

Study of Socioeconomic disparity on the effect of heat on health in persons working in the same organisation

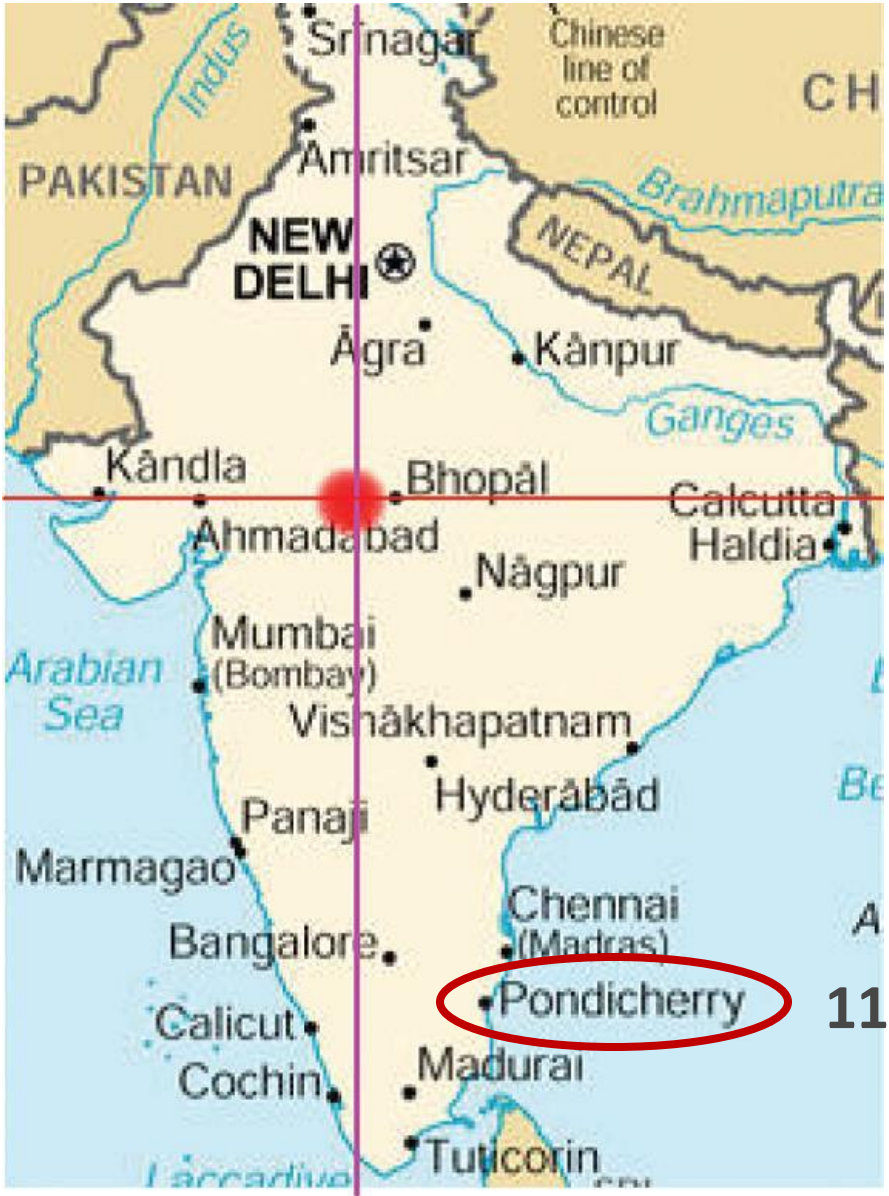
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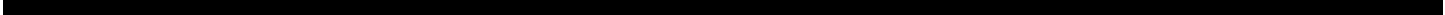
Pondicherry Institute of Medical Sciences (P.I.M.S.)

Pondicherry, India

Where is Pondicherry?



11.9417° N, 79.8083° E



Brief description of case study context

- This study is on the health issues faced by the medical college and hospital staff who work in different settings during the peak of summer.
 - The work environment is different for distinct categories of staff, though they work in the same organisation.
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OBJECTIVES

To study the health-related issues faced by the hospital staff during the peak of summer.

PERIOD OF STUDY

Health issues faced by the staff during the months of May and June of 2025

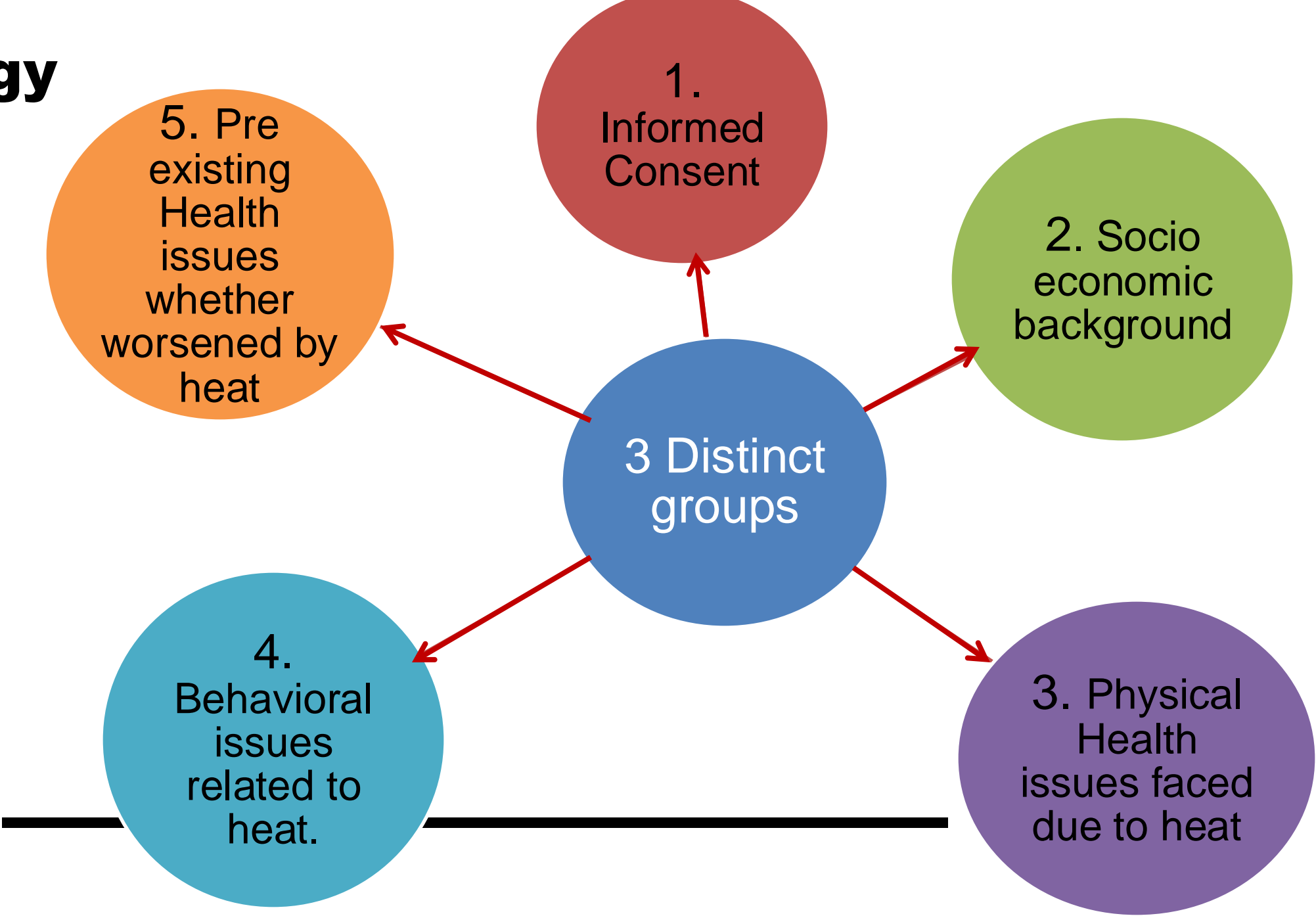
STUDY PARTICIPANTS (SP)

Doctors/ Staff working in air-conditioned (AC) environment

Doctors/Staff working in non Ac environment

Staff working in outdoors – community/garden

Methodology



Housing of some of the SP



The Extent of our campus at P.I.M.S.



Ethical issue with commentary

- 1. Obligations to research participants**
 - 2. Unintended consequences of research**
 - 3. Research governance**
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1. Obligations to research participants

The working environment for each of the distinct groups are not equitable.

Do researchers have a responsibility to the study participants beyond informing them that they are at risk and educating the various groups accordingly ?

Are the study participants willing or able to make changes in their work and lifestyle to respond to the findings of the study?

Is the researcher accountable to the study group by making the leaders aware of regarding the problems faced by the **distinct groups of SP** and advocating for change?

Mitigation measures might include:

- a) Change of work timings
- b) Given more frequent breaks?

2. Unintended consequences of research

The questions raised **adversely affect the work environment and ethos of the workplace.**

The SP will be aware that the conditions they are working in **are not equitable.**

When the study identifies difficulties faced by the employees, action may be required.

The administration might not be able to provide solutions to the affected individuals.

Research governance



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- Does the Research and Ethics Committee verify on whether the data collected bring out the benefits and risks faced by the distinct groups of employees?



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- Does the Research and Ethics Committee ensure that follow up action is taken by the researcher based on the findings of the research?
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Challenges likely to be faced:

The unintended effects of the research – as brought out by the research findings

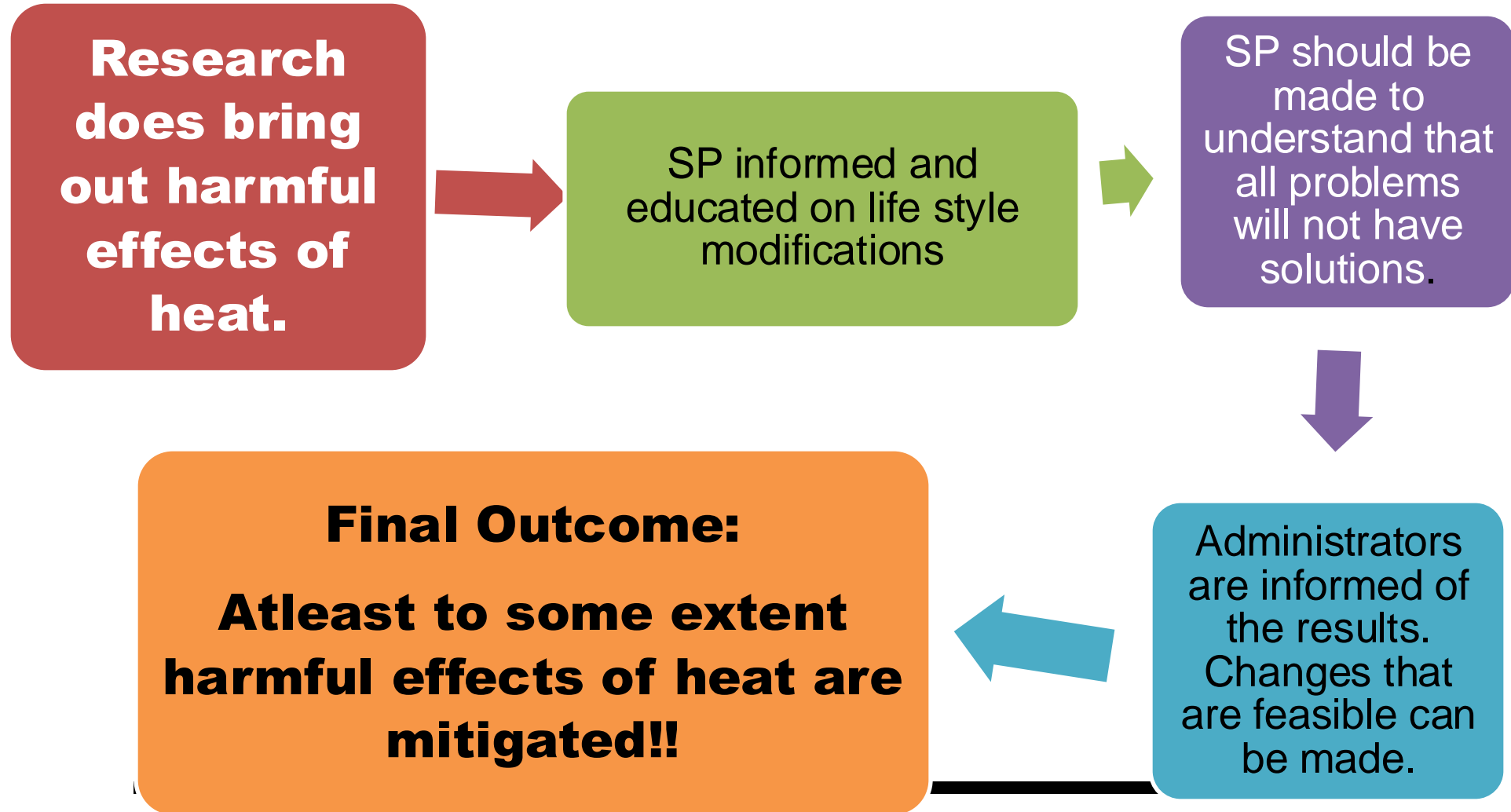
May affect the ethos of the workplace.

SP will be aware that the conditions they are working in - are not equitable.

May require action to be taken by administration which might not be feasible.

In such a case – should the research be permitted??

My reflections on whether research should be permitted at all!



Conclusion and two recommendations

Recommendations made:

According to principles of *justice and fairness*, every research finding –

- ❖ Should be made known to the study participants.
- ❖ Should be discussed with the administrators and others in leadership roles so that changes can be made to mitigate their exposure to heat.

Final implementations need to be followed up by the researcher and made known to all stakeholders.

Thank you

