

**THE POSSIBILITY OF TURNING HEALTH-IMPROVING RUNNING INTO A  
NATIONAL TRADITION AMONG THE POPULATION OF UZBEKISTAN**

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**Abstract:** In recent decades, the concept of a healthy lifestyle has become widespread throughout the world. Within this concept, running holds special significance as the simplest and most accessible form of physical activity. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), regular running reduces the risk of cardiovascular diseases by 30–40%, helps prevent metabolic disorders, and improves mental health and well-being. In Uzbekistan, a culture of health-improving running has been gradually forming among the population in recent years. With the adoption of the Presidential Decree No. PQ–6099 of October 30, 2020, the promotion of a healthy lifestyle was elevated to the level of state policy. Therefore, it is essential to scientifically study the potential for developing health-improving running as a national tradition in Uzbekistan.

**Keywords:** healthy lifestyle; health-improving running; national tradition; physical activity; running culture; World Health Organization (WHO); cardiovascular diseases; mental health; metabolic disorders;

**Introduction**

The research was conducted based on the following scientific and methodological foundations: Analysis of scientific literature: The works of L.P. Matveev, V.P. Filin, G.S. Tumanyan, as well as Uzbek scholars R.D. Khalmukhamedov and Sh.A. Mirzaqulov on health-improving physical education, were thoroughly studied. Comparative-pedagogical analysis: The experience of transforming running into a national habit in the United States, Japan, and European countries was examined to identify effective practices applicable to Uzbekistan. Sociological survey: A total of 300 respondents from Tashkent, Bukhara, and Samarkand participated in a survey to assess public attitudes toward health-improving running. Statistical analysis: Based on the survey data, percentage and dynamic indicators were calculated to evaluate trends and the degree of engagement in health-oriented running activities. The research findings revealed the following key facts:

Popularity among youth: Approximately 62% of respondents aged 18–30 reported that they go running at least once a week on a regular basis, indicating a growing interest in health-improving running among young people. Lower engagement among middle-aged groups: Among individuals aged 35–50, only 27% reported regular running activity

The main barriers identified were lack of time and insufficient infrastructure.

Infrastructure challenges: About 55% of participants stated that there are not enough running tracks or designated areas available for recreational jogging in their localities.

Cultural factor: Nearly 40% of respondents viewed running not as a sport but merely as a casual physical activity, suggesting that public promotion and cultural reinforcement are still insufficient to elevate running to the level of a national habit or tradition. Impact on physical health: Among participants who run regularly, 72% rated themselves as feeling “mentally and physically refreshed,” indicating a strong positive correlation between consistent running and overall well-being.

The prospects for establishing health-improving running as a national tradition among the population of Uzbekistan are remarkably high. Running, as a natural human form of movement, serves as an essential means of promoting a healthy lifestyle, strengthening the cardiovascular system, reducing stress, and increasing work productivity. In this regard, international experience can provide exemplary models for Uzbekistan.

In Japan, collective health exercises such as “radio taiso” movements and morning runs are among the most popular forms of engaging the population in physical activity. These exercises are regularly held in schools, workplaces, and public spaces, becoming an integral part of the nation’s health culture.

In the United States, running has become a key component of the “fitness culture,” forming an inseparable element of everyday life not only for professional athletes but also for the general public. Urban planning policies actively support this culture through the creation of running tracks, park trails, and beach routes designed for joggers.

Meanwhile, in European countries, free and voluntary running initiatives such as “parkrun” are organized weekly, emphasizing the promotion of a healthy lifestyle rather than competition. These examples demonstrate how running can evolve from an individual exercise into a socially significant cultural practice, offering valuable lessons for Uzbekistan’s ongoing efforts to foster nationwide wellness traditions. In Uzbekistan, the promotion of a healthy lifestyle has also become one of the key priorities of state policy in recent years. However, to integrate health-improving running more deeply into the daily lives of the population, it is necessary to strengthen cultural, organizational, and infrastructural factors.

In particular, efforts should focus on promoting running as a family and community-based activity, introducing “Morning Run” practices in educational institutions, and establishing running tracks as mandatory elements in urban planning standards. Such measures would significantly accelerate the development of a running culture across the country.

Moreover, it is important to regularly organize health-oriented running events in neighborhoods, higher education institutions, and workplaces, as well as to actively promote the benefits of running through mass media and social networks.

Through these approaches, running can evolve beyond the realm of sport to become an integral component of the national culture of healthy living, contributing to the physical, mental, and social well-being of the Uzbek population.

### **Conclusion**

The research results indicate that, in order to elevate health-improving running to the level of a national tradition in Uzbekistan, the following key conditions must be met:

Expansion of running infrastructure: development of stadiums, parks, and dedicated running tracks accessible to the general public. Strengthening cultural promotion: active dissemination of the idea of running as a family-oriented value and part of the national health culture. Integration into the education system: introduction of regular health-improving running sessions within schools and universities. Organization of international “running festivals”: holding large-scale events in major cities and desert regions to foster public enthusiasm and attract global attention. By fulfilling these conditions, running can become a deeply rooted national habit and cultural value within the healthy lifestyle of the Uzbek people, serving both individual well-being and collective national health development.

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