Exploring the association between campus environment of higher education and student health: A systematic review of findings and measures

Numerous studies have investigated the relationship between the neighborhood environment and residents’ health. However, other important settings, such as university campuses, have received little attention. This paper conducted a systematic review and synthesized existing empirical works examining the association between the university/college campuses built and natural environment and students’ health. The findings indicate that active transportation infrastructure, such as increased road intersections and better walkability, were found to be positively associated with students’ physical activity. The natural environment, including perceived naturalness, blue space, and greenness was shown to support student’s mental health and quality of life. Specifically, blue space was found to be the most preferred place for mental restoration, and scattered trees demonstrated a supportive effect in reducing depression symptoms. Even just viewing virtual trees can have a restorative effect and feel less anxiety. Additionally, during the summer, tree shadows were identified as the most important factors for enhancing thermal comfort.