

**THE ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF KURASH IN THE MODERN GLOBAL
SPORTS SYSTEM**

Ibodullayev Ulugbek Jamshid ugli

Asia International University Faculty of Social Sciences and Technology

Master's student of the Department of Physical Culture

Abstract. One of the most significant phenomena shaping the contemporary world is globalization and its dynamic processes, which influence not only economic, social, political, and cultural spheres but also the field of sports. This study examines the impact of globalization on *kurash*, one of the traditional national sports. The main purpose of the research is to analyze perspectives on globalization and the new approaches that have emerged as a result of its influence, as well as to assess the changes occurring in *kurash* as a national sport based on recent developments. Within the framework of the study, particular attention is paid to issues such as “globalization,” “globalization in sport,” “positive and negative aspects of globalization in *kurash*,” “changes in *kurash*,” and “new approaches emerging in the process of change,” and their forms of influence on *kurash* are analyzed. The literature review method was employed to collect data. Various printed and visual sources were examined, and the information obtained from them was applied throughout the research process.

Keywords: globalization, globalization in sport, *kurash* and globalization, new approaches in *kurash*

Introduction

Rapidly developing and increasingly widespread technologies enable individuals and societies to observe global processes and innovations occurring around the world within a short period of time. This situation significantly accelerates communication and information exchange among individuals. Today, people are able to stay in one place while being informed about events taking place in different parts of the world and communicate with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. This process leads to the emergence of certain cultural changes in the lives of societies and individuals [1].

Under the influence of advancing technologies, Uzbek society is also experiencing various social, cultural, and spiritual changes and transformations. Sport, as one of the important means of interpersonal communication within society, does not remain outside these processes. The influence of sport on individuals' physical, social, and emotional development further enhances its significance, especially during periods of social change [2].

Kurash, one of the traditional sports that has developed historically in the territory of Uzbekistan, embodies numerous national and cultural values and has been passed down from generation to generation as a national sport. *Kurash* is recognized not only as a means of physical training but also as an important component of the people's historical memory, cultural identity, and spiritual heritage. Having existed since the earliest stages of human history, *kurash* continues to maintain its relevance and occupies an important place in the modern sports system.

Although the roots of the concept of globalization can be traced back to ancient times, it began to develop rapidly from the 1980s onward, primarily affecting various fields through economic, technological, and social leadership and initiating a new global process. This complex set of transformations is commonly referred to as “globalization” and is interpreted as a process of increasing interdependence and interconnectedness among national economies [3].

While the term “global” dates back approximately four hundred years, the concept of “globalization” is relatively new. It entered academic discourse in the 1960s, became widely used in the 1980s, and by the 1990s was recognized by scholars as one of the key concepts of modern analysis.

Globalization is often interpreted through various metaphors by dominant groups, which complicates understanding its true nature and renders its meaning abstract. As a result, a certain sense of consent toward this process is shaped within society. In reality, globalization is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon encompassing economic, political, and cultural aspects. While emphasizing order and stability in the political sphere, it may also generate new forms of instability; while promising opportunities and development economically, it can intensify social inequalities; and while accelerating cultural homogenization, it may negatively affect local and national values. Technological advancement, the development of information and knowledge economies, the spread of neoliberal policies, and the expansion of multinational capital into global markets are among the key factors accelerating globalization. These factors can be broadly categorized into three main groups: technological, ideological, and economic factors [4].

Today, globalization has become an inevitable reality of the modern world and, just as it affects the entire globe, it also brings about significant changes in the life of Uzbek society.

Globalization and Kurash

Traditional sports such as horseback riding, archery, spear throwing, kurash, and other national sports have not been able to maintain their former level of popularity and vitality within society. Compared to football, the influence and popularity of these sports have gradually declined over time. As public interest in these sports decreased, print media, television, and radio also devoted insufficient attention to them. The limited coverage of these sports in mass media led to their gradual disappearance from public memory, creating a closed (weak) cycle.

As a result, the concept of sport in public consciousness has increasingly become synonymous with football, and sports media has turned into an information space almost entirely oriented toward football. Consequently, other traditional sports, including kurash, have been pushed out of public attention [5].

However, kurash is one of the oldest sports in the world, having existed since the earliest stages of human history. Throughout history, kurash has appeared in various forms—sometimes as oil wrestling, sometimes as freestyle or traditional wrestling, and in different regions under various names and styles. Regardless of its form, kurash has always been an integral part of human culture. Sport serves as a universal means of communication and expression for people, and kurash has historically represented a common language, shared spirit, and national identity for the Uzbek people. Nevertheless, this shared value has begun to lose its vitality under the

pressure of globalization and has fallen victim to popularity and rating requirements dominating modern mass media.

Kurash is a noble and honorable tradition inherited from our ancestors, reflecting a rich and dignified history. Despite this, it is difficult to claim that sufficient attention has been paid to this heritage. Various layers of society, including the sports community itself, bear some responsibility for this neglect. The declining public interest and encouragement toward kurash has led to its perception as an outdated sport that does not meet modern requirements and is associated mainly with the memories of older generations. Moreover, major sports organizations and clubs have allocated only a very small share of their investments to kurash, directing most financial resources toward more commercially attractive sports. While sponsors and entrepreneurs with significant financial capacity have invested heavily in other sports from a marketing and popularity perspective, kurash has remained in the shadow of mass appeal and ratings [6].

Globalization Factors Affecting Kurash

The factors influencing the popularity and vitality of kurash within the globalization process can be grouped into several key areas. These include mass media, the dominance of football, changes in global economic and political systems, and transformations in sports rules and regulations.

In addition, sponsorship activities aimed at directly reaching target audiences should be recognized as an important globalization factor affecting kurash. The concentration of sponsorship systems on popular and commercially attractive sports limits kurash's access to financial and informational resources. As a result, the development pace of kurash in the global sports arena slows down, and its traditional status gradually weakens [7].

Table 1.

Globalization Factors Affecting Kurash and Their Directions of Influence

No.	Globalization Factors	Direction of Influence	Impact on Kurash
1	Mass media	Information and advertising	Decline in popularity due to limited media coverage
2	Dominance of football	Popularity and commercialization	Reduced public interest in kurash
3	Changes in economic and political systems	Financial and institutional	Commercialization marginalizing traditional sports
4	Changes in rules and competition systems	Organizational and technical	Reduction of national characteristics
5	Sponsorship systems	Financial and marketing	Limited development opportunities for kurash

Table 2.

Positive and Negative Impacts of Globalization on Kurash

Globalization Factor	Positive Impact	Negative Impact
Media	Opportunity for international recognition	Declining popularity due to insufficient coverage
Football dominance	Use of sports marketing experience	Other sports remaining in the shadow
Economic systems	Formation of professional sports systems	Commercial interests becoming dominant
Rule changes	Participation in international competitions	Loss of traditional elements
Sponsorship systems	Potential financial stability	Insufficient investment in traditional sports

Table 3.

Strategic Approaches to Developing Kurash under Globalization

No.	Strategic Direction	Implementation Mechanism	Expected Outcome
1	Strengthening media strategy	Promotion via TV and digital platforms	Increased popularity and audience
2	Youth engagement development	Expanding kurash clubs in schools	Ensuring generational continuity
3	Sponsorship and marketing	Attracting local and international sponsors	Financial stability
4	Preserving traditional values	Supporting national competitions and rituals	Preservation of cultural identity
5	Expanding international cooperation	Integration with international federations	Enhanced global status of kurash

Conclusion

This study systematically analyzed the impact of globalization on kurash as a traditional sport. The findings demonstrate that globalization is a complex process exerting both positive and negative influences on the development of kurash.

On the one hand, globalization enables kurash to gain international recognition and integrate into modern training methods and competition systems. The adoption of international rules and standards enhances athletes' competitiveness. On the other hand, the process leads to a decline in attention to national and traditional features, insufficient media coverage, and limited financial resources.

The study identifies mass media, the dominance of football, changes in economic and political systems, standardization of rules, and underdeveloped sponsorship mechanisms as key globalization factors affecting kurash. These factors pose a risk of kurash becoming a secondary sport in terms of popularity and commercial value within the modern sports system.

However, if managed effectively, globalization can create significant opportunities for the development of kurash. Strengthening media strategies, improving youth engagement systems, developing sponsorship and marketing mechanisms, preserving traditional values, and expanding international cooperation can enhance kurash's position in the global sports arena.

In conclusion, ensuring modernization while preserving cultural identity remains the main strategic objective in the globalization of kurash. By effectively utilizing the opportunities of globalization and minimizing its negative effects, it is possible to ensure the sustainable and competitive development of kurash as a sport for future generations.

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