

## A study on Sports and Recreational Facilities at UiTM Pahang

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper examines the sports and recreational facilities that have been provided at UiTM Pahang. The explored the adequacy, the quality and the overall perception of the sports recreational facilities that has been used by students and staff whether for education or recreational purposes. The findings of this study help the university to be more concerned of the sports recreational facilities' importance at the university. Wrong perception or unseen benefits by the decision maker regarding the cost and benefits in developing the sport facilities making it not a priority to provide even though designing and building these facilities contribute a lot of benefits to the health and performance of the university communities.*

**Keywords:** *Sports facilities, Perception, Quality, and Adequacy*

### Introduction

Basrur (2003) defined sports as any physical activities or any movement of the body. They are activities such as attending aerobic class (structured), collecting golf balls (unstructured), jogging (planned) and walking your dog (unplanned). However, Aman, Fauzee and Mohamed (2007) added that sports are something that is related with rules, competition, result, play and games. This is true, where it is more focused on events such as the Olympic games, Commonwealth games and Sports Day where games are played, rules are enforced, and participant compete among each other and result are given. Meanwhile, recreation is defined as fulfilling free time where it is divided into resource based-recreation or outdoors recreation.

In Malaysia during the 1950s, development of sports facilities was not rapidly developed as compared to now. The improvement took place after Malaysia hosted the 16<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Games in 1998. The world-class stadium - Bukit Jalil National Sports Complex was developed to facilitate the event. It was followed by the development of Kompleks Belia dan Sukan, Kompleks Rakan Muda and Pusat Belia Antarabangsa which was subjected under the Ninth Malaysian Plan. Government started to believe that through sports, our nation can be united and patriotism can increase among Malaysians (Barghchi, Dasimah and Aman, 2010).

Although there are many provisions for plans and sports facilities, it was found that the people's interest to use the facilities and attending games are still lacking. The study revealed that the attendance of football game is at poor level with average of 2000 to 6000 attendances. This situation is different in America; the sports facilities are built extensively where they view sports as a part of life and culture (Barghchi, Dasimah and Aman, 2010). In New Zealand sport such as rugby is believed to be a part of their tradition. They not only play rugby but also watch rugby games (Cameron & Gidlow, 1998:137).

According to Aman (2005) in a study comparing the development of sports in Malaysia and New Zealand, Malaysian culture and their belief system is one aspect that restricts Malaysian to be actively involved in sports activities. Issues such as dress code, socialization and prayer time are the factors that restrict Malaysians, particularly Muslim Malaysians to be involved in sports, especially the women. Even though Islam encourages sport to promote good health, the introduction of sports by western countries is not fit for Muslim to get involved with (Salman, 1998).

Nowadays, the development of sports and recreation facilities in other countries had changed rapidly especially in the field of education (Cohen, 1996). Choosing users of the sports and recreational facilities in the university, most researchers tend to choose students as their respondents. This is because students are the major population in the university. A study from Leslie, Sparling and Owen (2001) stated that it is important for universities to provide extensive facilities to the university communities especially the students. It is important to shape the behaviour of young generation nowadays. What they have adapted now will influence their lifestyle in the future. One of the major concerns is sedentary behaviour among the students which will influence their working and lifestyle in the future.

Sedentary behaviour means too much sitting than participating in physical activities. For the students, spending time surfing the internet and playing online game are activities they prefer. Consequences of these behavior will affect the student's health. Chronic disease such as obesity will easily spread Owen, Healy, Matthews and Dunstan (2010). This situation is revealed from the study conducted by National College Health Assessment 2008 where students' participation in physical activity was found less than zero percent a week. The emerging of social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter had influenced students to spend much of their time sitting in front of a computer. It is estimated that students spend at least 2.8 hours per week using a computer (Fountaine, Liguori, Mozumdar and Schuna Jr. 2011).

Since teenagers spend most of their time in a university, it is important for the university to provide attractive facilities or an environment that can encourage them to be involved in physical activities (Sallis and Hovell, 1990). Good sports and recreational facilities had been proven as the place for students to enhance their social interaction (Bryant, Banta, & Bradley, 1995) and social integration (Braxton and Herschy, 2004) not only among them but also with other university communities such as staff.

Smith (2011) reported that student will participate less in physical activities when they enroll into university. Additionally, the percentage of physical activities declines upon graduation because of their sedentary behaviour during the university. Lack of time, feeling tired and having other commitments are reasons for not participating in any physical activities and using provided recreational facilities. Moreover, other reasons such as personal inadequacy in which they do not have specific knowledge to use the facilities and lack of interest in sports made the students abandon the facilities provided (Omar-Fauzee, Yusof and Zizzi, 2009).

The study of usage and non-usage of recreational facilities showed that students will tend to use the facilities if it is convenient and easy to use. Usually, students who stayed on campus will most likely use the facilities provided compared to those who stay off campus. This is supported by a study from Omar-Fauzee, Yusof and Zizzi (2009) which revealed that there are three reasons why students involvement in sports and recreation. The first one is due to being health conscious, followed by a proper and well maintained facilities provided and lastly to socialize. Variety of recreation facilities, good quality and clean surrounding are other factors that contribute to the reason for student's usage of the facilities.

## Statement of the Problem

For UiTM Pahang to move toward being an autonomous campus, there are many consideration on facilities that the campus needs to scrutinize. The facilities provided by the university are used as a marketing strategy to maintain competitiveness and attracting future students to enroll there. Attention to sports and recreation facilities is significant due to various benefits it could bring, not only to the students but to the university as a whole. As such, it is time for the university to consider and evaluate the importance of sports and recreational facilities in its vicinity. This study attempts to investigate the perception of UiTM Pahang students toward the sports and recreational facilities provided by the university and examine their involvement level in physical activities in a week.

Exploring the student perception in using the sports and recreational facilities is expected to increase the facilities' development and services to delight the student community and to promote a good and healthy lifestyle among the students.

## Significance of the Study

1. The findings will facilitate university administrator to provide a good sports and recreational facilities for the student community. Identifying the facilities' shortfalls is invaluable for future development in designing and improving the quality of the sports and recreation facilities.
2. The information from this study can be probed as a tool to attract and retain student enrollment in UiTM Pahang.
3. The outcome of this study will educate students on the benefits of sports and physical activities' involvement. The knowledge will encourage them to increase their involvement and usage of the facilities provided.
4. The awareness gained from this study is hoped to inspire students to practice good health.

## Research Methodology

Participants for this exploratory study are diploma students at UiTM Pahang who are the user of the facilities provided by university. A focus group of 80 samples was obtained and only 45 samples were valid for analysis. Set of questionnaire were developed in exploring the respondents' perception in using the sports recreational facilities at UiTM Pahang. Reliability study has been conducted for this study and the result for the test is .864 and based on (Salkind, 2012) the instrument that was used for this study is highly reliable.

## Findings and Discussion

### Demographics

From n= 45 respondents were comprised in this study, 22.2% were male and 77.7% were female respondents. All the students were from Diploma of Office Management and Technology. Students were selected as the respondent in this study because they were majority user for the facilities provided and the customer to the university

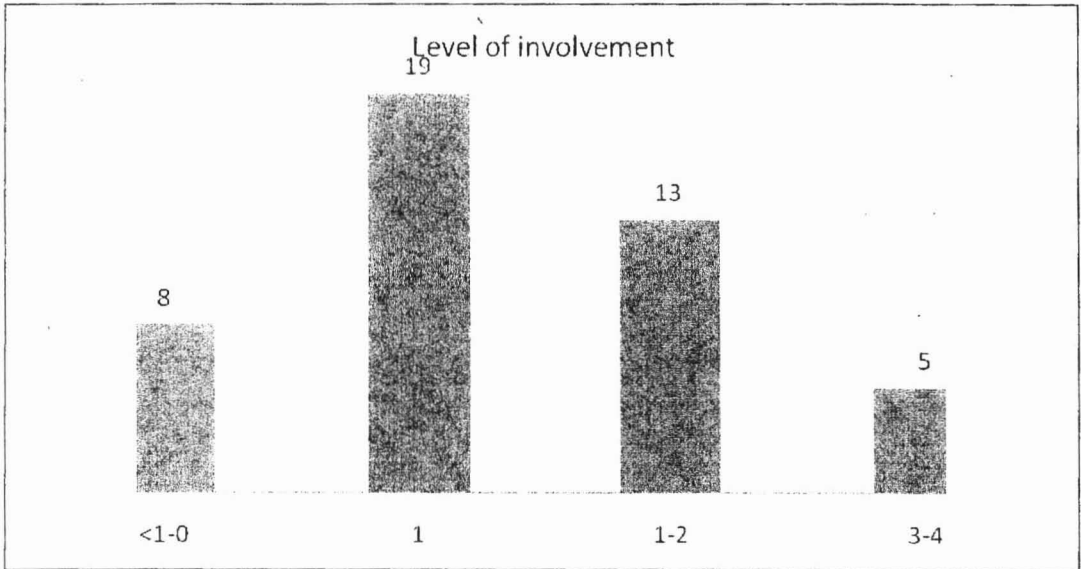
**Table 1: What is the perception of UiTM Pahang student community towards sports recreation facilities provided by the university?**

Descriptive Statistics	Mean	Std. Deviation
The provided sports equipment is always in good condition (functioning/usable)	3.2899	.76891
The amount and variety of sports and recreational facilities in UiTM Pahang are adequate	3.0580	.90560
Cleanliness level in toilets and changing rooms is satisfactory	3.0725	.89638
The amount of light in the sports facilities are appropriate	3.4203	.73576
Operation hour and procedure are user-friendly	3.3478	.81936
There is a sports and recreational facilities provided for the disabled	2.8406	.96441
Toilets and changing rooms for the disabled are provided	3.1304	.98389
Sports personnel on duty is always available, friendly and helpful	2.9710	.92309
Sports facilities reservation and procedure are simple	3.1159	.88345
Overall, the sports and recreational facilities in UiTM Pahang is at an optimum and well condition	3.3768	.76891

Table 1 above shows the perception that UiTM Pahang Communities towards sports recreations facilities that been provided by the university. Based on 1 to 5 likert scale which is 1 is strongly agree and 5 are very disagree. The results shows that based on the mean = (3.1623) indicated that the communities of UiTM Pahang are still not satisfied with the sport facilities that are being provided by UiTM Pahang. Since the students are the customers for the university, it is important to the university to provide excellent facilities that will satisfy their customer (Leslie, Sparling and Owen, 2001). Besides that, a study from the US stated that students are more attract to enrol the university that provide excellent recreational facilities (Woosnam, Dixon, and Brookover, 2006). Excellent sports and recreation facilities not only promote good health to the students but also help students develop their soft skills (Brytan et al., 2004) and social integration (Braxton et al., 2004).

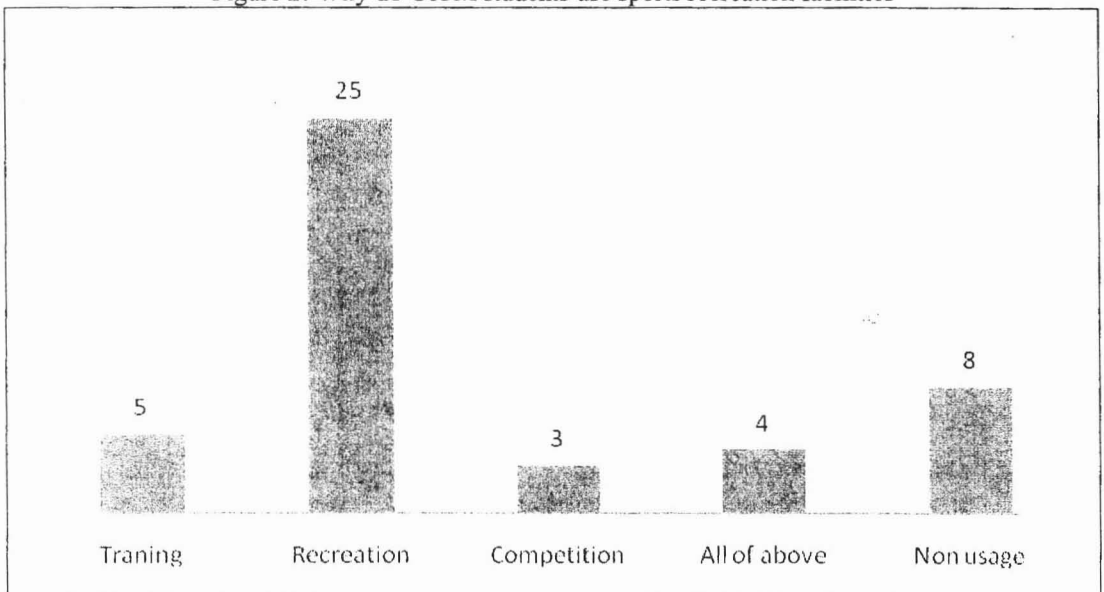
Figure 1: What is the level of involvement UiTM Pahang students in physical activities to access the fully utilize the sports recreation facilities provided?

Figure 1: Level of students' involvement in physical activities



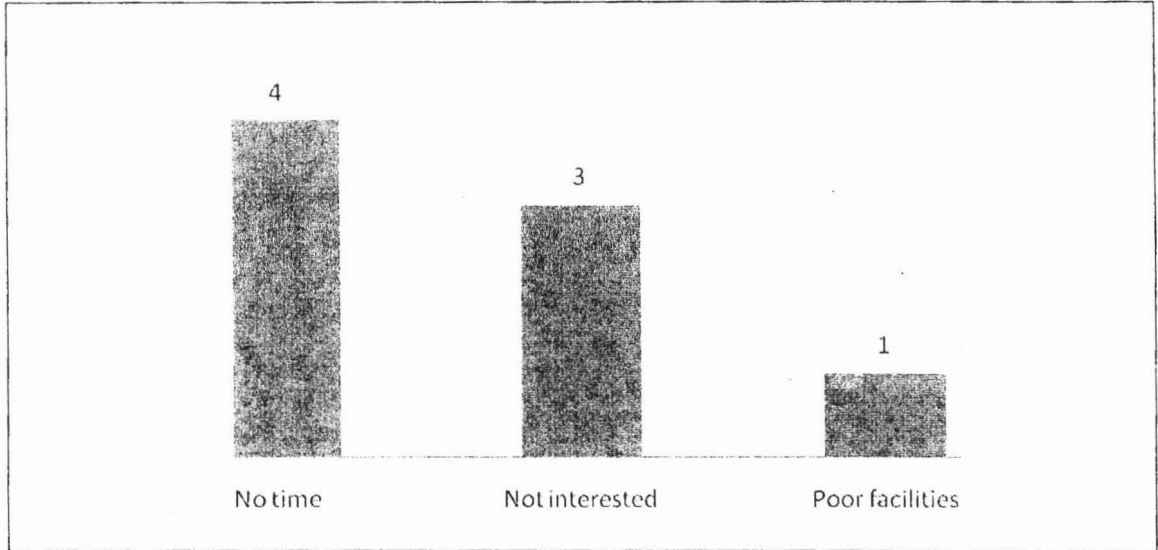
The bar chart above shows the level of involvement of UiTM Pahang students in physical activities. Majority of the respondent (n=19) stated that their involvement was once in a week. Subsequently 13 respondents only used UiTM sport facilities 1-2 times in a week. Only a minority 8 of the respondent stated that they are not using UiTM Sports facilities provided. From the result, it can be concluded that, the level of students' involvement in physical activities at UiTM Pahang is at average level. Even though there were studies that prove students less to be involved in physical activities because of lack of time and not interest in sports and recreation, studies carried out in UiTM Pahang proved to be vice versa Mohd Sofian, Aminuddin and Sam, 2009). Based on the environment at the UiTM Pahang, the sports and recreational facilities location is close to the student's hostel and this make it easy for the students to use the facilities provided. Hence, the number of students who stayed in the campus is higher than students who stayed outside the campus. This result aligns with a study conducted by Mohd Sofian, Aminuddin and Sam (2009) about the usage and non usage sports recreation facilities among students.

Figure 2: Why do UiTM students use sports recreation facilities



A majority (n=25) of the respondents stated that they used the facilities for recreational purposes. This condition is good for the students, which by getting involved in physical activities they can avoid sedentary behavior (Smith, 2011). Besides that, students can also develop other skills such as social interaction and social integration. However, there were 8 of them who stated they did not use any sports recreation facilities provided. The next following bar chart showed why some of them did not use the facilities provided.

Figure 3: Non usage reasons of sports and recreational facilities



A majority (36 respondents) who took part in answering this questionnaire said that they were using the sports facilities provided for them but the rest (n=8) of the respondent said that they did not use the sports facilities. Almost all (n=4) respondents they did not use the sports facilities was because of they don't have time to do it. Three respondents stated they don't want to use sports facilities and simply not interested with UiTM sports recreation facilities. Only one respondent said that UiTM sports facilities are not up to their standard. A study from Smith (2011) stated students still use the sports recreation facilities even though facilities do not meet up to their expectations. In addition, 79% of the respondents stated the sports recreation facilities were not their main reason to enroll into the university.

## Conclusion and Recommendation

Overall findings of the research found that the students are not satisfied with the sports and facilities provided but the students still use the facilities for physical activities and recreation. The perception from the customer (students) is the importance to the service provider (university) in order to know the quality of facilities provided and to meet customer satisfaction. Besides that, the finding showed that the students do have awareness about the important of health. This behavior is good for students not only in promoting the healthy lifestyle but also develop others soft skills from the social interaction and social integration with staff and lecturers. Students also stated that the main reason they participate in physical activities is for recreation. In order to attract more students to get involve in physical activities and use the facilities provided, the university should provide extensive facilities.

It is recommended that the study involved all communities in the university, including staff and lecturers since both of these parties also use the facilities provided. Since the perception of this study is not meeting up with the respondent's expectation, there were aspects that should be improved by the university to satisfy their clients. Even though the level of involvement is at an average level, there are students that still refuse to be involved in physical activities or used the facilities provided. The university should take an action to upgrade the facilities in order to be fully utilized by the students in the future.

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