical activities within an

integrated unit or lesson and to have achievement of the expectations from both subject areas assessed; and dedicate time for daily physical activity as a separate activity, which provides the classroom teacher with greater flexibility to provide the required daily physical activity. The social environment with the supportive hand is envisaged as social environment in this research (Ontario Education, 2005) [23]. A fulltime student enrolls in four or six semester credits on average, possibly more with the addition of laboratory credits or physical education classes. Therefore, a student with this number of credits spends at least twenty hours per school week in the classroom environment. It is here that interactions among peers and between faculty and students allow for an introduction to college level learning and the development of new ideas, thoughts, and beliefs on issues that are academically centered. It is the classroom environment that provides a structured and regular learning opportunity for students. The exchange of ideas, or at least the presence of different values, beliefs, and attitudes, can be easily investigated and obtained. Interactions with both faculty members and other students allow for the transmission of information and play a key role in the shaping of individual thought. However, the classroom's role is not minimized at this level; in fact, though "the undergraduate student generally spends less time attending classes than he does engaging in other campus activities, the stimuli provided by the classroom experiences are probably among the most significant sources of influence during the undergraduate years" (Astin, 1968, p. 50) [2].

### Physical Environment

An institution's type, size, and location play an important role in determining the campus environment in such ways as administration, proximity of residences to campus, and the overall feel of the university. All of this information can be placed into four categories: type of college town, climate, and geography of the campus and the town, and student residences. Residence halls become an important focus within the physical environment for various reasons. First, students spend a great deal of time within them, studying, interacting, and sleeping. If the residence hall is not able to provide an environment in which such activities can take place, the result can be detrimental to the students living there. Furthermore, the distance between residences and campus buildings can be a factor of interest. For example, if free tutoring is offered but is located across campus on a cold, rainy or snowy Northeast night, chances are that the service is seldom utilized, though free. On many college campuses, buildings are being restored to include administration and faculty offices, classroom and learning space, and resident space. The goal of this movement is to promote a living-learning-leading theme through connections between faculty and students.

In fact, the physical environment provides cues and opportunities for physical activity and includes both natural (such as climate, weather, elevations and scenery) and built environments (buildings, availability of facilities, runways, workplaces, homes, access, convenience, safety, and urban planning and design) factors. There are also individual level influences (such as exercise equipment at home, access to facilities, and satisfaction with recreation facilities) and community level influences (such as neighbourhood safety, hilly terrain, frequent observation of others engaging physical activity and enjoyable scenery) (Brownson *et al.*, 2001; Santos *et al.*, 2008) [8]. Berke *et al.* (2007) [3] found a statistically significant association between neighbourhood

walk ability and the frequency of walking for physical activity among the older people. However, the importance of different physical environmental factors may differ according to the specific context.

### Physical Activities

Physical activity is categorised as being of light, moderate, or vigorous intensity, and most of the health benefits have been associated with moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity (National Advisory Committee on Health and Disability 1998; US Surgeon General 1996). A light and intense physical activity does not cause noticeable increase in breathing, and results in small increase to energy expenditure, while moderate intensity physical activity (eg, brisk walking), and vigorous physical activity (e.g. jogging) both create noticeable increases in breathing and energy expenditure.

### Institutional Environment and Its Effects on Physical Activities with reference to various researchers

Physical activity is affected by individual, socio-cultural, environmental, and political factors. As indicated in the largest circle in Hume's model (Figure 1 on the following page), the built environment in various settings frequented by young people, i.e. their neighborhood, school, or childcare setting, is an important determinant of physical activity. (Quebec, 2013) <sup>[25]</sup>.

The Business school environment is a very influential social determinant of physical activity and constant interaction with peers can greatly affect choices, including participation in physical education and physical activity. Salvy *et al.* (2009) <sup>[27]</sup> found that peers and friends may promote physical activity and increase motivation to participate. This finding, taken with the views of the respondents in the present Australian Journal of Teacher Education Vol 35, 8, December 2010 13 survey, suggests that the partner and group work or peer-led activities may be useful in attempting to engage students in physical education and physical activity. Empowering students by offering elective topics, non-traditional activities or initiative games and increasing their role and responsibilities in class with sport education (Siedentop, 1994) <sup>[28]</sup> can provide positive peer interaction that encourages and promotes activity.

College is an important time for young adults to be influenced positively regarding lifetime physical activity. Sparling and Snow reported that six years after graduation, their study's participants were influenced for continued participation in fitness activity by three factors (Sparling, P.B., & Snow, T.K. (2002); 1) <sup>[29]</sup> attitudes toward exercise, 2) confidence in setting up personal exercise programs, 3) exercise status in their senior year of college. Well-structured wellness/fitness/activity programs can address all of these factors. It is vital that this golden opportunity to prepare young adults for a full, healthy life not be missed.

The crowded curriculum and timetabling are symbiotic in their relationship, with one often having a great effect on the other. As early as 1992, the Senate Inquiry (Commonwealth of Australia, 1992), followed by the Monaghan Report (Directorate of School Education, 1993) identified the crowded curriculum as a major barrier to Australian teachers providing physical education. Kahan (2008) <sup>[13]</sup> suggests that in primary schools, physical education timetabling may be reduced or even eliminated as it is often deemed a peripheral subject. Changes to the structure of secondary schooling represent an attempt to meet the needs of diverse populations and ensure that many options are available for all students.

However, at times this can be to the detriment of physical education. The identification in this study of timetabling as a barrier may relate to decreases in time allocation, split periods for classes or perhaps too many classes on at once, which means increasing competition for equipment and facilities. Both were considered the biggest barriers to providing physical education in schools

Schools/colleges offer young people numerous opportunities to be physically active, during both physical education classes and breaks as well while traveling there and back. Given their educational mission, school environments are the perfect places to introduce young people to the benefits of physical activity. Schools provide students with time for physical activity, qualified personnel, infrastructure, and equipment. Young people are in contact with their peers, an important source of motivation for physical activity, especially among adolescents. (Van Der, Paw, Twisk & Van, 2007) <sup>[32]</sup>.

In 1990s, research carried out by Blatchford found that while school days were getting longer, break times, including lunchtime, had been significantly shortened. His research shows that children valued break times during school because it offers a level of freedom from the rules and regulations of the rest of the school day. Confirming previous research, he argued that playtime is often regarded as problematic, and had been cut down to make more time for the National Curriculum. This means the positive experience that most of the children had during breaks was often being overlooked. He suggested that changing the arrangements of break times, including altering the length of the breaks, should take children's high regard for this time into account.

When children do have free time away from school and unstructured activities, other commitments, such as homework, mean that children can rarely use this time for free play. A recent survey (Gill 2011) <sup>[15]</sup> found that 55 per cent of children felt that their time to play was restricted by homework. Over-scheduling children's time could have implications for their health. Research from the late 1990s indicates that hectic schedules disrupt sleeping patterns and that pressure of homework and household chores have led to increased stress levels in adolescents (Melman & others 2007) <sup>[21]</sup>. Rosenfeld used the term 'hyper-parenting' to describe an apparent phenomenon whereby parents aim for perfection from their children, encouraging extracurricular activities at the expense of the imagination and creativity that is brought about by free-play (Rosenfeld & Wise 2001) <sup>[26]</sup>.

Pellegrini (2008) <sup>[24]</sup> argues that playtime is perceived as a waste of time that could be spent on academic forms of learning (Pellegrini and Holmes in Singer and others 2006). However, according to Pellegrini and Holmes, eliminating or reducing break times is counterproductive as this may be the only opportunity children have to let off steam and socialize with their peers. Therefore, break times at school are both important and educational. In fact Pellegrini has argued that 'playful' breaks from learning, that is, unstructured breaks, actually improve, rather than hinder, cognitive performance (Pellegrini 2008).

Similarly, Mackett (2004 cited in Blatchford & Baines 2006) <sup>[3]</sup> argues that school break times are the primary opportunity for children to exercise and so physical activity will decrease if school break times are reduced. He argues that the replacement of unstructured play with structured activities outside of school hours will not balance this, as children are frequently driven to and from these activities meaning that less physical activity is carried out. Furthermore, break times seem to offer children a unique opportunity for peer

interaction, Blatchford and others (2002) <sup>[4]</sup> found that playground games act as a 'scaffold' for building and supporting social relationships. Elsewhere, Blatchford and Baines (2010) <sup>[2]</sup> highlight the importance of break time games for forming group identities.

Young people's place of residence provides them with numerous opportunities to be physically active during their leisure time and travels. It provides the potential for active outdoor play while being a place to socialize with other children and be in touch with nature. Spending lots of time outdoors has been positively associated with physical activity among children. (Ferreira, Van Der, Wendel-Vos, Kremers, Van Lenthe & Brug, 2007 <sup>[14]</sup>; Hinkley, Crawford, Salmon, A. Okely & Hesketh (2008) <sup>[12 16]</sup>).

Active play is a way for younger children (who are often less involved in structured activities) to attain the levels of physical activity required and to do so in a financially affordable manner. The built environment of the neighborhood can promote physical activity during young people's travels. School is a daily destination, and engaging in active transportation to get there is a practical, low-cost method to be on the move. According to recent studies, young people travelling to school on foot or by bike engage in more moderate to vigorous physical activity per day than other children. (Lee, Orenstein & Richardson (2008) <sup>[18]</sup>).

Studies also show that providing access to schoolyards outside class hours is a way to increase the physical activity of young people in the neighborhood, particularly in urban settings where everyone has access to a backyard. A well-designed schoolyard could therefore be beneficial to all young people (Farley, Meriwether, Baker, Watkins, Johnson & Webber 2007) <sup>[13]</sup>.

Tinning (2007) <sup>[30]</sup> suggests that the teachers must know how to provide engaging experiences for all young people in physical education. However, their ability to do so is influenced largely by the many factors identified by teachers as institutional barriers affecting their provision of physical education, such as a lack of equipment, facilities and teaching spaces.

A definite way to encourage young people to spend more time in the fresh air and to be physically active outdoors is to provide them with suitable locations to do so. Some scientific studies have demonstrated an association between the number and accessibility of recreational and sports facilities (parks, playgrounds, pools, arenas, sports centers...) on one hand, and the prevalence of obesity and physical activity among young people on the other. An association has also been observed between the proximity of the place of residence to recreational and sports infrastructure (parks, playgrounds, pools, arenas, sports centers...) and physical activity among the young people (Davison, & Lawson (2006) <sup>[9]</sup>).

This review highlights the importance of play, particularly outdoor play, for increasing levels of physical activity, alongside other positive influences on a child's well-being, such as opportunities to understand and respect the natural world. However, the children seem to be getting fewer opportunities to play. A combination of poor play environments, busy school schedules and an increase in structured activities has meant that this beneficial and basic children's right has become sidelined, often perceived as an 'unaffordable luxury' (Elkind 2008) <sup>[10]</sup>. Even self-directed play during school break times, which has been linked to improving concentration and behaviour during lesson times (Madsen & others 2011) <sup>[20]</sup> as well as offering children a unique opportunity to advance their interacting skills, have

been cut significantly in recent years (Blatchford & others 2002) <sup>[4]</sup>.

## Discussion

The study examined how the institutional social and physical factors effect on the participation of students in physical activities. Several environment features were also tied to physical activity, including accessibility of spaces and equipment, aesthetics, safety, and peer proximity and behavior. Additionally, adults supported or interfered with neighborhood physical activity, as well as set boundaries. Though several themes (notably access and safety) are evident in adult based work, early adolescent participants shared unique perceptions tied to their neighborhood context (e.g., issues pertaining to adult authority, activity affordances of objects such as fences and trees). Accommodating these perceptions in future youth physical activity research could help clarify mixed findings surrounding physical environment effects on physical activity.

## Conclusion

The study tells us that the Institutional Social and Material Environment play an important role in physical activities in B-Schools. Social environments provide the impetus for development among incoming students; the classroom setting is a close second in terms of overall affect upon students. Though most of the researchers have avoided this topic (much of it looking at student development both academically and socially), the physical facilities and environment of the higher education system are the main concerns of many administrators. At first glance, the physical environment would be defined as "the classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and other facilities directly connected with student life or with the academic program of the institution" (Astin, 1968, p. 84) <sup>[2]</sup>. However, on a more specific level, the physical environment includes the university environment (residence halls, classrooms, and Greek Row, for example) along with the local community and the surrounding geographical location of the university. So Both have a great impact in the physical Education in B-schools.

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