

## ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY AND SCHOOL: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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### Abstract

Environmental Psychology is an area of knowledge focused on the analysis and proposition of actions about the relation between man and the physical space. Looking forward to identifying the productions about the space of the school from Environmental Psychology, a literature review was conducted in the multinational libraries EBSCOHost and BVS-Psi (Virtual Library in Health - Psychology Brazil). Together, they comprise over 25 databases about human, social, health and education sciences. The terms used for the searches were “environmental psychology” in intersection with “education” and “school”, in Portuguese and English. Quotation marks were used to restrict the searches to the exact terms. In EBSCO, there were found 183 texts and, in BVS-Psi, 83; excluding the overlaps, there was a total of 133 texts. We used as criteria for selection texts of scientific journals that contained the term “Environmental psychology” and that refers to researches and activities performed at school, exclusively or in comparison with other spaces. Following this criteria, we selected 15 papers – ten in Portuguese (all of them Brazilian), five in English (one from the USA, one from Turkey and one from England). All of the texts were entirely read and organized in a table for the record of information. The papers were published between 1998 and 2014. From 1998 to 2002, there are four texts (from Brazil, England, Turkey and the USA); from 2003 to 2007, three (two from Brazil and one from the USA); from 2008 to 2013, seven (six from Brazil and one from the USA); and one in 2014 (from Brazil). The themes discussed focus on four main topics: 1) organization of the space and its implications for interactions in school (seven texts, six Brazilian and one from the USA); 2) appropriation of space and relation of the students with the school (six texts, of which two are from Brazil, two from the USA and one from Turkey); 3) affordances and use of spaces in school, home, neighborhood and town center (one text from England); 4) analysis about the approximations between Environmental Psychology, Developmental Psychology and early childhood education based on researches from one Brazilian research group (one text from Brazil). In Brazil, the vast majority of studies is about childhood education (from 0 to 6 years), theme of nine from the ten articles; the exception is an article about middle school. From the texts about childhood education, eight are about the organization of space: schoolyards, playgrounds and classrooms, and its implications for the interactions, behaviors and plays of children; one of the texts addresses what the physical environment of the school informs about teaching and contact with nature. In the texts from other countries, there is not such a homogeneity, the texts focus on other levels of schooling (two about high school, one about University and two not specified, applicable to any level). The themes covered are: organization of space and its implications (school organization promoting/inhibiting obesity and/or healthy practices); opinions about the space (suggestions from students for improving the school conditions and appearance; moral reasoning about violence in school spaces; students’ privacy in a studio in a design/architecture University); and affordances. From the review, we conclude that there are many possibilities of relating environmental psychology and education, by discussing and analyzing characteristics of the school, as well as opinions from the people involved (students, teachers, janitors), in a logic of mutual influence. The studied papers point possibilities of analysis and intervention that can provide tools for actions and public policy on education, involving observations of the school organization, as well as the needs and concerns of those who attend schools. (Financial support: FAPESP).

**Keywords:** Environmental psychology, Education, School, Literature Review