

## **The Reality of the School Climate and Its Impact on the Practice of School-Based Physical Activity in Secondary Education**

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### **Abstract:**

The current study was designed to examine the state of the school climate and its influence on the implementation of school-based physical activities at the secondary level. Additionally, it aimed to explore the potential connection between school administration and student participation in physical activities. Utilizing a descriptive methodology, the research involved administering a questionnaire with closed-ended questions to a randomly selected group of 30 teachers. Upon analyzing the data, the study identified a statistically significant relationship between school administration practices and the facilitation of school-based physical activities. Furthermore, it highlighted a significant association between interpersonal relationships and student participation in physical activities, as well as a notable link between the inadequacy of school facilities and equipment and the extent of student engagement in physical education.

**Keywords:** School climate, school-based physical activity, secondary education.

### **Introduction:**

Schools represent pivotal social and educational institutions charged with the development of future generations. They serve not only as venues for diverse social interactions but also as platforms that broaden educational perspectives, foster ethical youth, and connect students with their cultural heritage. Moreover, schools are instrumental in passing down the legacies of previous generations, reflecting on contemporary issues, and preparing for future challenges. They condense and relay the vast array of human knowledge, ideas, and advancements across extensive historical epochs to students within an accessible and succinct framework.

Nevertheless, the fulfillment of these educational objectives necessitates a supportive school climate that is safe and harmonious. Such an environment fosters a conducive learning atmosphere where students can assimilate knowledge efficiently and effectively, devoid of disruption and stress.

The term "school climate" refers to the perceptible characteristics of a school's work environment that influence the motivation and behaviors of individuals within it (Chihab, 1992, p. 89). It encompasses the overall quality of life and communication within the school, significantly impacting social relationships, shared values, and the collective achievements of the educational community (Ben Dridi, 2009, p. 41).

Given the pivotal role of school-based physical activities within physical education programs and their contribution to national and school sports movements, these activities should be considered vital extensions of standard physical education classes. Therefore, it is imperative for schools to adopt a dedicated and structured approach to these activities.

The school climate is a critical determinant of physical activity participation at the secondary level. It shapes the environment in which students learn and develop their personalities, comprising various positive and negative elements. The school climate affects the implementation of school-based physical activities through multiple dimensions.

For instance, the behaviors of teachers and students can influence students' perceptions of fitness and their eagerness to participate in sports activities. Additionally, the availability and condition of sports facilities significantly impact students' motivation to engage in physical activities. Notably, many schools exhibit a lack of supportive climates that are conducive to fostering physical activity.

For instance, some educational institutions grapple with the challenge of inadequate sports equipment, while a portion of teachers and students may display a lack of enthusiasm for engaging in physical education activities. A robust school climate acts as a crucial catalyst, inspiring students to participate in school sports. Institutions that actively encourage student participation, ensure the availability of proper equipment, and advocate for sports involvement play a significant role in boosting students' physical health and overall well-being.

To enhance their climate, schools can introduce motivational programs aimed at invigorating both teachers and students. This study was initiated to delve into specific aspects of this issue, examining the current state of the school climate and its impact on the practice of physical activity at the secondary education level.

### **1- The Problem Statement:**

The school functions as a vital environment pivotal to the development of students' personalities, resembling a microcosm that both influences and is influenced by its members. The practice of school-based physical activity is considered essential for fostering students' health and well-being.

The school climate emerges from the entire educational system, incorporating crucial components such as school administration, which embodies leadership in supervision and guidance, teachers with their academic and professional credentials, their instructional and assessment techniques; students, encompassing their academic level, abilities, and

readiness; and the school infrastructure, including its geographical location and the facilities it houses.

Physical activity not only enhances physical fitness and overall health but also boosts self-confidence, improves mood, and mitigates stress and anxiety. Participation in school-based physical activities positively affects students' academic performance by enhancing concentration, attention, and memory. It also promotes cooperation, discipline, self-regulation, endurance, and patience.

Therefore, it is imperative to regularly encourage students to engage in physical activities and provide ample opportunities to partake in the variety of sports and activities available at school. Raising awareness about the significance of physical activity and its benefits for students' overall and mental health is crucial, as is fostering a culture of physical activity within schools and the broader community.

Based on the synthesis of previous studies and insights garnered, it became apparent that this research needed to address the real conditions of the school climate and its implications for the practice of school-based physical activity. This leads to the formulation of the following questions:

### **General Question:**

Does the school climate influence the practice of school-based physical activity at the secondary level?

### **Sub-questions:**

- Is there a statistically significant relationship between school administration and the practice of school-based physical activity?
- Is there a statistically significant relationship between interpersonal relationships within the school and the practice of school-based physical activity?
- Is there a statistically significant relationship between the school's facilities and equipment and the practice of school-based physical activity?

## **2- Hypotheses:**

### **General Hypothesis:**

The school climate impacts the practice of school-based physical activity at the secondary level.

### **Sub-Hypotheses:**

- There exists a statistically significant relationship between school administration and the practice of school-based physical activity.
- There exists a statistically significant relationship between interpersonal relationships within the school and the practice of school-based physical activity.

- There exists a statistically significant relationship between the school's facilities and equipment and the practice of school-based physical activity.

### 3- Study Objectives:

- \_ To clarify the current state of the school climate and its impact on the implementation of school-based physical activities at the secondary level.
- \_ To explore the existence of a correlation between school administration practices and the engagement in school-based physical activities.
- \_ To examine the nature of interpersonal relationships within the school environment and their influence on school-based physical activities.
- \_ To evaluate how facilities and equipment availability impact the participation in school-based physical activities.

### 4- Study Importance:

- \_ This study is pivotal in understanding the prevailing climate within educational settings and its influence on school-based physical activities.
- \_ The significance of this research lies in its potential to inform educational policymakers, researchers, educators, parents, and students about the importance of a supportive school climate for enhancing educational outcomes and overall academic success.
- \_ The research emphasizes the critical need for an optimal school environment that fosters active participation in school-based physical activities.
- \_ It aims to gauge the level of teachers' satisfaction with the school climate at their institutions, providing insights into the potential areas of improvement.

### 5- Definition of Key Terms in the Study:

#### 5.1 School Climate:

- **Definition by Al-Kuraiti:** "The general school climate encompasses the atmosphere within the educational institution, including its management approach, decision-making processes, and the distribution of roles and responsibilities among staff members. Essentially, the school climate embodies the unique characteristics that define the educational setting." (Abd al-Rahman Issaoui, 1993, p. 123)
- **Operational Definition:** School climate is defined as the prevailing positive relationships within the school environment, characterized by safety, security, and a general sense of well-being.

#### 5.2 Definition of School-Based Physical Activity:

- **Definition:** "School-based physical activity encompasses the acquisition of motor and sports skills, related knowledge, and information, along with the development

and maintenance of physical fitness aimed at enhancing health." (Mohammed Emad Al-Din, 1982, p. 67)

- **Operational Definition:** It refers to organized physical activities and games conducted within the educational institution outside regular classroom hours, under the supervision of educational staff.

### 5.3 Secondary Stage:

- The secondary stage of education serves as a critical bridge between middle school and higher education or entry into the workforce. It acts as a crucial developmental phase for nurturing future athletes by providing them with the necessary training and opportunities to excel in various sports disciplines. The level of attention and investment in these young athletes' development is instrumental in sustaining and enhancing their potential, enabling them to achieve notable achievements in sports.

**Operational Definition:** This term refers to the concluding stage of formal education before entering higher education.

## 6. Research Methodology:

The methodology in scientific inquiry comprises a set of established rules designed to ascertain truths within the scientific realm. It delineates the pathway the researcher follows to thoroughly examine the problem and reveal underlying truths (Abd al-Rahman Badawi, 1977, p. 95).

The choice of methodology depends on the specific topic under investigation. For this study, a descriptive approach was utilized, which involves the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data to draw meaningful conclusions. This process begins with the identification of the research problem, followed by the selection of the research sample, the development of data collection tools, the organization and classification of data, and finally, the analysis and interpretation of these data to reach precise conclusions (Zoukan, 1985, p. 189).

## 7. Research Population and Sample:

The sample is a critical element in any research, as it directly influences the reliability and validity of the results. The research concept can be thought of as the seed; the methodology as the soil, and the sample as the fertilizer that nurtures the growth of the research (Ammar Bouhouch, 1995, p. 89).

In our study, striving for objectivity in results, the sample was randomly selected, comprising 30 teachers from secondary schools in the municipality of Oued Fodda: Thawra Secondary School and Bouzar Saidi Mohamed Secondary School. Questionnaires were personally administered to these teachers during interviews, enhancing the accuracy of the data collected.

## 8. Operational Control of Study Variables:

- **Independent Variable:** School climate
- **Dependent Variable:** School-based physical activity

## 9. Research Tools:

To achieve the objectives of this study, the following tools were employed:

- **Personal Interviews:** Personal interviews were conducted with selected teachers to delve deeper into the study topic, clarify terminology, and refine the wording of certain questions to enhance clarity. These interviews were instrumental in shaping the questionnaire design and deepening the understanding of the research subject.
- **Questionnaire:** The questionnaire serves as a fundamental tool in survey research for collecting data on a specific topic. Designed to compile a comprehensive dataset directly from respondents, it facilitates the extraction of factual information from the field through a sequence of questions posed to secondary school teachers. Following a preliminary exploratory study and the validation of the questionnaire by several experienced academicians and field experts, the finalized questionnaire was distributed. It comprised closed-ended questions with options such as Always, Never, Sometimes, and Rarely, structured into three sections targeting the teachers' insights.

## 10. Scientific Validity of the Tool (Psychometric Properties):

- **Tool Validity:** This refers to the capacity of the instrument to accurately measure what it is intended to measure. It encompasses the questionnaire's ability to cover all relevant aspects comprehensively, ensuring the clarity of its items and the accessibility of its language to users (Taybi Ahmed, Nazour Issa; Ben Hfaf Issa, 2021, p. 140).
- **Face Validity:** The research tool underwent evaluation by a panel of experienced and specialized professors to assess the adequacy of the items in measuring the intended characteristics.
- **Internal Consistency Validity:** This was determined by calculating the correlation between each item and the total score of its respective section.

By calculating the correlation between each dimension and the total score of the questionnaire.

Section	Number of Items	Correlation Coefficient
First	12	0.991
Second	9	0.968
Third	8	0.977

**Table (01): Correlation coefficients between each section and the total score of the questionnaire.**

From Table (01), the strong correlation coefficients ranging from 0.96 to 0.99 across all sections indicate high validity of the questionnaire.

### **Reliability:**

- **Cronbach's Alpha Method:** The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using the Cronbach's Alpha method. The results are as follows:

Dimensions	Cronbach's Alpha Value
First	0.959
Second	0.929
Third	0.927
Total	0.938

**Table (02): Cronbach's Alpha values confirming the reliability of the scale.**

From Table (02), it is observed that the overall Cronbach's Alpha value for the questionnaire was high, reaching 0.938. The Cronbach's Alpha value for the first dimension was 0.959, while it reached 0.929 for the second dimension, and 0.927 for the third dimension. These are strong values that confirm the reliability of the questionnaire.

### **11 – Statistical Analysis Method Used:**

To enable a clear and comprehensive analysis of the measurement results, the following statistical tools were utilized: Pearson correlation coefficient, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, percentages, and Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ).

### **12 – Presentation and Analysis of Results:**

#### **1 – Presentation and Analysis of the First Hypothesis:**

The hypothesis that a statistically significant relationship exists between school administration and the practice of school-based physical activity was analyzed through the first dimension (school administration). The frequencies and percentages observed are as follows:

Item Number	Frequencies				Percentage			
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Rarely	Always	Sometimes	Never	Rarely
01	13	14	01	02	43,33%	46,6%	3,33%	6,66%
02	00	20	06	04	0%	66,66%	20%	13,33%
03	15	07	02	06	50%	23,33%	6,66%	20%
04	10	10	02	08	33,33%	33,33%	6,66%	26,66%
05	15	09	02	04	50%	30%	6,66%	13,33%
06	11	18	00	01	36,66%	60%	0%	3,33%
07	12	11	01	06	40%	36,66%	3,33%	20%
08	02	07	13	08	6,66%	23,33%	43,33%	26,66%
09	17	08	00	05	56,66%	26,66%	0%	16,66%
10	17	09	01	03	56,66%	30%	3,33%	10%
11	00	10	13	07	0%	33,33%	43,33%	23,33%
12	09	17	01	03	30%	56,66%	3,33%	12

**Table (03): Frequencies and percentages related to the first dimension.**

The analysis reveals varying levels of engagement, with percentages for "Sometimes" reaching up to 60%. The responses for "Never" and "Rarely" peaked at 43.33%, indicating a varied perception of the role of school administration in supporting physical activity.

first dimension	Frequencies				Percentages				Calculated $\chi^2$	Tabulated $\chi^2$	Statistical Significance
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Rarely	Always	Sometimes	Never	Rarely			
	10	12	03	05	34%	39%	12%	15%	7	5.99	0.05

**Table (04):  $\chi^2$  results for the first dimension (School Administration)**

From the recorded results in Table (04), it is evident that the calculated Chi-square ( $\chi^2 = 7$ ) exceeds the tabulated value ( $\chi^2 = 5.99$ ) at the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates statistically significant results, confirming that school administration plays a role in the practice of school-based physical activity.

• **Presentation and Analysis of the Second Hypothesis:**

There is a statistically significant relationship between interpersonal relationships within the school and the practice of school-based physical activity, as analyzed through the second dimension: interpersonal relationships within the school.

Item Number	Frequencies				Percentage			
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Rarely	Always	Sometimes	Never	Rarely
01	20	09	00	01	66,66%	30%	0%	3,33%
02	19	11	00	00	63,33%	36,66%	0%	0%
03	21	09	00	00	70%	30%	0%	0%
04	17	10	00	03	56,66%	33,33	0%	10%
05	19	11	00	0	63,33%	36,66%	0%	0%
06	09	12	01	08	30%	40%	3,33%	26 ,66%
07	11	13	03	03	36,66%	43,33%	10%	10%
08	07	13	03	07	23,33%	43,33%	10%	23,33%
09	09	15	00	06	30%	50%	0%	20%

**Table (05): Frequencies and percentages related to the second dimension.**

We observe from the table results that the percentage of teachers who answered “Always” ranged between 30% as the lowest value and 70% as the highest. For those who responded with “Sometimes,” the highest value reached 43.33% and the lowest was 30%. Meanwhile, responses marked as “Never” and “Rarely” recorded a maximum of 23.33% and a minimum of 0%.

second dimension	Frequencies				Percentages				Calculated $\chi^2$	Tabulated $\chi^2$	Statistical Significance
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Rarely	Always	Sometimes	Never	Rarely			
	14	12	02	02	43%	30%	15%	12%	17	5,99	0,05

**Table (06): Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) results for the second dimension (Interpersonal Relationships within the School).**

The results recorded in Table (06) show that the calculated Chi-square value, which equals 17, is greater than the tabulated value of 5.99 at the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates statistically significant results, affirming that interpersonal relationships within the school play a major role in encouraging the practice of school-based physical activity.

• **Presentation and Analysis of the Third Hypothesis:**

There is a statistically significant relationship between school facilities and equipment and the practice of school-based physical activity.

Item Number	Frequencies				Percentage			
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Rarely	Always	Sometimes	Never	Rarely
01	10	18	01	01	33,33%	60%	3,33%	3,33%
02	20	00	09	01	66,66%	0%	30%	3,33%
03	08	16	01	05	26.66%	53.33%	3,33%	16,66%
04	15	13	00	02	50%	43,33%	0%	6,66%
05	09	16	02	03	30%	53,33%	6,66%	10%
06	07	19	03	01	23,33%	63,66%	10%	3,33%
07	16	12	00	02	53,33%	40%	0%	6,66%
08	09	21	00	00	30%	70%	0%	0%

**Table (07): Frequencies and percentages for the third dimension.**

We observe from the results that the percentage of teachers who responded with “Always” ranged between 23.33% as the lowest and 66.66% as the highest. For “Sometimes,” the highest was 70% and the lowest was 0%. The highest values for “Never” and “Rarely” were 16.66%, while the minimum recorded was 0%.

Third dimension	Frequencies				Percentages				Calculated $\chi^2$	Tabulated $\chi^2$	Statistical Significance
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Rarely	Always	Sometimes	Never	Rarely			
08	10	10	02	02	48%	32%	10%	10%	7	5,99	0,05

**Table (08): Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) results for the third dimension (School Facilities and Equipment).**

From the results recorded in Table (08), we note that the calculated Chi-square value equals 7, which is higher than the tabulated value of 5.99 at the 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the results are statistically significant and confirms that school facilities and equipment play a role in supporting the practice of school-based physical activity.

## **Discussion of Results in Light of the Hypotheses:**

### **Discussion of the First Hypothesis:**

**Discussion of the First Hypothesis:** There exists a statistically significant relationship between school administration and the practice of school-based physical activity.

The results, as detailed in Table (04), show a Chi-square value of 7, affirming statistical significance at the 0.05 level. This evidence supports the assertion that effective school administration is crucial in fostering participation in physical activities. Proactive administration enhances the educational environment by supporting teachers in their roles, heightening awareness of responsibilities among staff, and providing necessary educational guidance.

This conclusion aligns with the research findings of Charbi Belkacem and Kamal Bouanjak and Fatiha Yessegr, who noted that physical and sports activities are often relegated to a formal role within educational settings. They further observed a general disinterest in school sports among administrative bodies, which complicates the efforts of physical education teachers to conduct impactful activity sessions. These observations corroborate the validation of the first sub-hypothesis.

**Discussion of the Second Hypothesis:** There exists a statistically significant relationship between interpersonal relationships within the school and the practice of school-based physical activity.

As evidenced in Table (06), the Chi-square value of 17 at the 0.05 level of significance underscores this finding. The school climate, intrinsically connected to the quality of interpersonal relationships, profoundly influences the educational process. Education is fundamentally a social endeavor, reliant on positive interactions among educators, students, and administrative staff.

Previous research, notably that conducted by Mohammed Abdulmohsen Dhubayb Al-Otaibi, highlights the critical importance of cultivating positive interpersonal relationships within the educational ecosystem. This includes fostering connections not only among teachers but also between teachers, administrative staff, students, and parents.

These interactions, grounded in mutual respect, appreciation, and collaborative engagement, significantly enhance educational outcomes and overall school morale. Therefore, the second sub-hypothesis is also validated, affirming the vital role of harmonious interpersonal relations in enhancing the effectiveness of school-based physical activities.

In both hypotheses, the interconnectedness of school administration quality, interpersonal relationships, and physical activity practices in schools is evident. These factors collectively contribute to a more vibrant and effective educational environment, promoting not only academic excellence but also the health and well-being of students.

**Discussion of the Third Hypothesis:** There exists a statistically significant relationship between the school's facilities and equipment and the practice of school-based physical activity.

The findings, as outlined in Table (08), indicate a Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) value of 7, achieving statistical significance at the 0.05 level. Thus, it is evident that a significant correlation exists between the scarcity of adequate school facilities and equipment and the frequency of school-based physical activity. This relationship is corroborated by the research of Abd al-Jabbar Abdullah Saad, which highlighted how the absence of appropriate spaces, fields, and equipment can impede the proper delivery of physical education classes.

Additionally, the studies by Abdulmohsen Dhubayb Al-Otaibi reinforce this conclusion, showing that one of the principal challenges faced by physical education teachers is the insufficient provision of necessary sports equipment. This deficiency not only hampers the conduct of physical activities but also restricts the teachers' ability to fulfill their educational duties effectively.

### **General Discussion:**

After examining and analyzing the various results obtained from the study sample, as presented in the tables containing the statistical data related to the variables of the study's hypotheses, which were centered around the following research question: Does the school climate influence the practice of school-based physical activity at the secondary level? the following conclusions were drawn based on the findings:

- The results confirmed a statistically significant relationship between school administration and the practice of school-based physical activity. This conclusion was supported by the participants' responses, which reflected a strong perception of the impact of school administration on physical activity practices. Accordingly, the first hypothesis was validated.
- The results also established a statistically significant relationship between interpersonal relationships and the practice of school-based physical activity. This was evident from the responses related to the second dimension, thereby confirming the second hypothesis.
- Furthermore, the findings revealed a statistically significant relationship between the lack of facilities and equipment in schools and the level of engagement in school-based physical activity. Consequently, the third hypothesis was also confirmed.

Based on the validation of all three sub-hypotheses, it can be concluded that the school climate indeed plays a significant role in facilitating and supporting the practice of school-based physical activity. Thus, the general hypothesis is also confirmed.

### **Conclusion:**

School-based sports activities, integral to physical education programs, play a pivotal role in the comprehensive development of students, encompassing physical, health,

psychological, social, and emotional aspects. These programs are designed to foster a culture of athleticism and fitness among students, enhance physical wellness, promote health consciousness, and bolster cognitive growth. Achieving these outcomes necessitates a concerted effort to raise awareness about the benefits of regular physical activity for maintaining overall health and vitality.

Furthermore, it is crucial to instill accurate concepts of physical activity, cultivate sportsmanship, reduce psychological stress, and provide a means for emotional expression. Physical activity not only meets psychological needs but also enables students to develop motor skills and abilities grounded in robust athletic and health principles. These skills contribute to building a resilient body, prepared to serve both society and the nation effectively.

To support students who show potential in various sports disciplines, it is essential to foster their artistic, motor, health, and cognitive development, enabling them to become exemplars for their peers and motivate others towards active participation in sports. This effort is fundamental to creating a healthy, well-informed society.

### **Suggestions and Recommendations:**

- Promote the strengthening of collegial relationships among teachers, recognizing their pivotal role in fostering organizational commitment within educational institutions.
- Underscore the importance of cultivating a positive school climate by encouraging and reinforcing professional conduct among teaching staff.
- Ensure that schools are equipped with all necessary conditions and resources conducive to success, thereby enhancing teacher motivation and reinforcing their professional dedication.
- Commit to the ongoing development of the school climate across all dimensions by adhering to established standards and fulfilling relevant quality criteria.
- It is imperative that the state implements a fair and responsive wage system for educators, one that reflects economic realities, in order to promote their financial stability, strengthen their professional commitment, and support their sustained engagement in educational excellence.

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