

## Whole School Environmental Mapping Framework in Preventing Childhood Obesity in Selangor

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**Abstract :** The school environment is one of many factors related to the increment of overweight and obesity among children. There is an evidence to suggest that the school environmental factor has an independent effect towards health-related behaviour of children and school culture. It may have a significant impact towards the emergence of childhood obesity through their influence on eating pattern and physical activity level. The objective of this study is to identify the school environmental factors (i.e. physical, economic, political and socio-cultural) towards healthy eating and physical activity of urban and rural primary school children in preventing childhood obesity. This can be identified by examining the compliance of rural and urban school environment with whole-school environmental mapping framework. The study design was a cross-sectional study. A total of 60 schools were randomly selected (30 urban and 30 rural) in Selangor, Western Peninsular Malaysia in 2013 and 60 teachers (responsible for student affairs and the school curriculum) have been interviewed face to face by using a whole school mapping questionnaire followed by observation of the school environment . This study has demonstrated that schools in both areas (rural and urban) comply mostly with the physical environmental mapping (83.3%), followed by socio-cultural environmental mapping, 65%. Meanwhile, the political environmental mappings in both urban and rural schools show a low compliance percentage, which is 56.7%. For economic environmental mapping, only 10% of both schools are complied. As a conclusion, this study has demonstrated that schools in both areas do not fully comply with the whole school environmental mapping framework, especially economic and political. However, holistic approach is needed and many improvements can be proposed to promote healthy eating and physical activities among school children. Government, families and schools as well as communities and the media should be included together with any strategies for preventing childhood obesity.

**Keywords :** childhood obesity, healthy eating, physical activity, school environment

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