

Sports Sponsorship by Unhealthy Industries: A Systematic Literature Review

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This systematic literature review provides an extensive overview of the existing literature on sports sponsorship by unhealthy industries. Through comprehensive searches in the databases of Web of Science and Scopus, we identified 91 publications meeting our inclusion criteria. These are categorized into prevalence, impact and (in)appropriateness of unhealthy sports sponsorships (USS). This review highlights a high prevalence of USS, particularly in soccer, with gambling sponsorships gaining prominence in recent years. Ethical concerns arise due to the positive correlation between exposure to USS and attitudes, preferences, and behaviours, potentially causing health-harming consequences for children, adolescents and adults. We propose a future research agenda, particularly focusing on longitudinal and experimental studies to investigate causal relationships between USS exposure and consumer-related outcomes, addressing current gaps. We clarify the public health implications of USS, offering scholars and practitioners insights to advocate for policy measures to curb USS.

Keywords: Sports Sponsorship; Unhealthy Sponsorship; Dark Consumption Products; Alcohol; Gambling; Unhealthy Food and Beverages