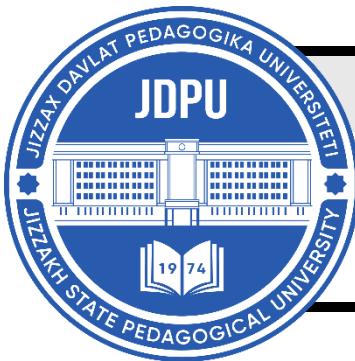


# MENTAL ENLIGHTENMENT SCIENTIFIC – METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL



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### THE PROBLEM OF INSUFFICIENT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AMONG STUDENTS AND ITS SOLUTIONS

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#### ABOUT ARTICLE

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**Abstract:** This article examines the problem of insufficient physical activity among students, analyzes its causes, and highlights its negative impact on health and the educational process. The study emphasizes the effects of a sedentary lifestyle, excessive use of modern technologies, and lack of attention to physical exercise on students' physical and mental well-being. In addition, effective pedagogical, organizational, and motivational solutions aimed at increasing physical activity in higher education institutions are proposed. The article underscores the importance of promoting a healthy lifestyle among students.

**Introduction.** In today's era of globalization and rapid technological development, a sharp decline in physical activity in the lifestyles of young people—especially students—has become one of the serious problems. The educational process, which is largely based on classroom instruction, the use of computers and mobile devices, the expansion of distance learning, as well as spending free time in a predominantly passive manner, all contribute to students becoming physically inactive. As a result, negative conditions such as hypodynamia, overweight, cardiovascular diseases, musculoskeletal disorders, and deterioration of mental well-being are increasingly observed.

Students represent the most active and intellectually capable segment of society and are the group that will determine the future development of the country. Their good health is not only a prerequisite for personal success but also an important factor in public health and

economic development. Therefore, increasing students' physical activity, forming a healthy lifestyle, and strengthening interest in sports activities are among the most urgent tasks of today.

The relevance of this topic lies in the fact that a lack of physical activity negatively affects not only physical health but also the efficiency of mental activity. Scientific studies show that students who engage in regular physical exercise achieve higher academic results, demonstrate greater resistance to stress, and exhibit higher social activity. Thus, an in-depth analysis of this problem and the development of effective solutions are of great scientific and practical importance.

The lives of students studying at modern higher education institutions are characterized by increased intellectual workload, lack of time, and a sedentary lifestyle. Preparation for classes, independent study, and learning through online platforms require students to spend long periods in a seated position. This fails to satisfy the body's natural need for movement and leads to a decline in the level of physical activity.

Physical activity is one of the key factors of human health, ensuring the proper functioning of the cardiovascular system, strengthening of muscles and bones, enhancement of immunity, and psychological stability. The student years are the most favorable period for forming healthy lifestyle habits. Unfortunately, many students do not pay sufficient attention to physical education classes, consider sports a secondary matter, or cite a lack of time as an excuse.

In addition, the excessive use of modern information technologies, dependence on social networks, and computer games significantly limit students' physical mobility. This situation negatively affects not only physical condition but also mental health, leading to stress, depression, and decreased ability to concentrate.

This article analyzes the main causes of insufficient physical activity among students and its impact on health and the educational process. It also proposes effective organizational, pedagogical, and motivational solutions aimed at increasing physical activity in higher education institutions. The main goal of the article is to scientifically substantiate the necessity of promoting a healthy lifestyle among students and making physical activity an integral part of daily life.

**Purpose.** The main purpose of this study is to conduct a comprehensive and in-depth scientific analysis of the problem of insufficient physical activity among students of higher education institutions. In particular, the study aims to identify the social, pedagogical, and psychological factors contributing to students' transition to a sedentary lifestyle, as well as to

examine how a decline in physical activity affects their physical health, mental state, and academic performance.

Objectives:

1. To identify and analyze the main factors leading to a decrease in the level of physical activity among students.
2. To study, based on scientific sources, the negative impact of insufficient physical activity on health and academic performance.
3. To assess the current state of organization of physical education and sports activities and identify existing problems.
4. To propose effective pedagogical and organizational solutions for engaging students in regular physical exercise.

**Methodology.** Currently, the decline in physical activity among students is associated with a number of factors. One of the main reasons is the intellectual workload of the educational process, which requires students to spend most of their time sitting in classrooms, libraries, or in front of computers. The increase in the volume of independent study also reduces the time allocated for physical movement.

Moreover, the widespread use of information and communication technologies, elements of distance education, and interest in social networks and computer games contribute to the formation of a sedentary lifestyle among students. Many students prefer passive forms of leisure rather than active movement.

Another important factor is the lack of motivation. Most students do not fully realize the health benefits of physical exercise or perceive sports only as a compulsory subject. Insufficient sports infrastructure in higher education institutions and uninteresting organization of training sessions further exacerbate the problem.

#### Impact of Insufficient Physical Activity on Health and Academic Performance.

A lack of physical activity has a serious negative impact on students' health. First of all, as a result of hypodynamia, the functioning of the cardiovascular system weakens, muscles lose strength, body weight increases, and metabolic processes slow down. Prolonged immobility leads to spinal deformities and pain in the neck and lower back.

In addition, insufficient physical activity negatively affects students' mental well-being. Stress, rapid fatigue, irritability, and reduced concentration are closely associated with a sedentary lifestyle. As a result, students face difficulties in mastering educational material and their interest in learning declines.

Scientific research shows that students who engage in regular physical exercise demonstrate better memory, faster thinking, and higher overall academic performance. Thus, physical activity is an important factor not only in strengthening health but also in developing intellectual potential.

#### Current State of Organizing Physical Activity in Higher Education Institutions.

Although physical education classes are included in the curricula of many higher education institutions, their practical effectiveness is not always high. In some cases, classes are limited to theoretical instruction or repetitive exercises, which reduces students' interest. In addition, the limited number of classes and their insufficient integration into students' daily lives do not significantly increase overall physical activity levels.

Insufficient development of sports clubs and mass sports events, as well as weak promotional activities, also represent significant problems. Some students are not adequately informed about available opportunities for sports participation, even when favorable conditions exist.

**Results.** Solutions to Increase Physical Activity Among Students. Increasing physical activity among students requires a comprehensive approach. First of all, physical education classes should be organized in a modern, engaging manner and adapted to students' individual abilities. The widespread introduction of various types of sports—such as fitness, running, swimming, team sports, yoga, and aerobics—can significantly increase student interest.

It is also important to organize seminars, sports festivals, competitions, and marathons aimed at promoting a healthy lifestyle in higher education institutions. Implementing incentive systems—such as evaluation, rewards, or additional privileges for active participation in sports—can also yield positive results.

Furthermore, modern digital technologies can be used to monitor and encourage physical activity. Mobile applications and online platforms for tracking daily movement and organizing team-based sports challenges motivate students to be more active.

**Pedagogical and Educational Aspects.** The role of educators is crucial in increasing physical activity. Teachers and coaches should not only conduct training sessions but also explain the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Introducing short physical exercises (physical activity breaks) into the educational process also helps prevent physical inactivity.

Developing students' responsible attitude toward their own health and teaching them to perceive physical activity as a personal need ensures long-term positive outcomes.

#### Causes of Insufficient Physical Activity Among Students and Its Consequences

| No. | Causes | Description | Main Consequences |
|-----|--------|-------------|-------------------|
|-----|--------|-------------|-------------------|

|          |                               |   |   |
|----------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>1</b> | Sedentary lifestyle           | Students spend most of their time sitting, with limited physical movement | Hypodynamia, muscle weakness                          |
| <b>2</b> | Excessive use of technology   | Dependence on computers, smartphones, and social networks                 | Eye strain, irritability, physical inactivity         |
| <b>3</b> | Lack of motivation            | Low interest in sports and physical activities                            | Decreased activity, failure to develop healthy habits |
| <b>4</b> | High academic workload        | Increased volume of independent study and preparation for classes         | Fatigue, stress, lack of time for physical exercise   |
| <b>5</b> | Limited sports infrastructure | Insufficient sports halls and clubs                                       | Reduced opportunities for students to engage in sport |

The main causes leading to insufficient physical activity among students and their consequences are presented in a systematic manner. As can be seen from the table data, a sedentary lifestyle and excessive use of modern information technologies are the primary factors contributing to physical inactivity among students. In addition, low motivation toward sports activities and a high academic workload limit the time allocated for physical activity and have a negative impact on students' health. As a result of these factors, muscle weakness, rapid fatigue, stress conditions, and a general decline in activity are observed. The table clearly demonstrates that the problem of physical inactivity among students has a multifactorial nature.

### **Solutions Aimed at Increasing Physical Activity Among Students and Expected Outcomes**

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Solutions</b>                     | <b>Forms of Implementation</b>                                       | <b>Expected Outcomes</b>                           |
|------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>1</b>   | Improving physical education classes | Organizing classes based on modern sports and an individual approach | Increased student interest, higher activity levels |
| <b>2</b>   | Organizing mass sports events        | Sports competitions, marathons, health days                          | Strengthening teamwork and social activity         |
| <b>3</b>   | Introducing an incentive system      | Assessing active students, awarding certificates and prizes          | Increased motivation, regular participation        |
| <b>4</b>   | Using digital technologies           | Mobile applications, online sports challenges                        | Activity monitoring, self-control                  |
| <b>5</b>   | Promoting a healthy lifestyle        | Seminars, trainings, awareness campaigns                             | Formation of healthy habits, improved health       |

The table presents the main solutions aimed at increasing physical activity among students, the forms of their implementation, and the expected outcomes. As can be seen from the table, organizing physical education and sports activities based on modern approaches helps to increase students' interest. Holding mass sports events and introducing an incentive system play an important role in engaging students in regular physical activity. In addition,

promoting a healthy lifestyle is expected to form a positive attitude toward physical activity among students. The consistent implementation of the solutions presented in the table will contribute to improving students' physical and mental well-being, as well as increasing the effectiveness of their academic performance.

### **Insufficient Physical Activity Among University Youth: Causes, Consequences, and Preventive Measures**

| No. | Problems and Causes                                  | Impact and Negative Consequences   | Possible Solutions                                    | Ways of Implementation   | Expected Outcomes                                       |
|-----|--|--|---|--|---|
| 1   | Busy daily schedule of students                      | Lack of time for sports and physical exercise, fatigue                     | Flexible physical activity schedules                  | Short but effective exercise sessions between classes and activities | Physical activity at least 3 times a week               |
| 2   | Dependence on technology (computer, phone, internet) | Physical inactivity, excessive time spent sitting                          | Digital fitness applications, limiting screen time    | “Digital detox” campaigns, interactive sports applications           | Reduced screen time, increased movement                 |
| 3   | Lack of sports facilities                            | Limited access to sports activities  | Creating sports halls and playgrounds                 | Free use of sports facilities on university campuses                 | Students gain opportunities to engage in sports         |
| 4   | Low motivation                                       | Decreased interest in physical activity                                    | Incentive system: bonuses, certificates, competitions | Sports competitions, reward systems                                  | Students are motivated to participate in activities     |
| 5   | Lack of information                                  | Low awareness of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and physical activity | Providing information and awareness campaigns         | Seminars, trainings, informational campaigns                         | Students understand the importance of physical activity |
| 6   | Psychological factors: stress, depression            | Reduced physical activity, deterioration of mental well-being              | Stress-reducing physical activities                   | Yoga, meditation, sports therapy sessions                            | Improved mental health, increased activity              |
| 7   | Social factors: friends' activity, family habits     | Low group participation, social isolation                                  | Organizing group activities, sports clubs and teams   | Formation of student sports teams and tournaments                    | Strengthened social ties, increased activity            |
| 8   | Health-related limitations                           | Illnesses, poor physical condition, sedentary lifestyle                    | Health-improving programs, individual training        | Physical exercises under medical supervision                         | Improved health, increased capacity for exercise        |

Causes, Consequences, and Solutions of Insufficient Physical Activity Among Students.

Insufficient physical activity among students is associated with many factors, which makes it necessary to analyze this problem in a systematic manner. The main causes include daily busyness, dependence on technology, insufficient sports infrastructure, low motivation, lack of information, psychological factors, social influences, and health-related limitations.

**Discussion.** Busyness and lack of time deprive students of opportunities to participate in sports activities. This leads to a decrease in physical activity and increased fatigue. To address this problem, universities can introduce flexible training schedules. By organizing short but effective exercise sessions between classes, it is possible to ensure that students engage in physical activity at least three times a week.

Dependence on technology—excessive use of computers, mobile phones, and the internet—reduces students' active time and promotes a sedentary lifestyle. This issue can be addressed through the use of digital fitness applications and limiting screen time. For example, "digital detox" campaigns or interactive sports applications can encourage students to be more physically active.

Insufficient sports facilities also prevent students from participating in regular exercise. To solve this problem, it is necessary to create sports halls and playgrounds on university campuses and make them freely accessible to students. As a result, students gain the opportunity to engage in sports on a regular basis.

Low motivation negatively affects participation in physical activity as well. This problem can be mitigated through incentive systems, such as organizing sports competitions, introducing rewards, certificates, and bonuses, which increase students' interest and engagement.

Due to a lack of information, many students are not sufficiently aware of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and physical activity. Through seminars, training sessions, and awareness campaigns, students can gain the necessary knowledge and become more motivated to participate in physical activities.

Psychological factors, including stress and depression, also reduce students' physical activity levels. This problem can be alleviated through yoga, meditation, and sports therapy sessions. As a result, mental well-being improves and physical activity increases.

Social factors—such as friends' behavior and family habits—can either encourage or limit students' engagement in physical activity. Through group training sessions and sports teams, students strengthen social connections and become more actively involved in sports.

Health-related limitations, including illnesses, poor physical condition, and a sedentary lifestyle, also hinder physical activity. These issues can be improved through individualized

training and health-improvement programs under medical supervision. As a result, students become more capable of participating in physical activities and develop a healthy lifestyle.

In general, insufficient physical activity among students is a multifaceted problem, and overcoming it requires universities and responsible authorities to develop systematic solutions. By identifying problems, understanding their consequences, and implementing effective measures, students can achieve healthy physical, mental, and social development.

**Conclusion.** The results of the study show that insufficient physical activity among students is a serious and widespread problem in modern higher education. The main causes identified include a sedentary lifestyle, excessive dependence on modern technologies, lack of motivation, and high academic workload. These factors negatively affect students' physical health, leading to muscle weakness, hypodynamia, rapid fatigue, stress, and decreased concentration. Consequently, this situation also reduces students' academic performance and intellectual activity.

The study also revealed that the practical effectiveness of physical education classes in higher education institutions is sometimes insufficient. In many cases, classes are not engaging, are not adapted to students' individual needs, and sports infrastructure is inadequate. As a result, students are unable to fully take advantage of opportunities to participate in sports and physical activities.

The solutions proposed in the article require a comprehensive approach. These include introducing modern sports activities, organizing mass sports events, implementing incentive systems, monitoring physical activity through digital technologies, and promoting a healthy lifestyle. These measures encourage students to engage in regular physical activity, strengthen their health, reduce stress, and improve academic performance.

Thus, increasing physical activity among students is important not only for improving health but also for enhancing learning effectiveness, stabilizing mental well-being, and ensuring the well-rounded development of the younger generation. Higher education institutions must play an active role in addressing this issue by implementing modern pedagogical, organizational, and motivational approaches. As a result, effective ways to form a healthy lifestyle and develop students both physically and morally will be created.

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