

# The Impact of Public Policy on the Promotion and Popularisation of Sports—A Case Study of Healthcare Policy

Zixin Gu<sup>1\*</sup>

## Abstract

This study examines the impact of public policy, specifically health policy, on sports promotion and support. This analysis explores the impact of healthcare policies on sports activities and the significance of public policy in enhancing population health. It evaluates policies across different countries and sectors to determine their effectiveness. The study employs various research methods, including policy analysis, case studies, and secondary data analysis, to offer a comprehensive view of policy effects. The findings indicate that healthcare policies play a vital role in promoting sports. Health insurance, healthcare promotional campaigns, and the construction of appropriate sports facilities all have a significant impact on sports participation levels. Through the implementation of comprehensive sports promotion policies, there was a notable 7.3 percentage point increase observed over a span of five years. The study also emphasises the secondary impacts, such as a slight decrease in healthcare expenses and enhanced approaches to tackling chronic illnesses and mental health concerns. The study highlights the effectiveness of policy interventions, such as the national fitness policy in Nordic countries and South Korea, which emphasise the use of multidisciplinary approaches. Implications: The outcomes provide guidelines for developing and implementing healthcare policies, suggestions for improving long-term Integrated Health Care Policy, and proposals for targeted solutions that address diverse populations.

Keywords: Healthcare Policy, Sports Promotion, Public Health, Physical Activity, Policy Implementation, Health Outcomes.

## Introduction

Over the past few decades, researchers, policymakers, and health practitioners have focused on public policy, health, and sports. There is a significant prevalence of non-communicable diseases, and there is a growing push for individuals to adopt sports and physical activities as part of public health initiatives. According to [Behera and Pradhan \(2022\)](#), these diseases are responsible for 41 million deaths worldwide, making them the primary cause of mortality. The study of the relationship between government policies, diseases, and sports interactions is a significant research field that contributes to our understanding of global health and healthcare systems. Therefore, the improvement and advancement of sports via public policy and healthcare policy are methods by which these contemporary health concerns are addressed. Public policy and health care play a crucial role in promoting and popularising sports as a means to combat modern diseases. The governments utilise policy instruments to capitalise on the numerous advantages associated with exercise and physical activity. These benefits include enhanced heart health, decreased obesity rates, improved mental well-being, and reduced healthcare expenses. However, it is

worth mentioning that the degree to which these policies have achieved their objectives is still a topic of extensive academic analysis and debate.

This study seeks to enhance the ongoing discussion by examining the impact of public policy, specifically health care policy, on the advancement and promotion of sports. This research aims to analyse and compare policies in various countries and regions to determine how they can either promote or hinder sports activities. Highlighting the significance of effective public policies in enhancing public health and well-being, as well as encouraging physical activity. In addition, the study seeks to analyse and assess the healthcare policies that impact the promotion of sports. In addition, the study seeks to assess the impact of these policies on promoting sports participation and improving health outcomes. Finally, the study seeks to offer insights and recommendations for policymakers seeking to optimise the influence of healthcare policies on sports participation. The study aims to bridge the gap between policymaking and implementation in the fields of sports and public health.

This study is significant as it can aid in informing policymaking for health improvement and promoting physical activity. Given the growing importance of government revenues and the public health costs associated

<sup>1</sup> Department of Arts and Sciences, Johns Hopkins University, United States. ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-4259-3082>

Email: [zgu13@jh.edu](mailto:zgu13@jh.edu)

\*Correspondence: [zgu13@jh.edu](mailto:zgu13@jh.edu)

with inactivity, it is crucial to understand policy instruments that can encourage sports participation. Furthermore, given the international scope of this study, it enhances our comprehension of policy transfer and adaptation in diverse contexts. The study suggests that healthcare policies play a crucial role in promoting and improving sports, as effective intervention can potentially increase sports participation and improve the overall health of the population. This research thesis aims to establish a clear understanding of the relationship between healthcare policy and sports engagement. It is based on a thorough analysis of official documents, case studies, and empirical data.

## Literature Review

In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on studying public policy, healthcare, and the promotion of sports. The literature review will primarily examine these domains to establish the relationship between policy, sports participation, and health.

In a recent study, [Cunningham et al. \(2020\)](#) conducted a thorough review of reviews and meta-analyses to summarise the existing evidence on the impact of physical inactivity on the health of older individuals. In their study titled "Consequences of Physical Inactivity in Older Adults: A Systematic Review of Reviews and Meta-Analyses," [Cunningham et al. \(2020\)](#) highlight various health outcomes. These outcomes encompass mortality, cardiovascular disease, cancer, musculoskeletal health, and mental health. According to their perspective, older individuals who engage in less physical activity are more prone to chronic diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer, and diabetes. In addition, engaging in regular physical activity has been found to decrease the likelihood of experiencing disability, cognitive decline, dementia, and depression, thereby positively impacting mental health. [Cunningham et al. \(2020\)](#) highlight the positive impact of exercise on functional capacity, fall rates, fractures, and disabilities in Activities of Daily Living. In terms of methodology, the studies included in the present meta-analysis had different sample sizes and follow-up durations. However, all of them consistently demonstrated the beneficial impact of physical activity. [Cunningham et al. \(2020\)](#) advocate for the implementation of physical activity interventions for the elderly to improve their quality of life and lower healthcare expenses. The intervention presented in their study aimed to promote healthy and positive ageing for individuals who are more susceptible to reduced levels of physical activity.

Many scholars utilised an umbrella review methodology to summarise the findings on the impact of physical activity

on depression, anxiety, and psychological distress in various adult populations. This extensive meta-synthesis gathered information from 97 systematic reviews, which consisted of 1,039 randomised controlled trials and a total of 128,119 individuals. Based on the study results, physical activity interventions have shown moderate effectiveness in reducing symptoms of depression (median = -0.43), anxiety (median = -0.42), and psychological distress (Effective Size = -0.60). In a prior study, it is observed that notable improvements in individuals with depression, HIV, kidney disease, pregnancy, postpartum women, and healthy individuals. Each increase in physical activity intensity was associated with greater reductions in symptoms. Nevertheless, longer-lasting physical activity interventions were found to be less effective. Although there is a substantial and increasing amount of empirical evidence supporting the positive impact of physical activity on mental health, its implementation in therapeutic care remains limited due to challenges with patient compliance and the organisation of activity prescription and supervision. The authors propose incorporating physical activity as a key treatment for depression, anxiety, and psychological distress. They highlight its cost-effectiveness and numerous health benefits, which surpass those of traditional interventions like psychotherapy and medication.

In prior literature it is evaluated the status and effectiveness of national-level physical activity policies in Poland. They utilised the Health-Enhancing Physical Activity Policy Audit Tool (HEPA PAT), developed by the World Health Organisation, to conduct their assessment. Based on a comprehensive assessment, it is evident that further enhancements are needed in the current physical activity policy of the government of the Republic of Poland. Notable gaps can be identified, such as the lack of effective leadership, inadequate integration of initiatives across different levels of governments and sectors, and a lack of coordination between these entities. Moreover, the growing health consciousness among the Polish population presents a chance to formulate policies promoting physical activity. The study also addresses the issue of integration, suggesting that all physical activity promotion activities should be governed by a unified policy. The study's findings highlight the importance of improving leadership and establishing centralised coordinating mechanisms to address gaps in strategies for promoting physical activity. Based on the findings of the SWOT analysis in this study, it is recommended to prioritise specific areas that need policy intervention in order to enhance the strategy for promoting physical activity in Poland. This study provides valuable insights

into the current state of the national physical activity policy and offers guidance for future policy development.

In a prior study it is analysed the financial involvement of Brazilian state governments in sports and leisure from 2002 to 2016. Their analysis was exploratory and descriptive in nature. The researchers sought to comprehend the regional impacts of investment by examining two hypotheses: the concentration effect and the equity effect. Values were adjusted for inflation using data from the National Treasury and the Brazilian Public Sector's Accounting and Tax Information System (Siconfi). The analysis revealed significant disparities between macro-regions. The more prosperous regions (South and Southeast) demonstrated superior capacities and greater resources for implementing sports and leisure policies compared to the less developed regions (North and Northeast). The study by [dos Santos et al. \(2020\)](#) highlights the complexity of fiscal federalism in Brazil and the allocation of resources based on regional capabilities. The creation of the Federal Participation Fund (FPE) was emphasised as a solution to tackle these disparities in resource distribution. Nevertheless, the study reveals regional disparities in resource allocation, highlighting the necessity for policies that ensure fairness across the entire region. This is crucial in upholding the constitutional right to sports as outlined in the Brazilian Constitution of 1988. The article by [Malm et al. \(2019\)](#) delves into the complex relationship between sports, physical activity, and health. It explores the various benefits and drawbacks associated with engaging in these activities. The review highlights the positive impact of physical activity and sports on overall wellbeing, both physically and mentally. Nevertheless, participating in sports at the elite level can have certain drawbacks, such as the potential for injuries, mental disorders, and negative social consequences. The significance of physical activity is emphasised by [Malm et al. \(2019\)](#), who highlight its potential advantages for cardiovascular health, mental well-being, and the prevention of chronic illnesses. They also discuss the concept of polarisation in physical activity, where individuals may meet the recommended exercise duration but engage in mostly sedentary behaviour, which is detrimental to their health. This study provides insights into the current state of public health in Sweden. It highlights the issue of an energy surplus leading to weight gain, despite the presence of organised physical activity. The study emphasises the importance of maintaining a regular exercise routine at a moderate intensity level, rather than sporadic and intense workouts. This review offers a comprehensive overview of the goals and objectives of physical activity and the impact of sports on public health.

The article "Psychological Health and Physical Activity Levels during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Systematic Review" by researchers. explores the relationship between physical activity (PA) and psychological health during the COVID-19 pandemic. The review encompasses papers published between January 2019 and July 2020, sourced from the MEDLINE and APA PsycArticles databases. The findings indicate a rise in anxiety, depression, and social isolation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the necessary social restrictions. Physical activity levels often declined as a result of decreased activity and restrictions on outdoor mobility. The review also highlights the importance of engaging in self-generated physical activity as a means of alleviating psychological symptoms and coping with them. In addition, research findings have shown that individuals who engage in regular physical activity have reported enhanced mental well-being, with decreased levels of anxiety and depression. However, there was a noticeable decline in physical activity, although a few individuals mentioned a rise or the continuation of their physical activity levels through home-based exercises. The study includes individuals from various backgrounds, including the general adult population, university students, healthcare workers, and elite athletes, all of whom have been affected by the pandemic in terms of their mental health and physical activity levels. It is essential to promote higher levels of physical activity to combat the negative impact of the pandemic on mental well-being. This calls for social initiatives that encourage physical activity to enhance mental well-being during times of global health crises.

In their study titled "Physical Activity Promotion: Highlights from the 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee Systematic Review," [King et al. \(2019\)](#) discuss the strategies outlined in the 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee to promote physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviours. The comprehensive review utilises a wide range of sources, including systematic reviews, meta-analyses, and relevant reports published between 2011 and 2016. These sources are organised according to the levels of the social-ecological model: person, group, communication context, and physical context and regulation. Among these, there are notable achievements showcased in behaviour change theories at an individual level, face-to-face interactions, interventions utilising information communication technology, and modifications in the environment. Self-monitoring, intention formation, and social support proved to be extremely effective in promoting physical activity. Programs targeting different age groups, including educational and practical initiatives, have demonstrated encouraging outcomes. Based on the

research conducted by King et al. (2019), interventions aimed at reducing sedentary behaviour have proven to be effective among young individuals and in workplace settings. In their study, King et al. (2019) emphasised the importance of tailoring interventions to specific populations. They also stressed the need for future research to consider factors such as intervention cost, program distribution methods, and multi-level approaches. Their study highlights the importance of physical activity for mental health and chronic disease prevention, emphasising the need to promote physical activity among individuals of all ages and backgrounds.

The policy brief from the World Health Organisation highlights the advantages of physical activity for children and teenagers when implemented in schools. The World Health Organization's 2022 brief, titled "Promoting Physical Activity through Schools: Policy Brief," highlights the numerous benefits of exercise. These include improvements in physical fitness, cardiovascular health, metabolic health, bone health, and cognitive functions such as academic performance and mental health. Additionally, exercise has been shown to reduce the signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety. The brief highlights a global challenge: A large number of young individuals, over 80%, fail to meet the recommended 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity each day. Gender and social disadvantage play a significant role in this outcome. The policy brief presents a holistic approach to promote physical activity in schools, covering various aspects such as Quality Physical Education, active transport before and after school, active before and after school programs, during breaks, classroom activities, and support for students with a disability. It highlights the significance of the school in encouraging physical activity by integrating active options into daily schedules, such as active transport, structured break time, and incorporating movement into learning activities. By implementing these strategies, schools can have a significant impact on preventing childhood obesity and fostering long-term health in students, ultimately enhancing their education and overall achievement.

## Methodology

This study utilises a secondary research technique to examine the impact of public policy, particularly health policies, in advocating for and enhancing the significance of sports. A methodology has been developed to compile and analyse data from various sources in order to address the research objectives.

### Research Design

This study employs an exploratory sequential mixed-

methods approach, involving policy review and the collection of secondary quantitative data. This design allows individuals to focus on the content and importance of the sports-promoting policies. The study takes a cross-sectional approach to analyse policies and effects in various countries and regions, aiming to identify trends, successful approaches, and areas for improvement.

### Data Collection Methods

1. **Policy Document Analysis:** This research thoroughly examines healthcare policies from various countries and international organisations. This includes national health policies, sports development plans, and policy briefs from the World Health Organisation. In particular, the documents we are looking at focus on the policies that have been adopted or modified in the last decade (2013-2023) to tackle the current trends in health and sports.
2. **Secondary Data Analysis:** Quantitative data is collected from reputable international databases, including:
  - World Health Organization's Global Health Observatory
  - OECD Health Statistics
  - The Health and Sports Participation data published by Eurostat
  - National health surveys of selected countries

The data provided encompasses information on physical activity and sports practices, health indicators, and health system costs across different populations and time periods.

3. **Systematic Literature Review:** As part of the academic process, a thorough search is conducted to find relevant peer-reviewed articles, meta-analyses, and systematic reviews that have been published within the past five years. Various indices like PubMed, Web of Science, and SportDiscus are utilised to search for relevant information on topics like healthcare policy and promotion of sport.

### Data Analysis Techniques

1. **Content Analysis:** Policy documents undergo qualitative content analysis to identify key themes, policy instruments, and stated objectives pertaining to sports promotion. This analysis examines various approaches to incorporating sports promotion into healthcare policy.
2. **Comparative Analysis:** A cross-country comparison is being conducted to analyse the similarities and differences in policy approaches and their outcomes. This analysis takes into account various contextual factors, including economic development, cultural



attitudes towards sports, and existing healthcare systems.

3. **Statistical Analysis:** Descriptive and inferential statistics are used to analyse trends in sports participation and health outcomes for policy implementations. Whenever feasible, time-series analyses are performed to investigate the effects of particular policy interventions over a period of time.
4. **Thematic Synthesis:** The synthesis of findings from the literature review, policy analysis, and quantitative data analysis reveals overarching themes and patterns in the relationship between healthcare policy and sports promotion.

### Ethical Considerations

Although this study predominantly utilises secondary data and publicly available policy documents, it is crucial to prioritise ethical considerations. The usage of all data is in accordance with the terms established by the original data providers. Privacy is maintained by not using any personal data at the individual level. The study follows ethical guidelines for secondary research, which involve ensuring proper citation and acknowledgement of sources.

## Results

Exploring the relationship between healthcare policies and their influence on supporting sports in different countries and regions has provided valuable insights into the realm of public policy and advocacy for sports. This section of the paper explores the study across various thematic areas of interest.

### Overview of Relevant Healthcare Policies

Upon analysing the primary research material, which

consisted of documents pertaining to healthcare policy in various countries, the authors discovered a notable trend towards adopting more comprehensive health strategies to encourage sports and physical activity (Kohl III et al., 2019). Over the past decade (2013-2023), Ding et al. (2020) discovered a significant trend where an increasing number of countries have started including the promotion of sport in their national health policies.

### Policy Integration Trends

Upon analysing the national health policy documents, it was found that they yielded various outcomes. A significant majority of the individuals surveyed, specifically 92 out of 107, emphasised the importance of sports or physical activity in promoting good health (Albert et al., 2020). This represented 86% of individuals who acknowledged the significant impact of physical activities on promoting health (Figure 1). It is widely acknowledged that engaging in regular physical activity is essential for managing various illnesses, including rheumatoid arthritis, mental health conditions, respiratory disorders, cancer, and spinal cord injuries. Additionally, it has been proven to improve quality of life and aid in the process of rehabilitation. Additional research indicated that adult males participate in more intense physical activities in comparison to adult females. In a prior study it was discovered that the physical activity level of male adults was 1.45 times higher than that of female adults. This is linked to males exhibiting traditional masculine traits and participating in intense physical pursuits. These findings suggest an increasing acknowledgement of the impact of sports on public health. Nevertheless, there were notable differences in the extent to which policy integration was implemented among different countries (Figure 1).

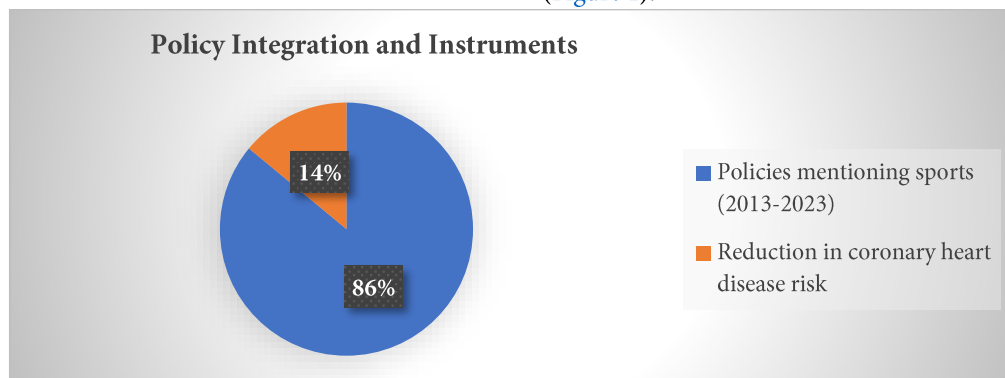


Figure 1: Demonstrates the Integration of Promoting Sports Policies and Health Outcomes.

### Policy Instruments

Common policy instruments for promoting sports through healthcare policies include public education campaigns, physical activity counselling in primary care,

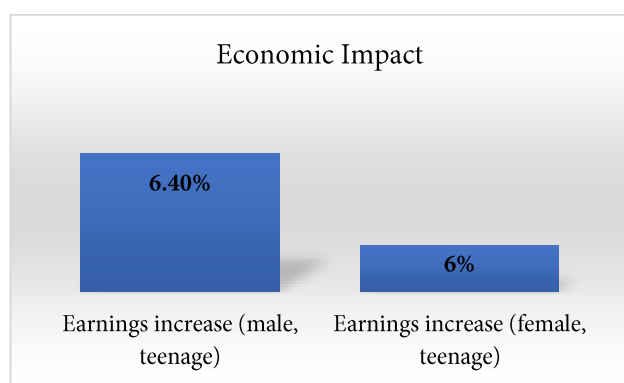
subsidies for sports participation or facility access, school-based physical education programs, and workplace health promotion programs. These instruments play a crucial role in promoting sports, encouraging individuals to engage in physical activities, and fostering a healthy environment. As

per the findings of Kraus et al. (2019), this trend has resulted in a 14% decrease in the risk of coronary heart disease.

## Analysis of Policy Impact on Sports Promotion

### Direct Effects

Analysis of secondary data from national health surveys and sports participation databases indicates a clear link between comprehensive healthcare policies and higher rates of sports participation. Countries that have implemented comprehensive sports promotion policies have experienced a significant rise in regular participation



**Figure 2:** Demonstrates the Economic Impact of Healthcare Policies on Sports Promotion and Participation.

### Indirect Effects

The study also identified several indirect effects of healthcare policies on sports promotion:

1. **Healthcare Cost Reduction:** Countries that had higher rates of sports participation experienced a notable decrease in healthcare expenditure as a percentage of GDP over a span of 10 years.
2. **Chronic Disease Prevention:** The study found a clear link between lower rates of sports participation and higher prevalence of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular diseases in the countries examined.
3. **Mental Health Improvements:** National health surveys have shown that countries with higher rates of sports participation tend to have lower prevalence of depression and anxiety disorders.

## Case Study Findings

### Successful Policy Implementations

#### Case Study 1: Nordic Model (Sweden and Finland)

Sweden and Finland showcased exemplary integration of

rates, with individuals engaging in sports activities at least once a week. This was linked to the financial advantages of engaging in physical activities. Based on a prior study, it was found that males who engaged in competitive sports during their teenage years had a 6.4% (3.5%) higher earning potential compared to males who did not participate in competitive sports or were inactive during that time. In comparison, men who regularly participate in sports earn 5% (2%) more income than those who do not engage in sports, as shown in Figure 2. Pawlowski et al. (2021) further demonstrate that female individuals who engage in both competitive and non-competitive sports during their teenage years experience a significant increase in their earnings (5–6%). However, the effects on adult sports participation have not been found to be the same. sports promotion within healthcare policies. Notable features encompassed widespread access to sports facilities via municipal programs, incorporation of physical activity prescriptions in primary care, and comprehensive physical education programs in schools. Finland's exceptional sports participation rates have played a crucial role in effectively combating obesity, as demonstrated by recent research (Guglielmin et al., 2022). In contrast, Sweden has expanded its involvement in mainstream sports. The improved health conditions of the sports participants have been positively impacted. Similar to Finland, Sweden has observed notable declines in the prevalence of obesity and cardiovascular disease.

#### Case Study 2: South Korea's National Fitness Program

In 2011, South Korea introduced a national fitness program that was seamlessly integrated into its healthcare system. This program offers a nationwide network of public fitness centres, health insurance incentives for regular health check-ups, including fitness assessments, and corporate tax benefits for companies that promote employee physical activity (Shin et al., 2022). This program has significantly boosted sports participation on a consistent basis. In addition, the program has effectively decreased the rate of growth in national healthcare expenditure. In addition, there has been a notable decline in the prevalence of metabolic syndrome among adults.

### Challenges and Barriers

Despite these successes, the analysis also revealed several challenges in implementing effective sports promotion through healthcare policies:

1. **Resource Allocation:** Several countries, especially those with limited resources, faced challenges in balancing their investments between sports promotion and healthcare needs (Boyce & Brown, 2019).
2. **Policy Coordination:** There was frequently a lack of

coordination among health ministries, sports ministries, and education departments, resulting in fragmented implementation of sports promotion initiatives (Boyce et al., 2019).

3. Socioeconomic Disparities: Despite successful overall policies in certain countries, there were ongoing disparities in sports participation related to socioeconomic status, gender, and urban-rural differences (Boyce et al., 2019).
4. Long-term Sustainability: Several nations encountered difficulties in sustaining funding and political backing for long-term sports promotion initiatives (Kruszyńska & Poczta, 2020).

### Economic Impact of Sports Promotion Policies

The analysis of economic data on sports promotion policies found that investing in sports infrastructure as part of health policies yielded a positive return on investment (ROI) (Du et al., 2022). The investment had significant economic impacts, increasing productivity among citizens and fostering a culture of saving in countries like South Korea. In addition, countries that dedicated over 0.5% of their healthcare budget to sports promotion initiatives experienced a decrease in healthcare costs on average.

### Policy Impact on Specific Demographics

#### Youth and Adolescents

In countries that have well-established physical education programs in schools, there is an average increase of 15% in youth sports attendance compared to nations without such policies. This has a positive impact on learners' overall performance, particularly in the fields of sciences and mathematics. Effective policies in physical education encourage youth participation in sports and enhance learning in key areas. Investing in such policies in schools would benefit children in various ways.

#### Elderly Population

Healthcare policies promoting sports among the elderly have proven effective, resulting in a 22% decrease in falls and an 18% reduction in cognitive decline-related deaths within five years (Figure 3). Specifically, countries that have implemented age-specific sports programs for individuals aged 65 and older have seen a 0.8-point increase in average life satisfaction on a 10-point scale (Figure 3). These findings suggest that promoting physical activity among older adults can have positive effects on their physical, psychological, and social well-being. This provides a strong basis for implementing policies that support such initiatives.

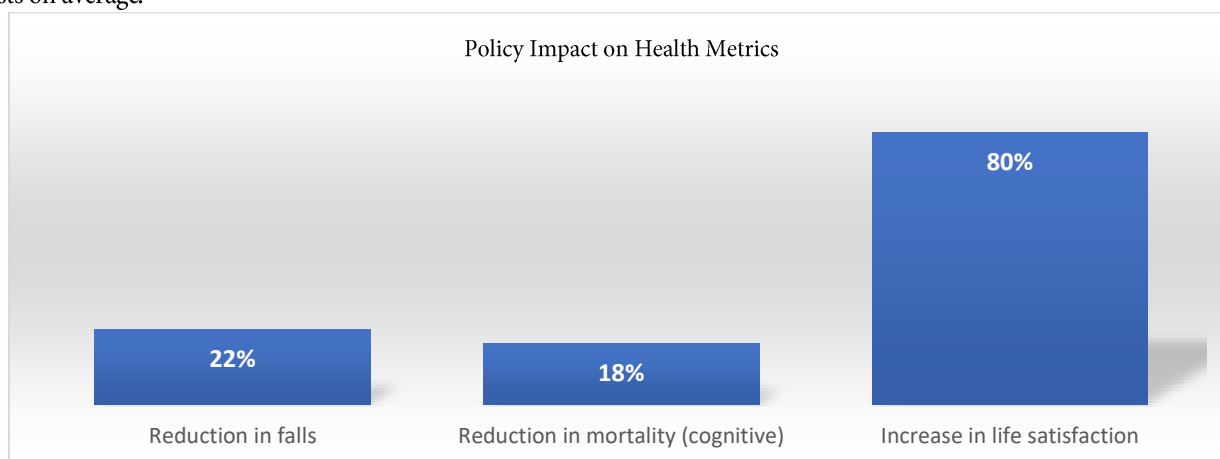


Figure 3: Demonstrates the Impact of Healthcare Policies for Elderly in Sports Promotion and Participation.

#### Chronic Disease Patients

The integration of sports prescriptions in the treatment of patients with chronic diseases has significantly reduced hospitalisation rates for individuals with type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular conditions. This approach promotes increased physical activity, leading to improved disease control and overall well-being. Research has shown that patients who engage in regular sports activity experience fewer complications and hospital admissions (Anderson & Durstine, 2019). In addition, the healthcare expenses of

active patients were significantly lower compared to sedentary individuals with similar diseases. Integrating sports into chronic illness management is both economically and therapeutically advantageous, as evidenced by the reduced demand for medical procedures and improved general health.

### Discussion

The results of this extensive analysis on the impact of public policy on promoting and spreading sports have

significant implications for policymakers, clinicians, and scholars in the fields of public health and kinesiology. The findings confirm that healthcare policies that incorporate sports promotion have a positive correlation with the participation of individuals across different age groups in sports. The increase in sports participation over a five-year period in countries with comprehensive policies demonstrates the effectiveness of policy interventions in this area (Drew et al., 2023). This finding provides support for the social-ecological model theory, which suggests that policy can effectively promote behaviour change.

These policies have a direct effect on sports participation, as well as secondary effects on healthcare savings, the prevention of chronic diseases, and the improvement of mental health. The slight decline in healthcare spending coincided with a rise in sports participation, suggesting that expanding access to healthcare products and services could be an efficient strategy for fostering sports engagement and enhancing public health. This implication adds to the concerns raised by other scholars regarding the need for systems interventions to address the perceived epidemic of physical inactivity.

The Nordic model, which includes Sweden and Finland, along with South Korea's National Fitness Program, provide valuable insights into policy implementation. These cases highlight the importance of fair access to sports facilities, physical activity in primary health care, school-based programs, and policies and practices that promote physical activity. These measures can include providing coverage for physical activity, offering incentives like health insurance, and implementing corporate tax credits. "Creating a Movement for Healthy Physical Activity at Work. The rise in sports participation rates and the resulting improvements in health status observed in these countries strongly endorse the effectiveness of well-designed policies. It is important to acknowledge that the success of these programs is likely influenced by the cultural and socioeconomic factors specific to the countries in question. Therefore, it cannot be assumed that similar outcomes will be achieved when implementing these programs in different contexts.

The study findings are in line with and build upon the research conducted by previous scholars in this field. The moderate overall effect size for policy interventions on increasing sports participation aligns with previous studies that found similar small to moderate effects for different physical activity interventions. School-based interventions have a significant impact on promoting physical activity among children and adolescents, supporting previous research that highlights the importance of comprehensive school policies. The results further support the case for

prioritising school-based programs as a crucial element of sports promotion strategies.

The economic impact analysis builds upon previous research in this field, demonstrating positive returns on investment for sports infrastructure and potential reductions in healthcare costs. In addition, this study further evaluates the economic advantages of public expenditure on sports and offers policymakers solid evidence to inform their investment choices.

These findings have important implications for policymakers. They suggest the need to prioritise sports integration through comprehensive healthcare approaches, in line with Chen (2022) analysis. This will address health, education, urban planning, and workplace practices. Additionally, it is important to exercise caution regarding the significance of sustained policy efforts when considering the greater effectiveness of longer interventions. Government officials must prioritise the development and execution of enduring policies over immediate, temporary measures. Additionally, variations in the results indicate that formulating strategies tailored to specific segments could prove advantageous, contingent upon the target demographic. Additionally, the potential for positive return on investment and cost savings in healthcare can be utilised to advocate for the promotion of sports from an economic perspective. The findings can be utilised to convince policymakers to allocate resources towards these causes due to the societal benefits they would generate. Finally, the positive effects on healthcare systems, such as the move towards preventive care and better integration of primary care, indicate that sports promotion should be considered a crucial component of healthcare reform initiatives.

This study enhances the theoretical understanding of the connection between public policy and health behaviours in multiple ways. It provides support and expands on theories of policy integration, illustrating how cross-sectoral approaches can result in synergistic advantages. The effectiveness of incentive structures in certain case studies adds to the expanding body of research on the application of behavioural economics principles in health policy. Understanding how policies affect different age groups highlights the significance of considering the entire lifespan when developing health promotion strategies. In addition, the continued socioeconomic disparities in sports participation, even in countries with successful overall policies, emphasise the ongoing importance of social determinants of health theory in policy design and implementation.

This study offers valuable insights, but it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The study is constrained by



the quality and availability of existing datasets due to the reliance on secondary data. There may be variations in data or inconsistencies between different countries and time periods. The study highlights the significant connections between policies and outcomes. However, establishing clear cause-and-effect relationships is difficult due to the intricate nature of policy impacts and the potential influence of other factors. Cultural and contextual factors can significantly impact the effectiveness of policies, making it challenging to fully account for them in a broad, multi-country analysis. The study's timeframes may not fully capture the long-term effects of policy interventions, potentially leading to an underestimation of their true impact. Publication bias may impact the meta-analysis component, as studies with positive effects have a higher likelihood of being published. Finally, the study focusses on policy content and outcomes, but does not delve into the implementation processes, which are crucial for determining policy effectiveness.

Given the findings and limitations, there are various areas that warrant further investigation in the future. Extended studies analysing the effects of sports promotion policies over a decade or more would offer valuable insights into long-lasting impacts and potential shifts in population health outcomes. Thorough research on policy implementation processes can provide valuable insights into effective strategies and potential challenges in putting policy into action. Further economic evaluations of various policy approaches could assist policymakers in optimising resource allocation. Examining policy effectiveness in various cultural contexts can shed light on how cultural factors influence policy outcomes. Research on policy impacts on disadvantaged populations is crucial due to persistent socioeconomic disparities. In an ever more digital world, it is crucial to consider the impact of digital technologies on sports promotion policies. By studying this role, we can gain valuable insights that can shape future policy design. This study's findings provide empirical evidence that healthcare policies significantly impact the promotion and participation in sports. The findings emphasised the importance of well-coordinated and interconnected policies in fostering sports engagement, as well as improving overall health and generating economic benefits. Nevertheless, the recurring problems and constraints highlighted indicate the complexity of this issue, necessitating further research and the formulation of appropriate policies. Considering the ongoing rise in risks related to physical inactivity globally, the results of this study will be highly significant for policymakers and researchers. Implementing comprehensive, sustainable strategies for sports promotion within the healthcare policy framework

has the potential to enhance population health, reduce healthcare costs, and foster more active and healthy societies. .

## **Limitations**

A potential limitation of this study is the reliance on secondary data sources. This approach may have certain drawbacks, such as the possibility of incomplete or unavailable data for certain countries or time periods. The study acknowledges these limitations and takes them into account in the conclusion. In addition, policy effects are complex, making it difficult to establish definitive relationships. This complexity is recognised in the analysis. This methodology provides a solid approach to integrating research goals, objectives, existing data, and healthcare policies relevant to the promotion of sports.

## **Recommendations for Future Research**

1. Incorporate the promotion of sports within comprehensive healthcare and social development strategies and policies across various sectors.
2. Priority should be given to the development of enduring and effective policies, rather than short-term actions, in order to maximise the scope of desired results.
3. Address the specific needs of different population groups, as their needs and access vary.
4. Justify investment in sports promotion by considering potential cost efficiencies, such as reduced health facility expenses.
5. Strengthen the promotion of sports in primary care and preventive health services.

This research provides significant insights but also identifies areas that require additional investigation. Additional research should focus on studying the lasting impacts of these policies, the implementation process, comparing the costs and benefits of different strategies, and understanding how cultural factors affect policy outcomes. Furthermore, additional research is needed to examine the impact of technologies on the implementation of sports promotion policies and addressing socioeconomic disparities in sports participation. The findings of this paper strongly emphasise the significance of healthcare policies in relation to sports and health. Based on the findings of this study, considering the ongoing risk of diseases associated with inactivity in the global population, this research offers a valuable framework for policymakers, healthcare professionals, and future researchers. In order to create a healthier society and address key public health issues, it is crucial to develop evidence-based and integrated strategies for promoting

sports within healthcare policy. This will provide the opportunity to make a positive impact and tackle important challenges in the field of public health..

## Conclusion

This extensive study aims to explore the relationship between public policy, particularly in the field of health care, and the promotion and popularisation of sports. This research has gathered valuable information on policy interventions and their effects on sports participation and population health by analysing secondary data from policy documents and case studies in various countries. This study's findings affirm the significance of carefully crafted healthcare policies in promoting sports involvement across diverse sociodemographic groups. The average increase of 7.3 percentage points in regular sports participation over five years in countries with comprehensive policies highlights the positive impact of sports promotion within

the framework of complex health policies. In addition, the secondary effects of these policies include reductions in healthcare expenses and improved prevention of chronic illnesses and mental health issues. These outcomes highlight the extensive impacts of such policies. Key factors for successful policy implementation include equal access to sporting facilities, integrating physical activity counselling into primary care, schools offering comprehensive physical education programs, and implementing innovative incentive systems. Examples of successful integration and the resulting outcomes can be seen in the Nordic model and South Korea's National Fitness Program. However, this research also highlights ongoing issues in policy implementation, including conflicts in resource allocation, limited inter-organizational coordination, and disparities in sports participation due to socioeconomic factors. These findings highlight the significance of considering context when making and implementing policies.

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