Roadmap for Economic Governance in Iranian Sport: Identifying Key Indicators

ABSTRACT

Purpose: Sports Economics is the ideal introduction for all sport management and sport policy students and those for whom economics is a relatively new area of study. This study explores the economic governance of Iranian sports by identifying key indicators essential for developing a practical governance framework. Given sports' significant cultural and social value in Iran, a comprehensive understanding of sports economics is crucial.

Design/methodology/approach: Utilizing a qualitative methodology grounded in semi-structured interviews with experts, this research delves into various dimensions of sports economic governance.

Findings: The analysis reveals that effective governance hinges on four primary themes: financial management, sports technology, sports economics, and sports participation. Key indicators within these themes include investment in sports infrastructure, financial transparency, technological advancements, revenue generation, economic development impacts, and promoting youth and women's participation. Findings underscore the importance of financial sustainability, transparency, technology adoption, and equitable participation in enhancing governance.

Originality: This study provides practical insights for policymakers and sports managers, aiming to optimize sports' economic and social outcomes in Iran through improved governance practices. Iranian sports organizations can achieve greater performance and sustainability by implementing these key indi**cators**, ultimately fostering a more robust and equitable sports ecosystem.

Keywords:

Economic Governance; Governance Indicators; Iranian Sports; Sports Economics; Sports Policy.

Orginal Article

نقشه راه حکمرانی اقتصادی در ورزش ایران: شناسایی شاخص‌های کلیدی

نقشه راه حکمرانی اقتصادی در ورزش ایران

چکیده

هدف: اقتصاد ورزشی مقدمه‌ای ایده‌آل برای همه دانشجویان مدیریت ورزشی و سیاست ورزشی و همچنین کسانی است که اقتصاد برای آن‌ها حوزه‌ای نسبتاً جدید از مطالعه به شمار می‌رود. این پژوهش با هدف شناسایی شاخص‌های کلیدی ضروری برای توسعه یک چارچوب حکمرانی مؤثر، حکمرانی اقتصادی ورزش ایران انجام شده است. با توجه به ارزش فرهنگی و اجتماعی قابل توجه ورزش در ایران، درک جامع از اقتصاد ورزش بسیار مهم است.

روش: این تحقیق با استفاده از یک روش کیفی مبتنی بر مصاحبه‌های نیمه ساختاریافته با خبرگان، ابعاد مختلف حاکمیت اقتصادی ورزش را بررسی کرده است.

یافته‌ها: تجزیه و تحلیل نشان می‌دهد حکمرانی مؤثر بر چهار موضوع اصلی بستگی دارد: مدیریت مالی، فناوری ورزشی، اقتصاد ورزش و مشارکت ورزشی. شاخص‌های کلیدی در این مضامین شامل سرمایه‌گذاری در زیرساخت‌های ورزشی، شفافیت مالی، پیشرفت‌های فناوری، درآمدزایی، اثرات توسعه اقتصادی و ارتقای مشارکت جوانان و زنان است. یافته‌ها بر اهمیت پایداری مالی، شفافیت، پذیرش فناوری و مشارکت عادلانه در تقویت حکمرانی تأکید دارد.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: این مطالعه با هدف بهینه‌سازی نتایج اقتصادی و اجتماعی ورزش در ایران انجام شده که از طریق بهبود شیوه‌های حکمرانی، بینش‌های عملی را برای سیاست‌گذاران و مدیران ورزشی ارائه می‌کند. با اجرای این شاخص‌های کلیدی، سازمان‌های ورزشی ایران می‌توانند به عملکرد و پایداری بیشتری دست یابند و در نهایت اکوسیستم ورزشی قوی‌تر و عادلانه‌تری را پرورش دهند.

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1. Introduction

Sports economics is a specialized field that explores the intersection of economic principles and the sports industry (Mohamadi Askarabadi et al., 2020). This discipline covers diverse topics, including the financial performance of sports organizations and clubs (Miragaia et al., 2019), the economic impacts of sporting events (Li & Jago, 2013), labor markets in sports, and the economic implications of sports governance (Fatahimilasi et al., 2022). International sport governance is often considered a significant and distinctive aspect of global politics (Jedlicka, 2018). The growing focus on good governance in sports has led to efforts to evaluate the governance practices of various sports organizations (Geeraert, 2019). Governance in sports pertains to the frameworks, rules, and processes that guide and control sports organizations (Mohammadi Rauof et al., 2022; Shilbury et al., 2013). In many countries, good governance standards are a prerequisite for public funding, reflecting a global emphasis on transparent and accountable sports management (Blanco, 2017). Governance models (GM) in sports can vary widely across different sports and countries (Siekmann & Soek, 2010), including centralized and decentralized systems, public and private ownership, and different levels of stakeholder involvement (Farahani et al., 2020). For example, GM vary widely across different sports and regions, from member-owned European football clubs to the franchise model of North American sports leagues (Szymanski, 2003).

Analyzing GM within sports economics is crucial (Booth et al., 2015) as it enhances the understanding of how various structures impact the efficiency, equity, and sustainability of sports organizations (Asgari Gandomani et al., 2023). Moreover, evaluating the indicators, benefits, and challenges associated with these GM offers comprehensive insights into their effectiveness and identifies areas for improvement (MohammadiRaoof et al., 2021). Asian countries have become significant players in the international sports business (Lee & Watanabe, 2019). Evidence shows a notable increase in sports governance research in recent years (Dowling et al., 2018). Research highlights seven factors—planning, economy and finance, organization, law, education and science, government, and media—in the GM of public sports in Iran (Keshavarz, 2019). However, findings indicate that sports governance has not adequately addressed the needs of athletes to improve sports achievement (Juliandi et al., 2020). In line with global pronouncements on good governance (Booth et al., 2015), awareness of the importance of good governance in both governing and participatory sports organizations has risen (Booth et al., 2015).

The analysis of GM in sports economics involves assessing how these structures affect organizational performance (Delima & Ragel, 2017), financial stability (Raouf & Ahmed, 2022), and competitive balance (Michie & Oughton, 2004). Effective governance enables sports organizations to improve their financial performance through sound management, transparent decision-making, and strong strategic planning. In contrast, poor governance can result in financial mismanagement,

corruption, and a loss of stakeholder trust, as demonstrated by numerous scandals in international sports organizations such as FIFA (Forster, 2006). Effective governance also promotes transparency and accountability, reducing the risk of corruption and mismanagement (Geeraert, 2015). Additionally, GM impact competitive balance within sports leagues, crucial for maintaining fan interest and commercial viability (Bagabo, 2021). Competitive balance refers to the level of equality in performance and financial capabilities among teams within a league (Rottenberg, 1956). Understanding these dynamics is essential for stakeholders aiming to optimize the economic and social outcomes of sports governance.

However, despite the fundamental issues and obstacles encountered in Iran, such as instances of corruption in sports (Mahmoudi et al., 2019; Razzaghi et al., 2015), lack of financial transparency within professional clubs (Amirtash & Mozafari, 2014), challenges regarding television broadcasting rights (Alidoust Ghahfarrokhi, 2019; Zare et al., 2015), unsuccessful attempts at privatizing sports clubs (Amiri et al., 2014; Moghimi & Alaei Ardakani, 2019), inadequate development of public sports infrastructure and the limited contribution of sports to public health (Asefi et al., 2018), clubs facing negative financial balances (MohammadiRaoof et al., 2021), the looming threat of sports suspension in the country, continual changes in ministry and federation structures (Sajjadi, 2015), an ineffective performance evaluation system within sports organizations (Keshavarz et al., 2014), insufficient interdepartmental cooperation among influential sports institutions (Farahani et al., 2019), and the scarcity of sports facilities coupled with numerous unfinished projects and management deficiencies (Rezaei et al., 2016). Pashaie and Sotiriadou (2023) results show that ICT has a mediating role in reducing administrative corruption in sport organizations. Moreover, there are disparities in women's access to suitable facilities and opportunities (Abedi et al., 2019), and weaknesses in the country's sports diplomacy (Peymanfar et al., 2019), all indicating that, unfortunately, the sports institution in our country has yet to fulfil its potential in achieving ambitious goals and securing its rightful status.

In Iran, where sports hold a significant cultural and social value (Pashaei et al., 2019), examining the economic dimensions of its sporting landscape becomes imperative. This study examines the complex context of sports economics in Iran and evaluates key indicators that shape the country's sports economic governance. For instance, the increasing commercialization of sports has raised concerns about prioritizing profits over sporting values, leading to ethical dilemmas and stakeholder dissatisfaction (Andreff & Szymanski, 2006). In addition, global sports organizations often strive to implement consistent governance standards in culturally and regulatory diverse environments. Therefore, the study of governance indicators in sports economics is very important for understanding how different structures affect the performance and sustainability of sports organizations in Iran.

By evaluating key governance indicators, stakeholders can identify best practices and areas for improvement. This process ultimately aims to strengthen more effective

and equitable sports management frameworks in Iran. Despite the growing body of literature on sports governance, there remains a notable gap regarding the specific economic indicators that are crucial for developing effective governance frameworks in the Iranian context. Previous studies have highlighted various challenges, such as corruption, financial mismanagement, and inadequate infrastructure. However, there is limited research that systematically identifies and analyses the economic indicators necessary for enhancing governance in Iranian sports. Thus, the following research question was formulated to address this gap:

RQ: What are the key economic indicators necessary for developing an effective governance framework in Iranian sports, and how can they be implemented to enhance overall governance?

This analysis aims to enhance the understanding of sports economics and sports economic governance—the frameworks and processes that guide financial decision-making and management within sports organizations. By identifying and implementing key economic indicators, Iranian sports organizations can achieve more effective and equitable governance. This, in turn, will enhance their overall performance and sustainability.

For policymakers, this research provides practical insights into how governance structures can be improved to foster transparency and accountability. For sports managers, understanding these economic indicators will facilitate better strategic planning and resource allocation. Ultimately, the findings of this study aim to contribute to a more robust sports governance framework in Iran, addressing existing challenges and promoting the long-term viability of sports organizations.

2. Methodology

This research employed a qualitative approach grounded in thematic analysis, utilizing semi-structured interviews as the primary methodological tool. This qualitative method facilitated an in-depth examination of the complexities involved in sports economic governance, allowing for a nuanced understanding of participants' insights and perspectives. The thematic analysis process began with data collection, where each interview was conducted individually, ensuring focused attention on the insights of each participant. Each interview was conducted individually, ensuring focused attention on the insights and perspectives of each participant. Following this, we familiarized ourselves with the transcribed data by reading through the transcripts multiple times to gain a comprehensive understanding of the content.

Next, we engaged in an initial coding process, analyzing each transcript line by line and assigning codes to meaningful segments of text derived directly from the participants' words. This was followed by axial coding, where we identified relationships between the initial codes and grouped them into broader categories, ultimately synthesizing these categories into potential themes that encapsulated the main ideas reflected in the data. The identified themes were then reviewed and refined

through an iterative process, ensuring they accurately represented the coded data and aligned with the overall research objectives. Each theme was defined and named to articulate its essence, and the findings were organized into a coherent narrative supported by relevant quotations from the participants. By following this structured thematic analysis process, we ensured that our findings were grounded in the participants' experiences, providing valuable insights into the economic governance of sports in Iran.

2.1. Interview Design

To develop a comprehensive framework for understanding sports economic governance in Iran, a series of questions were formulated based on prior studies and existing literature in the field. The rationale behind selecting these specific questions was to address key areas that are critical for enhancing governance practices within Iranian sports organizations. For instance, questions such as "What do you consider to be the most critical economic indicators that need to be addressed to improve the governance of sports in Iran?" were designed to identify the specific metrics that experts believe are essential for effective governance. Similarly, the question "How can integrating economic governance indicators enhance transparency and accountability within Iranian sports organizations?" aimed to explore the relationship between governance indicators and the overall integrity of sports management. Lastly, by asking "What challenges do you foresee in implementing a robust economic governance framework in Iranian sports, and how can these challenges be overcome?" we sought to uncover potential obstacles and solicit expert recommendations for addressing these challenges.

In addition to the primary questions, subsequent probing questions were developed to deepen the discussions and explore specific aspects raised by participants. These probing questions were crafted based on the initial responses during the interviews, allowing for a more flexible and responsive dialogue. For example, prompts such as "Could you elaborate on your statement regarding …?" or "Given previous discussions on …, what are your thoughts?" were used to encourage participants to provide more detailed explanations or to clarify their viewpoints. This approach ensured that the interviews not only captured a wide range of perspectives but also allowed for a richer and more nuanced exploration of the complex dynamics of governing the sports economy in Iran. By combining well-structured primary questions with adaptive probing inquiries, we aimed to create an environment conducive to in-depth discussion and insight generation.

2.2. Study Method

Experts and scholars in sports economy from various cities in Iran were selected for the study. Before each interview, a brief introduction to the study was provided to all participants. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the interview

at any time and that all collected information would remain confidential and anonymous. Additionally, participants were notified that the interviewers were independent academic researchers, and their responses would be collected without identification for analytical purposes only. Interviews were conducted in Persian. Some interviews were conducted in person (n=7), while others were conducted virtually using software such as Google Meet (n=3) and WhatsApp (n=4). The duration of the interviews ranged from 25 to 50 minutes.

2.3. Participants

This study employed a purposive sampling approach to select interview participants, ensuring that individuals chosen had a clear understanding of the research problem and the central phenomenon of economic governance in sports. The selection criteria were based on participants' expertise, experience, and their ability to provide relevant insights into the governance of sports in Iran. Specifically, participants were required to have academic qualifications in fields related to sports economics, management, or policy, as well as practical experience in the sports sector.

The study involved 14 participants, comprising 9 men and 5 women, all holding postgraduate degrees. Participants were categorized into three distinct groups based on their educational backgrounds and job titles. The first group, academicians, included six university professors, all holding PhDs, whose expertise in sports economics and governance provided deep academic insights into the research topic. The second group consisted of sports managers, including one individual with a PhD, one doctoral student, and one individual with a master's degree. This group's composition reflects a strong practical background in managing sports organizations, offering valuable perspectives on the implementation of sports economy governance. The third group included sports experts and policymakers, comprising two doctoral students, two individuals with a PhD, and one with a master's degree. This group's expertise in policy and practical experience in the sports sector was crucial for understanding the broader implications of governance in the sports economy.

Additionally, the study utilized snowball referrals to identify further participants. This method allowed initial interviewees to recommend other qualified individuals within their networks, thereby enhancing the diversity and relevance of the sample. All participants voluntarily agreed to take part in the study and provided recorded consent. The diverse grouping of participants ensured a comprehensive analysis of the research topic, drawing from a wide range of experiences and professional insights. Basic demographic information about the study participants, including age range and professional background, is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the interviewees

Row	Gender	Age	Education	Job/post
1	Man	41	PhD	University professor

2	Man	62	PhD	University professor
3	Man	39	PhD	University professor
4	Female	33	PhD	University professor
5	Female	46	PhD	University professor
6	Female	38	PhD	University professor
7	Man	38	MA	Sports manager
8	Man	34	PhD Student	Sports manager
9	Man	33	PhD	Sports manager
10	Man	45	PhD	Experts and policy makers
11	Man	48	PhD Student	Experts and policy makers
12	Man	50	PhD Student	Experts and policy makers
13	Female	46	PhD	Experts and policy makers
14	Female	56	MA	Experts and policy makers

2.4. Data Analysis

Analysis was undertaken concurrently with the data collection process. After the interviews were transcribed by the lead author, each transcript was coded independently by two authors. The analysis involved a three-stage coding process: open, axial, and selective coding. The first stage, open coding, refers to the initial line-by-line analysis of data, where qualitative data are coded into meaning units (themes) closely resembling the participants' words. Similar and analytical concepts were grouped together. Highly related concepts were combined at a more abstract theoretical level, thereby identifying themes or categories. The second stage, axial coding, involved determining the relationships between categories derived from open coding. In other words, axial coding re-categorizes based on the nature of these relationships. Finally, selective coding was used to develop the conceptual model.

Lastly, steps were taken to guarantee the analysis' accuracy. The research team discussed the themes and interpretations of the data. Inter-rater reliability is a method of measuring the reliability of qualitative research, which is estimated based on the degree of similarity of coding done by multiple coders. The test-retest reliability method has been used to measure reliability. Test-retest reliability can be a useful assessment for a survey instrument (Pashaie et al., 2024). This method refers to the degree of consistency in data classification over time, with a test-retest reliability interval.

3. Results

Table 2 presents the classification of indicators affecting sports economic governance based on the coding of interview responses. It organizes these indicators into broader

themes, subcategories, and specific categories to provide a structured overview of the key factors influencing economic governance in Iranian sports.

Table 2. Classification of indicators affecting sports economic governance based on interview coding.

Category	Subcategory	Theme
Financial management in sport	Investment in Sports Infrastructure	• Level of government investment in building and developing stadiums and sports halls per capita • Proportion of sports infrastructure budget allocated to community-based facilities • Number of new sports facilities constructed or renovated in the past year • Utilization rate of public sports facilities • Satisfaction level of users with sports facilities
	Financial Management and Economics in Sports	• Financial sustainability of sports clubs and organizations • Effectiveness of financial management practices in sports • Transparency and accountability in financial reporting • Compliance with financial regulations and standards • Use of financial management to support the long-term growth and development of sports
sport technology management	Use of Technology in Sports	• Adoption of technology in sports management and operations • Use of technology to enhance athlete performance and training • Development of innovative sports technologies, such as wearable devices and data analytics • Use of technology to improve the fan experience and engagement • Impact of technology on accessibility and inclusivity in sports
	Technology Development and Empowerment	• Investment in sports technology research and development • Accessibility of sports technology to athletes, coaches, and organizations • Use of technology to promote sports education and lifelong learning • Impact of technology on innovation and entrepreneurship in the sports industry • Empowerment of individuals through sports technology to improve their health and well-being
Sport economics management	Revenue and Profitability from Sports	• Revenue generated from ticket sales and sports admissions as a percentage of total sports revenue • Revenue from advertising and television broadcasting rights as a percentage of total sports revenue • Profitability of sports clubs and teams from merchandise sales • Economic impact of sports on the local economy, including job creation and revenue generation • Contribution of sports to GDP
	Impact of Sports on Economic Development	• Level of investment attraction and investors in the sports industry • Impact of sports on reducing healthcare costs and improving labor productivity • Number of jobs created in the sports industry • Growth of sports-related businesses and services • Contribution of sports to export earnings and tourism revenue
	Impact of Sports on Improving Social Well-being	• Impact of sports on physical health, including reducing the risk of chronic diseases • Impact of sports on mental health and well-being

		• Role of sports in promoting social inclusion and cohesion
		• Use of sports to address social issues and promote positive change
		• Contribution of sports to community development and resilience
	Youth and Women's Participation and Presence in Sports	• Percentage of young people who participate in regular physical activity
		• Number of young people involved in organized sports
		• Percentage of women who participate in sports and physical activity
		• Gender equality in participation and opportunities in sports
		• Positive impact of sports on the empowerment and well-being of young people and women
Sport participation management	Development and Advancement of Sports Culture	• Percentage of the population that participates in regular physical activity
		• Number of individuals involved in organized sports
		• Availability and accessibility of sports education and training programs
		• Media coverage of sports and positive portrayal of athletes
		• Public perception of sports as a valuable contributor to society
	Sports Management and Hosting International Events	• Effectiveness of sports governance structures and policies
		• Transparency and accountability in sports management
		• Quality of planning and execution of major sporting events
		• Impact of sporting events on attracting tourists and promoting local businesses
		• Legacy benefits of hosting major sporting events

Ten organized topics were categorized into four broad topics. The identified topics were financial management in sports, sports technology management, sports economics management and sports participation management.

Validity and reliability of data

To enhance data analysis, both detailed and holistic approaches were employed. In the detailed approach, interview texts were read line by line, and if one or more paragraphs seemed meaningful, that section was chosen as the unit of analysis. The meaning unit was then condensed into one or more concise sentences. This analysis method was applied throughout the interview text. In the holistic approach, the interview text was considered as a single-meaning unit. After multiple readings and coding of the entire text, sub-themes were extracted. These sub-themes were then semantically grouped into main themes.

In this study, to assess the validity of the findings, the research findings were presented to the participants and Table 3 was used.

Table 3. Test reliability results.

Row	Interview number	Total number of codes	Number of agreements	Number of disagreements	Test-retest reliability
1	1st	15	6	6	80%
2	2nd	17	8	7	94%
3	13th	16	7	6	87%
	Total	48	21	19	87%

They studied the theory text and applied their comments. Finally, the research was reviewed by professors and, based on their comments, corrections or changes were made to the final theory. The retest reliability method was used to measure reliability. As shown in Table 2, the total number of codes in a 30-day period is 48, the number of agreements is 21, and the number of disagreements is 19. The retest reliability of the interviews conducted in this study is 87%, and since this value is above 60%, the coding reliability is confirmed.
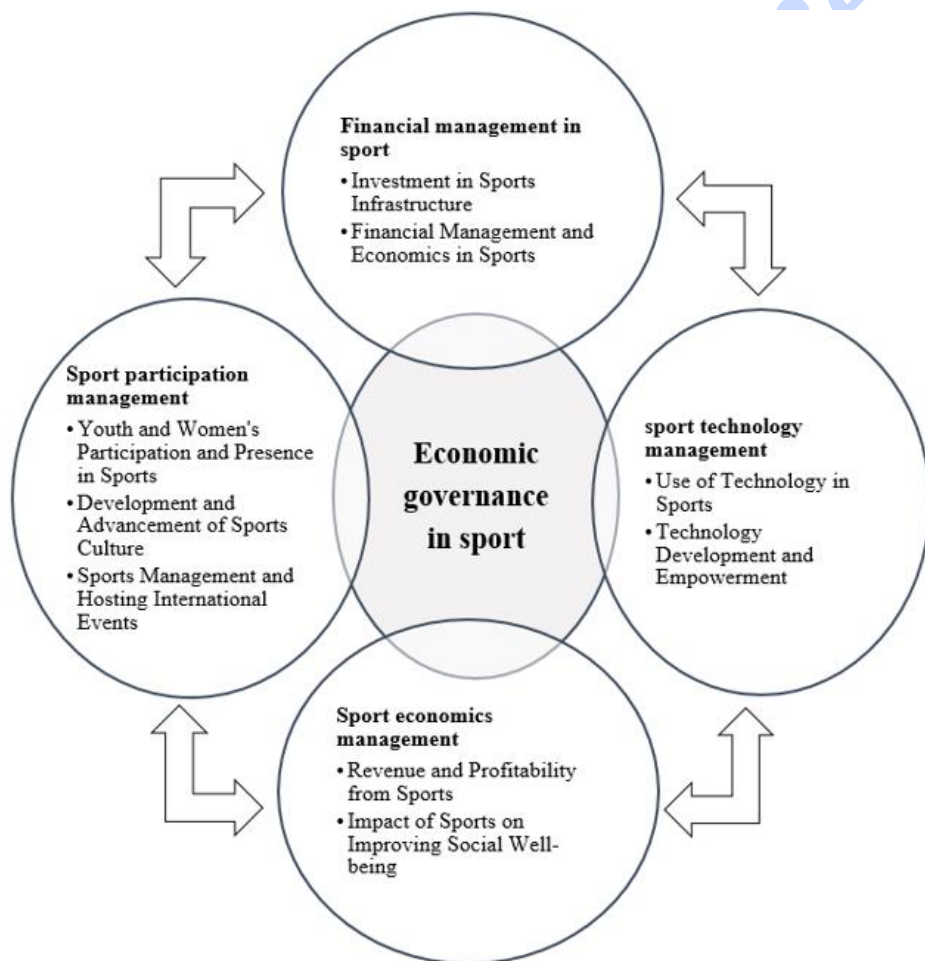

Figure 1. The model of indicators affecting economic governance in Iranian sports.

Financial Management in Sports encompasses investment in sports infrastructure and financial and economic management in sports, indicating that improving the economic conditions in sports requires attention to securing financial resources and optimizing their management. This focus on securing financial resources and managing them efficiently can lead to the improvement of the economic status of sports in Iran, laying the foundation for sustainable development. Sports Technology Management, which includes the use of technology in sports and the development and empowerment of technology, highlights the importance of leveraging modern technologies to enhance and improve sports and economic performance. This utilization of new technologies can increase efficiency, enhance sports and economic performance, and facilitate resource management .Sports Economic Management, with categories such as revenue generation and profitability from sports and the impact of sports on economic development, emphasizes the necessity of economic efficiency in sports activities and indicates that sports can serve as an economic driver and revenue generator. This economic efficiency can contribute to the overall growth and development of the country's economy. Additionally, Sports Participation Management, focusing on the presence and participation of youth and women in sports and the development of sports culture, underscores the social role of sports in improving social welfare and promoting sports culture. This participation can lead to strengthened social cohesion and elevated general cultural levels. Furthermore, Management and Hosting of International Sports Events highlight the significance of these events in enhancing international image and attracting foreign investments. These classifications underscore the multifaceted importance of sports in various economic, social, and cultural domains and highlight the necessity of paying attention to all managerial and strategic aspects to enhance sports economic governance in Iran.

4. Discussion

The current study conducts a thorough investigation into the essential economic metrics required to ensure efficient management in Iranian sports. By grouping these indicators into financial management, sports technology, sports economics, and sports participation, the findings emphasize the interconnected nature of governance components and their collective role in fostering sustainable development within the sports ecosystem.

The importance of financial management as a pillar of governance cannot be overstated. Transparent and accountable financial practices directly influence

stakeholder trust and organizational sustainability (Urdaneta et al., 2021). However, the persistence of financial mismanagement and opaque reporting practices in Iranian sports poses significant challenges. Addressing these issues requires implementing robust financial policies, establishing clear reporting mechanisms, and ensuring compliance with regulations. Moreover, prioritizing investments in sports infrastructure and community-based facilities can expand access and enhance public trust, aligning with international best practices (Coates & Humphreys, 2003); Humphreys and Sauer (2007); (Wicker & Thormann, 2022).

Technological advancements play a transformative role in modernizing sports governance. Integrating sports technology not only improves athlete performance but also enhances operational efficiency and fan engagement. Tools such as data analytics, wearable devices, and virtual platforms have revolutionized training and decision-making processes (Filo et al., 2015). Nevertheless, ensuring equitable access to these innovations remains a challenge. Strategic investments in research and development, coupled with deliberate efforts to democratize technology adoption, are essential for maximizing its benefits across all levels of sports organizations.

The study also highlights the broader economic impact of sports, emphasizing their role as a driver of economic growth. Sports contribute to local economies through job creation, tourism, and revenue generation from broadcasting and ticket sales. Furthermore, their potential to reduce healthcare costs and improve public well-being underscores the dual economic and social benefits of a well-governed sports sector (Asefi et al., 2018). Effective economic governance strategies, such as leveraging commercial partnerships and optimizing revenue streams, can amplify these benefits and strengthen the financial foundation of sports organizations.

Encouraging sports participation, particularly among youth and women, is vital for achieving equitable growth and fostering a culture of inclusion. Systemic barriers, such as gender disparities in access to facilities and opportunities, remain significant challenges. Inclusive policies and targeted initiatives can help bridge these gaps, empowering underrepresented groups to actively engage in sports. Promoting grassroots programs and increasing the availability of community sports facilities are actionable strategies to cultivate talent and strengthen national sports performance.

Despite the potential of these strategies, challenges persist in implementing effective governance frameworks. Corruption, inadequate infrastructure, and resistance to change hinder progress. For example, entrenched practices and organizational inertia often delay the adoption of innovative governance models (Kikulis, 2000). Overcoming these challenges requires collaboration among policymakers, sports managers, and stakeholders. Strategic planning, continuous monitoring, and a commitment to transparency and accountability are indispensable for navigating these obstacles and driving meaningful reform.

In general, this study underscores the critical role of financial transparency, technological integration, economic strategy, and inclusive participation in enhancing sports governance in Iran. While challenges remain, the proposed strategies provide a

roadmap for achieving more effective, transparent, and equitable governance practices, ultimately contributing to the long-term sustainability of the sports sector.

5. Conclusion

This study highlights the critical elements of economic governance in Iranian sports, offering a structured framework aimed at improving transparency, accountability, and sustainability within the sector. By pinpointing key indicators such as financial management, technology adoption, revenue generation, and inclusive participation, this research provides valuable insights for enhancing governance practices.

The practical implications of these findings are substantial. Policymakers can leverage the proposed governance framework to establish strong financial regulations and strategic plans that optimize resource allocation and promote infrastructure development. For example, prioritizing investments in community sports facilities can improve accessibility and support public health initiatives. Sports managers can adopt transparent reporting practices and utilize technological innovations to boost organizational efficiency and build stakeholder trust. Tools like data analytics and wearable technology not only enhance athlete performance but also facilitate better decision-making and fan engagement strategies. Additionally, stakeholders—including private investors and community organizations—can use these insights to uncover collaboration opportunities, particularly in revenue generation through sponsorships and media partnerships.

In conclusion, implementing these governance strategies can fortify the economic foundation of Iranian sports, fostering a more inclusive, transparent, and sustainable ecosystem. Collaboration among policymakers, sports managers, and stakeholders is crucial to overcoming existing challenges and maximizing the social and economic benefits of a well-governed sports sector. By embracing these recommendations, the Iranian sports industry can move towards a future characterized by equity, innovation, and long-term growth.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures
The authors report no conflicts of interest in this work.

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