



THE PHYSICAL FITNESS CAMPAIGN FOR USIU GRADUATES

Summer 2018

ABSTRACT

Physical activity reduces the risk for heart disease, some cancers, diabetes, and helps prevent unwanted weight gain. It also reduces stress and anxiety, increases a sense of well-being and improves our quality of life. People of all ages can improve their health by being moderately active on most days of the week. Examples of moderate activity include brisk walking, gardening, and yard work sufficient to increase the heart rate.

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PART 1 – BACKGROUND OF CAMPAIGN STUDY

1. Introduction

Globally, physical inactivity has been linked many times to several health problems such as obesity, lifestyle diseases and a decline in general brain and body performance (González, K., Fuentes, J., & Márquez, J. L., 2017). A quick internet search will give you numerous results on risks, benefits and even suggestions for adoption to improve on physical activity. The rise in physical inactivity can partly be attributed to development where more people are now doing more desk jobs than manual physical labour. Improvement in the transport sector has also contributed to an increase in physical inactivity as there are more affordable, faster ways to move around ranging from trains, taxis, public buses, motor bikes and bicycles.

Physical activity, which can be defined as any body movement produced by muscles and that results in the release of energy, helps build and maintain strong muscles, bones, and joints (WHO, 2017). It reduces the risk for heart disease, some cancers, diabetes, and helps prevent unwanted weight gain. Physical activity also reduces stress and anxiety, increases a sense of well-being and improves our quality of life. People of all ages can improve their health by being moderately active on most days of the week. Examples of moderate activity include brisk walking, gardening, and yard work sufficient to increase the heart rate.

While most people are aware of the benefits of physical inactivity listed above, the willingness to adopt a physical fitness regime is not exactly popular with people giving a wide range of excuses such as time, cost for paying for gym membership and the good old procrastination. All the same, there is general agreement that this ‘modern-day’ problem could be fixed through behaviour change at an individual, household and even institutional level.

In the recent past, there has been an increase and deliberate push for people to adopt physical fitness to help improve their quality of life, prevent lifestyle diseases and help deal with stress better. This increase in awareness and knowledge levels of the importance of physical activity is an important first step for becoming active. Developing skills and improving motivation to be physical activity on a regular basis are important as well. Creating supportive and safe environments in which physical activity can take place are essential for increasing physical activity in a community.

Organizations ranked among the best employers such as Safaricom, Google, KenGen (Business Today, April 2018) are now giving their employees gym membership benefits with an aim of encouraging their staff to exercise and adopt regular physical fitness regimes.

Academic institutions have also invested in amenities that permit their students to engage in physical activity. United States International University (USIU) Africa, an academic institution guided by the vision of becoming a *premier institution of academic excellence with a global perspective*, has greatly invested in the welfare of its students and staff. USIU Africa has a state of the art gym open to all students free of charge, a swimming pool and 16 sports team. However, as discovered in our formative research, 82% of the 119 respondents have never used the university physical activity facilities provided by the university.

This behavior change strategy therefore aims to design and deliver high impact messages guided by the transtheoretical theory to influence the graduate students to adopt the use of the university's physical activity amenities/resources to improve their health, quality of life, manage stress and improve brain performance.

1.2 USIU Background Information

United States International University – Africa (USIU) has a total population of 1,300 graduate students as at July 2018 in the various schools who all have access to the campus recreation centre and sports grounds. The student center is situated on the East Wing of the Freida Brown Student Centre and was established in 2016 comprising a fully-fledged gym that is open and free of charge to all USIU students who are in session. Employees of USIU can use the gym but are charged a minimal fee which goes into the maintenance of the facilities. In addition, there is a newly built swimming pool open for use by students upon presenting their student identity cards and jogging grounds around the campus.

USIU has a total of 16 sports teams which include basketball, volleyball, rugby, swimming, tae-kwondo, karate, kickboxing, tennis, table tennis, athletics, chess, softball and hockey for both men and women. These activities are coordinated by the sports department that is run by a Sports Activities Committee. These teams comprise of university students and anyone interested is welcome to join and take part in the many tournaments organized by the university.

These teams comprise of largely by undergraduates who take part in tournaments and competitions nationwide as well as internationally. Some of the players have been selected to join the Kenya national teams and compete for the country.

Services offered in the gym are martial arts, strength training, cardio work-outs, aerobics, weight-lifting and table tennis. Special workout sessions are also offered such as Zumba, step and dance aerobics amongst others complete with both male and female showers and changing rooms. The gym operates Monday to Friday from 0700hrs – 2000hrs and there are four fully employed instructors to assist with gym activities.

For its 2018-2019 projected expenditure, USIU has plans to build a sports pavilion and has a budget of Kshs.15million and purchase additional gym equipment worth Kshs.10million amongst other plans. This investment is geared to improving students' welfare and uptake of sports facilities.

1.3 Literature Review on Physical Activities

The reason for this literature review is three-fold; to facilitate the understanding of the relevant concepts and underpinning issues that are examined in this study, to identify what previous studies and scholars have found concerning the issues under scrutiny and, to identify the gaps in extant literature that this study seeks to address. As a preliminary, it is crucial to conceptualize and understand the phrase, 'physical activity'. Multiple definitions have been proposed, which, while intended at clarifying the concept only work to obscure or complicate it. Alricsson (2013) defines physical activity (or simply PA) as any body movement that is produced by the skeletal muscles and which requires the expense of energy as a preliminary.

The United States' (US) Department of Health and Human Services, DHH (cited in National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, NHLBI, 2013), construe physical activity as any body movement that works a person's muscles and requires more energy than resting. These may include yoga, running, gardening, and walking among others. The DHH (cited in NHLBI, 2013) further perceives PA as movements that enhance health. Moreover, PA has also been conceived in behavioral terms, for instance, Gabriel, Morrow, Jr., and Woolsey (2012) conceptualize PA as a multidimensional behavior that incorporates human movement,

precipitating physiological attributes such as enhanced physical fitness and increased expenditure of energy.

Nonetheless, what is fascinating in all these understandings, is that PA is underpinned by physical fitness which essentially includes both skill related and health related fitness. Alricsson (2013) explains that health related aspects of physical fitness include muscular endurance, cardio-respiratory endurance, and muscular strength while skill related components are balance, reaction time, agility, coordination, power and speed. What is especially significant and interesting in the extant definitions of PA, especially as is implicit in Gabriel, *et al.*, (2012) definition, is that PA is a multidimensional behavior. As such, the uptake of PA necessitates behavior change.

The transtheoretical model of change (TTM) created by Prochaska J. and DiClemente C. in 1983 (cited in Lenio, 2003) has been applied widely to understand change behavior in health. The TTM is a model of intentional or deliberate change, which focuses on the individual's decision-making potential rather than biological and social influences such as those that have been tried in other approaches to physical health (Lenio, 2003). There are four critical aspects of the TTM, these are construed in terms of stages of change, process of change, self-efficacy and decisional balance (Prochaska & Velicer, 2007). The TTM assumes that there are five stages of change, these include precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance (Prochaska, Norcross & DiClemente, 2013).

In the precontemplation stage, it is assumed that the person has no intention to change his or her behavior in the foreseeable future since they are either under-aware or unaware of their problem(s). In the contemplation stage, there is problem awareness and individuals are seriously considering overcoming it, but they lack the required full commitment to taking action (Prochaska & Velicer, 2007). According to Prochaska and DiClemente (cited in Lenio, 2003) the preparation stage conjoins intention and behavioral criteria, and at this stage individuals either have the intention to take action in the near future or have unsuccessfully taken action in the recent past and are considering taking action again. At action stage, individuals are modifying their behavior and environment so as to overcome their problems (Prochaska, *et al.*, 2013). Action demands serious commitment in terms of energy and time. In

the maintenance stage, people endeavor to avoid relapse and consolidate the gains achieved during action (Lee, Park & Min, 2-15).

The second aspect of the TTM concerns the process of change. According to Prochaska and Velicer (2007) the process of change implies the overt and covert activities which people deploy to progress through the stages of change. Critical process in this regard include consciousness raising which involves awareness enhancement; dramatic relief which enhances emotional experiences and reduced effects if apt action is taken; self-reevaluation which involves the affective and cognitive assessment of self-image with or without a particular healthy habit (Prochaska, *et al.*, 2013). It also includes environmental re-evaluation, the consideration of how the affective and cognitive assessments of personal habits affect an individual's social environment (Prochaska & Velicer, 2007). Decision balance is reflective of the individual's relative consideration of pros and cons of change (Lenio, 2003). Self-efficacy as conceived within the TTM implies the situation-specific confidence people have that they can with overcome the risks without relapse to their unhealthy habits (Prochaska & Velicer, 2007).

From the understanding created by extant literature the TTM it is both implicit and explicit that PA is a tasking undertaking which demands serious commitment and great devotion. More interestingly and quite importantly, the TTM implies that effective communication is of great potential importance in PA. This is in line with the postulations and propositions of the behavior change communication strategy. Behavior change communication (BCC) is construed as a strategic phenomenon that is directed by behavior change theories and systematic processes which ultimately result in influencing practices (Newell, 2014).

The understanding of PA and TTM reveal that behavior change is an important element in physical activity. Segar, Taber, Patrick, Thai and Oh (2017) contend that communication concerning physical activity frames physical activity and determines how people perceive it. The understanding of PA and TTM established in this study reveals that behavior change is an important element in physical activity. In fact, according to Segar *et al.*, (2017), BCC assumes two things; one, that individuals value their health, and two, that because they value their health, people are compelled to change their decisions and behaviors based on their health.

Through effective BCC strategy, it is possible to change any behavior that is high risk towards one that has minimum or low risk.

Trujillo, Brougham and Walsh (2004) found that people have reported being active to realize better health and prevent diseases. Nonetheless, Segar *et al.*, (2017) found that PA's health benefits featured in communication and promotion result in less participation compared to effect of emotional benefits. Newell (2014) contends that communication is important in facilitating all the stages of communication including precontemplation, preparation, contemplation, action and maintenance. An effective communication strategy is essential in motivating individuals to adopt a particular behavior change such as taking up physical activity.

Regular physical activity is associated with enhanced health and reduced risk of all-cause mortality (Kahn et al, 2010). According to the authors, they opine that informational approaches are designed to increase physical activity by providing information necessary to motivate and enable people to change their behavior, as well as to maintain that change over time and propose primarily educational approaches to present both general health information about disease prevention and risk reduction as well as specific information about physical activity and exercise.

The authors also propose that interventions to increase physical activity should adopt behavioral and social approaches and that they can only be effective if the social environment is structured to provide support for people trying to initiate or maintain behavior change. Therefore, interventions should involve the target individuals or group behavioral counseling and typically include the friends or family members that constitute an individual's social environment.

According to the World Health Organization, lifestyle diseases can be greatly reduced through regular aerobic exercise and physical activity and state that recreation activities such as running, brisk walking and swimming are excellent for elevating the heart rate and lowering the incidence of heart disease, obesity and diabetes, if done regularly and that modest and physical activity changes the size and density of cholesterol-carrying proteins thereby causing less damage to the cardiovascular system (Associated Press, 2002). Therefore, people of all ages can improve their health by being moderately active on most days of the week. Examples

of moderate activity include brisk walking, gardening, and yard work sufficient to increase the heart rate.

A communication strategy for behavior change includes the provision of logical information that is grounded on sound scientific knowledge (Segar *et al.*, 2017). The aim of such communication is to increase problem awareness and knowledge of the problem among the target population, stimulate community dialogue on the issue and to promote the required attitude change improve skills and the sense of self-efficacy among the target population (Newell, 2014).

1.4 Assessment of current use of USIU Recreation Facilities

Method

Through casual observation in the months of May-June 2018, it was noted that there are many activities students can take part in, at USIU however, the uptake is mainly perceived as done by undergraduate students. To ascertain whether this was the case a quantitative approach was adopted where two methods of study were administered among USIU students - using questionnaires and face-to-face interviews to check uptake of the said facilities. Non-probability sampling was done with a convenience sample selected by providing an online link to distribute to the group's networks.

Questionnaires targeting graduate students, who are presently in session, were distributed to assess their current use of the university gym and sporting grounds/facilities. The survey was created and administered through Microsoft Forms and distributed through email links, one-on-one encounters and WhatsApp groups. The questionnaire begun by establishing the respondent's demographics in terms of age, gender, duration they have been at USIU and their current level (either graduate or undergraduate). The next section focused on establishing whether the respondents had ever used the recreation facilities and if they had, for them to select which facility they had used in the last six months. For those who had not used any of the facilities, they were asked to select a reason why and also advise what they would consider as their best time to do so during the day. The final section of the questionnaire sort to find out if the students had received any communication from the USIU administration on the use and access to the gym and sporting facilities and whether they would consider use of the same if

they had sufficient information about the services offered, availability and benefits. For those who were unsure about future use, a section was provided for them to give any information that they thought would make them use the facilities in future.

Findings - Sample Characteristics

The total respondents were a sample size of 119 students as at June 2018. A total of 115 (97%) respondents were graduate students from the study, 1 (1%) undergraduates and 3 (3%) were doctorate students. All respondents are currently in session with 31 (26%) students who have been at USIU for 1-2years, 70 (59%) 2-3years, 9 (8%) 0-1 years and a similar number, 9 (8%) above 3 years. Of the total respondents 51 (43%) were male and 68 (57%) were female. The breakdown in age was as follows:-

Age Group	Numbers	Percentage
21 – 30 years	31	26
31 – 40 years	51	43
41 – 50 years	33	28
Above 50 years	4	3

This shows the majority of the respondents were 31 years and above and therefore the BCC strategy should consider this. Of this number 21 (18%) students confirmed having used the gym or sporting facilities while 98 (82%) had never used the facilities throughout their stay at USIU. Of the 18% that had used the facilities, none had used the swimming pool in the last six months while 18 had used some of the facilities.

According to the further findings, of those who had never used the facilities before, 78 students reported that they could consider use of the facilities in the future while a similar number indicated they were unfamiliar with conditions or terms of use. Another 51 indicated they had none or little knowledge about facilities available. All 119 students indicated they had never received any communication from the USIU administration on the use and access to the gym and sporting facilities. Of the total sample respondents, 100 (84%) stated they could consider use of the facilities if they had sufficient information about services offered, availability and benefits while 18 (15%) stated that they were unsure while 1 (1%) said they would not.

Other general observations indicated that even though some graduate students do not use the facilities at USIU, about 10 reported that they use other gyms outside of school. Those who provided comments stated that if more information on terms and benefits of using the facilities was made available, they could consider use while still in session.

Therefore, there is need to come up with a strategy to try and influence change in sedentary behavior amongst majority of graduate students at USIU.

1.5 Stakeholder Engagement

This strategy sort to engage USIU students, faculty and employees to influence adoption of physical activities as part of their day to day routine when they are on campus. Since communication will be targeted to most of them in the long run, it was important to invite their opinions and views on how the implementation of proposed activities will work best.

Upon consultation with the primary target audience through one on one interviews with 15 graduates who recommended that the operating hours in the evenings be extended to 2200 or 2300hrs so that the evening students can use the facility in the evenings or that USIU management considers operating the gym over the weekends when they have more free time.

Faculty and employees consulted are willing to take up use of the sporting facilities as long as management segregates the exercise rooms so that they do not have to mix with the students. There are currently four gym rooms and request that one is set aside for them.

1.6 Theory of Change to Adopt

As enumerated earlier, to help improve uptake of use of the sporting facilities at USIU, the strategy proposes to use the Transtheoretical Model of behavioral change. As seen above, this theory describes individuals' motivation and readiness to change a behavior. The theory will help identify the stages students are in as they progress through lifestyle modifications. It will also guide the strategy in understanding how the students are feeling about adopting positive lifestyle changes and therefore help them progress through each stage to make the proposed behavior change more effective. The stages in the theory for consideration include:-

- i. **Precontemplation** – In this stage, the students are not considering adopting a physical activity program and they are largely sedentary and perhaps do not see or understand the value of physical activities in their daily routines. Messaging will therefore be more focused on encouraging the said students to start thinking about change and the resultant benefits. Messaging will focus on educating students about the health risks of inactivity and the value of being physically active while considering there will be some who are not ready to make changes just yet and require further encouragement and information on benefits of physical activities while still in school.
- ii. **Contemplation** – This is the stage where students will begin to consider the idea of adopting a physical activity program and starts to think about how the sedentary lifestyle is negatively affecting his or her health. While they may not be quite ready to make changes but thinking about it, messaging will be to encourage them to weigh the pros and cons of physical activities so that they can better understand the benefits of adopting a physical-activity program and making other positive lifestyle changes.
- iii. **Preparation** – In this stage, the students are mentally and physically preparing themselves to adopt a physical activity program. They are no longer considered sedentary and they have begun to engage in some of physical activity (e.g. walking and an occasional visit to the gym) but without consistency or commitment to continue doing so. Messaging will therefore focus on encouraging the students to adopt healthy lifestyle changes and overcome the challenges keeping them away from the gym. Working with the available gym instructors, the messages should include information on how to create a plan to fit physical activity into the students' busy work schedules, especially for evening students as well as making healthy food choices when eating out and identifying or creating a social support system.
- iv. **Action** - This is the period between 0-6 months where the students will have been engaging in regular physical activities. They are outliving the plan created at the preparation stage and therefore messaging will focus on offering continuous support and encouragement. Messages should contain information on long-term advantages of

using the sporting facilities and importance of setting individual goals so that the drive does not wear off. Other messaging will include information on anticipating and overcoming obstacles that might deter their motivation to go to the gym.

- v. **Maintenance** –This is the period six months and above where students will have adopted a physical activity program and are maintaining new healthy behaviors. Messages will therefore focus on continued encouragement to the students and identifying those that cause relapses and ways to deal with the said triggers. While appreciating the students may oscillate back and forth in the different stages, it is also important to craft messages that will address the trigger factors so that messaging to address these are well articulated.

1.7 Audience Segmentation

While conducting the formative assessment, the selected sample was largely graduate students and therefore this strategy uses them as the primary audience. The secondary audience are post-graduate students and under-graduates who are not specifically using the sporting facilities. Other secondary audiences are the faculty and other staff who access the campus frequently. While recognizing the audiences are different, segmentation of the audience was done as follows:-

Socio-demographic	Behavioral	Psychographic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sex ➤ Age ➤ Education ➤ Occupation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Current behavior ➤ Stage of change/readiness to adopt physical activities ➤ Frequency of physical activity ➤ Consistency of physical activity ➤ Duration of physical activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Benefits sought ➤ Interests ➤ Attitudes, opinions ➤ Preferences of exercise time ➤ Activities preferred

PART 2 – BEHAVIOR CHANGE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

2.1 The Problem

- i. Nature and extent of the problem – use of university gym and sporting facilities used mainly by undergraduate students. A small population of the graduate and post-graduate school, including faculty and campus staff do not use the facilities citing the following reasons among others:-
 - Little or no information on general terms and conditions for use of the same.
 - Inability to use the facilities due to time constraints and operating hours.
 - Use of other facilities outside of USIU.
 - Lack of information on eligibility to join or use the facilities from management, including services offered and benefits.
 - Low hygiene standards witnessed in the use of gym equipment
 - Lack of a trainer in the swimming pool and hockey pitches.
- ii. Potential audiences – Primary – graduate students while Secondary audiences are Faculty and staff of USIU and undergraduate students who do not use the facility.
- iii. Available resources – Sports grounds, swimming pool and recreation centre. Currently with four qualified gym instructors but a professional swimming coach is required for the pool facility. Other sports coaches required for the various sports who will guide the students in desired activities. USIU plans on putting up a sports pavilion by 2019 and buying additional gym equipment.
- iv. Communication environment – Information to be channeled through campus emails that targeted audience have, campus noticeboards, distribution of flyers and class WhatsApp groups. Management to also consider use of Blackboard for periodic notices on sports updates as available section is not in use.

2.2 Goals and Communication Objectives

The overall goals of this behavior change strategy are:-

Goal: Creating awareness on activities that students can take part in while on campus

Objective: *To circulate information to 30% of USIU graduate students of the sporting and recreation facilities available for their use by December 2018*

Goal: Stimulating a desire to change sedentary lifestyles and adopting physical exercise in the target audience daily routines

Objective: *To influence 20% of USIU graduate students to join the USIU gym or take up daily physical fitness at home by September 2018.*

2.3 Proposed Strategic Approaches

This program will accomplish its communication objectives by considering the appropriateness of communication channels selected for use and other effective approaches to reach a large proportion of the audiences effectively and efficiently. This strategy proposes to use the following:-

- i. Social networks – identifying key class social media platform users who will help disseminate information to classmates in their social networks. This is in an effort to reach out to groups that may provide a social environment to attract members in groups.
- ii. USIU Blackboard e-learning platform – this will ensure a wide reach of information going out to all students and faculty who are currently in session. Revamping of current page
- iii. Posters and flyers - to be put up in all the school's notice boards and distributed in various classrooms in the evenings.
- iv. On ground activation – Hold student-driven events, stunts and dialogue on the school grounds with an aim of getting students to sign up to the gym. These events will include the popular annual USIU Cultural Week.

- v. Creating awareness at faculty-driven events such as the occasional public lectures in the auditorium, the keynote speaker being a famous person or gifted orator. Officials from the gym and the fitness champions to be given a few minutes before the keynote speech to present their case. Brochures/flyers will be distributed in these events.
- vi. Fitness champions: Using people (gym instructors, students who already actively use the gym) to share stories to stimulate action from the students. These stories will include how they manage their time, creating time for gym use, the benefits they have felt after using the facilities and a message to inspire others to adopt the physical exercise regimen.
- vii. Fitness month: introduce a fitness month where students and trainers interact, work out together, challenge and encourage each other, have competitions and sign up new students to use the fitness facilities. In this month, messages encouraging more sign-ups and adoption of workout regimes be intensified.

2.3.1 Strategic Approaches Matrix:-

The matrix below has been developed to guide the strategy in identifying the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed approaches and will guide the implementation plan when selecting appropriate approach during the behavior change communication execution plan.

Strategic Approach	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages	Resources Available	Comments	Rank
Use of social networks	Identifying key class social media platform users who will help disseminate information to classmates in their social networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Wide reach ➤ Simplified and variety messages ➤ Variety of channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hard to measure impact ➤ No control of networks ➤ Cannot link response to campaigns to the specific channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Free Wifi in campus ➤ Availability of smartphone use ➤ Variety of social class groups ➤ Readily available tools to design content 	Easiest to use but require dedicated manpower to run the campaigns	4
USIU Blackboard e-learning platform	Information made available will ensure a wide reach of information going out to all students and faculty who are currently in session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All students have access ➤ Existing sports page available ➤ Existing teams already place and in use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Page currently inactive. ➤ Mainly used for academic work and no surety that graduate students will take an interest ➤ Requires deliberate effort to direct attention to the page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Content on current activities already available. ➤ Current team to include graduate students. ➤ No extra cost required to use the platform 	Mainly used by undergraduate students and therefore information to be available to graduate students	3
Posters and flyers	To be put up in all the school's notice boards and distributed in various classrooms in the evenings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Visual appeal ➤ Easy to identify ➤ Easy to distribute in various notice boards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Not everyone is drawn to noticeboards ➤ High wear and tear ➤ Not cost effective as require design and printing costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Availability of multimedia students and design software. ➤ Availability of printing services 	Tactic will complement the messaging at the on-ground activation.	4
On ground activation	Hold student-driven events, stunts and dialogue on the school grounds with an aim of getting students to sign up to the gym. These events will include the popular annual USIU Cultural Wee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Highly Interactive/engaging ➤ Easy to attract crowds ➤ Personalized attention increases appeal ➤ Immediate sign-ups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Not effective for evening students ➤ Requires team effort ➤ Requires long duration of promotion as students do not attend class everyday 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Readily available USIU PA System ➤ Gym instructors readily available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Requires extensive promotion and promotional materials. ➤ Labor intensive 	2
Faculty Driven Events	Creating awareness at events such as the occasional public lectures in the auditorium, the keynote speaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sustainable ➤ Student focused ➤ Credibility of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bureaucracies involved in beginning such events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lecturers available. ➤ Information channels 	Requires faculty to accept the role of disseminating the message	3

	<p>being a famous person or gifted orator.</p> <p>Officials from the gym and the fitness champions to be given a few minutes before the keynote speech to present their case. Brochures/flyers will be distributed in these events.</p>	source boosts campaign messaging.	➤ Existing attitudes towards faculty events	are available.	and believe in the cause being advanced.	
Fitness and Sports Champion	The use of students who are already actively using the gym and other sporting facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evidence-based testimonials are highly effective. ➤ Personalized interaction ➤ Enhances credibility. ➤ Ease of mobilizing champions to go round classes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Most champions would be undergraduates who the graduates may not relate with easily. ➤ Timing may not be convenient for all targeted audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Current sports teams and gym instructors ➤ Availability of content to be shared 	Fitness and Sports champions currently available.	1
Fitness month	Introduce a fitness month where students and trainers interact, work out together, challenge and encourage each other, have competitions and sign up new students to use the fitness facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reinforced messaging makes it easy to influence activities over time ➤ Creates hype amongst audience. ➤ Interactive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Labour intensive. ➤ Requires a lot of planning ➤ Time and resource demands are high ➤ Requires dynamism to minimize monotony 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Available gym and fitness facilities ➤ Availability of sports teams to run with the activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Easy to monitor and track what is working and what is not. ➤ Can be culturized in the campus calendar 	5

2.4 Positioning

The program will meet its intended objectives with the help of positioning statements. Positioning will enable the postgraduate students to form a mental picture of the benefits they stand to gain by engaging in physical activity.

The positioning statement is:

“Physical fitness is the best way to stay healthy and enhance alertness in my studies, and it ensures my overall well-being.”

This is a prime call to action for postgraduate students who have been battling health issues and have received similar advice from their family, friends and doctors. It establishes a link between regular exercise and excelling in one’s studies, which is the most crucial interest for any university student. No student invests in an education without the hope of graduating at the top of their class and reaping the fruits of their arduous work.

2.5 Key Benefits and Support Points

The key message will be flanked by support points which highlight the benefits of adopting physical fitness in the daily regimen of a postgraduate student.

A benefit statement was formulated as follows:

“If you maintain a daily physical fitness regimen, you will stay healthy and alert throughout graduate school.”

Such a statement was informed by the fact that graduating is the utmost interest of a postgraduate student, thus it would grab their attention and cause them to evaluate how their present lifestyles are pushing them closer to this goal.

2.6 Key Message Points

The key ideas will appear in all communication material and activities for the program so as to ensure consistency. However, the key message points may vary due to differences in the

strategic approaches and the channels being used. Proposed messages will be focused on the stage of change the target audience are currently in and will include such messages as:-

Pre-contemplation Stage

At this stage, since the students will not even be considering adopting a physical activity program or understand the value of introducing physical activity in their daily routine, messages will be educative about health risks of inactivity and value of being physical active. Examples of key messages at this stage are:-

- i. I do not have to wait until I fall sick before I begin jogging/walking/exercising.
- ii. Success is important, so is my health.
- iii. Change starts with me – you may never know what results come of your action but if you do nothing, there will be no result.
- iv. If I could manage my time better, I would have time to relax exercising.

Use of hashtags on social media can also get the target audience to start considering physical activities, e.g #MyUnhealthyLifestyleStory

Contemplation

As seen earlier, at this stage the students may not be ready to make changes but have started thinking about physical activity as an option. Messages will therefore be to encourage the students to weigh the advantages/disadvantages of a healthy behavior change towards exercise. Examples of key messages at this stage are:-

- i. Physical fitness stories....the benefit of keeping fit and the dangers of not.
- ii. Time to change my story and stay fit for life
- iii. Your journey to physical fitness starts in the mind...decide you can and start.
- iv. I have been lazing around for a while, it's about time I took control of my fitness
- v. Every accomplishment starts with the decision to try.

Preparation

At this stage, the students will be mentally and physically ready to adopt a physical activity program and may have began walking or making occasional visit to the gym hence messages

should help the student create a plan for adopting healthy lifestyle changes and overcoming challenges

- i. Your journey to physical fitness starts soon...are you ready?
- ii. “Sit less, move more” aimed at encouraging increase in regular physical activity amongst USIU university graduates It is either now or never – I have to start working out.
- iii. I will make use of the free fitness facility resource.
- iv. It’s time to get my fitness buddies to go to the gym
- v. I am signing up today and my healthy living plan begins now.
- vi. Thrice a week is all it takes to be fit again – time to pick a time!

Hashtags would also help at this stage to help with the planning. An example is #FitnessFridaysatUSIU

Action

At this stage, students will have been considered having taken up regular physical activity for less than size months and following up on the laid plan but do require continuous support and encouragement for them to focus on the long-term benefit. Examples of key messages are:-

- i. Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going
- ii. My journey to fitness is exciting and rewarding.
- iii. Don’t look good to exercise. Exercise to look good.
- iv. Don’t give up on your health when you have just started to look and feel good. Keep going...
- v. Hashtag examples = #NoHoggingYesJogging, #FormNiFitness, #FitnessNiFiti

Maintenance

At this stage, the students will have adopted a regular physical-activity program for more than six months and therefore messaging should focus on having them sustain these as well as address any challenges that might make them revert to their old ways. Examples are

- i. Live for Life – aimed at regular vigorous exercise among students
- ii. Total lifestyle change.
- iii. Hashtags on social media platforms. Proposed examples of catchy trending hashtags are as follows: #Fitness=USIUDegree, #USIUGymChronicles
- iv. Time to register for the free boot camp at the recreation centre, all month! Join us

2. 7 Proposed Channels of communication

Lead channels

The campaign will reach the postgraduate students through lead channels and supporting channels. The proposed lead channels are:

- i. Through interpersonal and group communication channels, such as the USIU student events such as USIU Cultural Week, HIV/AIDS Awareness Week, and Sexual Harassment Awareness Week and so on. There would be a tent where individual students can engage officials of the USIU sporting fraternity on matters fitness.
- ii. Group communications will be done through events such as the Student Barazas, and academic conferences/seminars where the students frequent.
- iii. Use of fitness champions to speak to evening class sessions would qualify as participatory group communication.

Support Channels

Supporting channels will be:-

Digital and social media, where the students will reach content via Facebook posts, tweets, WhatsApp groups and Instagram posts as well. This would enable the students to have an easy reference point for all their fitness queries, plus the reinforced messaging would gradually turn their hearts. Digital and social media would be ideal platforms as most of the postgraduate students operate multiple social media accounts.

To ensure effective reach of the target audience the proposed framework for selection of ideal channels, this strategy proposes use of the transtheoretical model stages to ensure messaging reaches the intended recipients as follows:-

i. Precontemplation Stage

- The fitness champions will engage in one-on-one and group communication via social media platforms and social applications such as WhatsApp.
- They can also engage during campus events such as the student *barazas* and theme weeks such as the USIU Cultural Week.
- Circulation of flyers and putting up posters with appropriate messaging.

ii. Contemplation Stage

- Interpersonal and group communications during campus events
- Social media messaging on various platforms
- Flyers and posters

iii. Preparation Stage

- Fitness champions introducing Q & A sessions to address any queries from students wishing to join the fitness journey
- Social media messaging on various platforms

iv. Action

- Fitness champions enabling the signing up of students to the gym and various sporting activities
- Social media messaging which encourages students to document their new experiences with physical fitness activities.

v. Maintenance

- Fitness champions inviting students for ongoing sporting/fitness events so as to inculcate the fitness culture in the students.
- Social media messaging which motivates students that they are on the right track.

2.8 Proposed Activities

This entails identifying the activities that are associated with the channels chosen and that would drive each strategic approach. The table below shows how the various activities will be undertaken:-

Channel	Activities
Interpersonal	One-on-one student engagement at the USIU Cultural Week, HIV/AIDS Awareness Week, among other student-driven events.
Group	Celebrity engagement of postgraduate students during evening class sessions.
Digital and social media	Facebook-use of USIU faculty and student influencers to drive the conversation. Twitter-use of catchy hashtags to make the fitness topic trend. Instagram-uploading photos of various students and faculty on their fitness journeys.
Blackboard	Announcements of key activities taking place in the Sports Department

It is important to have properly-laid down activities so that the greater vision of getting more and more students into fitness activities is not lost. The campus scene is vibrant with activities where the cause of the campaign can be propagated.

Digital and social media are likely to be the quickest mode of conveying the message, with the most far-reaching effects.

2.9 Proposed Implementation Plan

The implementation plan informs the **who**, **what**, **when** and **how much** of the overall communication strategy. Roles and responsibilities were allocated among the team members based on their individual competencies and skills.

Below is how the implementation plan was drafted:

Activity	Skills	Who has the skills	Activity	Deadline
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Formative assessment ➤ Survey administration ➤ Data Analysis and Reporting 	Carol Joyce Sylvia	➤ Establishing the perceptions of USIU postgraduate students towards the USIU gym and fitness in general	15.06.2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Literature Review 	Carol	➤ Previous studies done and use of current theory	15.07.2018
Stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Public relations ➤ Advocacy 	Carol Joyce, Sylvia	➤ Liaising with the USIU administration and gym officials on the planned activities.	30/6/2018
Events organizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Organizational skills. ➤ Participatory communication 	Joyce Sylvia	➤ Securing a tent at student events. Ensuring maximum traffic at the tent.	31/8/2018
Materials design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Creative design ➤ Public relations and crisis management ➤ Social media analytics ➤ Social media influencer 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Design of posters and flyers ➤ Enhancing influence of the campaign's cause. ➤ Social media management of all interactions. Also monitoring of social media activities. 	1/7/2018

A comprehensive plan ensures that all logistical considerations surrounding an activity are made and the right talent is identified to steer the activity.

It is also imperative to assign deadlines to each task so that the campaign meets its objectives within reasonable timelines. Also, certain activities cannot take place until another one does.

For example, the fliers and brochures need to be designed and printed before the USIU events take place.

2.10 Working Budget

The tentative budget proposed below gives a clear picture of the financial implication of conducting the behavior change communication campaign. This is crucial in planning for the available resources so that the campaign meets its intended outcomes in the most cost-effective ways.

The budget compiled was as follows:-

Activity	Cost (Kshs)
Design and administration of research survey	Nil (team members formulated it and dispensed it online)
Participation in USIU events	Nil
Printing of brochures and fliers (1000 @ Kshs20)	200,000
Social media engagement	100,000 for data bundles required to manage social media activities upto June 2019. PCs used are team members' own.
Contingency	200,000
Grand Total	Kshs.500,000

The budget will be met through lobbying for financial support from the USIU administration, as well as member contributions to meet any deficits. The budget is as lean and modest as possible, so that any extra funds can be ploughed back into the campaign for better outreach. The budget however is not static and will be reviewed from time to time so as to assess whether the campaign's objectives are being realized.

PART 3 – BCC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Once the planning is completed, what is left now is the implementation plan and below are the proposed activities:-

3.1 Area of Scope of the Campaign

In line with the research findings elucidated in the background of this campaign, the focus area will be graduate students at USIU-A, in Nairobi County. The total graduate population currently stands at 1300 and more students are expected in the Fall semester that begins in September 2018. The university recreation facilities are for use by students and staff and therefore any communication going out will be mainly for those within the campus environments and to prospective students when they join in Fall and Spring semesters. Criteria of messaging will be dependent of target audiences.

3.2 Target Audience/Participants

- a. Primary Audiences – All graduate students attending day and evening classes
- b. Secondary Audiences – These will include undergraduate and post-graduate students who are not actively using the facility despite their counterparts doing so.
- c. Tertiary Audiences – These will include USIU staff and Faculty who access the University grounds and other facilities.

3.3 Continued Stakeholder Engagement

The success of this strategy will require continued engagement with all stakeholders in assisting with dissemination of messages and having everyone involved. This will help in building rapport and finding out what is working or not as the campaign goes on. The health and physical fitness workers will also need to work closely with those implementing the strategy to be able to identify what messaging is appropriate for dissemination at each stage Graduate students (as the primary audience) will also be requested to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction informally to reduce any hurdles that may be encountered during the campaign and their input will be invaluable as the various stages are rolled out.

3.4 Message Dissemination Plan

Informed by the formative research conducted among the graduate students on the current limited use of the university's recreation facilities, the strategy proposes intensive dissemination of a variety of messages to the graduate students with the aim of informing, involving and calling students to action. The messages and dissemination approaches are designed to guide the overall campaign that seeks to positively influence graduate students to adopt the use of the university recreation and fitness facilities to improve their health and performance. The dissemination plan incorporates the use of low intensity, high and medium intensity approaches in a clear and consistent manner to ensure maximum impact.

3.5 Dissemination Objectives

Overall, the strategy's dissemination activities and initiatives are viewed as a process of continuous engagement with the following objectives:-

Informing: To ensure students are aware of the current fitness facilities, opening time, support needed and benefits.

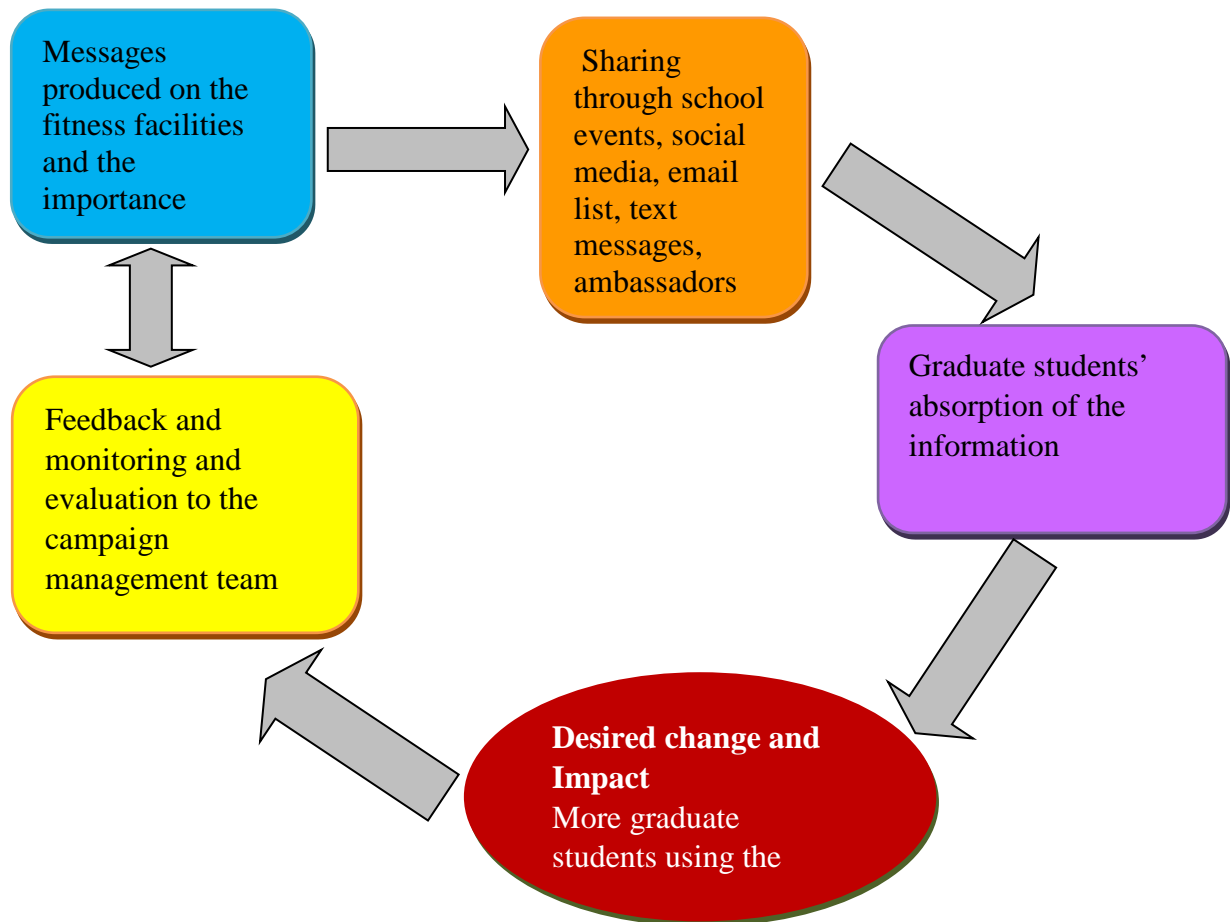
Understanding/Knowledge: To improve and sustain awareness of the existence and importance of using the fitness facilities provided by the university.

Influencing: To influence the graduate students to adopt the use of the fitness facilities to improve their health, prevent lifestyle diseases and overall improve brain performance.

Action-informed administration: To demonstrate to the administration the importance of publicizing the fitness facilities to all students including the graduate students

3.6 Message dissemination to change behavior flow chart

Below is a simplified representation of the flow of the campaign knowledge (messages) from the campaign desires to the target audience.



This flow chart outlines how the campaign messages will cascade from the information developers, to the students, action and feedback loop to ensure the behavior change is sustainable.

3.7 Message Dissemination Plan Matrix

The matrix below gives an overview of the dissemination plan detailed the stage of change, purpose, target audience, selected channels and the responsibility.

Purpose	Target Audience	Message Type	Channel/ Platform	Timing	Responsibility
Precontemplation stage: The messages will be designed to raise awareness and trigger change of mind and heart towards adopting a physical fitness regime Sample messages: #MyUnhealthyLifestyleStory, Change starts with me					
Raise awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Graduate students in USIU ➤ School Management ➤ Fitness facilities supervisors/coaches 	-Photos and descriptions of the available fitness facilities in the university. -Asking students to visit the fitness facilities in the university -use of hashtags on social media -Use fitness champions to deliver the message.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Posters and flyers to be placed in all public spaces ➤ Fitness stunt at the events/graduation square ➤ Email message to all graduate students ➤ Blackboard E-learning repositioning of the message ➤ Messages delivered during the faculty driven events ➤ social media message using GIFs, Memes and catchy phrases mentioned in the key messages section. ➤ Fitness month launch 	First 3 months of the campaign	Caroline, Joyce and Sylvia
Contemplation stage: this is when students are aware of the available facilities and how they can use them and are gearing up to use the facilities Sample messages: It's about time I took control of my fitness, "Sit less, move more" aimed at encouraging Increase in regular physical activity amongst USIU university graduates					
Influence graduate students to use the fitness facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Graduate students in USIU ➤ School Management ➤ Fitness facilities supervisors/coaches 	Interpersonal, best practice examples by champions, digital content and offline content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Personalized messages on Blackboard e-learning sports page ➤ Class sensitization visits by fitness champions ➤ Fitness month events ➤ Social media messages using the suggested hash tags 	Continuously	Caroline, Joyce and Sylvia

Preparation stage: Here students are ready to start using the facilities and the messages will be design to encourage and cheer them on Your journey to physical fitness starts soon...are you ready? And “Sit less, move more” aimed at encouraging increase in regular physical activity amongst USIU university graduates It is either now or never – I have to start working out.					
Encourage and cheer them on students to kick start the use of the facilities	Graduate students	Hype messages and support mechanism messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Posters and flyers ➤ Personalized messages on Blackboard e-learning sports page ➤ Class sensitization visits by fitness champions ➤ Fitness month events ➤ Social media messages using the suggested hash tags 	Month 4 to 6	Caroline, Joyce and Sylvia
Action: Messages to encourage action to start using the recreation facilities. Fitness champions enabling the signing up of students to the gym and various sporting activities Sample messages include: Together we can, #NoHoggingYesJogging, Live for Life – aimed at regular vigorous exercise among students, Total lifestyle change.					
Support behavior change by encouraging adoption of the use of the fitness facilities as a fun exercise	Graduate students	Fitness is fun and you only need 10-15 minutes per day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Videos on easy and short fitness plans for YouTube ➤ Social media; WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook and – Instagram ➤ Fitness month push ➤ Fitness champions ➤ Posters and flyers 	Continuous	Undergraduate broadcast students to package content with technical leadership from the BCC team
Maintenance stage: To promote continuous use of the facilities Sample messages: Fitness champions inviting students for ongoing sporting/fitness events so as to inculcate the fitness culture in the students and social media messaging which motivates students that they are on the right track.					
Support consistent use of the physical fitness facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Graduate students ➤ Secondary audience; under graduate and post graduate students 	Showcasing the benefits and impact of using the fitness facilities and the need to continue using the facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Human Interest stories/ Case studies from graduate students who have used the fitness facilities packaged in form of; ➤ Videos, audios, ➤ social media quotes and infographics ➤ emails, ➤ University fact sheet 	Continuous	Caroline, Joyce and Sylvia with support from the broadcast students to support with the production

The campaign team will seek to continuously test the messages on small groups of graduate students before disseminating to the audience to ensure the messages are culturally right and sensitive and that they achieve the desired change of graduate students using the physical activity facilities and events available.

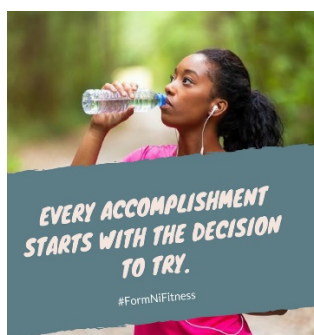
3.8 Sample Message Designs

Below are proposed samples of message designs at different stages of the campaign that will be complemented and communicated with the channels proposed in this strategy. They should be varied to avoid monotony and to remain vibrant at all stages.

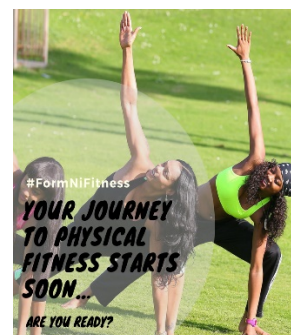
Pre-contemplation



Contemplation



Preparation



Action



Maintenance



3.9 Monitoring & Evaluation of the Behavior Change Campaign

There will be a framework for monitoring implementation of the behavior change strategy aimed at influencing graduate students to adopt the use of the university fitness facilities to improve their health and performance. Our monitoring and evaluation criteria will include both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This will be done through perception survey studies that measure success criteria against set measurable indicators (purposes). The evaluation process will involve the graduate students and university administration through interviews, questionnaires, online survey, observation and other data collection strategies.

Purpose	Target	Criteria for success	Questions to ask
Awareness, knowledge and understanding	All the graduate student	Increase in the number of graduate students informed on the fitness facilities available in the university	Which fitness facilities do you know of? How did you get to know about the facility?
Behavior change intentions	50% of the graduate students	Students indicating intention to use the fitness facilities if time allows	Will you start using the university gym or swimming pool? A yes answer will indicate positive change
Involvement and action (behavior change)	30% of the graduate students adopting the use of the fitness facilities.	The campaign will be asking graduate students to use the fitness facilities and will thus measure how actually start using.	Have you used any of the fitness facilities this semester? Which ones? How often? How do you feel now? Do you intent to continue using the facilities?
Visibility and message reception	All university students and USIU supporters and prospective students	-Number of social media post shares, retweets, likes and comments. -Number of students who visit the fitness facilities for further enquiries -Number of students who attend the fitness event and stunts	-This will be done as a survey and a focus group discussion. -We will also collect data at the different fitness centers.

To ensure effectiveness of the campaign, we will use the participatory monitoring approach involving all stakeholders. This will help us determine if the chosen approach is working, allowing us enough time to adjust the campaign tactics in real time for maximum impact.

CONCLUSION

The benefits of physical activity amongst students cannot be overstated. As seen in this strategy, it reduces the risk for heart disease, some cancers, diabetes, and helps prevent unwanted weight gain. Physical activity also reduces stress and anxiety, increases a sense of well-being and improves our quality of life which is instrumental in ensuring students remain healthy and fit throughout their academic journey. Any sedentary lifestyle can be addressed through behavior change communication campaigns and hence the reason for the one proposed here whose intervention is informed by the research findings done between May and June 2018 or characteristics of graduate students at USIU.

This strategy is grounded on the theory/model of Transtheoretical Model of Change which has been used widely to influence change in behavior. It is however noted that the success of any behavior change campaign requires the participation of all stakeholders. This will be paramount to gauge effectiveness of the campaign and help improve on areas not suitable or not working.

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