



## Development Strategy of Leisure Sports to Improve Physical Fitness for Employees of the Small And Medium Enterprise in Fuzhou City

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### Abstract

This study explores sports and leisure participation among employees in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Fuzhou City. Using qualitative research methods, including interviews, the research uncovered current situation, strategy and feasibility of employee engagement in these activities. Using content analysis, we found a positive link between sports and leisure participation and employee well-being. Employees who actively participated report higher job satisfaction, improved health, and increased productivity. Supportive workplace cultures that value work-life balance and flexibility played a crucial role in encouraging participation. Social interaction and peer support are significant motivators for engagement. Tailored incentives, access to resources, and employee feedback also contributed to increased participation.

These insights can inform the development of workplace policies promoting well-being. Despite limitations, such as sample size and qualitative nature, this research highlights the potential benefits of integrating sports and leisure into SME workplace culture, fostering a healthier and more engaged workforce. Suggestions in the study highlights the role of social influence and peer dynamics in leisure behavior. Researchers can delve deeper into the mechanisms of peer motivation and the impact of social networks on leisure choices. The study opens avenues for further research on sports and leisure participation, particularly in the context of SMEs. Future studies can explore the long-term effects of workplace interventions, the role of technology in promoting participation, and the scalability of successful initiatives.

**Keywords:** sports, leisure, employee well-being, SME

### Introduction

Sports and leisure are integral aspects of social development and national progress. In recent years, China has recognized the significance of sports and leisure as they contribute to comprehensive national strength and societal advancement. Consequently, the sports and leisure industry has gained increasing attention and significance within the broader sports landscape.

The modernization, humanization, and scientific development of society are mirrored in the evolution of the sports and leisure sector. This transformation is expected to continue, with a particular focus on China's development of sports and leisure activities. In recent years, a range of documents and policies have been introduced to support and cultivate sports and leisure, reflecting unprecedented promotion and development in this field.



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National fitness is a societal initiative that enhances a nation's overall strength. In 2014, the State Council elevated national fitness to a national strategy, with the goal of reaching 500 million regular participants in physical exercise by 2025. This initiative aimed to significantly boost sports consumption, contributing to economic growth.

China's sustained economic growth over the past decade and improved living standards have resulted in increased investment in sports facilities. This, coupled with changing attitudes toward health and well-being, has led to a surge in leisure sports participation. Activities like badminton, ping-pong, swimming, hiking, and sports dance have become core components of residents' lifestyles (Svensson et al., 2021).

Government initiatives, such as the "National Fitness Program (2016-2020) Notice," have set ambitious goals for physical activity participation and sports consumption. Leisure sports have been identified as a key driver of the sports industry's growth and a source of economic stimulus. The development of the fitness and leisure industry in China is guided by five primary goals, including promoting daily fitness, developing outdoor sports, and fostering national folk fitness and leisure programs (Paek et al., 2022). Additionally, there is an emphasis on integrating fitness and leisure with culture, education, health, agriculture, and the "Internet Fitness and Leisure."

The "Healthy China 2030" Plan outlines strategies to promote fitness and leisure sports, encourage sports clubs, and develop regional fitness and leisure demonstration zones and industrial belts. The ultimate goal is to enhance the overall leisure experience and maximize the utilization of natural, social, and cultural resources (Sanderson & Brown, 2020). China is committed to expanding consumption in various sectors, including tourism, culture, sports, health, and education. Several comprehensive development plans and policies have been introduced, positioning leisure sports as a pivotal industry within the tertiary sector (Silva et al., 2019).

Given the government's consistent support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in China, these businesses are expected to play a significant role in the growth and development of the leisure sports industry (Batista et al., 2019). The Chinese government has a long-standing commitment to supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This dedication extends to the leisure sports sector, where SMEs are anticipated to play a crucial role in fostering growth and innovation (Horky, 2021). The development of leisure sports within SMEs aligns with broader national objectives of economic expansion and societal well-being (Johnson et al., 2020).

In recent years, various initiatives and policies have been implemented to bolster SMEs' involvement in the leisure sports industry. These measures include financial incentives, regulatory reforms, and capacity-building programs. The goal is to create a favorable environment for SMEs to thrive and contribute significantly to the development of leisure sports (Wu et al., 2022).

Furthermore, SMEs are uniquely positioned to offer diverse and localized leisure sports experiences. Their ability to tap into regional characteristics and tailor offerings to specific communities can contribute to the sector's vibrancy. This localized approach is essential for ensuring that leisure sports become an integral part of people's daily lives across different regions of China (Milone, 2021).

As leisure sports continue to gain popularity and support, SMEs in Fuzhou City, and indeed throughout China, have an opportunity to play a pivotal role in developing strategies that enhance the physical fitness of employees (Colley et al., 2019). The nexus between SMEs, leisure sports, and employee well-being is an exciting area of exploration and development (Young et al., 2013).



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In conclusion, the recognition of the significance of sports and leisure in China's social and economic development is evident in various policies and initiatives. The promotion of national fitness and the growth of the leisure sports industry have become integral components of the country's long-term strategy. Within this landscape, SMEs have a unique role to play in fostering innovation, creating localized experiences, and contributing to the holistic development of leisure sports for the benefit of employees and society at large.

## Research Objective

1. To study is the current state of physical fitness among employees in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Fuzhou City
2. To study a leisure sports strategy be designed to improve the physical well-being of SME employees in Fuzhou City.
3. To study factors determine the feasibility of the leisure sport strategy aimed at enhancing the physical fitness of SME employees in Fuzhou City.

## Literature Review and concepts

In the realm of sports theory, one crucial concept is the theory of sports and leisure participation, originally proposed by Icek Ajzen. This theory provides a fundamental framework for examining physical education. Leisure and recreation, characterized as voluntary activities undertaken during one's leisure time for both physical and mental enjoyment, hold a distinct place in this theory (Ábrahám et al., 2012; Young et al., 2013).

Sports, as a means of nurturing one's innate nature, serve as a unique platform for leisure and recreation. The social and individual functions that sports offer in the context of leisure and recreation are unparalleled when compared to other leisure activities. The distinctive aspects of sports that facilitate leisure and recreation include their focus on personal development and the rich human interactions inherent in sports activities (Ko & Pastore, 2004; Lord & Stein, 2009).

The critical role of understanding sports and making value judgments in the development of sports. The introduction of modern sports into China brought forth various mainstream sports values, such as the "strong soldier-strong seed-strong country" perspective, the "gold medal-competitive" viewpoint, the "biological health" outlook, and the "education" approach (Demirel et al., 2022; Mirehie & Gibson, 2020). While some of these values have fulfilled their roles at specific historical stages, others continue to play a crucial role in the world of sports. The contemporary development of sports in China, characterized by societal transformation, has ignited a quest for the concept of sports and leisure. Determining whether this concept can meet the evolving needs of sports development is an urgent issue. Analyzing this matter from the lenses of leisure theory, history, and philosophy, it is clear that the concept of sports and leisure can bring new dimensions to the development of sports in China (Moradi et al., 2020).

The attitudes, behaviors, and satisfaction levels of these workers in sports and leisure activities reflect their physical and mental well-being (Hart et al., 2020; Kaplan & Witvrouw, 2019). Urban integration, as a significant environmental factor, affects the perception of individuals' health and enriches their quality of life. Understanding the intrinsic connection between urban integration and sports and leisure participation is vital for the well-being of migrant workers and the advancement of urban public health. The study employed a combination of theoretical frameworks, qualitative and quantitative research methods, and empirical data from 1,102 new-generation rural migrant workers in Shanghai to construct a mechanism model highlighting the influence of urban integration on sports and leisure participation.



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The concept of lifelong sports emerged as an international trend in the late 1960s and gained popularity in the 1990s. It is an extension of the global "lifelong education" movement that gained traction after World War II. In 1965, Frenchman Paul Langeland articulated the necessity of lifelong education at the UNESCO Conference on Adult Education in Paris. This idea of lifelong education influenced some sports scholars who, considering human skill development, the role of physical exercise, and the needs of modern society, proposed the concept of lifelong sports.

As early as 1968, A. V. Knobkov, the director of the Central Institute of Physical Education in the former USSR, advocated for the idea of individuals engaging in physical activity from infancy to old age. Lifelong physical education entails individuals staying physically active and receiving continuous instruction throughout their lives. It has evolved alongside lifelong education, considering the natural progression and transformation of the human body, the significance of physical exercise, and the demands of modern society on individuals.

The principles of human functional activity underscore the need for consistent physical exercise. Modern lifestyles require physical activity to be an integral part of daily life, and improving physical fitness demands scientific guidance and ongoing physical education. This approach aims to leverage the power of sports to enhance national fitness and boost the physical well-being of the entire population (Chelladurai & Kim, 2022; Keane et al., 2019).

Lifelong physical education carries two key meanings. Firstly, it emphasizes that individuals should engage in physical exercise activities throughout their lives, making physical education an integral and vital aspect of their existence; secondly, it involves providing opportunities for people to participate in physical education activities at various life stages and in different contexts, guided by the concept of lifelong physical education. This approach seeks to integrate physical education systematically and comprehensively into people's lives by offering opportunities for sports activities across different life phases and spheres (Diaz et al., 2019; Forsell et al., 2022).

To evaluate the physical health of enterprise employees, this study employs the "National Student Physical Health Standard (revised in 2014)" proposed by China's Ministry of Education. This standard comprehensively assesses the physical health of employees, considering aspects such as body shape, bodily functions, and physical fitness, both before and after the experiment (Eime et al., 2019; Thomas et al., 2019).

This study has three primary objectives: firstly, to evaluate the current physical fitness status of employees in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) situated in Fuzhou City; secondly, to formulate a leisure sports strategy aimed at improving the physical well-being of SME employees in Fuzhou City; and thirdly, to assess the feasibility of implementing this leisure sport strategy, identifying any shortcomings and suggesting potential enhancements for the benefit of employees in SMEs in Fuzhou City.

## **Theoretical Framework**



**Figure 1** Show Theoretical Framework

## Research Methodology

The research design of this study is structured to comprehensively investigate the current state of sports and leisure participation among employees in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Fuzhou City. To achieve this, the study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative research methods such as interviews and observations.

### Participants

The purposive sampling strategy employed in this study was designed to achieve diversity among the participants, thereby enhancing the research by incorporating a wide range of perspectives and experiences within small and medium enterprises (SMEs). This strategy involved the intentional selection of individuals with varying characteristics who met specific criteria established for the study. We identified potential participants through various means, including consultation with SME management, utilization of employee databases, and engagement with employee groups.

It is worth noting that the selection of participants was conducted with meticulous attention to alignment with the research objectives. This implied that individuals chosen for interviews possessed insights or experiences directly related to sports and leisure participation within SMEs.

In order to bolster the credibility of the findings, researchers employed triangulation, a technique involving the comparison of data obtained from participants with diverse characteristics. This approach served to validate and reinforce the conclusions drawn from the study. The purposive sampling strategy adopted in this study allowed us to make strategic participant selections, ensuring that the collected data remained in alignment with the research objectives. By deliberately diversifying the pool of participants according to pertinent criteria, the study aimed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of sports and leisure participation within SMEs in Fuzhou City.

### Instrument

The research team designed semi-structured interview outlines tailored to the study's objectives. These outlines guide the interviews, ensuring that core issues related to sports and leisure participation are addressed. In-depth interviews were conducted with selected SME employees. These interviews aimed to gather detailed information about their sports and leisure habits, barriers to participation, and suggestions for improvement.

The assessment of semi-structured interview quality involved an evaluation of various aspects of the interview process to ensure the production of reliable and meaningful data. The quality of the interviews began with the establishment of well-defined research objectives. It was ensured that these objectives were clear and aligned seamlessly with the study's overarching purpose. Additionally, a thorough evaluation of the interview questions was





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conducted, focusing on their clarity, relevance, and appropriateness. The questions were meticulously designed to be open-ended, encouraging participants to provide in-depth and comprehensive responses.

In the process of evaluating the quality of the semi-structured interviews conducted for the research study, the interview protocol was carefully designed to maintain consistency in the interview process. All participants were asked the same set of core questions to ensure uniform data collection. However, follow-up questions were tailored to each participant's responses to delve deeper into specific areas of interest.

The criteria used for participant selection, which involved purposive sampling, were examined in detail. This evaluation aimed to determine whether the selected participants represented a diverse and relevant cross-section of small and medium enterprise (SME) employees in Fuzhou City.

Ethical considerations were a priority throughout the interview phase. The research team ensured that ethical guidelines were meticulously followed. This encompassed obtaining informed consent from all participants before the interviews commenced and maintaining strict participant confidentiality throughout the research process. By implementing these measures, the research study aimed to uphold the quality and integrity of the semi-structured interviews and the data collected during the research. These steps were taken to enhance the reliability and validity of the research findings.

In this study on the sports and leisure participation of employees in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Fuzhou City, we employed two important techniques to validate and enhance the credibility of our qualitative research findings: member checking and peer debriefing.

After conducting a series of semi-structured interviews with employees from SMEs in Fuzhou City, we took the crucial step of member checking. This involved revisiting the participants to ensure that our interpretations and findings aligned with their perspectives and experiences. We organized individual or group feedback sessions with the interviewed participants. During these sessions, we presented the participants with summaries of our preliminary findings, including key themes and insights that emerged from their interviews.

We encouraged open and candid discussions during the feedback sessions, allowing participants to express their opinions and provide feedback on the accuracy and representation of their viewpoints. Participants were given the opportunity to correct any inaccuracies, offer additional insights, or suggest revisions to our interpretations if they felt that something was misrepresented. By engaging in member checking, we aimed to validate our interpretations and ensure that the voices of the participants were accurately and authentically reflected in the research findings.

In addition to member checking, we also implemented peer debriefing to gain valuable insights and critical feedback from colleagues with expertise in qualitative research.

We shared our interview transcripts, data analysis, and preliminary findings with colleagues who have experience in qualitative research methodologies. Through in-depth discussions and consultations, our peers provided valuable feedback, alternative perspectives, and suggestions for improving the rigor and credibility of our study.

By employing both member checking and peer debriefing in our study, we aimed to enhance the validity and trustworthiness of our qualitative findings, ensuring that the research accurately represented the experiences and perspectives of the SME employees in Fuzhou City and that our interpretations were grounded in the data and multiple perspectives.

### **Data Analysis**

Qualitative data from interviews and observations are systematically analyzed. Themes and patterns are identified to draw meaningful insights into the current situation and



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underlying causes. We began by transcribing the interviews verbatim. This involved converting the spoken responses of the participants into written text. Transcription ensured that we had a clear and accessible record of all interview data.

Following transcription, we engaged in thematic coding. This process involved systematically identifying and labeling recurring themes, patterns, and meaningful content within the interview transcripts. We assigned codes to segments of text that related to specific topics or concepts.

We organized the coded data into a structured format. This allowed us to easily access and review segments of text associated with particular themes or categories. This step facilitated a more comprehensive understanding of the data. With the coded data organized, we proceeded to interpret the findings. This involved examining the relationships between different themes and exploring the implications of the data. We aimed to extract meaningful insights and draw conclusions from the data.

To enhance the validity of the findings, we considered multiple data sources and perspectives. Triangulation involved cross-referencing the qualitative data with other sources or methodologies, such as member checking and peer debriefing, to ensure consistency and reliability.

Overall, the approach to data analysis demonstrated a rigorous and systematic process that allowed us to extract valuable insights from the qualitative interviews with SME employees in Fuzhou City. This methodological rigor contributes to the credibility and trustworthiness of the research outcomes.

## Research Results

The findings regarding the current state of physical fitness among employees in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Fuzhou City reflected a common theme of challenges and opportunities, as voiced by the participants:

### Theme 1: Current Situation

Several participants highlighted the demanding nature of their work in SMEs as a significant factor affecting their physical fitness. Participant 1 expressed, "I think many of us in SMEs neglect our physical health due to work demands. Long hours at the office and stress leave little time for exercise. It's a common issue." This sentiment was echoed by Participant 3, who added, "I try to stay active, but it's not easy. After a full day at work, I'm exhausted. Weekends are when I can finally do some exercise."

In terms of workplace culture, the lack of emphasis on physical fitness within SMEs was evident. Participant 2 remarked, "The company doesn't really promote physical fitness. There are no gym facilities, and no one talks about it. It's up to us individually." Similarly, Participant 4 noted, "Some of my colleagues are health-conscious, but most of us don't prioritize fitness. The workplace culture doesn't encourage it."

Despite these challenges, there was a clear desire among participants for more support and wellness programs within their workplaces. Participant 5 expressed this sentiment, saying, "I wish the company offered wellness programs. It would motivate us to take better care of our health." Participant 6 emphasized the need for employer involvement, stating, "Physical fitness is important, but it's challenging when work is demanding. We need more support from our employers."

These findings underscore the complex relationship between work demands, workplace culture, and employees' ability to prioritize physical fitness within SMEs in Fuzhou City. Opportunities exist for organizations to create a more supportive environment that encourages and facilitates employee well-being.

### Theme 2: Strategy



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Designing a leisure sports strategy to enhance the physical well-being of SME employees in Fuzhou City requires a thoughtful approach, taking into account the needs and preferences of the workforce. As Participant 1 mentioned, "I think many of us in SMEs neglect our physical health due to work demands. Long hours at the office and stress leave little time for exercise. It's a common issue."

To address these challenges and create a strategy that resonates with employees, it's crucial to start by assessing their needs and preferences. This echoes Participant 2's perspective: "The company doesn't really promote physical fitness. There are no gym facilities, and no one talks about it. It's up to us individually."

Once we have gained insights from the employees, we can set clear objectives for the strategy. Participant 6 emphasized the importance of employer involvement, stating, "Physical fitness is important, but it's challenging when work is demanding. We need more support from our employers." This highlights the need to align the strategy's objectives with the goal of improving employee well-being.

Creating inclusive programs is essential, as Participant 4 noted, "Some of my colleagues are health-conscious, but most of us don't prioritize fitness. The workplace culture doesn't encourage it." To address this, offer a variety of leisure sports options that cater to different fitness levels, interests, and schedules, ensuring that everyone feels welcome to participate.

Promoting awareness about the leisure sports opportunities available to employees is also critical. As Participant 5 expressed, "I wish the company offered wellness programs. It would motivate us to take better care of our health." Effective communication through company channels can help employees understand the benefits of the strategy.

Additionally, consider providing incentives or rewards for employees who actively engage in leisure sports, as this can motivate participation. Recognizing the effort and dedication of employees, as mentioned by Participant 3, who said, "I try to stay active, but it's not easy. After a full day at work, I'm exhausted. Weekends are when I can finally do some exercise," can boost morale and enthusiasm.

### **Theme 3: Feasibility**

The feasibility of the leisure sport strategy designed to enhance the physical fitness of SME employees in Fuzhou City hinges on several factors, including employee engagement, resource allocation, and overcoming identified shortcomings. Participant 7 highlighted the feasibility concern, saying, "I'd love to exercise more, but I can't find the time with my work schedule. If the company provided options during lunch breaks or after work, I'd be more likely to participate." This suggests that aligning the strategy with employees' availability is crucial for feasibility.

Several shortcomings were identified that need improvement to enhance the strategy's effectiveness. Participant 2 pointed out, "Many employees aren't even aware of any fitness initiatives. There's a lack of communication." To address this, better communication and promotion of the leisure sports programs are essential. Participant 8 shared, "We don't have access to any sports facilities at work, and there are no nearby gyms." This signifies a significant obstacle to participation. Overcoming this challenge may require seeking partnerships with local fitness centers or providing equipment within the workplace.

As mentioned by Participant 7, time constraints are a considerable hurdle. The strategy should address this by offering flexible scheduling options to accommodate employees' busy workdays. Participant 6 noted, "Our managers don't prioritize physical fitness, so it's not encouraged." Leadership buy-in and support are critical for the strategy's success. Encouraging upper management to participate can set a positive example.





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Participant 10 shared, "Budgets are tight, so any fitness initiatives need to be cost-effective." Ensuring that the strategy aligns with the SME's budget constraints is crucial. Exploring low-cost or subsidized options can be beneficial. Participant 9 mentioned, "I start exercising but lose motivation quickly. There's no one to push or motivate me." Implementing incentive programs or peer support systems can help employees stay motivated. Participant 4 emphasized the importance of offering a variety of activities, stating, "Not everyone enjoys the same sports. We need options." Diversifying the leisure sports programs can cater to different interests and preferences.

In conclusion, while there are challenges and shortcomings to address, the feasibility of the leisure sport strategy can be enhanced by tailoring it to employee needs, improving communication, and addressing resource limitations. By actively addressing these concerns, the strategy can become more feasible and effective in enhancing the physical fitness of SME employees in Fuzhou City.

## Research Discussion

The current state of physical fitness among employees in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Fuzhou City varies. Through our research, we found that there is a spectrum of physical fitness levels among SME employees. Some individuals maintained a relatively high level of physical fitness, engaging in regular physical activities and maintaining healthy lifestyles. On the other hand, there was a significant portion of employees who struggled with physical fitness due to factors such as sedentary work, lack of access to sports facilities, and time constraints. Overall, the state of physical fitness among SME employees in Fuzhou City reflected a diverse range of fitness levels.

To design a leisure sports strategy aimed at improving the physical well-being of SME employees in Fuzhou City, several key considerations have emerged from our research. Firstly, it is essential to create a supportive workplace culture that encourages and facilitates participation in leisure sports activities. This can be achieved through initiatives such as offering flexible work hours, providing access to on-site sports facilities, and promoting the benefits of physical activity among employees. Additionally, developing tailored programs that cater to the diverse preferences and fitness levels of employees is crucial. The strategy should include a variety of sports and leisure options to cater to individual interests, ensuring that participation is inclusive and enjoyable.

The feasibility of the leisure sport strategy aimed at enhancing the physical fitness of SME employees in Fuzhou City was assessed through participant interviews and observations. While the strategy held promise, there were concerns regarding time constraints and work-related pressures that needed to be addressed for successful implementation. Additionally, raising awareness and garnering support for the strategy emerged as essential areas for improvement.

Overall, the findings shed light on the current status of physical fitness among SME employees, propose a tailored strategy for improvement, and identify areas for enhancement to ensure feasibility and effectiveness. In our research, we conducted a comprehensive assessment of the current state of physical fitness among employees working in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) located in Fuzhou City. The findings revealed a wide spectrum of physical fitness levels among the participants. On one end of the spectrum, there were individuals who reported engaging in regular physical activities and maintaining a relatively high level of physical fitness. These employees often incorporated sports and leisure activities into their daily routines, emphasizing the importance of staying active.

Conversely, we also encountered participants who expressed limited engagement in sports and leisure activities. Factors contributing to this limited participation included the



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demands of sedentary work, time constraints, and a lack of access to sports facilities. These individuals faced challenges in incorporating physical fitness into their lifestyles and often struggled to find opportunities for leisure sports activities.

To address these findings, we developed a leisure sports strategy tailored to the specific needs and preferences of SME employees in Fuzhou City. This strategy was shaped by the feedback and input provided by the participants in our study. A central component of the strategy involved the promotion of accessible sports facilities within or near the workplace. By making these facilities readily available, employees could more easily engage in physical activities during their leisure time.

Furthermore, the strategy aimed to encourage regular physical activity among SME employees. This was to be achieved through awareness campaigns, motivational initiatives, and educational programs highlighting the importance of physical well-being. The strategy recognized the significance of fostering a supportive workplace culture that not only permitted but actively promoted leisure sports participation.

In evaluating the feasibility of this leisure sport strategy, we encountered mixed responses from the participants. While many acknowledged the potential benefits of such initiatives, including improved physical fitness and overall well-being, some expressed concerns related to time constraints and work-related pressures. It was evident that finding a balance between work responsibilities and leisure sports activities posed challenges for certain employees.

Additionally, our research identified several shortcomings in the strategy's implementation. Notably, there was a need for enhanced awareness and support for the strategy among SME employees. Some participants indicated that they were unaware of the available opportunities for leisure sports within their workplaces, suggesting the importance of better communication and outreach efforts.

In conclusion, our research highlighted the diverse landscape of physical fitness among SME employees in Fuzhou City. The devised leisure sports strategy aimed to bridge the gaps and enhance physical well-being through accessible facilities and awareness campaigns. While feasibility challenges exist, addressing these concerns and fostering a culture of support can contribute to the successful implementation of the strategy and ultimately improve the physical fitness of SME employees in the city.

## **Suggestions from research**

### **Suggestions for Theoretical Implications**

Theoretical implications of the study's findings extend beyond the immediate context of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Fuzhou City and contribute to the broader understanding of sports and leisure participation. These implications shed light on several theoretical aspects:

The study highlights the intricate relationship between work culture and leisure choices. It emphasizes the need for a more integrated approach that combines work and leisure theories. Theoretical frameworks in the fields of organizational psychology and sociology may benefit from incorporating the idea that workplace culture significantly impacts leisure preferences and behaviors (Jeanes et al., 2019; Thomas et al., 2019).

The concept of lifelong sports, as identified in this study, aligns with the principles of lifelong learning. Lifelong sports can be viewed as a form of continuous personal development that spans a person's entire life. This connection underscores the interdisciplinary nature of lifelong learning theories and their applicability beyond traditional educational contexts.

The findings reaffirm the importance of socio-demographic factors, such as age and education, in influencing leisure choices. These factors are crucial elements in leisure studies



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and can serve as a basis for exploring deeper connections between demographic variables and leisure preferences within various populations (Thomas et al., 2019).

The study's emphasis on workplace culture and policies influencing sports and leisure participation aligns with workplace health promotion theories. The workplace is increasingly recognized as a setting for health promotion efforts. The findings contribute to the theoretical foundation for workplace health interventions that focus on employee well-being and physical activity.

The role of peer influence and social dynamics in promoting sports and leisure participation highlights the importance of social theories within leisure studies. Concepts like social capital, social networks, and social support may be further explored in the context of encouraging leisure activities among employees (Forsell et al., 2022).

The study's identification of lifestyle preferences and identity as factors influencing participation aligns with theories that link leisure choices to individual identity and self-concept (Chelladurai & Kim, 2022). Theoretical frameworks related to lifestyle and identity may be enriched by considering the interplay between leisure activities and personal identity.

The study underscores the relevance of considering workplace environments in leisure policy and planning. It encourages scholars and policymakers to incorporate workplace factors into the design of programs and policies aimed at promoting leisure activities at both individual and societal levels (Keane et al., 2019).

In summary, the theoretical implications of this study expand the understanding of sports and leisure participation by bridging gaps between work and leisure theories, emphasizing the role of workplace culture, and providing insights into the socio-demographic, social, and identity factors that influence leisure choices. These implications contribute to a more holistic and interdisciplinary perspective on the dynamics of leisure behavior.

### **Suggestions for Practical Implications**

The practical implications of this study extend to various stakeholders, including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), employees, human resource professionals, and policymakers. SMEs should consider implementing well-being programs that incorporate sports and leisure activities. These programs can improve the physical and mental health of employees, leading to increased job satisfaction and productivity.

SMEs should cultivate a workplace culture that encourages and supports sports and leisure participation. This includes promoting a healthy work-life balance, offering flexible schedules, and recognizing the importance of employee well-being. SMEs can invest in on-site sports and leisure facilities or establish partnerships with local fitness centers. Providing convenient access to such resources can motivate employees to engage in physical activities.

Encouraging peer involvement through group activities, sports teams, or fitness challenges can create a sense of community and motivation among employees. Social support systems within the workplace can foster a culture of fitness and leisure. SMEs can design incentive programs that cater to the preferences and needs of their employees. This may include offering rewards for achieving fitness goals, participating in sports events, or joining wellness programs. Regularly soliciting feedback from employees through surveys or focus groups can help SMEs understand the specific interests and barriers to participation. This feedback can inform the design of effective well-being initiatives. Providing training and education on the benefits of sports and leisure can raise The practical implications of this study offer actionable steps for various stakeholders:

SMEs can utilize these findings to foster a culture of sports and leisure participation among employees. Initiatives may include creating a supportive workplace culture, providing accessible facilities, offering incentives, and recognizing the impact of peer dynamics.



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Prioritizing employee well-being can lead to improved organizational performance. Policymakers can use these insights to develop workplace policies that prioritize employee well-being. These policies may include guidelines on physical activity breaks, flexible work hours, and wellness incentives, ultimately benefiting both employees and society at large.

The study underscores the importance of employee well-being and its direct correlation with workplace productivity. SMEs and organizations can prioritize employee health and engagement as a strategy to enhance overall organizational performance. SMEs can tailor employee engagement initiatives based on demographic factors, preferences, and individual needs, enhancing the resonance of these programs and increasing participation.

In the realm of academic research, this study contributes to leisure studies by highlighting the interplay between workplace culture and leisure choices. It emphasizes the significance of socio-demographic factors, lifestyle, and identity in influencing leisure behavior. Researchers can explore the integration of work and leisure theories, delving into how workplace dynamics shape leisure preferences and behaviors. This bridging of organizational psychology and leisure studies can lead to a deeper understanding of the subject.

Additionally, this research sheds light on workplace health promotion theories and practices. It encourages further exploration of how organizations can actively support and facilitate employee well-being, including physical activity. Policymakers can utilize these findings to inform the development of policies aimed at promoting employee well-being and work-life balance. Policies that encourage physical activity in the workplace can have far-reaching societal benefits.

In conclusion, the research implications of this study empower SMEs, policymakers, and academics to take proactive steps toward enhancing the well-being of employees. By acknowledging the importance of sports and leisure participation and aligning workplace practices accordingly, organizations can foster healthier, more engaged, and more productive workforces while contributing to broader societal well-being.

The study highlights the role of social influence and peer dynamics in leisure behavior. Researchers can delve deeper into the mechanisms of peer motivation and the impact of social networks on leisure choices. The study opens avenues for further research on sports and leisure participation, particularly in the context of SMEs. Future studies can explore the long-term effects of workplace interventions, the role of technology in promoting participation, and the scalability of successful initiatives.

### **Suggestions Limitations of the Study**

The study focused on a specific group of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Fuzhou City. The sample size and geographic scope may limit the generalizability of the findings to SMEs in other regions or larger corporations. The study's participant demographics, including age, gender, education level, and marital status, may not fully represent the diversity of the workforce. This homogeneity could impact the applicability of the findings to more diverse workplaces.

Data collection relied heavily on self-reported information from employees. This introduces the potential for response bias, where participants may provide socially desirable or inaccurate responses. The study used a cross-sectional design, which provides a snapshot of the situation at a single point in time. Longitudinal research could offer insights into how participation in sports and leisure activities changes over time.

While the study identified factors that promote sports and leisure participation, it did not extensively explore the barriers that employees may face in engaging in these activities. Understanding these barriers could inform more targeted interventions. Participants may have



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felt pressured to report positive attitudes toward sports and leisure, given the potential for workplace expectations to influence responses.

The study may not have accounted for seasonal variations in sports and leisure participation, as data collection may have occurred during specific times of the year. While interviews provided valuable insights, the qualitative nature of the data may limit the ability to draw quantitative conclusions or make statistical comparisons.

Focusing solely on Fuzhou City limits the geographic diversity of the study. Cultural and regional differences in leisure preferences may affect the applicability of findings to other areas. The study did not extensively examine workplace policies related to sports and leisure. Investigating the presence and impact of such policies could have provided additional insights.

Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable insights into the factors that influence sports and leisure participation in SMEs and provides a foundation for future research in this area. Researchers can build on this work to explore a broader range of workplaces and address specific barriers to participation.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the current state of sports and leisure participation among employees in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Fuzhou City. The research aimed to explore the factors influencing participation in these activities and their implications for employee well-being and workplace culture.

The study also acknowledges its limitations, including sample size, demographic homogeneity, and the qualitative nature of interviews. These limitations provide opportunities for future research to delve deeper into specific aspects of sports and leisure participation in SMEs.

In essence, this study underscores the importance of promoting sports and leisure as integral components of workplace culture. It highlights the potential benefits of investing in employee well-being through physical activity, not only for individuals but also for the overall success of small and medium-sized enterprises. By recognizing the positive impact of sports and leisure, organizations can create a healthier, more engaged, and more productive workforce.

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