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**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**THE IMPACTS OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION TOWARD  
GROUP COHESION AND OUTDOOR EDUCATION  
ATTITUDE AMONG STUDENT FROM IPGM, KAMPUS  
TEMENGGUNG IBRAHIM, JOHOR**



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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

**Master of Sport Science**

**Faculty of Sport Science and Recreational**

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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY OF WORK

### CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any other degree or qualification

In the event that my thesis to be found violates the conditions mentioned above, I voluntarily waive the right of conferment of my degree and agree to be subjected to the disciplinary rules and regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the impacts of outdoor education toward group cohesion and outdoor education attitude. The samples in the study were students from Department of Physical Education, Institut Pendidikan Guru Malaysia, Kampus Temenggung Ibrahim, Johor Bahru, Johor. Sixty three (n=63) students participated with 32 serve as experimental group and 31 served as control group. The duration of the programme four days and three nights with both control and experimental group experience the same programme except team building activities which serve as a treatment for experimental group. This study seeks to explore the effects of outdoor education camp and sociodemographic variables (age, gender, place of living, and previous outdoor experience) on group cohesion and outdoor education attitudes. Group Environmental Questionnaire (GEQ) and Outdoor Education Attitude Inventory (OEAI) were used to gather quantitative data from pre and post-tests. Results from the present study suggested that, the camp led to a positive improvement in both group and the experimental group showed strong favourable toward group cohesion and outdoor attitude as compared to control group. Only previous experience found to be influential for OEAI but not for GEQ. The process of attitudinal changes toward group cohesion and outdoor education corresponded with Hanna's (1995) *Theory of Intention In and For the Wilderness* and *Theory of Social Cognitive* (Bandura, 1988).

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

#### 1.0 Introduction

Outdoor education is a form of learning system that conducted in the outdoor and indoor which involves challenging or adventure activities as a medium to foster individual personal and social growth (Foley, 2009). According to Foley, (2009) expressed that outdoor education is interrelated with other terms and often referred to as adventure education, adventure programming, outdoor learning, outdoor school, adventure therapy, adventure recreation, adventure tourism, expeditionary learning, challenge education, experiential education, environmental education, and wilderness education.

Consequently, outdoor education is often assumed to be synonymous with fostering environmental literacy and supporting a willingness to take environmental action (Bogner, 2002). Historically, character development, personal growth, and development of self were outcomes desire from participation in such experience (Powers, 2004). Hundreds of empirical pre-post studies have been conducted in an attempt to better understand the impacts (Sariscany & Oslin, 1995). Similarly, Hattie, Marsh, Neill, & Richards (1997) emphasized that the rapid development of outdoor education programmes which applied challenge as their medium of learning has been argued by many scholar about their effectiveness. An examination of the typical objectives of

outdoor education training programs improving leadership skills, team building, improving problem-solving skills, increasing trust, and improving communication has revealed why outdoor education training is so popular (Williams, Graham, & Baker, 2003). Thus, aware of positive impact of outdoor education toward group cohesiveness, Reserve Officer Training Unit (ROTU), Universiti Malaya has organized rafting expedition at Terengganu River in order to gain mental toughness and increase cohesiveness among them (Azmi Malek, 2008).

Training is thus critical to the development of a teacher identity as an outdoor educator. The development of such an identity will lead to enhanced self-efficacy amongst teachers. This process, in turn, leads to teachers becoming more engaged with outdoor learning (Nundy, Dillon, & Dowd, 2009). In terms of formal education in Malaysia, the Ministry of Higher Education and Ministry of Education have developed a curriculum for outdoor education in the syllabus of physical education subject for pre service teacher and pupil in school and has implemented various teaching and learning strategies to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonic, based on a firm belief in and devotion to God in line with the National Education Philosophy (Susan, 2006).

Generally, in Malaysia, outdoor education camping was assumed as an activity that can promotes team cohesion and behavioural changes (Bernama, 2004). Normally, outdoor education programme use adventure activities as a medium such as backpacking, rock climbing, canoeing, and other outdoor recreation activities to achieve goals and

objectives (Sheard & Golby, 2006). The objectives of an outdoor education program are to foster qualities such as determination, cooperation, self-restraint, encourage more effective communication skill, attitude change, build greater trust in others, increase shared decision, encourage new ways to resolve conflict, improve problem solving skills and enhance learning (Morgan, 2006; Sheard & Golby, 2006).

According to the study plan framework of Bachelor of Education in Sport Science at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, outdoor education course is compulsory to sport science and physical education pre service teacher with the main objective is to enrich them with knowledge and direct experience using the concept of learning through experience (Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris., 1997). Based on similar reason, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi MARA, and Institut Perguruan Malaysia have included outdoor education as a compulsory or an optional subject in their study plan framework as a basis for diploma or bachelor in physical education or sport science course (Abu Bakar Sidek, 2004).

Guideline of curricula for all levels of schooling which provided by Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum has outlined outdoor education as a sub topic of skill in Physical Education syllabus for all primary and secondary school in Malaysia (Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum, 1999). Obviously, it is shows that outdoor education has played a vital role in the personal and social development in Malaysia educational context. However, the effectiveness of outdoor education programme as an alternative of

enhancing group performance and attitude have been largely anecdotal (Sheard & Golby, 2006).

It is supported by Brown (2000) in his research conducted to 121 elementary school student with 95% of them were majors ranging from sophomores to post baccalaureates found students' outdoor attitudes and cohesion did not shows any change after experience learning in environment setting. According to Brown, the explanation for the inconsistence result is that it may not be possible to change student attitudes after completion of a single semester-long course. However in contrast to the above finding, Cooper's study (2004) found that outdoor education programs have the potential to build self-confidence and self-esteem, encourage personal responsibility and develop teamwork and cooperation skills.

Therefore, based on the inconclusive finding, there is a need for systematic research to gather empirical evidence in order to support the claims that outdoor education programs have a major enduring impact on group cohesion and outdoor education attitude (Sheard & Golby, 2006).

### **1.1 Statement of Problem**

Outdoor education programme have been operating in educational system in the United States since 1935, when Dartmouth College as a pioneer ran outdoor education trips for first-year students (Hooke, 1987, cited in Bell, Holmes, Vigneault, & Williams,

2008). In contrary, according to Abu Bakar Sidek (2004), historically in Malaysia there was no documentation stated when outdoor education programs have been operated formally and Amy (2007) reported Malaysia lack of research in the effect of outdoor education programme, especially on youth's group cohesion and outdoor attitudes. However, in Malaysia governing school, outdoor education has been taught actively in Physical Education subject in order to achieve the objectives of National Education Philosophy (Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum., 2002a, 2002b).

Over the years, researchers have attempted to gather information on outdoor education programs (Bell, Holmes, Vigneault, & Williams, 2008). The literatures suggest outdoor education may generate positive results in team performance and outdoor education attitude, but with inconclusive finding of quantitative and qualitative data gathered (O'Bannon, 2000). However, in contrast, there are some researchers argue that outdoor education programmes can give a significantly positive influence on the group cohesion and outdoor education attitudes of youth (Lane, 2008).

Therefore this study plans to prove the influence of outdoor education on group cohesion and outdoor education attitudes among participants from Institut Pendidikan Guru Malaysia, Kampus Temenggung Ibrahim, Johor.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to group cohesion and outdoor education attitudes among outdoor education students from Institut Pendidikan Guru Malaysia, Kampus

Temenggung Ibrahim, Johor. A quantitative method was employed in order to examine the impacts of outdoor education toward group cohesion and outdoor education attitudes.

More specifically, the purposes of this study are:

- (a) To determine the impacts of outdoor education towards group cohesion and outdoor attitude among outdoor education students IPGM, Kampus Temenggung Ibrahim, Johor Bahru, Johor.
- (b) To determine socio-demographics variables (age, gender, place of living and previous outdoor experience) in influencing group cohesion and outdoor education attitude.

### 1.3 Research Hypothesis

In order to investigate the impacts of outdoor education toward group cohesion and outdoor education attitude, the researcher has decided to unfold the following research hypotheses:

- H1 There was no significance differences between cohesion scores for control group and mean cohesion scores for experimental group after participating in outdoor education camp.
- H2 There was no significance differences between cohesion scores for control group and experimental group according to any of GEQ sub-domain (Individual Attraction to the Group-Task [ATG-T], Individual Attraction to the Group Social [ATG-S], Group Integration-Task [GI-T] and Group Integration Social [GI-S]).



- H3 There was no significance differences between cohesion scores for experimental group according to age, gender, place of living and previous outdoor experience.
- H4 There was no significance differences between outdoor education attitude scores for control group and mean outdoor education attitude score for experimental group after participating in outdoor education camp.
- H5 There was no significance differences between outdoor education attitude scores for control group and experimental group according to any of OEAI sub-domain (Physiological-physical, Mental-emotion, Social and General).
- H6 There was no significance differences between outdoor education attitude scores for experimental group according to age, gender, place of living and previous outdoor experience.

### 1.5 Significant of the Study

Over the last 20 years, outdoor education is claimed as powerful medium for learning and thus many studies have been conducted in examining the effect of outdoor education, especially on personal and social development of participants. (American Institute for Research, 2005; Shivers-Blackwell, 2003; Williams, Graham, & Baker, 2003).

However, the effectiveness of outdoor education in improving group cohesion and individual behaviors does not remain longer and criticised by many researchers (Lane,

2008; Shivers-Blackwell, 2004). There are various studies radically question such influence by request for empirical evidence rather than only assuming such positive outcomes. Robottom (1996, cited in Bogner, 2002) for instance judged any demonstrable positive effect of outdoor education programme as ill-founded. Therefore, this research will be a unique contribution to the growing body of literature on outdoor education programmes and learning communities in higher education in Malaysia in proving the effect of outdoor education on group cohesion and outdoor education attitudes. The impact of these results also can be used as an indicator for outdoor educator in Malaysia and as useful information for Malaysia Ministry of Education to restructure the curriculum of Institut Pendidikan Guru Malaysia if needed.

Furthermore, to better understand the impact of group cohesion and outdoor education attitude within outdoor education, empirical research is needed.

### 1.6 Delimitation

The following delimitations are placed on this study:

- (a) The study is delimited to subject of outdoor education students, Institut Pendidikan Guru Malaysia, Kampus Temenggung Ibrahim, Johor Bahru, Johor.
- (b) This study is delimited to 63 outdoor education diploma students from Department of Physical Education, Institut Pendidikan Guru Malaysia, Kampus Temenggung Ibrahim, Johor Bahru, Johor conducted on April 2009.
- (c) Group cohesiveness is accessed by the Group Environmental Questionnaire (GEQ) (Carron, Widmeyer, & Brawley, 1985).

- (d) Outdoor education attitude is accessed by the Outdoor Education Attitude Inventory (Wear, 1951)
- (e) The study is delimited to the four days and three nights outdoor education camping programme, conducted on April 2009 at Pulau Sibul, Mersing Johor (Appendix A).
- (f) This study is delimited to the response of outdoor education students from IPGM, Kampus Temengong Ibrahim, Johor on student group cohesion and outdoor education attitude only.

### 1.7 Definition of Term

Below are some operational definitions that are used in this study.

(a) Outdoor education: The use of the outdoors for educational purposes. Outdoor education often involves small groups actively engaged in adventurous activities for personal growth under the guidance of an instructor or leader (Neill, 2008). Operationally, in this study it is refer to the course and programme for students from Department of Physical Education, Institut Pendidikan Guru Malaysia, Kampus Temengong Ibrahim, Johor Bahru, Johor.

(b) Group cohesion: A dynamic process that is reflected in the tendency of a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its goals and objectives (Carron, Bray, & Eys, 2002). Operationally, it is refer to the tendency of a group of students from Department of Physical Education, Institut Pendidikan Guru Malaysia, Kampus Temengong Ibrahim to stick together in their final outdoor education camp.

(c) Outdoor Education Attitude: Feelings and values towards the outdoor education that could be expressed through cognitive, affective and behavioural responses (Szagun & Pavlov, 1995). Operationally, it is refer to the feeling and values a group of students from Institut Pendidikan Guru Malaysia, Kampus Temenggung Ibrahim while they follow their final outdoor education camp.

(d) Natural Environment: Natural environment is commonly referred to simply as the environment, encompasses all living and non-living things occurring naturally on Earth or some region thereof (Place, 2004). Operationally, it is refer to the environments which surround the camp site at Sibu Island, Mersing, Johor.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Introduction

Outdoor education is claimed to provides open-ended, dynamic, varied activities and risk which assumed may contribute for learning enrichment and developing social competence (Greenfield, 2004) and has potential to accelerate change in personal and social development in individuals through its setting and process (Sheard & Golby, 2006). Researchers have listed outdoor education activities as powerful medium for teaching and learning process and acting as social agent of changes (Alien-Craig & Miller, 2007). However many researchers have challenged this idea as recent outdoor education practices have failed to provide strong evidence for the improvement of outdoor education attitudes (Bogner, 2002).

The review is divided into two sections. Section one provides an overview of outdoor education, group cohesion, theoretical foundation, outdoor education attitudes and their influences on group cohesion and outdoor education attitude improvement. Meanwhile, section two provides discussion of previous studies that have investigated the impact of outdoor education camps on the improvement of group cohesion and outdoor education attitudes.

## 2.1 Outdoor education

The term outdoor education is widely used in order to refer to a variety of planned activities which organised in outdoor environment for tremendous of purposes (Neill, 2008). There are varieties of the definitions of outdoor education because the culture, philosophy and local condition influence conceptualizations, interpretations and local conditions of the understanding of the person (Brookes, 2006).

Almost half a century ago, outdoor education was defined as *'education in, about and for the outdoors'* (Donaldson & Donaldson, 1958). *'Education in the outdoors'* referred to the use of the outdoor environment as a learning source and setting for enriching the formal educational process. *'Education about the outdoors'* referred to outdoor education as a teaching method, where it provides first hand learning experiences through direct interactions between self, society and nature. Finally *'education for the outdoors'* referred to outdoor education as a medium of environmental responsibility and protection.

The most popular definition of outdoor education among researcher is defined by Priest (1986) which he proposed outdoor education as "...an experiential process of learning by doing, which takes place primarily through exposure to the out of doors". Through this definition, Priest highlighted outdoor education as an experiential learning Process which occurs either in the outdoors or indoors for the purpose of promoting the lifelong learning process.

However, recently the definition has been widespread and interpreted according to one's understanding of the meaning of outdoor education. For instance, Lund (2004) has defined outdoor education as "an experiential method of learning with the use of all senses. It takes place primarily, but not exclusively, through exposure to the natural environment. In outdoor education, the emphasis for the subject of learning is placed on relationships concerning people and natural resources". Lund's (2002) definition has similarity with Priest (1986) in term of the idea which he highlighted outdoor education is not only occurs in natural environment setting for the purpose of promoting lifelong learning process.

Neill (2003) has defined outdoor education as "When small groups of people participate in organized adventurous activities in natural settings and primarily use themselves as the resource for solving problems". He later proposed another definition which defines outdoor education as "a term that means different things to different people, cultures, and organizations. Common themes include an emphasis on direct experience of the outdoors for personal, social, educational, therapeutic and environmental goals"(Neill, 2008).

However, in different interpretation of meaning of outdoor education, Hammerman, Hammerman, and Hammerman (2001) proposed outdoor education as "a contemporary curriculum development that is sometimes difficult to define. It is a rather vague and nebulous educational concept", and it has been applied in various ways from a visit to a national museum to white-water kayaking. Based on this statement, they

highlighted outdoor education as a multidisciplinary subject which can be applied in any curriculum area and which is primarily focused upon enhancing learning capabilities through direct outdoor experiences.

Based on the above definitions, there is evidence of conceptual differences between researchers. As education *in, about* and *for* the outdoors, outdoor education was also defined as; (a) an experiential learning process (Priest, 1986) ; (b) method of learning (Lund, 2004); (c) the resources for problem solving (Neill, 2008; Neill, 2003) and; (d) a method for teaching and learning (Hammerman, Hammerman, & Hammerman, 2001). All these definitions and personal views have made the process of defining outdoor education far more complicated (Hammerman, Hammerman, & Hammerman, 2001).

In order to minimise the definitional debates, several researchers have proposed that outdoor education should not be defined in shallow terms because it has evolved and formed lots of new branches such as adventure education, environmental education, adventure based learning, ecology education, and education outside the classroom (Gilbertson, Bates, McLaughlin, & Ewert, 2006). These researchers thus proposed that outdoor education is best defined in broad terms as it is influenced by current practices and socially constructed and definitions can and should evolve and transform across time, space and culture (Neill, 2008).