

**THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE OF HEALTH PROMOTION
ACTIVITIES IN INCREASING THE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OF SCHOOL-STUDENTS**

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Annotation. This article examines the theoretical and practical significance of health promotion activities aimed at increasing the physical activity levels of school students. It explores the fundamental concepts of health promotion, highlights the role of educational institutions in developing active lifestyles, and analyzes evidence-based strategies that effectively encourage student participation in physical exercises. The study also discusses practical interventions such as school-based fitness programs, awareness campaigns, and community involvement initiatives. The findings emphasize that systematically implemented health promotion activities not only improve students' physical well-being but also contribute to their academic performance, emotional development, and long-term healthy lifestyle habits.

Key words. Health promotion, physical activity, school students, active lifestyle, school-based programs, health education, well-being, preventive strategies

Introduction. Physical activity plays a fundamental role in shaping the overall health, development, and academic success of school-aged children, making it one of the most essential components of contemporary educational and public health policies. In recent decades, the rapid increase in sedentary behaviors, digital screen time, and unhealthy lifestyle habits has raised global concerns regarding the physical and psychological well-being of students, prompting educators, policymakers, and health specialists to strengthen systematic health promotion activities in schools. Health promotion, as defined in modern research, encompasses comprehensive strategies aimed at empowering individuals to take control of their health while creating supportive environments that facilitate active and healthy behavior. Within the school context, health promotion activities include structured physical education programs, extracurricular sports, awareness campaigns, teacher-led initiatives, and community partnerships that collectively encourage students to engage in regular physical activity. The importance of these activities extends beyond improving physical fitness; they significantly influence students' cognitive performance, concentration, emotional regulation, social interaction, and long-term attitudes toward healthy living. Schools, as the primary social institutions in children's daily lives, hold unique responsibility and capacity to cultivate sustainable habits that promote lifelong well-being. By integrating health promotion into curriculum planning, school culture, and institutional policy, educators can address various barriers such as lack of motivation, limited access to sports facilities, inadequate knowledge, and social inequalities that affect students' physical activity levels. Furthermore, evidence-based studies indicate that well-designed health promotion interventions can reduce the prevalence of childhood obesity, prevent chronic diseases, enhance self-esteem, and improve school attendance and academic outcomes. Despite the recognized importance of these initiatives, many educational settings still face challenges in

implementing effective programs due to insufficient resources, lack of trained personnel, and low engagement among students and parents. Therefore, examining the theoretical foundations and practical significance of health promotion activities is essential for developing effective, adaptable, and student-centered strategies. This article aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the key concepts, approaches, and practical applications of health promotion in increasing physical activity among school students, emphasizing the need for interdisciplinary collaboration, innovative teaching methods, and continuous evaluation to ensure sustainable and impactful results.

Furthermore, promoting physical activity within schools is not only a strategy for improving students' immediate health outcomes but also a critical investment in long-term public health. Research indicates that early engagement in regular physical activity significantly reduces the risk of developing chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular conditions later in life, highlighting the preventative value of school-based interventions. In addition, active students often demonstrate enhanced cognitive abilities, including better attention, memory retention, and problem-solving skills, which positively influence academic achievement. Schools provide a unique environment for implementing health promotion activities because they offer structured schedules, access to trained educators, and opportunities for social interaction, all of which can reinforce positive behaviors. Effective health promotion within educational settings requires an integrative approach that combines curriculum-based physical education, extracurricular sports, motivational campaigns, and supportive policies that encourage daily movement. Moreover, consideration of students' psychological and social needs, including self-efficacy, peer support, and enjoyable activity formats, is essential to ensure consistent participation and long-term engagement. By understanding both the theoretical underpinnings and practical applications of health promotion, educators and policymakers can design interventions that not only improve students' physical well-being but also foster holistic development, creating a foundation for lifelong health and active lifestyles.

Literature review. Recent research highlights that health promotion activities play a central role in shaping students' physical activity behaviors and supporting their overall well-being, with scholars increasingly emphasizing a multidimensional approach within school environments. According to theoretical foundations discussed by global health researchers, health promotion is defined as a holistic process that equips individuals and communities with the skills, motivation, and supportive environments needed to improve and maintain health, which is particularly important for school-aged children who develop lifelong habits during their formative years [1]. Studies examining school-based physical activity programs indicate that structured interventions such as daily physical education, active classroom breaks, and extracurricular sports significantly enhance cardiovascular fitness, reduce sedentary time, and improve students' motor skills [2]. In addition, comprehensive health education integrated into the curriculum has been shown to increase students' awareness of the benefits of physical activity, encouraging long-term positive behavior change and reducing risk factors associated with inactivity and childhood obesity [3]. Research from behavioral science further argues that motivation, self-efficacy, and peer support are crucial in determining students' willingness to engage in physical activities, suggesting that schools should incorporate psychosocial components and collaborative learning strategies into health promotion initiatives [4]. At the same time, policy analyses emphasize the responsibility

of educational institutions to develop health-supportive environments that include safe playgrounds, accessible sports facilities, and institutional policies that promote regular movement and discourage sedentary behavior throughout the school day [5]. Evidence from international comparative studies also demonstrates that multi-stakeholder collaboration—particularly between teachers, parents, community organizations, and local health authorities—greatly enhances the effectiveness of school health promotion programs by expanding resources, increasing participation, and reinforcing healthy behaviors at home and in the community [6]. Despite the strong theoretical and practical support documented in the literature, several authors note persistent challenges such as limited funding, insufficient teacher training, and low student engagement, which hinder the full implementation and sustainability of health promotion initiatives in many schools; therefore, more innovative, evidence-based, and culturally adaptable strategies are required to meet the diverse needs of students and ensure long-term health outcomes [7].

Research methodology. This study employed a mixed-method research design that integrated quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively examine the theoretical and practical importance of health promotion activities in increasing the physical activity levels of school students. The quantitative component focused on measuring students' participation in physical activity programs and assessing changes in their physical activity levels following intervention-based health promotion activities, while the qualitative component explored students', teachers', and school administrators' perspectives on the effectiveness, challenges, and implementation processes of these initiatives. The target population consisted of school students aged 10–16, and the sample was selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure representation of different grade levels and gender groups. Data were collected through structured questionnaires, standardized physical activity assessment tools, and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire included items on students' daily activity levels, attitudes toward physical activity, and awareness of health promotion activities, while the physical activity assessment measured frequency, duration, and intensity of movement using self-report logs and observational checklists. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers and administrators to gain deeper insights into the planning, execution, and perceived impact of school-based health promotion programs. Prior to data collection, all research instruments were pilot tested to ensure clarity, reliability, and validity. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods, including frequency distributions, mean comparisons, and correlation analysis to identify patterns and relationships between health promotion activities and students' activity levels. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved coding responses, identifying recurring themes, and interpreting key patterns related to motivational factors, institutional support, and barriers to student participation. Ethical considerations were strictly followed throughout the study, including obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality of responses, and securing approval from the relevant educational and research authorities. This methodological approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of how health promotion activities influence students' physical activity behaviors and provided evidence to support the development of more effective and sustainable school-based health initiatives.

1-Table. Students' physical activity levels before and after health promotion activities

Indicator	Before (n=100)	After (n=100)
Daily physical activity (minutes)	28 min	52 min
Students participating in sports	37%	69%
Sedentary time per day	6.1 hours	3.8 hours
High motivation for activity	22%	54%

1-Table presents a comparative analysis of students' physical activity indicators before and after the implementation of school-based health promotion activities. The data clearly show that students' daily physical activity increased substantially, rising from an average of 28 minutes to 52 minutes. Similarly, the proportion of students participating in sports increased from 37% to 69%, indicating stronger engagement and higher interest in physical exercise. The table also highlights a significant reduction in sedentary time, decreasing from 6.1 hours to 3.8 hours per day. Moreover, the percentage of students demonstrating high motivation for physical activity increased from 22% to 54%, suggesting that the health promotion initiatives were effective not only in changing behavior but also in influencing students' attitudes and enthusiasm toward an active lifestyle.

2-Table. Teachers' and administrators' evaluation of health promotion programs

Evaluation Criteria	Teachers' Rating (1–5)	Administrators' Rating (1–5)
Effectiveness of activities	4.2	4.4
Student engagement	3.8	4.0
Availability of resources	3.1	3.3
Overall program satisfaction	4.0	4.5

2-Table provides an evaluation of the health promotion programs from the perspectives of teachers and school administrators. Both groups rated the effectiveness of the activities highly, with teachers assigning a score of 4.2 and administrators rating it slightly higher at 4.4. Student engagement was rated moderately high by both groups, reflecting that while participation improved, some students still required additional motivational support. The availability of resources received lower scores, indicating that limited equipment and facilities remain a challenge for the full implementation of the programs. Overall program satisfaction was rated positively by both teachers (4.0) and administrators (4.5), demonstrating a strong institutional belief in the value and impact of health promotion activities. Together, these tables illustrate that the initiatives produced measurable improvements in student activity levels while also receiving favorable evaluations from key school stakeholders.

Research discussion. The findings of the study clearly demonstrate that health promotion activities implemented within school environments have a significant and positive influence on increasing students' physical activity levels, confirming the theoretical assumptions outlined in the literature and aligning with the perspectives of educators and health specialists. Quantitative data indicated a noticeable improvement in students' daily activity patterns after participating in

structured programs such as morning exercises, active classroom breaks, and after-school sports clubs, suggesting that regular exposure to well-designed health promotion initiatives can effectively reduce sedentary behavior and enhance overall physical fitness. These results support earlier studies which argue that systematic interventions lead to improved cardiovascular capacity, better motor skills, and heightened engagement in physical tasks, indicating that schools have a strong potential to act as catalysts for developing long-term healthy habits. Qualitative findings further enrich this understanding by revealing how students' motivation, social support, and school climate contribute to their willingness to participate in physical activities. Many students reported feeling more confident, energized, and encouraged when teachers actively participated in activities, when peers provided positive reinforcement, and when the school created a supportive and enjoyable atmosphere for exercise. Teachers and administrators emphasized the importance of integrating health promotion into the school culture, noting that programs are most effective when they are consistent, appealing, and aligned with students' interests and developmental needs. However, the research also highlights several challenges that limit the full impact of health promotion activities. A lack of sufficient resources such as modern sports equipment, limited availability of trained physical education specialists, and inconsistent parental involvement were frequently mentioned obstacles. Furthermore, workload pressures and academic priorities sometimes reduced the time allocated to physical activities, revealing the need for more flexible schedules and policy-level changes that prioritize student well-being alongside academic achievement. Another critical finding is the varying levels of student engagement, with some students demonstrating high enthusiasm while others displayed minimal interest due to low self-confidence, lack of prior physical activity experience, or personal preferences for sedentary leisure. This suggests that a one-size-fits-all approach is insufficient, and more diversified, inclusive, and motivational strategies are required to ensure participation among all students. The study also indicates that collaboration between schools, families, and community organizations significantly strengthens program outcomes, as shared responsibility creates a broader environment that consistently reinforces health-promoting behaviors. Overall, the discussion shows that effective health promotion activities are those that combine structured physical programs, psychosocial support, institutional commitment, and community partnership. By addressing existing barriers and continuously adapting strategies to students' needs, schools can maximize the impact of health promotion efforts and contribute to shaping healthier, more active, and more resilient future generations.

In addition to the quantitative improvements observed, the qualitative insights underscore the multifaceted benefits of health promotion activities beyond physical fitness. Students frequently reported enhanced social interaction and teamwork skills as a result of participating in group exercises and sports, which not only strengthened peer relationships but also contributed to a more positive school climate. Teachers highlighted that integrating health promotion into daily routines improved classroom behavior and attention, suggesting a link between physical activity and cognitive functioning. The discussion also reveals that motivational factors play a critical role in sustaining participation, with recognition, rewards, and personalized encouragement serving as effective strategies to engage students who may be less naturally inclined toward physical activity. Importantly, the study identifies the need for culturally and contextually relevant programs that reflect students' interests and local community resources, as standardized interventions may fail to address diverse needs and preferences. Collaboration with

families emerged as another pivotal factor, with active parental involvement reinforcing healthy behaviors at home and amplifying the impact of school-based initiatives. Additionally, the research highlights that continuous monitoring, feedback mechanisms, and program flexibility are essential to adapt activities over time, maintain student interest, and ensure long-term effectiveness. These findings collectively suggest that successful health promotion programs require a comprehensive approach that combines structured physical activity, psychosocial support, environmental facilitation, and stakeholder collaboration, thereby creating an ecosystem that encourages sustained engagement and promotes holistic development among school students.

Conclusion. The results of this study highlight the substantial influence that well-structured health promotion activities can have on increasing physical activity levels among school students, confirming both theoretical expectations and practical observations reported in previous research. By integrating regular physical exercises, awareness initiatives, and supportive environmental conditions into the school setting, educational institutions can significantly reduce sedentary behaviors and foster healthier lifestyle patterns among students. The findings clearly demonstrate that such activities not only contribute to improved physical fitness but also enhance students' cognitive functioning, emotional well-being, and social development, further reinforcing the importance of adopting a holistic approach to student health. Nevertheless, the study also brings attention to several persistent challenges, including limited resources, insufficient teacher training, inconsistent parental engagement, and varying levels of student motivation, which collectively hinder the full effectiveness of health promotion programs. Addressing these issues requires a more strategic and collaborative approach that involves policymakers, educators, families, and community organizations working together to ensure the sustainability and inclusiveness of school-based health initiatives. The evidence indicates that long-term success depends on continuous monitoring, adaptation of program content to meet students' needs, and stronger institutional commitment to creating a health-supportive school culture. Ultimately, the study concludes that health promotion activities, when implemented thoughtfully and supported by all stakeholders, play a vital role in shaping active, healthy, and resilient future generations, making them an essential component of modern educational practice.

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