

5 – 7 June 2026

Nice , France

## **The Role Of School Sports In Strengthening Health Education: Evidence From Secondary Schools In Kigali City, Rwanda**

**Niyonkuru Umulisa Diane**

*East African Christian College, Rwanda*

### **Abstract**

The integration of sports within school programs has gained increasing attention as an effective strategy for promoting health education and holistic learner development. This study explores the role of school sports in strengthening health education among secondary school students in Kigali City, Rwanda. Grounded in the framework of school-based health promotion, the research examined how participation in organized sports activities contributes to students' health knowledge, physical activity levels, and positive lifestyle behaviors. A mixed-methods design was employed, involving selected public and private secondary schools in Kigali City. Data were collected from students, physical education teachers, and school administrators through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, and analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The findings indicate that sports-based activities enhance students' understanding of health-related concepts, promote physical fitness, and support the development of psychosocial skills such as teamwork, self-discipline, and stress management. Despite these benefits, the study identified challenges including limited sports facilities, inadequate instructional time, and insufficient professional training for teachers. The study concludes that school sports represent a valuable and practical approach to advancing health education within the formal education system. It recommends the systematic integration of sports into health education curricula, improved resource allocation, and institutional support to maximize their educational and health-related impact. The findings contribute to ongoing discussions on innovative approaches to education and student well-being within the context of developing education systems.

**Keywords:** Adolescence; Health Literacy; Lifestyle Behaviors; Physical Fitness; Preventive Education