

# Sport and healthy lifestyle as a condition for sustainable development

*Ksenia Korsun*\*, *Mariia Zadorina*, and *Vladislav Murashov*

Ural State University of Economics, Yekaterinburg, Russia

**Abstract.** The article is devoted to the problems of sports development as one of the key means of popularizing a healthy lifestyle among the population in the context of sustainable development. General scientific methods (analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization) and specific scientific methods (sociological and historical) were used during the research. The article presents the results of a survey of people who live in Yekaterinburg and are over the age of 18 (N=118, 2023) regarding sports and a healthy lifestyle. Special attention is paid to sports and its impact on national identity and economic development of the state. The role of the state in the development of sports and physical culture is also analyzed. The problems that negatively affect the development of sports and, as a result, its use as a means of spreading a healthy lifestyle are highlighted. It is concluded that the solution of the accumulated problems in the field of sports is possible only thanks to the joint efforts of the state, business community and population.

## 1 Introduction

Sports and physical culture have played a vital role in the life of any society for centuries. In the modern world these two things are the drivers of promoting the idea of a healthy lifestyle, preserving the health of the population – one of the most important components of the sustainable development of each country.

It should be noted that Russians have a rich and diverse sports culture, from traditional folk games and sports to modern Olympic sports, which contributed to the formation of the identity of the nation and social cohesion. The importance of sports and physical culture in Russia is reflected in the long history of the country's sporting achievements, when Russian athletes achieved success in various sports disciplines at the international level.

One of the main roles of sports and physical culture in Russian society is to strengthen the physical health and well-being of the population. Regular physical activity is recognized as an essential component of a healthy lifestyle, and sports offer people a great way to stay fit, be active and participate in public life. In Russia, sport is considered not just as a hobby or pastime, but as an integral part of everyday life, where millions of people are engaged in various sports and physical activity every day.

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\*Corresponding author: [korsunksenia@mail.ru](mailto:korsunksenia@mail.ru)

However, in recent years, the Russian sports landscape has been overshadowed by a series of contradictions, scandals and failures that have called into question the integrity of its sports institutions and the positive effect in promoting a healthy lifestyle.

One of the most serious problems facing Russian sports and physical culture is the problem of doping. The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has accused Russian athletes and officials of participating in a state-sponsored doping program that led to the disqualification of many athletes from international competitions and the exclusion of the Russian national team from the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyongyang, South Korea. In addition to this, there are other problems facing Russian sports and physical culture. They include the lack of infrastructure and insufficient funding for sports programs, as well as an insufficiently well-developed training base and a shortage of qualified coaches and instructors. All these problems are discussed in this article.

## **2 Materials and Methods**

The methodological basis of the research is general scientific (analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization) and specific scientific methods (sociological, historical). Research materials include scientific articles, analytical materials of authority bodies, survey materials (questionnaires) of people living in the city of Yekaterinburg, who are over 18 years old (N=118, 2023).

## **3 Results and Discussion**

### **3.1 The importance of sport and the role of the state in its development**

The influence of sports and physical activity programs on a person's mental health, their social and emotional well-being is stated in the studies by M. English, L. Wallace, J. Evans [1], D. Carless, K. Douglas [2], etc. J. Morrison writes about the relationship between sports and performance [3]. T. R. F. Middleton, B. Petersen, R. J. Schinke consider sports as a way to help forced migrants (i.e. refugees and asylum seekers) integrate into the local community [4]. The motivational potential of sports is studied by J. Kristensen, A. Skilbred, F. E. Abrahamsen [5].

At the same time, many authors declare a special role of the state in the development of sports and its promotion as a way of influencing the health of the population through the concept of "Sport for health" [6]. Some authors argue that the positive effect of sports and its impact on the healthcare sector is experienced not only by the state, but also by the private sector of the economy [7].

Sports and physical culture play an important role in strengthening social cohesion and national identity in Russia. Sport unites people from all layers of society, regardless of their social or economic status, and provides a common language and experience that helps overcome social differences. Sporting events such as the Olympic Games or the World Cup are moments of national pride and unity when citizens come together to support their country and their athletes.

The importance of sports in promoting national identity is also reflected in the role of the state in supporting sports and physical culture in Russia. The Russian government invests in sports development programs by providing funding and infrastructure for sports organizations and events. These investments are aimed not only at encouraging sporting achievements, but also at strengthening national pride and unity through sports.

In addition, sports and physical education also play a significant role in economic development. The sports industry in Russia annually generates billions of dollars, providing thousands of people with jobs and income.

The role of the state in supporting and developing sports and physical culture in Russia has been a key factor in the country's sporting success for many years. The Government plays an active role in promoting and financing sports programs and facilities, and supports athletes and coaches at all levels.

One of the first examples of state participation in sports in Russia was the foundation of the Imperial Society for the Encouragement of Gymnastics in 1863. This organization was engaged in popularization of gymnastics and other types of physical activity among the population, provided funding and resources to support the development of gymnastics clubs and training programs throughout the country.

In Soviet times, the role of the state in the development of sports became even more noticeable. Sport was seen as a key component of the country's propaganda efforts, and the State invested heavily in sports facilities, training programs and support for athletes. The Soviet government also created a system of sports schools and academies that identified and trained talented young athletes from an early age, helping to form a number of world-class athletes in various sports.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian government continued to support sports development programs, although sports funding was cut due to the economic problems the country faced. Despite these problems, the government continued to play an active role in supporting sports and physical education, funding sports facilities and programs, as well as offering financial support to athletes and coaches.

In recent years, the participation of the state in sports in Russia has been the subject of dispute, especially concerning doping. The scandal was caused by the massive doping by Russian athletes at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, which led to the suspension of the Russian national team from participating in the 2018 Winter Olympics and sparked a broader debate about the integrity of Russian sports institutions.

### **3.2 Sports and healthy lifestyle: public opinion**

In order to identify people's attitude to sports and its role in promoting a healthy lifestyle, a survey of the population of Yekaterinburg (the Sverdlovsk Oblast, Russia) was conducted in June-August 2023. 118 people aged 18 and over took part in the survey, 31% of them were men, 69% were women.

One of the questions was if the respondents led a healthy lifestyle, and the majority answered "yes rather than no" (54%), while every fifth respondent (21%) chose the answer "yes". At the same time, 87% of people admitted that they sometimes drank alcohol. 71% stated the use of tobacco and other nicotine-containing products.

Every second respondent (48%) is engaged in sports, and every eighth (12%) does sports on a regular basis. At the same time, 41% of people plan to start playing sports in the near future. It should be noted that some of the respondents aged 18 to 24 began to play sports only after moving to Yekaterinburg, since they did not have such an opportunity in their hometowns. They rated the sports infrastructure of Yekaterinburg at 5 out of 5 (high), and that of their hometown – from 0 (very low) to 3 (average). Among the reasons why people started doing sports, the main one was the desire to get a beautiful figure (43%). Every fourth respondent wanted to be like their idol-an athlete or a hero of a sports TV show (27%). For 14%, sport is a way of self-realization, and 9% said that their parents insisted on their playing sports when they were children.

The majority of respondents involved in sports attend fitness clubs (39%) or swimming pools (21%). Some go dancing (12%) or go sport walking (5%).

The key question of the questionnaire was if sport affects the popularization of a healthy lifestyle, and the answers ranked as follows: "yes" – 24%; "rather yes than no" – 47%; "rather no than yes" – 21%; "no" – 8%.

The study showed that the people today focus on maintaining a healthy lifestyle, even if exposed to some bad habits. Passion for sports is most often caused by the desire to get an ideal figure or is formed under the influence of "opinion leaders" (athletes, TV show participants). Almost everyone who does sports on a regular or irregular basis, visits sports institutions and organizations and uses sports infrastructure facilities. At the same time, in small settlements, such facilities may not be enough or they are none. And finally, according to respondents, sport has a direct impact on promoting the idea of a healthy lifestyle.

## **4 Conclusions**

Sustainable development of any country is impossible without ensuring a healthy lifestyle of the population. In this regard, the state is obliged to take measures to improve the quality of life of the population and use all health-saving technologies available to it. Support of sports and physical culture is an effective means of popularizing the idea of a healthy lifestyle.

Although Russia has a rich history of sporting success and strong traditions of physical activity and fitness, there are serious problems that need to be solved in order to ensure the further development of sports and physical culture in the country.

One of the key challenges facing Russian sports is the problem of corruption and doping. The widespread use of doping by Russian athletes has overshadowed the country's sporting achievements and raised the question of the integrity of Russian sports institutions. Many people have become disillusioned with their idols - athletes who once inspired them to start leading a healthy lifestyle and monitor their nutrition, body, and health. Solving this problem will require constant efforts from the government, sports organizations and athletes themselves to promote a culture of clean and fair competition.

Another problem facing Russian sports is the lack of access to high-quality facilities and training programs in many parts of the country. While large cities such as Moscow and St. Petersburg have world-class sports facilities and training programs, many small places do not have the resources to provide similar opportunities to their residents. People who live in these areas do not have the opportunity to engage in physical culture and sports due to poor financing of this industry in small towns and villages. Solving this problem will require increased investment in sports infrastructure and training programs, as well as expanding the reach and support of sports organizations in these areas.

After all, the role of sports in promoting the idea of a healthy lifestyle among the population in the context of sustainable development is enormous. In this regard, the solution of the accumulated problems in this area requires a comprehensive and collective approach. The state, business community and population, working together to promote a culture of clean and fair competition, and expand access to high-quality facilities and training programs, as well as support athletes and coaches at all levels, will help Russia continue to develop its rich sports history and achieve even greater success in the coming years. This will have a positive impact on the value of a healthy lifestyle, motivate citizens to monitor their health and engage in physical culture. All these factors will contribute to better well-being of the population and ensure sustainable development.

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