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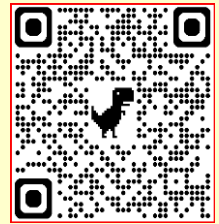
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## Skiing in Mongolia: Historical Overview and Contemporary Development Trends

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the policies and trends in the development of winter sports in Mongolia from a scientific perspective. The findings suggest that integrating sub-programs to promote winter sports among the general population is feasible without legislative amendments. Such initiatives can be implemented across all levels of government institutions and integrated into school curricula.

Global warming has led to cancellations of regular competitions in European countries with advanced skiing programs, highlighting Mongolia's potential to establish permanent world-class winter sports facilities due to its long winters.

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) account for 85.9% of deaths in Mongolia, with one in three individuals dying from cardiovascular disease and one in four from cancer (National Survey on NCDs and Risk Factors, 2019). Fitness assessments among 18–25-year-olds indicate that 49.8% are rated as C or D, with 9.7% of males and 10.7% of females receiving an “F” grade. Current physical education curricula in schools, vocational colleges, and universities inadequately address modern fitness needs (O. Battulga, 2024).

Participation in skiing is highly effective in reducing NCD risks. Making skiing accessible to all citizens could mitigate the adverse health effects of urban winter pollution and physical inactivity for approximately 60% of the population. Mongolia's climate and natural conditions are highly suitable for skiing.

Archaeological evidence, including rock carvings documented by Ts. Purevdorj, indicates that skiing has ancient roots in Mongolia. Despite this, there is limited scientific research on the origin, evolution, and development of skiing in the country. This study aims to fill this gap and provides data applicable to government bodies, NGOs, universities, researchers, and individuals.

**Keywords:** Skiing, Winter Sports Development, Public Physical Education, Sports Policy

## 1. Introduction

This research focuses on promoting outdoor physical activity as a component of a healthy lifestyle and investigates policies and systems that foster independence and self-reliance among students.

Globally, countries are actively promoting winter sports as part of daily routines to cultivate healthy lifestyles. Mongolia has developed frameworks to integrate skiing into public physical education programs, benefiting urban populations, enhancing youth independence, and improving workforce capacity.

The study underscores the need for scientifically grounded policy development aligned with Mongolia's climatic and socio-cultural conditions.

## 2. Origins and Global Development of Skiing

Skiing originated as a practical tool for survival, facilitating transportation, hunting, and cargo transport. Over time, it evolved into a sport.

- **Early History:** Skiing enhanced military mobility, provided recreation, and supported competitions.

- **1920–1950:** International competitions relied on wooden skis, with performance determined by skill rather than equipment.
- **1960–1980:** Introduction of plastic skis in Austria, Germany, Finland, Norway, and the USSR increased speed and performance.
- **1980–2000:** Development of new disciplines including Snowboarding, Nordic skiing, Ski Orienteering, Freestyle, Aerials, and Slope Style.

The International Skiing History Association (1993) was established to study skiing's origins, evolution, and development. While Mongolia's skiing history is under-researched, skiing has globally developed into a competitive sport with cultural, recreational, and economic significance.

**Conclusion:** Skiing evolved from a human necessity into an internationally recognized sport contributing to tourism, economics, and global sporting events.

## 3. Development of Skiing in Mongolia

Mongolians have used skis for over 800 years. Modern skiing was introduced approximately 100 years ago, recognized as a sport 80 years ago, and organized competitively for 65 years. Skis have been used in daily life, education, and international competitions.

### 3.1 Quantitative Data (2015)

#### Skiing Infrastructure by Province

Province	Alpine	Cross-country competitions	Cross-country training	Roller	Public PE skiing	Standard tracks
Bulgan	0	5	42	2	0	0
Arkhangai	0	1	9	1	0	0
Uvurkhangai	0	2	16	0	0	0
Orkhon	40	4	32	4	20	1
Khuvsgul	0	1	17	0	0	0
Zavkhan	0	0	26	0	0	0
Uvs	0	4	36	0	0	0
Tuv	0	3	31	4	0	0
Selenge	0	0	10	0	0	0
Khentii	0	0	16	0	0	0
Darkhan	0	2	10	3	0	0
Ulaanbaatar	800	20	150	20	110	1
<b>Total</b>	840	42	395	34	130	2

#### Population vs. Ski Equipment

Year	National Population	Ulaanbaatar Population	Skis
1921	732,800	-	~50
1944	759,061	41,000	600
1989	2,044,000	548,400	~3,000
2020	3,296,866	1,539,800	~1,900

The data show that modern skiing access remains limited; in Ulaanbaatar, only one in 1,050 residents actively skis.

### 3.2 Historical Milestones

- 1946: Tasganii Ovoo ski station
- 1951: First National Championships

- 1957: National Ski Team
- 1958: Mongolian Ski Federation founded; Handgait ski resort opened
- 1964: Joined International Ski Federation
- 1989: Shargha Morit-Handgait race with 3,000 skiers
- 2007 & 2009: Sarhia and Sky Resort ski centers opened
- 2015–2017: International competition participation; MNS 6698:2017 standard applied

### 3.3 Education and Curriculum

The 1957 Physical Education Program integrated skiing along with athletics, gymnastics, and games. Curricular adjustments accounted for local conditions and provided students with practical skiing skills.

## 4. Discussion and Recommendations

Despite a century of skiing experience, Mongolia's development remains limited: only 11 provinces and 27 districts offer skiing programs. Material constraints, lack of facilities, and insufficient training programs have hindered growth.

#### Recommendations:

1. Integrate skiing programs into local and national development plans.
2. Train professional personnel combining expertise and dedication.
3. Ensure adequate equipment and infrastructure.
4. Establish clubs and training centers.
5. Develop elite athletes to compete internationally.

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