



## **Impact of the Physical and Social Surroundings on Engaging in Physical Activity as Mediating Factor**

*Rupesh Kumar Srivastva<sup>1</sup>, Dr. V. K Sharma<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, <sup>2</sup>Research Guide

Department of Physical Education, Sunrise University, Alwar, Rajasthan

Email id:- [Rupeshkumarsrivastva5389@gmail.com](mailto:Rupeshkumarsrivastva5389@gmail.com)

### **ABSTRACT**

Examining the barriers that youth perceive as impeding their physical activity has become important in recent years. Institutional settings should promote physical activity among students, especially those at business schools who spend a lot of time in the classroom. Schools' physical education programs are a key component of a comprehensive approach to providing this support.

Among students at business schools, motivation, individual self-efficacy, and assessment of the physical and social environment are the main predictors of exercise activity. It has been discovered that these elements affect one's degree of physical activity both directly and indirectly. There are, however, few studies that have been able to demonstrate a causal relationship, and there is currently little evidence of one. The Self Determination Theory and Theory of Reasoned Action were specifically employed in this study to pinpoint the variables influencing physical activity participation, especially in business schools.

In order to isolate the causative factors, this particular study created six hypotheses that addressed the physical and social environment, motivation, and personal self-efficacy with the mediation effect of gender variance. The study used standardized instruments in relation to the independent, dependent, and mediating variables examined for the analysis in order to accomplish proper factor loading and reliability analysis. The study's data met all of the requirements for multivariate analysis using SPSS, including data normality, homoscedasticity, unidimensionality, and multi-collinearity. The PLS-SEM technique was mostly employed in the data analysis to draw conclusions on the study's presumptions.

**Keywords:-** physical and social surroundings, mediating factor, causative factors

### **Introduction**

The relationship between a person's engagement in physical activity and their immediate social and physical environments is gaining attention in the fields of health, psychology, and urban planning. In order to better understand the complex relationship between these factors, researchers have looked at how individuals interact with their physical and social settings to either support or dissuade their participation in physical exercise. This phenomenon is referred to as the "mediating effect" of a person's social and physical circumstances on their level of physical activity.

A person's immediate social environment includes the people, relationships, and social institutions that make up that environment. Family, friends, coworkers, local social networks, and cultural customs are all covered. These social effects may have a significant impact on a person's desire for exercising, attitudes toward it, and behaviors related to it. For instance, having friends or relatives that encourage you and work out often may act as a positive social pressure that encourages you to move more. On the other side, social marginalization or a lack of friendship support may discourage individuals from exercising.

The physical environment is the tangible setting in which individuals reside, go to work, and spend their leisure time. This includes infrastructure like parks, leisure centers, sidewalks, bike lanes, and other features that promote an active lifestyle. It may be straightforward to access opportunities for physical activity in a physically accessible and well-designed workplace, increasing the possibility that employees would exercise regularly. A location that lacks these components or is seen as unsafe, however, may act as a disincentive to physical activity.

### **Definition of Mediating Effect**

The term "mediating effect" refers to a statistical or conceptual phenomena in which a third variable, also known as the mediator, is used to assist explain a link between two other significant factors, which are commonly referred to as the independent variable and the dependent variable. This phenomenon is described by the phrase "mediating effect." To put it another way, the independent variable exerts its impact on the dependent variable via the medium of the mediating variable, which acts as a conduit or mechanism for this process.

It suggests that social and environmental factors could play a role in acting as mediators to help explain how or why specific conditions impact a person's engagement in physical activity. In the context of participating in physical exercise, this phenomenon is referred to as the mediating influence of both the social and physical surroundings.

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## **The Physical Environment**

The chances for individuals to participate in physical activity and the reasons that drive them to do so are significantly influenced by the physical environment in which they live, work, and play. In this section, the physical environment plays the role of a mediator between the individual's physical actions and the surrounding environment, hence it is subjected to a close and in-depth analysis.

**Accessibility of Recreational Spaces:-** There is a considerable correlation between the ease of access to parks, recreation centers, sports facilities, and green spaces, on the one hand, and the likelihood that a person would engage in physical activity, on the other. People are more likely to include movement into their day-to-day routines when these areas are accessible to the public and kept in good condition, since this increases the likelihood that they will have opportunities for enjoyment and exercise..

**Availability of Infrastructure:-** Physical activity levels are influenced by factors such as the availability of infrastructure such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian-friendly routes. People are more likely to select and make use of modes of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and other kinds of physical mobility when the area has the right infrastructure in place to support these types of physical mobility.

**Safety and Perceived Risk:-** There is a possibility that crucial mediators include concerns about safety and perceptions of danger in the physical environment. People in a given location could decide not to participate in outdoor physical activities if the area has a high prevalence of violent crime, inadequate lighting conditions, or an absence of security measures. These worries may be alleviated if surroundings were created that were both safe and actively encouraged proactive behavior.

**Aesthetic and Environmental Design:-** It is possible that the visual appeal and design of the physical surroundings have an effect on the amount of people who choose to engage in physical activity. People may be enticed to participate in activities and be motivated to do so by urban environments, landscapes, and recreational spaces that have been thoughtfully created. People may have a more positive mental attitude if they are in a nice setting, which in turn may motivate them to exercise and spend time outside.

## **Physical Activity and Health**

It is well acknowledged that frequent physical activity is a necessary component of a healthy lifestyle. Research has shown that regular exercise has a lot of positive effects on a person's mental as well as emotional and physical wellbeing. This chapter investigates the complex link that exists between physical activity and health, and it outlines the several ways in which increased physical activity contributes to improved overall wellbeing.

### ***Physical Health Benefits***

Regular physical activity has been related to several improvements in physical health, including cardiovascular health, musculoskeletal strength, and metabolic function, amongst other improvements. Aerobic activity, strength training, and flexibility exercises are the three types of workouts that are most effective for increasing bone density, flexibility, and overall strength.

### ***Weight Management***

The prevention and treatment of obesity, as well as weight control, may be greatly aided by regular exercise. People who engage in regular physical activity are better equipped to acquire and maintain a healthy weight because they burn more calories and have a faster metabolic rate.

### ***Chronic Disease Prevention***

Regularly engaging in physical exercise has been linked to a decreased chance of developing chronic illnesses such as type 2 diabetes, some malignancies, and stroke. The regulation of blood sugar levels, reduction of inflammation, and enhancement of immunological function are all benefits of regular physical exercise.

### ***Mental Health and Emotional Well-being***

Exercising regularly has been demonstrated to have a positive effect on one's mental health. The symptoms of depression and anxiety may be alleviated, along with improved mood, self-esteem, and cognitive function, by engaging in regular physical activity. Endorphins are released during physical activity, which contributes to these positive effects on mental health.

### ***Cognitive Benefits***

It has been shown that regular exercise may improve cognitive function and delay the loss in cognitive ability that comes with age. The potential of the brain to change and the production of new connections is referred to as neuroplasticity. Regular exercise encourages neuroplasticity, which in turn enhances memory, attention, and the ability to solve problems.

### ***Sleep Quality***

Regular exercise is associated with improved sleep quality as well as increased sleep length. People who engage in regular physical activity often have healthier sleeping patterns, including an easier transition into sleep and longer total sleep times.

### ***Stress Reduction***

A natural way to alleviate stress is to engage in physical exercise. Working out helps lower levels of stress hormones, which in turn promotes feelings of relaxation and mental clarity.

### ***Social Interaction***

Social contact and a feeling of belonging in a community may be fostered via participation in group physical activities. This part of physical exercise, which involves interaction with other people, may lead to improvements in mental and emotional well-being.

### ***Lifespan and Quality of Life***

According to the findings of many pieces of research, people who lead active lifestyles have a greater likelihood of living longer and enjoying a better quality of life in their older years. In older individuals, engaging in regular physical exercise has been shown to both postpone the development of age-related health problems and enhance general functioning.

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## **Conclusion**

This particular research set out to clarify the factors linked to business school students' inclination to engage in physical education sessions. The premise of this research, which was backed up by the literature analysis, was that a range of circumstances, even when academic institutions provide a positive social and physical environment, affect students' choices to engage in physical exercise in the setting of business schools. With the aid of the theory of planned behavior and self-determination theory, it is stated that attitude, subjective norms, and self-determined factors like self-efficacy effect the intention to engage in physical activity.

The study put out six hypotheses, including direct and indirect impacts, and four research projects are intended to elucidate the variables affecting physical exercise in this study. The study used Statistica's PLS SEM tools to evaluate the responses. The results demonstrate a direct or indirect relationship between each independent variable and moderating variable selected and the inclination of business school students to engage in physical education sessions. This implies that the employee's propensity to engage in physical activity is influenced by both internal and external factors related to the social and physical environment of their school. The study elucidated the significance of both the physical and social surroundings in shaping students' inclination to engage in physical education within the framework of a business school.

The study also indicates, in contrast to the previous result, that self-efficacy and other traits regulate the association between students' physical exercise habits and their social and physical settings. To pique members' interest in physical exercise, institutions need to examine these individual factors more closely and focus on assisting both male and female members in enhancing their feeling of self-worth and self-determination. The research places emphasis on the disparities in physical activity levels across genders.

In this setting, the goal is to encourage children to participate in physical exercise by carefully examining the effects of the school's physical infrastructure, social environment, gender appreciation, and self-esteem on practitioners and school management. The study offers better insight into the physical education professionals, business school administration, physical education teachers, and business school students in order to comprehend the importance of physical education and exercise in a business school setting.

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