

In The

Name of

God



Sports Business Journal

**Scientific Semi-annual Journal
of Alzahra University**

Winter and Spring, 2022
Vol. 2, Issue. 1, Serial Number 3

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- **Tables.** Tables should present new information rather than duplicating what is in the text. Readers should be able to interpret the table without reference to the text. Please supply editable files.
- **Equations.** If you are submitting your manuscript as a Word document, please ensure that equations are editable.

Editor-in-Chief Lecture ---

Many thanks to God that we could publish the 3rd issue with seven articles with his care. Now, we hope that by receiving an excellent grade from the Iranian Ministry of Science, we will be able to respond to the trust of sports management scientists to submit their manuscripts to SBJ.

From now on, we hope to go one step further by receiving the appropriate grade and valid scientific articles in journalism in updating the publication of articles and minimizing the time of judging and publishing the articles of our esteemed academic colleagues. We have the next step for more visibility and gaining international grades.

This success will not and will not be achieved except with the unwavering support of Alzahra University and the cooperation of all colleagues in conducting and submitting quality research results related to the SBJ specialty. We also invite experienced and young researchers to submit quality articles in the business journal in sports.

Please notice that the coverage of the journal is fundamentally sport, business, and management, with a broad range of related fields and topics falling under this area, including:

- Business, marketing, and entrepreneurship in sport
- Sports industry; sports tourism, leisure, and recreation
- Business and sponsorship in sports events and venues
- Traditional and new media in the sports business and IT in the sports business
- Economic relevant sporting business projects
- Business law and ethics in sports business
- Sports brands and customer behaviour and corporate social responsibility

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Study on the Marketing Mix of Iranian Football Industry

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to investigate on the marketing mix model of the Iranian football industry.

Methodology: The present study is an applied and descriptive-analytical research that was conducted on fieldwork. The research tool is a marketing mix of the Memari (2007) study on Iranian sport industry. Subjective and content validity was determined by experts and sports experts and its reliability in a preliminary study was estimated on 30 sample subjects through Cronbach's alpha of 0.92. The statistical population of the study consisted of two groups. The first group was the Fans of the three East Azerbaijan province teams in the Premier League, with 441 of them being unlimited, they were selected randomly by multi-stage cluster and cluster. The second group includes members of the Football Association board Technical, managing director of the provincial clubs, teams of experts board and administrators (N = 90) who were selected by targeted sampling method. Data were analyzed by descriptive statistics and correlation t-test with the help of statistical package SPSS 22 and structural equation model using Amos software.

Findings: The results showed that the existing situation of sports clubs marketing mix are significantly lower than the optimal situation such as financial sponsorship, promotion management, pricing management, the power of the market, public relations management, process management, location management and brand management. Finally, the coefficients of the indexes indicate the optimal fit of the marketing mix model of the football clubs. Therefore, to improve the development of football industry, it is necessary to make fundamental changes to the marketing plans of this province.

Originality: In this article, we examine the modeling of the 8p marketing mix elements on the football industry using structural equation methods.

Keywords

Football Industry
Marketing Mix
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Sports Marketing

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1. Introduction

With the increase of global changes in the economic and commercial fields, it seems that traditional advertising and marketing methods are no longer useful for companies and organizations. If a company cannot update its methods in line with these developments, it can hardly continue to survive in today's competitive market. The sports industry, especially the football and club industry are no exception to this rule. The use of marketing techniques and specialized marketing research are among the urgent needs of this market. Sports marketing refers to the use of sports as a tool for marketing other services. In addition, marketing has been used for describing a variety of activities related to sports promotion (Alipour et al., 2018). Sports marketing is one of the most complicated tasks of sports organizations which promote the product through marketing efforts and offer to buyers so that they can succeed in their work (Moyer et al., 2015).

Marketing mix is defined as a combination of all factors in the marketing managers' command hierarchy to meet the demands of the target market. Therefore, the concept of marketing mix is the idea of a set of controllable variables in the possession of marketing management that can be used for affecting consumers (Miloch & Lambrecht, 2006). The marketing mix model was highly effective during the early years of the marketing period, when physical products formed a significant part of the economy. However, as marketing moves toward integration and many non-physical goods are added to the economy, marketing experts considered some limitations for this marketing mix and its famous 4p. The limitations which have forced some of them to add other Ps. The items such as process, individuals, physical evidence, packaging, etc. are among the items which can be mentioned. Marketing professors and experts have presented differing views on the marketing mix during the years after the opinion of McCarthy. Some have introduced 5p, 6p, 8p and even 13p, etc. as the marketing mix of enterprises. These individuals believe that the mix of four market factors has overlooked some activities (Eagleman, 2013). Since 1960, when (McCarthy, 1960) defined the concept of marketing mix and the factors in this mix including the four elements of product, price, location and product promotion. Another model was provided by (McCarthy, 1960). This model included seven components of product and product production (related to services), price, place (location with distribution), promotion and encouragement, physical factors, participation (employees and customers) and process (work routine).

Promotion involves information, encouragement and influence activities. Promotion plays a significant role in sports marketing through informing products to sports enthusiasts - holding sports competitions. On the other hand, the operation of forming or influencing individuals in relation to sports products becomes the level of intervention and the image of companies related to sports (Edmans et al., 2007).

Process represents the manner in which service delivery systems perform their work. The facades of buildings, landscapes, vehicles, interior furniture, equipment, employees of organizations, signs, written materials and other visible signs are all tangible evidences which indicate the quality of services of an organization (6). In today's

competitive market, obtaining the appropriate position in the mind of consumer in such a way that the consumer is loyal is highly important. One of the effective factors in achieving such a position in the minds of customers is the special value of the company's brand. Brand equity is the ultimate utility or added value created by a product through a brand such as Coca-Cola. Researchers indicated that marketing decisions and market conditions affect brand equity. Brand is a name, phrase, term, sign, symbol, slogan, anthem, dress, program, and a combination of these factors. Competitive organizations are used for introducing products and services to vendors and differentiating an organization or sports club, and a sports organization's ongoing commitment to provide a set of features, services, and benefits to stakeholders (Fatehi, 2017). The results of studies in the field of marketing of sports industry in Iran indicated the significance of eight elements of marketing mix (support, individuals, process, product, promotion, price, distribution and physical evidence) (Fatehi, 2011) in the field of domestic sportswear purchase and four elements (product, price, distribution and promotion) in the field of foreign sportswear purchase (Adidas) (Haas et al., 2004). (Tahmasbpour Shafiei & Alizadeh, 2015) evaluated the marketing promotion element of the Premier League of Mazandaran Province and indicated a significant difference between the two existing and desirable conditions of the marketing promotion element (Tahmasbpour Shafiei & Alizadeh, 2015). (Khodaparast Sareshkeh et al., 2016) studied the components of marketing mix (p7) in the Iranian Volleyball Super League. The results revealed that the product component had the highest average and public relations had the highest average in the best case while its other components were in the lower categories (Khodaparast Sareshkeh et al., 2016). (Kouzechian & Ehsani, 2010) studied the factor of 7p sports marketing mix in the Iranian Football Premier League and indicated that the components of marketing mix had no priority in both the current and favorable status (Kouzechian & Ehsani, 2010). (Moyer et al., 2015) stated that the regular promotion activities of sports teams through social media are regarded as a component of direct sports marketing. In addition, promotional activities through Facebook affect the ticket sales and the presence of fans in the stadium (Moyer et al., 2015). (Alipour et al., 2018) indicated that marketing mix components have a significant positive effect on the customer satisfaction of sports products. The marketing mix of different economic enterprises varies according to the market conditions, industry, etc (Alipour et al., 2018). The era of master keys is over and the keychain should be completed and the best key should be selected and used according to every lock through knowledge, experience, information, and intuition. Meanwhile, the football industry has become a global revenue-generating industry, resulting in the acquisition of capital and revenue generation for sports organization (Mohammad Kazemi et al., 2008). so that it has become a pervasive and universal phenomenon; a phenomenon for which no conceivable boundaries can be considered; So that it is known as one of the most popular sports in the international arena to the extent that many countries have considered it as part of their national sports (Memari, 2007). Thus, the use of recovery tools and techniques in the field of football industry is one of the most essential measures of club management principles. The issue of club revenue is discussed in many countries. The discussion of rules related to the transfer of international players, modeling of

organizational structure of successful clubs, issues related to the role and position of television, private international networks, sports advertising and sponsors are among the topics related to sports revenue generation. The evolution of football economically has resulted in the emergence of many interests and interests. Thus, a wide range of human, material, monetary, financial and credit resources have turned to football. As long as football was considered as a game, business, or trade, the stakeholders in the world of capital, industry and services did not pay much attention to it. However, this is not the case nowadays. Football is raised as one of the strongest alternatives for different investors (Rezaei, 2016). Many professional clubs have been able to play a key role in the macro-economies of countries, for example, the football clubs in Spain whose material value in the development of the professional club industry in Football has created 47000 jobs. The development of the football club industry is not limited to the countries such as the UK, Spain, Italy and Germany, but also the Asian countries such as Japan and South Korea have been able to take fundamental steps towards the economic development of the football industry, with proper management Take themselves (Sheikhi & Pazoki, 2017). According to Article 44 of the constitution and the development plan, it is necessary for the Iranian sports clubs to generate revenue (Rezaei, 2016). Undoubtedly, football is the most popular sport in the world with the highest potential to attract fans and has a special place and significance among all sports. Due to the significance of marketing in financing, clubs have no choice but to generate revenue. The combination of marketing mix factors and their proper and rational use in clubs can be highly effective. However, most football clubs around the world are well aware of the great potential of the football industry and increase their channels and revenue approaches every day. Unfortunately, Iranian football clubs are very weak in terms of revenue generation and costly than revenue-generating. The inattention of clubs to marketing and revenue-generation not only has a significant effect on their economic performance, but also affects the technical quality of the teams. The marketing mix is a toolbox used by marketing managers to achieve their goals, pushing the company forward to achieve the set goals. The popular marketing mix is 4p, which is more specific to manufacturing organizations. Since the 4p mix is not responsive in the service industry and industries such as football where the main product is a sport event, the 7p mix including product, price, distribution, promotion, individuals, physical evidence, process and support, which is highly important in the football industry was considered as 8p mix in this study to evaluate the status and role of these factors in the industry of East Azerbaijan football clubs. Finally, the appropriate marketing mix model of the football industry in East Azerbaijan province was presented to be the basis for the future performance of football clubs officials and managers.

2. Methodology

The present study was applied in terms of objective and descriptive-analytical in terms of method and was conducted as field. The population included two groups to study and explain the marketing mix model of the football industry in this province. The first group included the fans of three teams in East Azerbaijan Province in the Premier

League. According to Morgan's table, the appropriate sample for this population was 384 subjects, but 450 questionnaires were distributed randomly in several stages and clusters to make sure of the sampling number and then 441 questionnaires were evaluated after eliminating the incomplete questionnaires. The second group includes the members of the board of directors of the football committee, technical staff of the teams, experts of the board and the teams, the CEOs of the clubs in the province, and the supervisors of the teams in the province, who were selected in a purposeful way as 30 individuals (a total of 471 individuals). In order to study the marketing mix of the football industry in the province, the standard questionnaire of marketing mix of the architectural sports industry (2007) was used. Face validity and content validity were confirmed by 10 professors of sports management experts. In addition, its reliability was obtained in a pilot study on 30 statistical samples through Cronbach's alpha of 0.92. This questionnaire measures eight main variables of financial support, promotion management, pricing management, market power, public relations management, process management, location management, and brand management in scale of very low, low, average, high and very high in two dimensions of current and desired status. In the current status of the questionnaire, each component and the importance of each component were questioned. In the present study, descriptive and inferential statistics of t-test paired sample and structural equation modeling were used to review and analyze the data. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to evaluate the normal distribution of data. All of the data were analyzed using SPSS and AMOS statistical software.

3. Results

The descriptive findings of the study indicated that the youngest respondents were under 30 years old and most of them were in the age range of 31-40 years. Most of the subjects had a bachelor's degree and the minimum of them had a bachelor's degree. In addition, 93.6% of the respondents were fans so that 30.4% of the respondents in Tractor, 17.4% in Mashinsazi, 21.7% in Gostaresh Foolad and 30.4% were interested in all three teams. Before evaluating the research hypotheses, first the normality of data was determined by Kolmogorov-Smirnov test ($p \leq 0.05$) and the statistical sample had a normal distribution. Thus, the t-test paired sample was used to compare the current and favorable status of the factors. The results for each factor of the marketing mix are shown in [Table 1](#). According to the results of [Table 1](#), the current status of financial support in the sports marketing mix of clubs in East Azerbaijan province ($p=0.01$, $t=-33.12$), pricing management ($p=0.01$, $t=-29.73$), market power ($p = 0.01$, $t = -28.34$), process management ($p=0.01$, $t=-27.92$), location management factor ($p=0.01$, $t=-15.43$), brand management ($p= 0.01$, $t= -17.97$) and finally the current status of sports marketing mix in the clubs of East Azerbaijan province ($p =0.01$, $t=-1.86$) was significantly lower than the favorable status.

Table 1. Comparison of the current and favorable status of marketing mix factors.

Significance level	T	Degree of freedom	Mean difference	Mean	Status	Variable
0/01	-33/12	470	-1/71	2/21 3/92	Current Favorable	Financial support
0/01	-29/73	469	-1/37	2/50 3/87	Current Favorable	Pricing management
0/01	-28/34	469	-1/32	2/48 3/80	Current Favorable	Market power
0/01	-25/10	470	-1/26	2/62 3/88	Current Favorable	Public relations management
0/01	-27/92	470	-1/30	2/34 3/64	Current Favorable	Process management
0/01	-15/43	470	-0/70	2/89 3/59	Current Favorable	Location management
0/01	-31/86	468	-1/32	2/56 3/88	Current Favorable	Sports marketing mix

Based on the eight identified factors of the marketing mix of the clubs in East Azerbaijan province, which was obtained using exploratory factor analysis, financial support, promotion management, pricing management, market power, public relations management, process management, location management and research model management were designed according to these factors as shown in Figure 1.

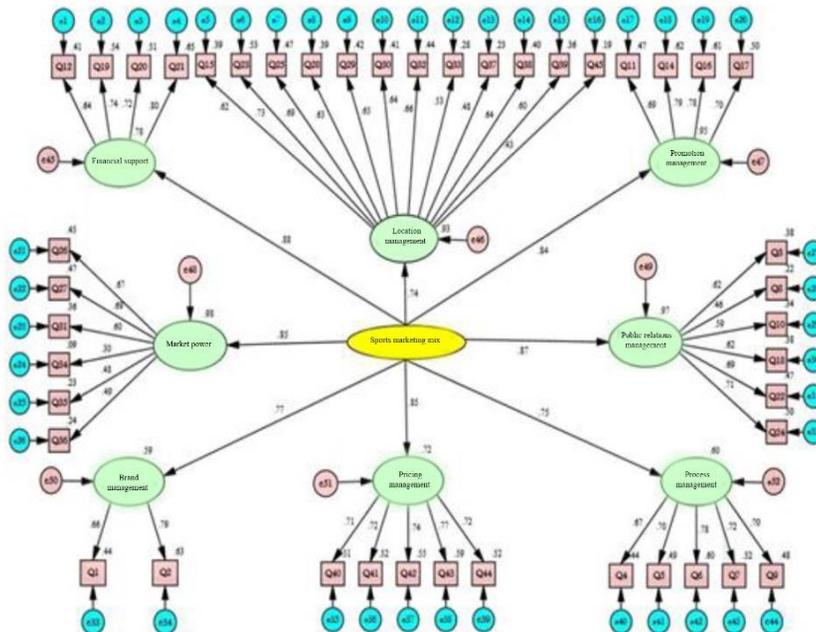


Figure 1. Model of marketing mix factors of clubs in East Azerbaijan province based on the favorable status.

Fitting indicators were used to test whether the model of marketing factors of clubs in East Azerbaijan province has a good. In modeling the structural equations with emphasis on Amos software, three indicators of absolute, comparative, and parsimonious should be used to determine the fit of the model. According to the results of Table 2, the value of the chi-square statistic ratio (χ^2) equals 215/178 with the degree of freedom is 894 equal to 2.412. This value is between 1 to 3, indicating the approval of the model. In addition, the corresponding P value is 0.071, which is acceptable and the model is approved considering that it is more than 0.05. The goodness-of-fit index (GFI) is 0.924, indicating the acceptability of this rate for the optimal fit of the model. The root mean square of the estimation error, another indicator for the goodness of fit, is 0.097 which is acceptable since it is less than 0.1, indicating the approval of the research model. Other goodness-of-fit indicators for structural equations are Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) as 0.911, Bentler- Bonett Index (BBI) as 0.94, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) as 0.935, and Parsimonious Normed Fit Index (PNFI) as 0.65, all indicating the desired fit and approval of the model of marketing mix factors in the country's sports industry.

Table 2. Indicators of the model fit of marketing mix factors in the clubs of East Azerbaijan province.

Interpretation	Criterion	Value	Fit index	
-	-	2156/178	Chi-square (χ^2)	
-	-	894	Degree of freedom (df)	
Optimal fit	1-3	2/412	Chi-square to degree of freedom ratio (χ^2/df)	Absolute
Optimal fit	More than 0.05	0/071	Significance level (P Value)	
Optimal fit	More than 0.90	0/924	Goodness of fit index (GFI)	
Optimal fit	More than 0.90	0/911	Tucker- Lewis Index (TLI)	
Optimal fit	More than 0.90	0/94	Bentler- Bonett Index (BBI)	Comparative
Optimal fit	More than 0.90	0/935	Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	
Optimal fit	Less than 0.1	0/05	Root squared root mean error (RMSEA)	Parsimonious
Optimal fit	More than 0.5	0/65	Parsimonious Normed Fit Index (PNFI)	

4. Discussion and conclusion

The main infrastructure of the sports industry is composed of clubs, which act as production factories and economic enterprises. Using equipment and facilities, skilled manpower, expertise and modern technical knowledge and technology of sports and entertainment, they have made a revenue-generating industry. The results indicated that the current status of the sports marketing mix of clubs in East Azerbaijan province is significantly lower than the favorable status. The results of this part of study are consistent with the results of research by (Ghasemi et al., 2016), (Kouzechian & Ehsani, 2010) and (Seif Panahi Shabani, 2015). Unfortunately, the Iranian football clubs do not take advantage of the presence and interests of many foreign investors. However, even the organization of the Iranian Football Premier League, which in accordance with Article 2

of Article 58 of the Statute of the Football Federation as a separate and independent organization is responsible for holding professional leagues and conducting all the affairs like business and economic affairs related to it has been useless to attract such investors. Unfortunately, what is regarded currently as sports marketing in Iran is limited to the trivial sale of match tickets, production and sale of sports products, as well as the insufficient support of the sponsors of some sports teams. The strong dependence of the sports industry in Iran on the government has provided some conditions which require the cooperation of researchers and educated individuals in this field, as well as the managers with professional experience in this industry to analyze the complexity of the sports market in the country and manage the huge amount of money turnover and the employed individuals with scientific and correct management. The inattention of clubs to marketing and revenue-generation not only has a significant effect on their economic performance, but also affects the technical quality of the teams. As a result, it seems necessary for the football clubs of East Azerbaijan Province to reconsider their marketing plans. Regarding each of the marketing mix factors, the results indicated that each of the eight factors of financial support, promotion management, pricing management, market power, public relations management, process management, location management and brand management in the sports marketing mix of the clubs in East Azerbaijan province were significantly lower than the favorable status. The results of financial support and promotion management are consistent with the results of research by (Moyer et al., 2015), (Ghasemi et al., 2016), (Kouzechian & Ehsani, 2010), (Seif Panahi Shabani, 2015), (Miloch & Lambrecht, 2006), as well as (Westerbeek & Shilbury, 2003) but inconsistent with the results of (Maadi, 2011). Providing club clothing and promotional items in training centers for free, increasing the value of teams with the presence of key players and coaches, and the use of discounts for promotions, special customer service, lack of incentive and promotion policies, lack of sponsorship and support of satellite and television channels, and the lack of clubs' advertisements in print, electronic and internet media are among the reasons for the lack of promotion desirability in the clubs of the province. In addition, the more promotional activities in marketing competitions, the more attention and welcome of the audience and sponsors to the programs and competitions. The current status of pricing management in the sports marketing mix of clubs in East Azerbaijan province is significantly less than the favorable status. The results of this part of the study are consistent with the research by (Ghasemi et al., 2016), (Kouzechian & Ehsani, 2010), (Seif Panahi Shabani, 2015) and (Mohammad Kazemi et al., 2008). Signing contracts with sponsors with quality products and cost-based pricing is one of the measures which can be effective in improving the current pricing situation. Optimal price element is one of the most critical elements of the marketing mix since customers pay special attention to it as the stadium may have good conditions in all respects but fails to attract potential customers due to the high-ticket price. In this regard, private sector organizations and companies are likely in a better status since in today's competitive environment, the private sector seeks to everything in order to survive and has more authority than the public sector for reducing its prices. The result of the study showed a significantly lower status than the desired status in pricing management. Perhaps no appropriate studies have been conducted in this factor by the football clubs of East

Azerbaijan province and the pricing has not been expertized. Furthermore, the current status of market power in the sports marketing mix of clubs in East Azerbaijan province is significantly less than the favorable status. This finding is consistent with the results of studies conducted by (Ghasemi et al., 2016), (Kouzechian & Ehsani, 2010) and (Seif Panahi Shabani, 2015). Clubs are the most significant part of the football industry and the survival of this industry is highly dependent on the survival of clubs. Income is regarded as one of the most significant pillars of any industry. The football industry has provided an appropriate space for economic activities through increasing the communication facilities such as satellite, internet, mobile, the arrival of sponsors, the specialization of sports activities and its abundant attractions for people. Thus, these clubs should continue their activities with more power since East Azerbaijan Province is one of the few provinces which currently has three representatives in the country's Premier Football League and this issue can put the clubs in the province in a position of power. Further, the presence of Tractor team, despite the large number of fans, is the basis for using this factor. The results indicated that the current status of public relations management in the sports marketing mix of clubs in East Azerbaijan province is significantly less than the favorable status. The results of this part of the study are consistent with the studies by (Tahmasbpour Shafiei & Alizadeh, 2015), (Kouzechian & Ehsani, 2010), (Seif Panahi Shabani, 2015), (Miloch & Lambrecht, 2006) and (Gladden et al., 1998). Appropriate public relations management, press conferences, expanding TV coverage, etc. have a great effect on strengthening the team brand in the minds of consumers. For this reason, today the sports environment, especially football, is the most appropriate environment for advertising goods and services since football has a large audience and various media are highly interested in working in the field of football. For this reason, the owners of products and services seek to investment in football. The lack of favorable financial support in the sports marketing mix of clubs in East Azerbaijan province is rooted in the lack of a skilled manpower structure in the area of sports public relations in sports clubs in this province. It seems that some measures should be taken in the field of hiring and employing public relations experts, marketers and marketing programs of such clubs. The current status of process management and location management in the sports marketing mix of clubs in East Azerbaijan province is significantly less than the favorable status. The results of this part of the study are consistent with the results of studies by (Ghasemi et al., 2016), (Kouzechian & Ehsani, 2010) and (Seif Panahi Shabani, 2015) but inconsistent with the results of (Maadi, 2011). Process represents the way in which service providers fulfill their tasks accordingly. The major purpose of marketing is to identify market needs and shortcomings, so that services may be designed for satisfying the needs. This goal involves designing the service process and how it is delivered, respectively eventually, this issue shows how all the marketing mix is coordinated to provide consistent and quality customer service. Inappropriate location and physical condition of stadiums have a direct effect on spectator satisfaction with competitions. All sports managers and officials should have a continuous plan not only for the reconstruction, renovation and architectural design of the stadiums in this province. Instead, they should use the help of experienced consultants to construct sports facilities for observing safety principles in the construction of facilities and equipment in such places, as well as its aesthetic principles.

The results of t-test paired samples indicated that the current status of brand management in the sports marketing mix of clubs in East Azerbaijan province is significantly less than the favorable status. The results of this part of the study are consistent with the results of research by (Ghasemi et al., 2016), (Kouzechian & Ehsani, 2010), (Moyer et al., 2015) and (Seif Panahi Shabani, 2015). Contrary to what is raised about the marketing mix of sports services in the world literature that product management in the marketing mix is not manifested as an independent factor, but a factor called brand management has emerged and is regarded in the football market of this province. It is the name and brand of the product which should be promoted and product promotion is used as a tool for strengthening the equality value of teams or their supporters. In addition, the appearance of a factor called brand management in the eight-factor model and as a response variable shows that brand management and promotion of teams is of major significance in the sports market of this country and this province more than anything in the sports market of this country and this province. Meanwhile, the current status of brand management in the sports marketing mix of the clubs in the province is significantly less than the favorable status.

In this regard, serious measures should be taken and the brands of football clubs in the province should reach their true value so that they can play a good role in the marketing mix of these clubs. Based on the research findings and model fit, each of the eight factors is equally effective in the marketing of these clubs. In the meantime, financial support, public relations management and pricing management are more effective than other factors and these factors should be emphasized and reviewed more carefully. Today, sports clubs' revenue mainly comes from resources sponsored by sports sponsors. In addition, the clubs should act forcefully in this regard and convince big sponsors to sign a contract with the club. Based on the results of this study, the managers and officials of sports clubs in East Azerbaijan province are suggested to provide more financial support to the club by establishing appropriate relations with commercial companies and offering different support offers to companies. Furthermore, officials and managers should use the opinions of a skilled marketing team to increase their promotional and advertising activities and better manage them. Further, they should increase the quality of customer service by adjusting the ticket price for the salons and other places of the complex. By hiring and attracting experienced public relations managers, they can improve the public relations of the clubs and finally improve the marketing status of the club. The officials and managers of sports clubs in East Azerbaijan province should promote and manage the value of their brand using special management mechanisms and review their marketing plans by establishing new complexes in the city.

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مطالعه آمیخته بازاریابی صنعت فوتبال ایران

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کلیدواژه

آمیخته بازاریابی
بازاریابی ورزشی
باشگاه ورزشی
صنعت ورزش
صنعت فوتبال

نوع مقاله

پژوهشی

چکیده

هدف: پژوهش حاضر تبیین مدل آمیخته بازاریابی صنعت فوتبال بود. پژوهش حاضر از نظر هدف کاربردی و از نظر روش انجام تحقیق توصیفی-تحلیلی می‌باشد که به صورت میدانی انجام گرفته است.

روش: ابزار پژوهش پرسشنامه آمیخته بازاریابی صنعت ورزش معماری (۲۰۰۷) بود. روایی محتوایی و صوری توسط افراد متخصص و اساتید مدیریت ورزشی تعیین گردید. همچنین پایایی آن در یک مطالعه مقدماتی بر روی ۳۰ نفر از افراد نمونه از طریق آلفای کرونباخ ۰/۹۲ برآورد شد. جامعه آماری تحقیق شامل دو گروه بود. گروه اول هواداران سه تیم آذربایجان شرقی حاضر در لیگ برتر بودند که با توجه به نامحدود بودن آن ۴۴۱ نفر از آن‌ها به صورت تصادفی طبقه‌ای و خوشه‌ای چندمرحله‌ای انتخاب شدند. گروه دوم شامل اعضای هیئت رئیسه هیئت فوتبال، کادر فنی تیم‌ها، کارشناسان هیئت و تیم‌ها، مدیران عامل باشگاه‌های استان و سرپرستان تیم‌های استان بودند (N=۹۰) که با روش نمونه‌گیری هدمند ۳۰ نفر انتخاب شدند. برای تجزیه و تحلیل داده‌ها از آمار توصیفی و از آزمون تی همبسته و معادلات ساختاری استفاده شد.

یافته‌ها: وضعیت موجود شامل عوامل حمایت مالی، مدیریت ترویج، مدیریت قیمت‌گذاری، قدرت حاکم بر بازار، مدیریت روابط عمومی، مدیریت فرایند، مدیریت مکان و مدیریت برند در آمیخته بازاریابی ورزشی باشگاه‌ها می‌باشند. وضعیت موجود آمیخته بازاریابی ورزشی باشگاه‌های فوتبال، به‌طور معنی‌داری پایین‌تر از وضعیت مطلوب است. لذا به‌منظور بهبود توسعه صنعت فوتبال ضروری است تا در برنامه‌های بازاریابی باشگاه‌ها تغییرات اساسی انجام گیرد.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: در این مقاله به مدلسازی عناصر آمیخته بازاریابی ۸P بر روی صنعت فوتبال با روش معادلات ساختاری پرداخته شده است.

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The Future Strategy of the Professional Sports Clubs Case Study: Sepahan Club

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of the present study was to determine the strategic future of the Sepahan sports club.

Methodology: In the present study, cross-effects analysis was used as one of the foresight methods. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including interviews and checklists, was used to collect data. The research was from interpretive philosophy, inductive approach; case study strategy; qualitative method; single-point time horizon; research contributors, strategists, experts in foresight, prominent managers, and the club's experts. Thirty individuals were selected through purposive sampling using the snowball method. The research tools were semi-structured and exploratory interviews. Data were analyzed using the Micmac and scenario wizard software.

Finding: The most important strategic factors include supporting public and private bodies, enhancing cultural and social responsibility, developing media awareness, managing systems and processes, developing appropriate infrastructure, improving financial and environmental impacts, and security was identified as being consistent with the club's sustainable development. Finally, two scenarios include scenario consisting of financial resources allocation, unit, and integrated management components; and the second is one the components of specialization and highlighting and modeling to chart the club's future.

Originality: In this article, we examine the modeling of the 8p marketing mix elements on the football industry using structural equation methods.

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1. Introduction

Strategic management is an essential and vital factor for organizations to create sustainable value and competitive advantage in today's complex environment (Lloréns Montes et al., 2004). What is certain is that one of the most critical and fundamental activities in the organization to positively synchronize with change and the ability of healthy competition in society is to use accountability improvement systems to achieve the desired and constructive goals of the organization (Nazari et al., 2014). It must be acknowledged that no economic and service enterprise operates in a vacuum. All organizations are like a dynamic and organic system within the environment that interact with other components of the environment and are influenced by each other (Marchiori & De Vecchi, 2020). Today, responsive organizations successfully interact with the conditions of the external environment and effectively guide the organization toward its main goals and objectives (Nazari et al., 2016).

The increasing speed of change in the first decade of the 21st century has led to the emergence of an age called uncertainty, and an environment full of opportunities and threats has advanced the current complex systems (Nazari et al., 2017). In this unstable and rapidly changing environment, traditional planning tools such as past trend extrapolation, forecasting, and foresight will not be responsible only for the medium and long term (Zali & Poursohrab, 2017). One of the present age characteristics is the speed of change in the organizational and extra-organizational environment. This high speed in environmental change requires organizations to build a bridge from the present to the future. By anticipating these changes, the organization can prepare them and make the right and efficient decisions. Strategic planning seems to be a good solution (Savio & Nikolopoulos, 2013). Understanding and predicting the future is a practical and necessary step in adapting organizations to their strategic environment, but it is inherently tricky. In recent years, the methods used to plan and evaluate the strategy have changed a lot, so the use of concepts and techniques to determine alternative futures with long-term perspectives (Nazari, 2016).

Therefore, accurate forecasting for strategic decisions has increased, so the demand for futuristic studies has also increased. Strategic decisions make structures for operational actions whose consequences are far-reaching and far-reaching in terms of time agreement. They are the function of complexity and uncertainty that are the main problems of decision makers (Ponomareva & Sokolova, 2015). More complex issues require coherent support and more accurate predictions, although the accuracy and reliability of quantitative patterns and predictions decrease with increasing complexity (Iden et al., 2017). Strategic foresight is an approach that considers uncertainties in the strategic decision-making process and helps reduce the unknown realm in the process. This approach creates creative planning by combining the analysis of internal and external trends with each other and facilitating the strategy adoption process, and supporting the decision maker of the strategy (Heger & Rohrbeck, 2012).

Foresight activities combine exploratory and normative approaches and design strategic options and blueprints for future action (Sarpong & Hartman, 2018). Foresight aims to imagine different futures and consequences and participate in informed

decision-making (Savio & Nikolopoulos, 2013). Rapid and far-reaching environmental changes have challenged traditional planning and management systems. Companies have increasingly welcomed strategic foresight because of its flexibility in changing future variables. Theoretical and managerial implications are that strategic foresight puts organizations in readiness and expands their vision for emerging social advancement (Shirvani et al., 2018).

Types of futures are considered in strategic foresight, including a) Possible futures, which include all possible situations that can be realized in the future. B) believable future; includes those futures that, according to current human knowledge, appear in the future. C) Possible futures are likely to be realized and are based on the continuation of current trends in the future. D) Favorable futures are a combination of possible, probable, and believable futures that determine the most optimal future event (Voros, 2008). Hence, the concept of strategic foresight is the ability of the roadmap to identify a superior course of action and predict its consequences for the realization of the preferred future (Gavetti & Menon, 2016).

Strategic foresight uses a variety of methods to evaluate future events. One of the most important of these tools is screenwriting (Sarpong & Hartman, 2018). Scenario writing describes the future that focuses on the cause-and-effect processes influencing decision-making (Dehghanian & Najafi Rastaghi, 2017). Accordingly, strategic foresight can be fundamentally different from the techniques, methods, and models usually associated with market forecasting and analysis (Duus, 2013). A story scenario describes justified alternatives that look to a specific part of the future. Scenarios are often used to describe the possibility of replacing future changes in the organization's external environment (Khazaei Sahneh & Aslaniyan, 2017). Scenario planning creates several informed, plausible, and imagined alternative settings in which decisions can be made to change current thinking, improve decision-making, enhance human and organizational learning, and improve performance for the future (Rahbar et al., 2018). Scenarios are the best language for strategic issues because, in addition to creating a shared understanding of the future, they show different futures and are helpful for people to make better decisions and deal with uncertainties (Ghazinoory et al., 2018).

Today, organizations and administrative institutions are so complex that it is impossible to survive without careful planning. Sports organizations are no exception. Like any other organization, planning in sports organizations is considered an essential management task. We are planning in a sports organization to determine the goals of all activities and group efforts and how to achieve those goals (Savadi et al., 2017). As the most prominent global social phenomenon, Sport plays a crucial role in human life. Therefore, due to the environmental changes that are currently accelerating in sports organizations and the complexity of organizational decisions, the need to implement a comprehensive program to address such issues becomes more tangible. This plan is nothing but a strategic plan (Abdollahi & Sajjadi, 2016). According to many management experts, the ability to think strategically for the survival of organizations in today's highly complex business environment and increase flexibility and ability to cope with change is crucial before strategic planning. Hence, organizations need something to be equipped differently than other organizations. Strategic thinking provides organizations

with a weapon to stay in the current competitive and turbulent environment (Shabani Bahar et al., 2016).

In today's changing environment, constant and continuous changes, organizations' thinking and thinking have undergone a fundamental change characterized by attention to strategic thinking and related principles (Nazari, 2016). Professional sport, over time, has been able to transform itself from a mere event into a lucrative sport, so that in the developed countries of the world, due to growth in several dimensions, and especially in commercial and economic dimensions, it is referred to as industry (Moradi Chaleshtari et al., 2019). Hence, professional sports clubs, like most organizations and institutions in other fields, have become strategy-oriented organizations for survival and durability in global competition. Due to the rapid environmental changes and the resulting uncertainty, the need for strategic planning and future research to deal with possible future changes has become more apparent. In this regard, mastering strategic thinking is very important for leaders who want to change their future and environment (Rahimi et al., 2017).

In Iranian sports, professional sports are one of the most popular sports. As any professional club, they must generate income through revenue-generating channels such as ticket sales and sponsors. The greater the presence of fans, the higher club's income, and as a result, the higher the position and brand value of clubs. Among the various popular sports activities worldwide, football is undoubtedly the most participatory and most watched activity and sport. Football is the most popular sport globally, with over three billion fans, so professional clubs pay more attention to this sport (Marchiori & De Vecchi, 2020). Examining and recognizing the future of professional clubs is one of the basic needs of professional sports to survive in a highly competitive environment with unpredictable changes. The complexities in professional sports and the numerous problems that the managers of this sport are dealing with increase the need for futuristic research in this field day by day. However, research related to futurism in various sciences has been very significant for researchers and organizations in the last decade. Among them, it dealt with the future of Iranian sports by using interaction matrices. Findings showed that budget allocation, modeling from other countries, designing long-term plans, and creating process-oriented strategies are the most critical factors for the future of sports in Iran.

Sepahan Sports Club, a professional club in Isfahan with a history of 60 years, is one of the oldest sports clubs in Iran, which currently operates in professional sports for both men and women. The expansion of the club's sports activities at the national and international levels and the need for financial resources and sustainable income indicate the club's need for strategic plans—the increasing speed of organizational and environmental changes that can no longer cope with traditional planning tools. Stepping into the future requires managers to use foresight tools and build the future they expect and design.

Due to the importance of professional sports in Iran, Sepahan Club has a special place in professional sports. It seems necessary to study the future of this club. This club, one of the most important professional sports clubs in Iran, must adapt well to changes in the time and environment. Developing futurism in professional clubs can help club managers be useful for sports in Iran on a larger scale. Since Sepahan Club has a significant role in Iran's professional sports, it can formulate ideal goals and

prioritize appropriate activities, projects, and actions by taking advantage of the club's preferred future. After conducting this research, it's possible results will enable stakeholders to imagine the preferred future of professional sports, make informed decisions, and finally be able to. Evaluate the positive and negative aspects and create a hopeful future for Sepahan Club.

It can be acknowledged that many future events and happenings are predictable, and by intervening in this process, the desired changes can be made. Too often, dealing with the present and solving existing problems creates obstacles for managers and decision-makers to think about the future. In contrast, current problems are caused by not knowing the future. Everyday problems are the most valid reason to think about the future. Today's crisis results from not addressing the obstacles and problems before the crisis. Despite the profound changes in today's societies around life, organizations are increasingly looking for the desired future. By identifying the ambiguities and ambiguities of significant issues, they are looking for planning and decision-making for the desired end. It should be noted that a real presence in the process of future developments, reducing threats and increasing opportunities, requires a forward-looking strategic approach that allows action in future events. Strategic foresight in professional clubs enables the study of the past, present, and future by using new methods to determine critical influential and critical factors and scenario-building and prioritizing communities' scenarios for excellence and the future. The end of Sepahan Club facilitates the club's greatness to improve and identify the desired future with the help of senior managers, policymakers, and managers. Given the issue's importance, the present study intends to develop favorable and preferred future scenarios for Sepahan Club.

2. Methodology

Based on [Saunders et al. \(2009\)](#), the philosophy of this research was interpretive. The Research approach was inductive. The research Strategy was Case Study, and the research method was qualitative. Also, the Research time horizon was one section, and the data collection was an interview. The research method was a survey study with a developmental approach following the critical paradigm conducted in the field.

The present research combines documentary and survey methods in terms of research type. In terms of nature, it is based on new methods of futurism, analytical and exploratory, and has been done using a combination of quantitative and qualitative models. A sampling of this research following qualitative methods is purposive sampling. The research participants were experts in strategy, strategic foresight, and prominent managers and experts. A total of 30 people were selected through targeted snowball sampling. Based on the matrix, the opposite effect analysis coefficients were performed for classification to identify the key and strategic factors of Sepahan Sports Club in the future. The identified factors were entered into the interaction analysis matrix. They were distributed among the experts by a questionnaire, and the experts scored them from 0 to 3. The result of the questionnaire was analyzed by Mick Mac software. To develop the excellence and priority scenarios of Sepahan Sports Club, first, a quantitative approach and a descriptive strategy, survey, and field tactics were followed. Then the research was

carried out with a qualitative approach and analytical strategy. To formulate priority scenarios, we used a scenario script software; compatible plans are identified, then intuitively prioritized, described, and interpreted the desired future designs by the Strategic Research Council.

3. Results

To conduct semi-structured interviews and identify the drivers, researchers conducted interviews with two groups of academics and experimental individuals. The characteristics of the interviewees are given in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Details of research participants.

Title	Education	History
Managing Director	MA	30 years
High Advisor to the Club	Ph.D. (Associate Professor)	15 years
Club technical advisor	Ph.D. (Assistant Professor)	Ten years
Deputy of Resources and Human Capital	MA	20 years
Vice President of Sports	MA	19 years
Director of the Academy	Ph.D. student	15 years
Media Manager	Bachelor	23 years
Cultural Director	Ph.D. student	Ten years
Legal Manager	MA	Ten years

At first, the strategic elements of Sepahan Sports Club were formulated according to the strategic council of the club. Mission: Activity in competitive and professional sports and social and cultural role-playing in society under the auspices of Mobarakeh Steel Company of Isfahan as the strongest supporter of sports in Iran. Vision: The promotion of the Iran-Isfahan name at the national and international level and the promotion of national pride through the development of competitive and professional sports were considered. Grand policy: Promoting Iranian-Islamic values by emphasizing the four areas of thought, science, life, and spirituality in the path of comprehensive development of the cultural and sports club by implementing a program-oriented approach in the processes of competitive and professional sports of the club, maximum use of capacity "Actual and potential Mobarakeh Steel Factory to realize the vision of Sepahan Sports Club in Isfahan. Motto: "The better of the first" was approved. Mega Goals: The main goals of the club in the championship sports section of the Asian Clubs Cup, gaining top positions in other disciplines in national and international leagues, in the economic area to achieve an income of 100 billion Tomans, and in the socio-cultural section to continuously attend cultural events and earn an average of 25,000 spectators per game was considered a primary goal of the club. Core Values: The central values of the club were the observance of Iranian-Islamic values, attention to the heroic spirit, honesty and integrity, and emphasis on strategic thinking.

To identify the most critical drivers of Sepahan Club's futurism process, we used the essential factors of success in two categories of factors. They include privileging factors and distinguishing factors identified by the research team in [Table 2](#). is available.

Table 2. Critical success factors (CSF) of Sepahan cultural and sports club.

Effective factors identified			
Allocation of Mobarakeh Steel funds	Cyberspace	Safety & Security	Volunteering systems
Dynamics of sports economics	Technology and Communication	Evaluation of indicators and criteria	System approach
Economic sanctions	Unified and integrated management	Pragmatism of officials	Strategic planning
Media	Macro policymaking	Specialization in sports and clubs	Organizational Structure
Advanced and successful international models	Legal infrastructure	Studies and research	Incentive system
Highlighting and patterning	Women's sports position	Strengthen the quantity and quality of processes	Significant young population
Access to facilities	Patterning	Sports culture in the community	

According to the opinions gathered from the collected data, interviews, and intuitive judgments of the strategic council of the club, the most important critical factors of success were achieved. Based on [Table 2](#), the essential factors affecting the internal and external trends of Sepahan Club were identified in 27 elements, which were combined in the following phases. The research team finally selected the most important factors of success. It classified them into four categories: bedding factors, social coordination factors, management excellence factors, and institutionalization of cultural factors, in the form of a crossover effect matrix of impact scores. And effectiveness in [Table 3](#) Reported.

Table 3. Completed scenario matrix.

	Bedding factors		Social harmonizing factors		Management excellence factors		Institutionalizing cultural factors			
	Allocation of steel funding	Fair distribution of resources	Build a sports motivator	The arrival of popular sports	Social status of the club	Unified and integrated management	Specialization	Physical participation of the country's officials	Highlighting and patterning	Media
Bedding factors	Allocation of steel funding			2	1	2	2	2	2	2
	Fair distribution of resources			2	3	1	1	1	1	2
	Build a sports motivator			3	2	2	1	1	2	1
Social harmonizing factors	The arrival of popular sports	1	2	2		2	2	2	1	3
	Social status of the club	1	1	2		1	1	1	2	1
Management excellence factors	Unified and integrated management	3	3	2	3	1		3	2	3
	Specialization	2	2	1	1	2		1	2	1

		Bedding factors			Social harmonizing factors		Management excellence factors		Institutionalizing cultural factors		
		Allocation of steel funding	Fair distribution of resources	Build a sports motivator	The arrival of popular sports	Social status of the club	Unified and integrated management	Specialization	Physical participation of the country's officials	Highlighting and patterning	Media
Institutionalizing cultural factors	Physical participation of the country's officials	2	2	1	3	2	1	2			
	Highlighting and patterning	2	1	2	2	2	2	1			
	Media	2	3	2	3	3	3	2			

Based on the findings of Table 3, strategic indicators are controllable indicators and affect the dynamics and change of the system. In total, ten key and strategic indicators of Sepahan Sports Club obtained from the previous step were analyzed and divided into four general components and ten sub-components with the opinion of the Strategic Research Council. Equivalent to this segmentation has been entered and analyzed in Scenario Wizard software. The board of compatible scenarios was reviewed and analyzed in the meeting of the strategic council. In the future construction of Sepahan Mobarakeh Steel's preferred cultural and sports club, the priority should be given to the scenario with components of financial resources and integrated management, and the second priority to the plan with social status components. Specialization, highlighting, and modeling should be assigned, and finally, the third priority should be assigned to scenarios with media coverage components.

4. Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of this study was the strategic foresight of the Sepahan Club to determine the vital practical factors and scenario preparation for excellence. Developing the club's strategic foresight will help prioritize the club's priority scenarios and strategies with higher accessibility.

First, the strategic pillars of the strategic orientation of Sepahan Sports Club were formulated. The club's mission was to work in the field of competitive and professional sports and play a socio-cultural role in society. The vision of the Iran-Isfahan Name Club was considered at the national and international levels and the promotion of national pride through the development of competitive and professional sports. The macro policy of "promoting Iranian Islamic values with an emphasis on the four areas of thought, science, life, and spirituality in the comprehensive development of the club was considered. Maximizing the capacity of the actual and potential Mobarakeh Steel Factory of Isfahan to realize the club's vision with an emphasis on strategic thinking should be a priority. Important key and strategic factors of Sepahan Sports Club include the support of public and private bodies of the club (economic), excellence of cultural (social) responsibility of

the club (cultural), development of media (social) awareness, management of systems and processes in the club (managerial). Furthermore, results showed that the development of sports infrastructure under the needs of the club (environmental), the improvement of the financial situation of the club (economic), and the impact on environmental and security factors are in line with the sustainable development of the club (environmental) were the other factors. The overlap of the extracted key indicators, including the bedrock factors with components such as the allocation of financial resources from Mobarakeh Steel, the fair distribution of resources, and the construction of sports incentives, were considered. Social adaptation factors include factors, entering popular sports and the social status of the club among the people. Management excellence factors include Unified management and specialization were considered. Finally, standardized cultural factors such as accompaniment of political officials, highlighting and modeling, and media activities were evaluated.

According to the findings, the indicators of attention and implementation of economic sanctions have caused significant changes in professional sports and defensive strategies of economic sanctions. In other words, a resistance economy is a way to deal with sanctions to develop and excel in professional sports in terms of treatment costs and avoiding the costs of various cultural and social harms. At the same time, policymakers should take severe and strategic thinking ways to deal with these sanctions to improve the situation of professional clubs to improve the situation. Therefore, access to facilities is one of the indicators that the presence or absence of the club system is subject to change. In this regard, special attention should be paid to providing conditions for using all capacities and potentials in the geographical area to increase access to facilities. Unstable are bilateral indicators of advanced and successful international models, macro-policy-making, and strategic planning. Macro-policy is also unsafe due to the lack of a roadmap with an executive guarantee and will become stable when a specific roadmap with long-term horizons is developed by scientific experts considering all the conditions prevailing in the country and the executive guarantee of the original roadmap. The media and the ubiquity of the strata are of the same type as both seek to engage people in professional sports. With the involvement and inclusive entry of the strata into professional sports, the economics of professional sports will be active and dynamic. Realizing this, sports trends and approaches in the club will occur in a state of supply and demand, and in that situation, domestic investors and foreigners will be led to the club. Target indicators are allocating financial resources and specialization, achievement of changes, and system evolution. Allocating financial resources in the steel budget system to the category of sports, in line with the growth and excellence of the club and increasing the rich national, political, social, cultural, and economic functions with an intelligent system in line with the roadmap and with strategic and forward-thinking can evolve the club's vision of playing a role in Iranian professional sports, as well as social responsibilities towards society, will take a fundamental step. Because sport has deep historical roots and plays an essential role in developing past and present cultures, various sciences, including the social sciences, have studied it (Andrews & Wilson, 2019).

A specialized view of sports and the appointment of sports managers and officials from the body of sports with a scientific approach to step on the roadmap for the growth and excellence of professional sports in the country is vital. To determine the excellence-making and priority scenarios of Sepahan Sports Club, the Strategic Council present some compatible scenarios. The scenario should be assigned with social status, specialization, highlighting, and modeling components. Finally, the third priority should be given to the scenario with the components of media coverage. The first scenarios consist of the components of allocating financial resources and single and integrated management to Sepahan Sports Club. It must be acknowledged that sport is no longer a hobby but has become a thriving industry, especially in developed countries. The volume of investments made in the professional sector is very high. The material benefits of sport lead to immediate material benefits for industrial companies. In the long run, its intangible benefits increase the level of authority, national pride, better labor use, and increased employment in sports and other sports. Governments taking advantage of the long-term benefits of sports should be considered a capital good. The necessary attention should be paid to the development of professional sports. The idea of not trying to generate revenue in this area and the lack of economic and marketing thinking have led to financial crises. Therefore, the club should follow this approach well and be effective in the field of mission.

Integrated action in different parts of the club will eliminate the weakness in the unity of command between the sports activities in this field. Integrating and coordinating the performance of human resources with scientific competence and sufficient experience in the body of the club is always one of the important limitations and has led to more problems and crises in this area. According to the issues, the promising future of Sepahan Sports Club depends on providing solutions and strategies that establish links between the components of allocation of financial resources and unified management. In that context, Sepahan Sports Club will evolve and excel. It will achieve growth and prosperity.

The second scenario consists of components of specialization and highlighting and modeling athletes in Sepahan Sports Club. Since man is a social being, belonging to a group and being accepted by the group is one of his primary needs in the process of socialization. Man will try to establish meaningful relationships with other people, be able to become a member of groups, and finally accept group and community. Sports activities also affect the socialization process of people in different ways and cause fundamental changes in people's attitudes towards society. In this regard, the club academies can provide the conditions for the vast presence of the community in line with the club's social responsibilities by giving optimal services because sport is a small world that reflects particular social values. The manifestation of values through sport shows its essential role in society. Sport as a social institution is associated with many levels of social relations. It is deeply related to elements such as the presence and performance of mass media, ethnic and racial ties, clothing, language, culture, and social values of people and spectators (Hedlund et al., 2020).

One of the main priorities of professional sports is using specialized human resources to make the best use of financial and economic resources in the club. Many problems of

the club will be solved by using technical people. It seems that they should turn to the use of efficient, scientific, and passionate people in sports. Educational, heroic, and professional dimensions are developed with the tendency towards specialization.

Highlighting and modeling athletes is an institutionalizing cultural factor in the direction of professional sports. In fact, by using this process, there is more motivation for the presence of different individuals and groups in society. Have comprehensive and more accurate planning in this field with the entry of various institutions, especially radio and television, to provide the necessary incentives and incentives for public participation in professional sports by highlighting prominent sports figures. This seems to be the best opportunity to elevate the club's brand. In this scenario, it is observed that athletes will determine the desired future by connecting the circles of specialization and highlighting and modeling. Also, officials and policymakers, by taking advantage of practical solutions and strategies required by implementing this scenario, a helpful step toward the growth and excellence of the club: Sepahan Sports Club and the institutionalization of professional sports in society.

The scenario includes media coverage in Sepahan Sports Club. Scientific awareness of the media targeted awareness programs with specialized expertise and provided programs for all walks of life. The critical role of targeted advertising of sports science videos with a positive attitude, regardless of monetization on radio and television. It has a special place in institutionalization to support the club in the long run. In this regard, programs should be prepared, compiled, and displayed to improve the level of public information and knowledge about the mission and mission of the club. The media performs various functions in line with the general public's tendency towards professional sports. The media leads to social cohesion, institutionalization, and promotion of professional sports through education, information, and awareness. Also, with the entry of the media into professional sports, modernity and social marketing play a unique role, and environmental monitoring has increased. In general, in building a hopeful future for the Sepahan Sports Club, all efforts must follow the critical strategic indicators of the club.

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آینده پژوهی باشگاه‌های ورزشی حرفه‌ای مطالعه موردی: باشگاه سپاهان

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کلیدواژه

آینده‌نگاری
باشگاه
سپاهان
راهبردی
ورزش حرفه‌ای

نوع مقاله

پژوهشی اصیل

چکیده

هدف: هدف از پژوهش حاضر تدوین سناریوهای مؤثر بر آینده باشگاه فرهنگی ورزشی فولاد مبارکه سپاهان بود.

روش: در پژوهش حاضر از روش تحلیل اثرات متقاطع به‌عنوان یکی از روش‌های آینده‌نگاری استفاده شده است. پژوهش از منظر فلسفه تفسیری، رویکرد استقرایی، راهبرد مطالعه موردی، روش کیفی و شیوه گردآوری و تجزیه تحلیل داده‌ها مصاحبه بود. مشارکت‌کنندگان پژوهش، صاحب‌نظران و خبرگان حوزه راهبردی، آینده‌نگاری، مدیران و کارشناسان برجسته باشگاه بودند. در مجموع ۳۰ نفر از طریق روش نمونه‌گیری هدفمند به روش گلوله برفی انتخاب شدند. ابزار پژوهش حاضر، مصاحبه‌های نیمه ساختاریافته و اکتشافی و سؤالات مصاحبه‌ها از نوع باز پاسخ بود.

یافته‌ها: مهم‌ترین عوامل راهبردی شامل: شامل حمایت ارگان‌های دولتی و خصوصی، تعالی سازی مسئولیت فرهنگی - اجتماعی، توسعه آگاهی رسانه‌ای، مدیریت امور سیستم‌ها و فرآیندها، توسعه زیرساخت‌های ورزشی متناسب با نیاز، بهبود وضعیت مالی و مؤثر بر عوامل محیطی و امنیتی متناسب با توسعه پایدار باشگاه شناسایی شد. در نهایت دو سناریو شامل؛ سناریو اول متشکل از مؤلفه‌های تخصیص منابع مالی، مدیریت واحد و یکپارچه و سناریوی دوم متشکل از مؤلفه‌های تخصص‌گرایی و برجسته‌سازی و الگوسازی برای ترسیم آینده باشگاه در نظر گرفته شد. به‌طوری کلی می‌توان ادعان نمود در ساخت آینده مرجع باشگاه فرهنگی ورزشی فولاد مبارکه سپاهان سناریو با مؤلفه‌های تخصیص منابع مالی، مدیریت یکپارچه، جایگاه اجتماعی، تخصص‌گرایی و برجسته‌سازی و الگوسازی اختصاص یابد و در نهایت پرداختن رسانه‌ها در نظر گرفته شد.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: در این پژوهش، برنامه راهبردی از دو روش کمی و کیفی استفاده شده است.

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Exploring Entrepreneurial and Innovative Sports Opportunities During and After the Corona Crisis

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Coronavirus has affected all sectors of the global economy, but particularly the sports industry, given its social nature, is affected by the Covid Crisis. Therefore, the research aims to analyze the entrepreneurial and innovative sports opportunities in the corona and post-corona crises.

Methodology: Research is applied based on its purpose. The method of this research was qualitative and based on the grounded theory. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews with 14 research experts. The research samples were selected using the snowball method. Then, the results of the interviews were analyzed using Max QDA software and based on the coding method with a structuralism approach. The review and monitoring were performed periodically to ensure the accuracy of the extracted codes.

Findings: The research categories were divided into four main groups: 1- Supply and demand conditions, 2- Production factors, 3- Competitive context and strategy of the firm, and 4- Related and supporting industries.

Originality: Findings show that sports innovation and opportunities in the corona are affected by four factors. So, the analysis of the sports entrepreneurial and innovative opportunities in a threat called the corona crisis is a step to provide entrepreneurship in sports to continue the positive effects in the post-Corona era.

Keywords

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1. Introduction

In the present age and over time, conditions arise for countries from which it will not be easy to escape. One of the conditions that have affected all countries in the health sector is the Covid-19 pandemic. It has led to the decline of many businesses. If Covid-19 crisis continues, many businesses will be damaged and lost (Zarghami, 2021). This epidemic has posed severe challenges in various regions around the world. Exercise is one of the social phenomena that has been strongly affected by this virus. As one of the influential institutions affected by the outbreak of Covid-19, Sport must fulfill its mission well in the face of existing challenges and future problems. The Covid-19 crisis is still growing, and there is currently no clear vision for its end, so sports organizations must develop new approaches to competing in the new environment (Jaberi & Mazloomi Soveini, 2021). The current outbreak has had far-reaching economic consequences around the world. No country seems to be unaffected. Not only has implications for the economy, but it has affected all aspects of society and has led to dramatic changes in the way businesses operate and consumer behavior (Donthu & Gustafsson, 2020).

Although Corona disease has affected all sectors of the global economy, some have been most affected. The sports sector has been particularly affected by the Corona pandemic as never seen before. This means most sports companies urgently need new business models to adapt to change (Ratten, 2020). In this regard, (Heydari & Asadollahi, 2021) in their research to evaluate the effects of coronavirus in sports on the role of the virus in the production and distribution, private and public sectors, education and research in sports, trade, events, and competitions, Technology, service and economic sectors of the sports industry point out. Based on the results of the analysis of the findings of (Heydari et al., 2021) concerning the identification of the effects of coronavirus in the sports industry, the final two dimensions of the impact of the virus outbreak were identified in the sports industry, which included direct and indirect effects. Corona in the sports industry can help adapt the activities of this industry to the current situation. (Brakhas et al., 2021) Also, the management of sports businesses in times of crisis and recession requires using change and innovation strategies and technology-based environmental networking. (Ahmadi et al., 2021) have also studied the effects of the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus on the sports industry. Their conclusion states that economic and sports factors are among the negative consequences of the epidemic of Covid-19 on the sports industry.

Therefore, Covid-19 has a significant impact on the sports industry. For example, the prevalence of Covid-19 has dramatically reduced participation in sports activities (Mann et al., 2020). Also, according to Tasnim news agency 2020, the effects of this epidemic include the suspension of the Olympic Games and the UEFA Cup from 2020 to 2021. It was estimated that the postponement of the Olympic Games alone was a figure of nearly \$ 3 billion in additional costs to the organizing committee. In addition to the \$ 12.6 billion it has a fee; the games have not been ineffective in the Iranian economy. Tomans has been estimated for Iranian sports. Faced with the challenges, addressing and exploiting the potential opportunities posed by the coronavirus outbreak

can be a crucial strategy for the sports sector. Furthermore, despite all the problems caused by corona in different societies, many fields have tried to adapt to new conditions and, in many cases, have been attempting to use new conditions as a unique opportunity to create and act further.

It is clear that the Covid epidemic is not just a health emergency but an economic downturn that has created an unstable, complex, and ambiguous environment for organizations (Biron et al., 2021). Under such circumstances, the sports industry is one of the most entrepreneurial sectors of the global economy, particularly affecting competitiveness (Parnell et al., 2022).

Entrepreneurship has always been an essential Strength for the competitiveness of the sports industry and socioeconomic position in society (Jones et al., 2017). The sports industry was also forced to innovate rapidly in the Covid-19 crisis. Focusing on opportunities to create shared value in these critical situations by creating entrepreneurial opportunities has become necessary (Ratten et al., 2021).

Innovation is a strategic response to crises such as the Covid pandemic (Wenzel et al., 2020). When this pandemic has disrupted global economic and industrial activity and shaped an uncertain future, a tool such as innovation can be helpful, so many companies and businesses are required to innovate to survive. Innovation is vital for the organization's survival and improvement and for maintaining competitiveness in the face of threats and challenges during and after the pandemic (Chesbrough, 2020; Lee & Trimi, 2021; Wang et al., 2020).

Recognizing the opportunities and problems of entrepreneurship in sports is essential. Identifying opportunities is one of the ways of entrepreneurship in sports, and more people are encouraged to start a business and create employment. And entrepreneurship, in a broader sense, means innovation and spirit. Dynamics and value creation occur in society (Mandalizadeh & Honari, 2011). Sports Entrepreneurship Must Identify Opportunities and Use Them to Create Entrepreneurial Activities_ (Kermally, 1986). For many researchers, including Dellabarca (Dellabarca, 2002; Venkataraman, 2002), seizing opportunities is the primary definition of entrepreneurship. Opportunity is an essential step in the entrepreneurial process, and in the context of sports-based businesses, identifying plays a decisive role

Although it appeared initially, the Corona crisis is a Serious threat to most businesses. A deeper look provides new opportunities for businesses (Vazifedoust et al., 2020). The coronavirus outbreak has caused Serious injury to operations and business supply chains. On the other hand, the development and expansion of Entrepreneurship development are one of the necessities of developing countries, which leads to the use of opportunities and resources. Therefore, the entrepreneurial opportunities issue is a concept that differentiates entrepreneurship from other areas. In the Covid crisis, it is seriously to pay attention to opportunities, creativity, and innovation that lead to the growth of businesses (Vazifedoust et al., 2020).

On the other hand, the unemployment crisis has challenged many graduates of the higher education system. As is evident from the unemployment statistics, and according to the Statistics Center of Iran in 2021, the unemployment rate of young people aged 18-35 shows that 15.6% Of the active population 18-35 years have been unemployed.

Also, in the spring, 2021 percent of the unemployed graduated from higher education out of the total unemployed was 40.3 percent, which was higher among women than men in urban areas than rural areas. Therefore, the issue of unemployment is critical and is one of the main problems facing students and university graduates.

Given student unemployment in all societies and finding a way to solve this problem, entrepreneurship can be included in higher education programs. Many young people are in universities and various fields of study, including physical education and science. They are studying sports and hope to be able to enter the labor market after graduation. Given the current situation, the entrepreneurial perspective can significantly reduce these people's problems (Zabihi et al., 2019).

The effects of the coronavirus outbreak on sports businesses, including unemployment, poverty, low productivity, and downsizing in governmental and non-governmental organizations, continue. In addition to negative economic consequences, these effects can lead to significant social problems, increased crime and violence, and so on.

In this situation, we can take a step toward reducing these effects by analyzing the current situation and supporting jobs. Therefore, entrepreneurship and innovation opportunities are the issues we address in this study. The field of sports has many opportunities in the heart of crises. We hope innovation will improve the situation of entrepreneurial and innovative sports businesses in the context of the Corona crisis. And in post-corona, we will see the continuation of the process of improving jobs, entrepreneurship, and innovation in this field.

Therefore, in the present study, we seek to answer the question: what entrepreneurial and innovative sports opportunities exist in the corona and post-corona crises?

2. Theoretical background

Before the outbreak of the Covid-19, Researchers such as Ratan & Ferreira (2017) argued that sport and entrepreneurship have similar characteristics because of the need for innovation to bring about change. This position makes sport a catalyst for entrepreneurship. It requires new thinking to increase performance Sport-based entrepreneurship has created a distinct form of entrepreneurship because it provides a way to view sports activities from a creative and futuristic perspective (Ratten & Ferreira, 2017).

In the wake of the Corona crisis, (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2020) concluded that significantly risk-taking and innovation increased after the Covid-19 outbreak (Salimi Zaviyeh, 2020) points out in a study about the strategic response to the Corona crisis states that four types of strategies are essential that innovation is one of them.

(Ratten et al., 2021) also emphasizes after the Covid-19 outbreak, to adopt better policies to combat the Covid pandemic, we need an innovative and forward-thinking method. And relying on sports entrepreneurship And the theory of service-dominated logic, Communication between networks, Creating shared value, And examines crises in the expression of sports entrepreneurship ecosystems, and shows that in times of crisis, The sports industry can use its unique entrepreneurial ecosystem to encourage active collaboration that leads to the creation of shared value (Ratten et al., 2021).

Ratten (2021) also argues that public policy has been integral to the response mechanisms used to manage the Covid-19 crisis. As a result, more attention is being paid to policymakers regarding how to implement entrepreneurial ideas that help reduce the turmoil surrounding Covid-19.

Fallah et al. (2017) research results show that not all job opportunities have been used yet. And public and private sector officials can use sports science and entrepreneurship graduates in the sports sector by planning and paying attention to employment. (Jaberi & Mazloomi Soveini, 2021) Also, considering the challenges Covid-19 has created in sports, it is possible to use opportunities to strengthen and develop parts of sports and face some of the threats and challenges Corona poses.

Some research in the entrepreneurship field has examined the entrepreneurial behavior and mentality in the Corona era. For example, the modulatory effects of psychological distress related to Covid-19 on the cognitive process, entrepreneurial intent, and entrepreneurial behavior were investigated among higher education students in Vietnam. The results showed that perceived behavioral control and entrepreneurial intention effectively encouraged entrepreneurial behavior.

The entrepreneurial attitude and intention link is modulated negatively by the psychological distress related to Covid-19. Also, psychological distress related to Covid-19 can reduce the connection between students' intentions and entrepreneurial behavior in higher education institutions. Therefore, society will need educational policies in the entrepreneurship field.

Although the current situation seems to be somewhat under control, researchers believe that Covid-19 remains the biggest challenge for sports contemporary society in the world. Adherence to social distancing policies, strict return-to-play protocols, and Covid-19 specific training may have forever changed the way children and young people participate in sports. In this context, we are responsible for understanding how the Corona pandemic affects youth sports and its short-term and long-term consequences. We also explore what opportunities can be used to help improve participation and preserve the future.

His findings provide valuable insights into the youth sports environment as a global pandemic result and suggest that families, sports clubs, and sports organizations need more resources and tools to assist in recovery efforts and ensure the survival and prosperity of youth sports in the future.

Staley et al. (2021) examined the challenges facing sports customers in the post-Corona era and believe that managers should consider the challenges of sports audiences. In his study, (Lete-Lasa et al., 2020) also identify potential opportunities for Covid-19 transmission in sports and physical education before, during, and after training and competition. Paying attention to and managing these challenges will be decisive for sports businesses after their audiences return to sports.

Finally, the results of Corona's research, as in the past, emphasize the continuation of entrepreneurship and innovation with more power. The only way to save the sports industry from the damage done during the Corona era is to develop entrepreneurship and innovation in sports organizations and businesses. The emergence of new ways of participating in sports will probably change the human lifestyle forever. In the meantime,

recognizing opportunities, extracting opportunities from threats, and making the best use of them in a competitive situation will be able to shape a bright future.

3. Methodology

The present study used data-based theory (data-based theory / basic theory). In general, the primary purpose of this type of theorizing is to explain a phenomenon by identifying the key elements (concepts, categories, and propositions) of that phenomenon and then classifying the relationships of these elements within the context and process. Theorizing is done in three main steps: open coding, systematic axial coding, and selective coding. In addition, the coding steps were performed using Max QDA software. The research community is sports entrepreneurs in the context of the Covid-19 crisis who have launched entrepreneurship in the sports field and have been active for at least one year. Due to the uncertainty and lack of sufficient knowledge about the research community, the snowball method was used to select the research sample. The sampling continued until the theoretical saturation. It should be noted that before the interview, interview instructions were sent to the interviewees. Finally, 14 semi-structured interviews were conducted. Then the results of the interviews were analyzed using MaxQda software. This analysis was performed in three steps as follows and based on the research method:

3.1. Step one: Open coding

First, the contents of all the interviews were typed then the open coding was done. Sixty-one available codes were obtained from the 14 interviews analyzed in the first stage.

3.2. Step two: Axial coding

The purpose is to establish a proper relationship between the classes obtained from the open coding step. Axial coding creates groups and categories; At this stage, all similar codes are placed in their group. To ensure classification accuracy, these codes were reviewed again by the research sample. Fourteen categories were obtained in this process.

3.3. Step three: Theorizing step (selective coding)

The purpose of fundamental theorizing is not merely to describe a phenomenon but to produce a theory. In this regard, to turn analysis into ideas, classes must be related to each other in an orderly and coordinated manner. In the code grouping, the core codes extracted from the interviews were grouped then the groups were compared to each other to identify and obtain the main groups and dimensions. In this section, four selective codes were obtained from the classification. There are different definitions of quality data in terms of validity and reliability. (Skinner et al., 2020) believe that based on the other goals and characteristics of qualitative studies, it is more appropriate to use the concept of credibility instead of validity. This condition should be achieved through long-term participation, sustainable observation, participant review, and triangulation.

Glaser also states that triangulation is one of the tools that can judge the power and credibility of the research. In the present study, for this purpose, long-term participation and communication with the interviewees were performed to evaluate the researcher's inference. The path of data extraction and codes was re-inspected periodically to prevent bias and ensure their validity. The data obtained were also reviewed by the research group help and a survey of interviewees about the results.

4. Results

The demographic information of the research sample is present in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Demographic information.

Age	50 years and older	2
	40-50 years	2
	30-40 years	4
	30 years and younger	5
Education	Ph.D. and higher	3
	Masters	3
	Bachelor	4
	Associate Degree	2
	Diploma and lower	2
Work experience	More than 15 years	2
	10-15 years	3
	5-10 years	5
	Less than five years	4

Most research samples have more than ten years of work experience and higher education than a bachelor's degree. After step-by-step coding, 61 initial concepts were obtained, and images were classified into fourteen categories. Finally, the research categories were divided into four main groups; The coding results of the interviews are presented in the table below.

Table 2. Codes and abstract concepts.

Row	Open codes	Axial codes	Selective codes
1	Reduce sales of sports products	Exchange flows	Supply and demand conditions
2	Reducing the production of sports services		
3	Reducing the flow of liquidity in the sports industry (reducing the flow of exchanges in the sports industry)		
4	Promote the trade of sports products and services electronically	Electronic commerce	
5	Development of online sports training		
6	Development of the use of new technologies based on digital, IoT, or artificial intelligence in sports and health		
7	Changing the type of demand for consumers of sports products	Demand	
8	Change in prioritizing consumer demand for sports products		
9	Reduce the use of sports products due to quarantine practices		
10	Creating opportunities to provide sports services in a different way	Business models	
11	Intensify and accelerate innovations in sport		
12	Opportunities for change in business and entrepreneurship		

Row	Open codes	Axial codes	Selective codes
13	Higher flexibility of smaller sports businesses in changing the business model		
14	Significant changes in customer relations		
15	The prosperity of online businesses and the development of service application development		
16	Increase the provision of remote services		
17	Adjustment of human resources in some sports businesses		
18	Telecommuting human resources in some sports businesses		
19	Temporary absence and disruption of the presence of the human resources in some sports businesses	Human resources	Production factors
20	Changes in the way we work and the need to design different policies regarding the recruitment of labor		
21	Numerous requirements for labor training		
22	High rental costs, salaries, and reduced liquidity		
23	The income is Decreasing for small and start-up businesses and sports entrepreneurs	Cost and revenue balance	
24	Vulnerability of small sports businesses to environmental pressures		
25	Transforming Teleworking into a cultural approach in the future		
26	Reduce costs by increasing Teleworking	Teleworking	
27	Avoid wasting time by Teleworking		
28	Strengthen work potential by Teleworking		
29	Increasing the use of sports television channels		
30	Increase the use of sports news applications		
31	Development and increase of use of social sports networks	Media	
32	Development and increase in using sports news and organizational sites		
33	Government assistance to affected businesses		
34	Decreasing the country's competitiveness rank in sports businesses		
35	Business Ease Index downgrades, how difficult it has been to start a sports business since the beginning of the Covid Pandemic 19		
36	Improving the global innovation index in the country		
37	The economic structure and governance of the country and the weakness of the regulatory system, business environment, and financing		
38	Existence of parallel institutions policymakers of sports innovation		
39	Industrial development is affected by sanctions pressures and so on		
40	The impact of Covid-19 on the economies of the world		
41	Problems with repaying loans		
42	Closure of schools and universities		
43	Cancellation of Sports events and competitions		
44	Closure of social sports recreation	Social change	Competitive platform and enterprise strategy
45	Decreased presence in scientific and cultural societies in sports		
46	The disappearance of some traditional businesses in the sports field		
47	Changing the many business's strategies to survive		
48	Creating investment urgencies in specific areas such as medicine and reducing investment in other industries, including sports	Strategic market changes	
49	Improve financial performance and develop online gaming services		
50	The tendency towards online versus offline sports shopping behaviors		
51	Creating digital lifestyle conditions for every person at every level	Lifestyle	

Row	Open codes	Axial codes	Selective codes
52	Would rather stay home and feel safe		
53	Marketing through social media		
54	Maintaining brand communication with the customer through social media networks		
55	Price changes due to changes in raw materials and equipment prices	Price crises	Related and supporting industries
56	Countries' relationships affect on the raw materials price for the production and sports services provision		
57	Do not supply sports products or raw materials with profit motives	Goods production and the provision of the Barriers	
58	Decreased exports of sports products due to shortages of raw materials		
59	Decreased competitiveness in parts of the sports industry whose support industries are under threat		
60	Supply of raw materials and equipment for goods Production and services provision		
61	Restrictions on the transportation sector affect the raw materials and equipment supply		

Table 2 shows the factors and variables affecting entrepreneurial and innovative opportunities in the sports industry. Although these factors have created critical conditions, such crises will provide entrepreneurial and innovation opportunities in sports.

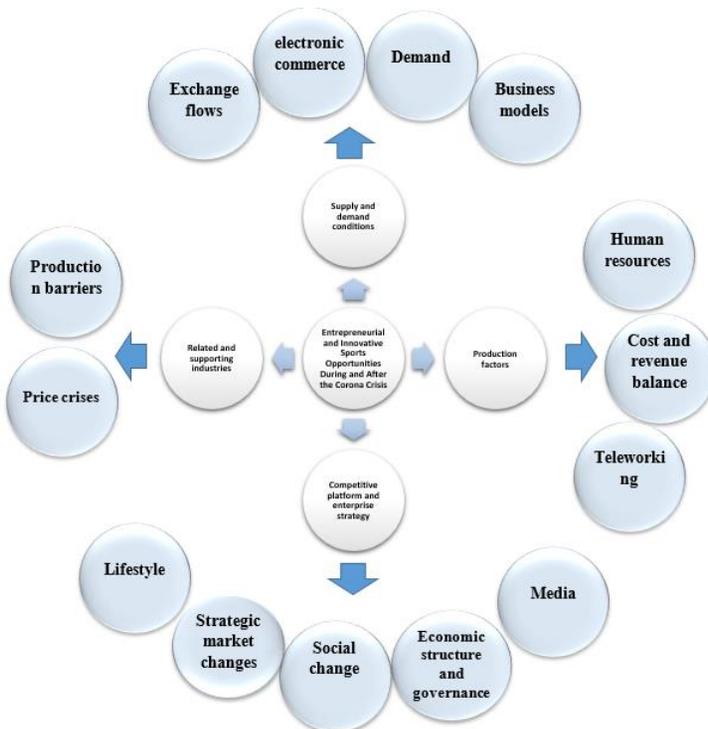


Figure 1. Entrepreneurship model and sports innovations in the Covid-19 crisis.

The [Figure 1](#) shows the entrepreneurial and innovative sporting opportunities in the corona and post-corona crises. This model reflects the opportunities for entrepreneurship and innovation in sports businesses due to environmental changes. Many internal and external factors of the sports industry include exchanges, e-commerce, demand, business models, human resource, cost-benefit balance, telecommuting, etc., with the flow and complex communications. They have formed, provided opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship in the sports industry crises, changed existing businesses, and created new ones. This leads to the growth of innovation and entrepreneurship in the sports industry.

The creation of new exchanges, the development of e-commerce, changing customers' needs, wants, and demands and the emergence of new business models are affected by the overall supply and demand trend. Finally, we can see new trends in the market for the supply and demand of sports products. Also, the new conditions of human resources, the imbalance of costs and incomes, especially in start-ups, and the increase in teleworking affect sports production. Changes in the factors of production, in turn, significantly change the supply of products. In the next section, new forms of media and social media development, economic structure and governance, social change, lifestyle changes, and strategic changes in the market affect enterprises' competition and strategy. These factors affect structure of the market competition. Also, price crises and barriers to production have been able to change the supporting industries, as the supply of raw materials and transportation restrictions will create problems in the production path and thus directly impact the quality, quantity, and price of products.

5. Managerial implications

This study aims to provide scientific suggestions for using sports entrepreneurship opportunities in the Corona disease critical conditions and beyond. Utilizing the results of this research will affect sports entrepreneurship and their survival by using the innovation power and turning constraints into strengths. Also, providing unique perspectives and solutions can show a clear path toward the sustainable development of the sports industry and the economic development of related businesses for experts, planners, and policymakers.

6. Conclusion

According to the research, the findings indicate that innovation and opportunities in Corona are impressed by four general factors. Included 1- Supply and demand conditions 2- Production factors 3- Competitive platform and enterprise strategy 4- Related and supporting industries.

According to the first factor, which is the supply and demand conditions;

The results show that exchange flows, e-commerce, demand, and business models are affected by the Covid crisis. Therefore, we can take steps to develop entrepreneurship in this sector by innovating and finding existing opportunities. For example, in the Covid-19 crisis, online education is created in the e-commerce sector.

And people use the online environment instead of being physically present. Many sections have also been expanded online, which may have received less attention before the quarantine conditions.

In this regard, (Gharari et al., 2021) show that online education is an immediate need in the learning process and teaching and has many benefits. Utilizing innovative methods in providing services can help manufacturers in this industry. In the meantime, these changes will likely continue in the post-corona environment, and the career path in many areas will be more modern. Covid19 has dramatically changed the business landscape and put most businesses in control mode.

Based on this, entrepreneurship is always full of challenges. And Covid-19 has already proven to be the most significant challenge the smallest businesses have ever faced. Undoubtedly, markets will change in the future, and the small companies that best adapted to these changing conditions are thriving and will continue to do so in post-corona.

In the production factors field, this research results show that the Covid-19 crisis has also affected human resources by adjusting and teleworking. (Alavi et al., 2021) results confirm the present study. They identify the consequences of Covid-19 that one of these consequences is related to human resources. In such a situation, many costs can reduce by taking advantage of telecommuting opportunities in sports organizations. Also, by turning telecommuting into a culture in the future, it is possible to avoid wasting time and other resources and save the costs on the infrastructure needed for virtual activities, etc to provide the conditions for the organization's development.

Even with the current interpretation, it can predict that this telework will be an organizational culture post-Corona. Employees will welcome this. Hence, human resource is an important factor in sports organizations and various sectors of the sports industry and are essential to creating an opportunity to innovate in the Corona situation.

In the competitive platform and enterprise strategy field, the results indicate that other factors have changed in the context of the Corona crisis, such as media, social change, living conditions, etc., that can be used for profitability. As we have seen, the Covid-19 epidemic has been an unprecedented event and can potentially affect the sports industry and the wider community fundamentally.

In addition, the physical constraints that consumers experienced due to the epidemic created opportunities to use different types of sports media coverage to maintain the relationship between sport and their fans (Couldry & Hepp, 2013). On the other hand, the desire of people to use online services has created many opportunities in this area (Areiza-Padilla et al., 2021). As a result, many applications and technological infrastructures have been introduced to the sports world. Today using these technologies at home has become one of the principles of advocacy and entertainment for fans.

Although the abrupt cancellation of live sporting events was disruptive, it created opportunities for producing new media and consumption opportunities for sports leagues, teams, and their fans through various sports media broadcasts. The United States sports industry uses new media content strategies across multiple broadcast platforms to provide sports consumption opportunities for fans who quarantine at home. These findings are consistent with the results of (Ratten, 2021).

As a result, consumers have found a new form of entertainment on the social networks of stadiums and sports schools, allowing them to have fun and physical exercise at home. Thus, sports clubs were able to identify a mechanism that will enable them to reach out to their customers and continue to offer various online products and services, taking into account the context of Corona. Therefore, forward-thinking innovation and thinking must adopt better policies to combat the Covid pandemic. Therefore, this section will be able to maintain its online services and provide the necessary services to customers who do not want to attend gyms, considering the exit from the corona crisis and entering the post-corona. Policy considerations from an entrepreneurial perspective will help understand the importance of future research on digital transformation, leadership, business impact, and social inclusion. Social change among the Corona influence reveals opportunities to moderate entrepreneurship to achieve competition and growth.

The Related and supporting industries are other factors that show we are also involved in price crises and Goods production and the provision of the services Barriers, including reduced exports of sports products, price changes, and so on. (Gavrila Gavrila & De Lucas Ancillo, 2022) and (Alameeri et al., 2021) research results are consistent with the present study results. With the onset of the Covid19 virus outbreak, countries' relations were affected, resulting in a change in production capacity. The export of the product depends on the industries that supply it (for example, some sports equipment manufacturers and clothing may face a shortage of raw materials).

As a result, the competitiveness of many manufacturers whose support industries threaten is affected. On the other hand, the supply of raw materials has been affected by the restrictions in the transportation sector. In addition, some companies' concerns or profit motives prevent them from marketing their products. The result is that the final price has risen. This price will affect the supply and demand chain. This means price increases are inevitable. But many manufacturers have been able to reduce unnecessary costs, optimize consumption, use cheaper energy such as solar panels, change the approach of expensive advertising, and pay more attention to Cheaper ads in cyberspace and other cost-cutting strategies. They have overcome these threats and continue to succeed in the market.

According to the results of this study, it seems that the use of innovation is a competitive advantage for sports businesses. And utilizing creative and innovative thinkers and human resources today is an opportunity and a benefit that will be able to accelerate in overtaking competitors. Of course, the reaction to the environment must be swift and planned, which requires increasing agility in the organization and communication with the external business environment. It also seems that entering different and new industries and using technological potentials in the corona crisis can be considered an opportunity to witness the growing trend and institutionalization of changes in sports businesses in the post-corona situation.

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بررسی فرصت‌های کارآفرینانه و نوآورانه ورزشی در شرایط بحران کرونا و پس از کرونا

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کلیدواژه

بحران کرونا
صنعت ورزش
فرصت نوآوری
کارآفرینی
کسب و کار

نوع مقاله

پژوهشی اصیل

چکیده

هدف: بیماری کرونا ویروس همه بخش‌های اقتصاد جهانی را تحت تأثیر قرار داده است. صنعت ورزش نیز باتوجه به ماهیت اجتماعی آن به‌طور ویژه‌ای متأثر از بحران کووید ۱۹ است. از این‌رو هدف از پژوهش حاضر مطالعه تحلیلی فرصت‌های کارآفرینانه و نوآورانه ورزشی در شرایط بحران کرونا و پس از کرونا بود.

روش: پژوهش حاضر به لحاظ هدف کاربردی و روش مطالعه این تحقیق از نوع کیفی با استفاده از تئوری مبتنی بر داده‌ها از نوع داده بنیاد (گراندد تئوری) بود. داده‌ها با استفاده از مصاحبه نیمه ساختاریافته با ۱۴ نفر از خبرگان در زمینه پژوهش جمع‌آوری شد. نمونه پژوهش به روش گلوله برفی انتخاب و سپس نتایج مصاحبه‌ها با استفاده از نرم‌افزار مکس کیودا و به روش کدگذاری نظریه‌مبنایی و با رویکرد ساخت‌گرا مورد تجزیه و تحلیل قرار گرفت. نظارت و بررسی به‌صورت ادواری جهت اطمینان از صحت کدهای استخراج شده صورت گرفت.

یافته‌ها: بر اساس نتایج مقولات پژوهش در ۴ گروه اصلی قرار گرفتند که عبارت‌اند از: ۱- شرایط عرضه و تقاضا ۲- عوامل تولید ۳- بستر رقابت و استراتژی بنگاه ۴- صنایع مرتبط و حمایت‌کننده .

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: یافته‌ها نشان می‌دهد که نوآوری و فرصت‌ها در دوران کرونا تحت تأثیر این چهار عامل در حوزه ورزش قرار می‌گیرند لذا تحلیل فرصت‌های کارآفرینانه و نوآورانه ورزشی در تهدیدی به نام بحران کرونا گامی است برای فراهم کردن بستر کارآفرینی در حوزه ورزش و ادامه روند تأثیرات مثبت در دوره پس از کرونا.

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Role of Intellectual Property Rights in Developing Brand Equity of Iranian Sport Products

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aimed to investigate the role of intellectual property rights in developing brand equity in Iranian sporting goods.

Methodology: With the descriptive-survey research method and structural equation approach, statistical data were collected by field method. The statistical population consisted of the Iranian sporting goods market, which was selected through the available sampling method, and data were collected from Tehran, Karaj, Khuzestan, Semnan, and Isfahan. The sample size was 485. Modified Intellectual Property Rights Questionnaire (Hirschila, Bowen Ang Hove, 2017) and Brand Equity Questionnaire (Aaker, 1991) were used for data collection. Law and sports management professors assessed the validity and reliability of the questionnaires. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to evaluate the construct validity of the questionnaire, and structural equation modeling under the AMOS software was employed to present the research model.

Findings: The research model test results showed that the model appropriately fits the data and that the coefficients of the four factors of material law, moral law, international law, and copyright law have a positive and significant effect on developing sports brand equity. It is recommended that sporting goods manufacturers receive legal consultations to undertake registration for the legal branding of their products. Considering the presence of upstream documentation related to domestic production support and general administration policies in the economy, policymakers and the authorities take measures to develop, implement, and monitor the proper enforcement of intellectual property rights in the sports products industry.

Originality: In this study, comparing the intellectual property and brand equity in Iranian sports products have been studied for the first time.

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1. Introduction

Because of its positive social, cultural, and economic impact, the sports industry has become one of the world's largest industries. For most countries, this industry is an essential source of economic activity, income generation, employment, and international trade (Abdolmaleki et al., 2018). Therefore, it should be acknowledged that the importance of companies operating in the business sector is increasing in the current system of economics, where economic balance and exchange progressively interact with each other. Moreover, in the age of a knowledge-based economy, the value-creating activities of companies and organizations do not rely only on their tangible assets but also on their ability to use intangible assets as the main advantage of their value creation. One of the companies' most critical intangible assets is their trademark (brand). A brand is a name, word, symbol, design, or combination intended to introduce the products or services of a salesperson or a group of retailers to customers and differentiate the products from competitors (Amirhajilo et al., 2019). Marketing experts believe branding is the monopoly of products or services for sports organizations that transcend geographical boundaries and can become global (Amirhajilo et al., 2019). Therefore, designing and developing strong brands is the main priority of most successful sports organizations because it is widely believed that strong sports brands can increase competitive advantage in this vast industry. Therefore, sports managers must manage their organization and sports product from a brand's perspective (Bridgewater, 2010). For example, brand equity in the Aaker (1991) model involves five dimensions brand awareness, perceived brand quality, brand association, brand loyalty, and other brand equity assets such as royalties, trademarks, and recording popular brands (Aaker, 1991). In this regard, there are three main perspectives in scientific studies regarding the concept and role of brand equity. The first viewpoint is customer-based equity. From this perspective, brand equity is part of the attraction or repulsion of a particular product or service of a specific company or organization that is produced by the invisible component of the product or service provided, not by the characteristics of the product or service.

On the other hand, like other industries, the sports industry has products and goods, and its primary income is obtained from sports fans and enthusiasts and through sports goods and services (DeSarbo & Madrigal, 2011). Sports brands have become popular today, and even some have turned into legends. They acquire significant benefits from their image and value. Therefore, a brand should be considered the most important intangible asset in the sports industry. By reflecting on the business structure of the sports industry and considering the processes and sources of income in this field, it can be concluded that one of the most important topics to study in this industry is the status of brand and branding and the factors affecting it. Sports has emerged as a top industry in the last two decades. The sports brands from companies such as Nike and Adidas and big clubs such as Manchester United, Barcelona, and Real Madrid have become valuable and decisive to other industries. In this vast industry, like other companies and industries, well-known companies such as Nike and Adidas always try to increase the profit from the company's primary operations and activities, as well as raise the value of their brand and

eventually their company. Hence, it is not surprising that some of these companies appear in the list of the most valuable companies and owners of the most appreciated brands worldwide. Concerning sports clubs, which are the central enterprises of the sports industry, it must be admitted that the value is summed up in the name and logo, and in a word, in the club brand, which is why many clubs continue to generate revenue. Therefore, it is fair to say that branding is the newest game in the sports industry (Mirzaee et al., 2017). The existence of more than 50 active sports federations with nearly 100 specialized sports with appropriate sports equipment as well as millions of professional, championship, and recreational athletes around the world has encouraged the producers of sports goods and products to take advantage of the market supply and demand of this industry via developing an appropriate brand. For example, only in the sportswear business do brands such as Adidas, Nike, and Puma compete side by side to expand their market. There are also famous names and brands in Iran; for instance, an Iranian brand known as Majid is promoted in the sportswear field in Iran. However, in the world of sports products and services, branding and creating brand equity is a pervasive issue, and manufacturers of sports products and services have been looking for ways to increase the sales share of their products and services in target markets for many decades ago. This issue has found its way into sports management and marketing literature. Today numerous researchers in the marketing of sports products and services have emphasized the role of brand equity in this regard, studied it from different angles, and acknowledged the impact of brand equity in the market of sports products and services (Azadi et al., 2015a, 2015b; Ramezani Nejad et al., 2018).

On the other hand, the role of law in various commercial issues is another current concept that has shown its vital role in the world of economy and industry more than before. The idea of intellectual property rights is an influential topic in economics and the marketing of goods and services. Since creating a work (tangible or intangible) is considered a profession and source of income with the expansion of communication, a set of rules and regulations govern the relationship between the owner and the publisher with the government. Intellectual property is generally divided into "literary and artistic property" and "industrial property." In terms of literary and artistic property, Iran has not joined the relevant international treaties mainly due to differences in economic views. Still, Iran has acceded to Paris Convention in terms of industrial property¹. In

¹ Considering the global understanding of the importance of intellectual property in economic development, United Nations established the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). WIPO is an international organization for the provision of services, policy-making, information development and cooperation on intellectual property, which has 191 members and aims to lead an effective and balanced international system for intellectual property rights in order to develop creativity and innovation that will benefit the entire international community. The treaty establishing WIPO was concluded on July 14, 1967 in Stockholm and enacted in 1970. However, this institution dates back to the period between 1886 to 1886, namely Treaty of Paris and then Treaty of Bern, both of which were established under the auspices of Swiss federal government. Another goal of WIPO is to encourage and develop international cooperation in the field of creation, dissemination, application and support of ideas and intellectual works of individuals to improve the economic, social and cultural situation of humanity. WIPO activity in the field of international treaties is divided into three categories: Patent Cooperation Treaty; Madrid Treaty and Protocol on International Trademark Registration; and the Hague Agreement to support industrial

this regard, countries support intellectual property rights for two reasons: granting exclusive rights to the creator of the idea, both morally and economically, and giving society the right to use the created thought. In addition, governments as policymakers need to adhere to intellectual property rights to encourage creativity and innovation and to develop and use the results of creativity and innovation. This is necessary to establish social justice and equity in the business for economic and social development. Therefore, paying attention to intellectual property rights in the field of domestic and foreign direct investment is inevitable, and the upstream documents of the country emphasize this issue. In Iran's 20-year vision plan, the fourth, fifth, and sixth programs of cultural, social, and economic development, scientific and technological advancement document, general policies of the system in the field of economy and employment, the law of business environment improvement, public policies of the system regarding the encouragement of investment and the bills of Expediency Council² have paid particular attention to intellectual property.

Over the past two and a half decades, our country's policymakers have debated the benefits of reforming intellectual property rights. However, one of the main issues in these debates is that intellectual property rights limit the ability of domestic companies to emulate the advanced technologies of foreign companies, potentially slowing down economic progress. We can partly compensate for this through the benefits gained by increasing investment and production by multinational corporations. In this regard, the sports industry can also benefit from this right. The sports industry is a new area, and its support is being developed in the form of intellectual property. It includes industrial and literary, and artistic property because sports, like other industries, have a product and a commodity that may be based on skill, thought, and perhaps fame. Expanding intellectual property protection to producing sports products and services plays a vital role in countries' economic systems, especially the sports economy. Briefly, sporting events and related matters can be considered the source of products formed in this industry. Achievements of sporting events include the sale of rights, the televised

design. In addition to registering and encouraging various countries, especially developing ones, WIPO has acted as an arbitrator and mediator in resolving international disputes to accede to these treaties. The Cooperation Treaty is a patent for international treaties and has more than 150 member states. Iran joined WIPO in 2002 and became a member of Patent Cooperation Agreement on October 4, 2013.

²Improving the business environment and promoting its indicators (political, cultural, legislation environment as well as macro-economy, labor market, taxes and infrastructures) and supporting private and cooperative sectors, competition through modifying relevant laws, regulations and procedures in the framework of Iranian Constitution (13 policies of the Supreme Leader), promoting the establishment and expansion of capital development funds for commercializing ideas and supporting new, small and innovative companies, stabilizing a reassuring atmosphere for economic actors and investors relying on comparative and competitive advantages, creating new advantages and protecting property as well as all rights arising from it (Row 45, Economic Affairs, General Policies of the Fourth Cultural, Social and Economic Development Plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the general policies of the system in 20-year vision plan), protection of property and all rights arising from it, including intellectual property (subject of row 1 of general policies of the system regarding the encouragement of investment), establishment of the intellectual property system in the country (general policies of the system for the growth and development of science and research in the country in the field of higher education and research centers approved by the Expediency Council on March 6, 2007).

broadcast rights of competitions, advertisements, the sale of sports goods and equipment, and the like. Many studies have been conducted on the factors affecting the development of the share of sport in GDP. It was observed that in industrialized countries such as Italy, England, and Germany, the ratio of sports economy to GDP is 2%, 1.75%, and 1.4%, respectively, while it is 0038 in Iran (Razavi, 2005).

Examples of legal entities active in the sports sector are the signs and symbols of clubs, sports leagues, international sports organizations, and companies involved in the sports industry. They earn \$ 1000000 through the issuance of licenses to use these signs in the advertising and sportswear industries, and studies in this field are expanding (Hekmatnia & Calligrapher, 2010). (Margoni, 2016) argued that traditional and new ways of protecting property, property rights, and inheritor rights can still provide adequate protection for sporting event organizers. However, (Boyle, 2015) conducted a study entitled “Battle for control? Copyright, football, and European media rights” and found that there are more complex and subtle aspects of the status of intellectual property in sports law that need to be carefully considered. Studies conducted in Iran also show the unique and influential position of rights in sports, primarily intellectual property rights. (Amadi, 2017) also stated that some areas in Nigerian sports, including copyright, marketing, and distribution of sporting events, require appropriate intellectual property, which indicates the need to develop it in Nigerian sports. The gaps related to the intellectual property system are one of the problems in sports. (Soltani et al., 2020) indicated that specialized offices should be established throughout the country to improve the intellectual property in sports and take legal measures against thefts related to inventions, ideas, and innovations in sports to develop a suitable platform in sports promoting intellectual property. By taking care and protecting the works and creations produced in sports, as well as creating a database of ideas, creativity, and innovations of people in sports, experimental conditions are provided for improving intellectual property in the field of sports. In addition, the findings of studies by (Rahbari & Lajmorak, 2016) on the specific dimensions of trademark licenses in sports indicate that the general and ambiguous approach of Iranian legislative regulations and literature to trademark licenses lacks minimum standards. They are governing essential aspects of sports rights in terms of adequacy and efficiency to deal with specific issues of this kind of agreement in the field of sports and that the principles governing contracts should be systematized by benefiting from the experiences and reasonable legal solutions of other countries.

As observed, the need to respect intellectual property rights undeniably impacts the economics of various sports industries, especially in branding, which has tremendously affected the evolution of industrial markets in the last decade. Therefore, because the economy, industry, production, and protection of Iranian goods are the current primary debates in our country, the role of brand creation and security is an essential concern of economic actors, including producers of sports goods and services. This research seeks to carefully study this issue to formulate and suggest ways out of this challenge to support domestic production and promote the prosperity of Iranian sports goods to overcome the insignificant contribution of sports to GDP compared to countries possessing sports markets and brands. Therefore, the researcher in the present study

intends to answer whether the observance of intellectual property rights in the sports industry affects brand equity or not? And what are the influential components and their effectiveness? Correct answers to these questions can play a valuable role in preventing the damage caused by the negligence of legislators, policymakers, and planners in the country. It is for the economic development of the sports industry and protection of domestically produced sports goods, as well as providing an opportunity for investors in this market and confidence building in the economic actors of the sports industry.

2. Methodology

This study aimed to investigate the role of Intellectual Property Rights in Developing Brand Equity of Iranian Sports Products. We used the descriptive-survey research method and a practical approach to structural equations; the relevant statistical data were collected by field. The statistical population included all participants in the Iranian sports products market selected by available sampling, and data were collected from Tehran, Karaj, Ahvaz, Semnan, and Isfahan. According to the sample power software, the sample size was 485. Modified Intellectual Property Rights Questionnaire (Hirschila, Bowen Ang Hove, 2017) and Brand Equity Questionnaire (Aaker, 1991) were used for data collection. The research was conducted in person and electronically. In the electronic section, the questionnaire was given to people in the virtual group of sports stores (Majid, Daei, Yousef, etc.). SPSS and Amos (version 24) were used in the descriptive statistics section (frequency distribution table, skewness, and kurtosis for normal distribution) and in the inferential statistics section to analyze hypotheses from structural equations. The formal and content validity of the mentioned questionnaires was confirmed based on the opinions of physical education and sports sciences professors in the field of sports management (University of Tehran, Tarbiat Modares, Shahid Beheshti) as well as law professors (Shahid Beheshti University) in consultation with supervisors and advisors. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined using Cronbach's alpha, combined reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), average square variance (ASV), and divergent validity was determined by the Fornell-Larcker criterion.

3. Results

74.4% and 25.6% of participants in this study were men and women; more than 80% had BSc or higher degrees, and approximately 95% were over 30 years old.

Table 1. Normal distribution of data.

Research variables	Kurtosis		Skewness	
	Statistic	Error	Statistic	Error
Material	0.53	0.111	0.57	0.221
Moral	0.34	0.111	0.09	0.221
International	0.39	0.111	0.58	0.221

Research variables	Kurtosis	Skewness		
Copyright	0.03	0.111	-1.44	0.221
Loyalty	1.31	0.111	1.56	0.221
Quality	0.17	0.111	-0.74	0.221
Association	0.89	0.111	0.59	0.221
Awareness	0.18	0.111	-1.42	0.221

As shown in Table 1, the research variables have a normal distribution and can be subject to statistical tests of structural equations.

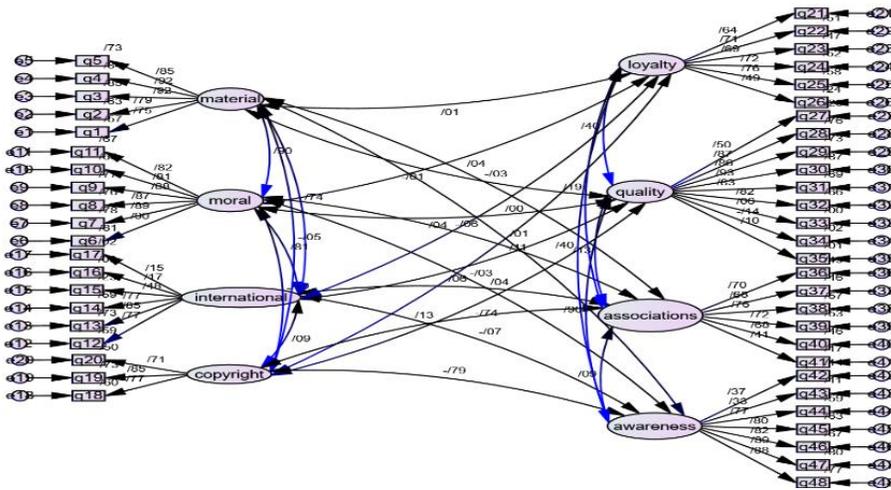


Figure 1. Initial measurement model in standard coefficient estimation mode.

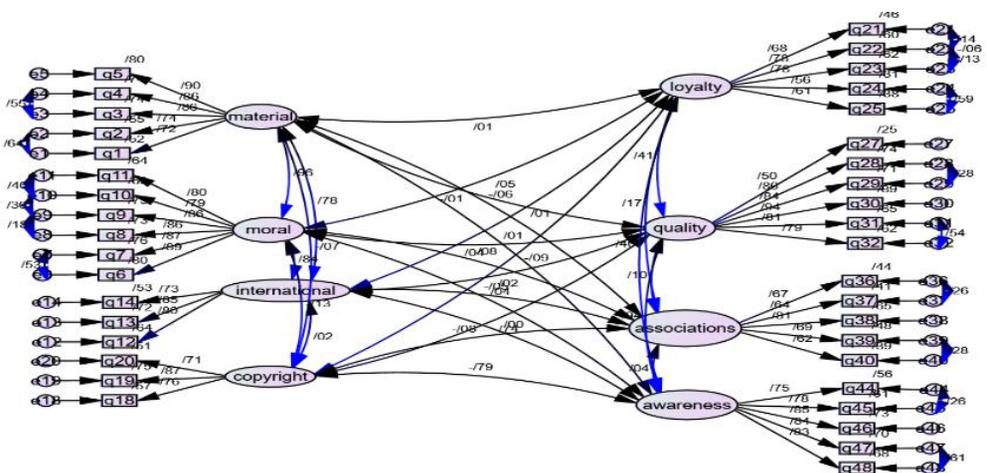


Figure 2. Modified measurement model in standard coefficient estimation mode.

Table 2. Fitting indices of the modified measurement model.

Fit indices	Type of fit index	Limit	Obtained value
Chi-square/Degrees of Freedom (df)	Parsimony index	<3	2.94
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	Parsimony index	<0.8	0.05
The goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	Absolute indices	>0.8	0.85
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	Absolute indices	>0.8	0.82
Normed of Fit Index (NFI)	Comparative indices	>0.9	0.92
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	Comparative indices	>0.9	0.93
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	Comparative indices	>0.9	0.93

Table 3. Validity and reliability of the construct.

Variables	Combined Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Average Square Variance (ASV)
Material	0.91	0.67	0.22
Moral	0.93	0.71	0.23
International	0.83	0.63	0.18
Copyright	0.82	0.61	0.17
Brand loyalty	0.81	0.67	0.05
Brand quality	0.91	0.64	0.23
Brand association	0.81	0.57	0.08

Table 4. Fornell-Larcker table.

International	Material	Moral	Copyright	Loyalty	Quality	Association	Awareness
0.79							
0.77	0.81						
0.84	0.96	0.84					
0.02	0.06	0.12	0.78				
0.09	0.01	0.05	0.08	0.82			
0.01	0.02	0.04	0.73	0.41	0.80		
0.04	0.05	0.08	0.08	0.16	0.10	0.75	
0.12	0.10	0.09	0.78	0.39	0.93	0.03	0.81

Another essential criterion determined by divergent validity is the degree of relationship of a structure with its characteristics compared with the relationship between that structure and other structures. Hence, the acceptable divergent fact of a model indicates that a structure in the model interacts more with its characteristics than with different structures. [Fornell and Larcker \(1981\)](#) state that divergent validity is acceptable when the value of AVE for each structure is greater than the shared variance between that structure and other structures (i.e., the square of correlation coefficient values between structures) in the model. [Tables 4](#) and [5](#) show that this criterion also has suitable conditions for the model in question.

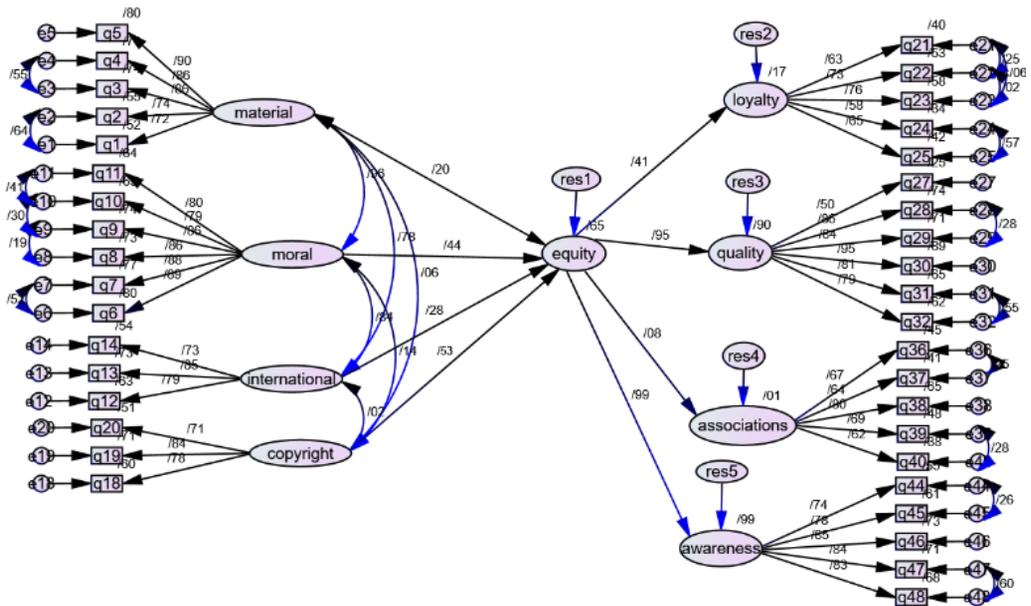


Figure 3. Structural model in standard coefficient estimation mode.

Table 5. Model fit index.

Fit indices	Type of fit index	Limit	Obtained value
Chi-square/Degrees of Freedom (df)	Parsimony index	<3	2.89
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	Parsimony index	<0.08	0.06
The goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	Absolute indices	>0.8	0.84
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	Absolute indices	>0.8	0.82
Normed of Fit Index (NFI)	Comparative indices	>0.9	0.94
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	Comparative indices	>0.9	0.92
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	Comparative indices	>0.9	0.92

4. Discussion and conclusion

The value of intellectual property as an asset of any company or organization is an essential component of brand and branding. Preserving the importance of intellectual property in brand management helps prevent widespread losses of brands. Today, along with marketing and brand management measures, intellectual property rights should be regarded as an investment and a competitive advantage in maintaining a brand. This study aimed to investigate the role of Intellectual Property Rights in Developing Brand Equity of Iranian Sports Products. Overall findings of the study showed that the management of intellectual property rights is a necessity for managing brand equity and that effective brand equity management should be a mandatory part of the daily business of any sports or non-sports organization or company. Data analysis showed that material rights as a subset of intellectual property rights have a positive and significant impact

on the brand equity of domestically produced sports goods. This finding is consistent with (Amadi, 2017) research results.

As stated earlier, material rights, among intellectual property rights, are optionally transferable and limited in time. This right involves publication and reproduction rights, as well as the right to perform, present and read the work to the public, to translate, to record and produce a film, to generate a consistent result or to combine, to use rewards, and so forth. Since branding is expanding in the sporting goods and services industry in Iran, the relevant agencies and institutions need to monitor the proper implementation of upstream documents related to the rights of producers of goods and products in various industries, including the fledgling sports industry. Those active in this sector should try to fulfill the legal requirements of registering their sport's brand with sufficient knowledge of the existing laws and regulations of the country to benefit from the monopoly of their brand with long-term planning and using the current consulting capacities. In addition, the role of awareness and training of brand owners should be the headline of educational activities of relevant agencies and unions.

Also, data analysis showed that moral right has a positive and significant effect as one of the subsets of intellectual property rights with brand equity. This finding is consistent with that of (Falvey et al., 2006) and (Kim & Hyun, 2011). As previously stated, the moral right in this study cannot be transferred to others, is not limited to place and time, and generally includes such things as the right to attribute the work to the author, preservation and integrity of the work, and the right to decide on the publication of the work. The right to attribute the work to the author refers to the non-transferability of this right to others, even if the author agrees and this right is reserved for the heir. At the same time, the right to preservation and integrity of the work means the right to object to any change or action damaging the creator's reputation. Therefore, given that the country's legislators in the last decade have paid particular attention to Iran's economic development in the region. It is necessary to present the executive solutions of the general system policies in the financial sector, emphasizing the protection of the brands related to industries of different sectors. Including the sports sector, while encouraging the economic actors of the sports industry to create unique brands in this marketing field.

The direct effect of international law as another subset of intellectual property rights on the brand equity of sports products was another finding of the present study, which was consistent with the results of (Nkomo, 2014). International law intellectual property rights indicate the existence of essential and strong treaties and conventions and the possibility of international prosecution for violations related to trademark abuse. Therefore, given the presence of the Paris Convention (1883), Iran acceded in 2009 and accepted the Lisbon Amendment, as well as the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 1974 as the fourth convention recognized by the United Nations. It seems necessary for the community of producers and investors in the sports sector to develop the unique value of sports brands and take advantage of relevant capacities for supporting and strengthening their brands with sufficient confidence and reliability. (Nkomo, 2014) considers the international right of intellectual property as a lever to support the brand and replace the concept of communal land with that of

competitive land. From the perspective of a knowledge-based economy, intellectual property rights revive and make small and medium-sized investments competitive, adding value to their intellectual assets to the point where they commercialize goods and related industries.

Without the protection of international legal property, investing in the industry would not be cost-effective. It could be in jeopardy because the segregation of goods and services would be eliminated. The intellectual property rights of counterfeit market competitors would be lost due to a lack of monopoly during a fierce competition predisposing to abuse. Finally, the results showed that copyright has a positive and significant effect on the brand equity of sports products. This finding is consistent with the results of (Margoni, 2016). In a study, the latter showed that remedial solutions based on old and new forms of property and inheritance rights can still provide adequate protection for sports organizers. Copyright translated to request to release and reproduce. However, realistically, it must be translated into the right to material exploitation. Today, with the development and evolution of the copyright concept, it is considered almost equivalent to the author's copyright.

Nevertheless, author copyright refers to a set of material and moral rights and arises in countries that value moral rights. In explaining this issue, intellectual property right (copyright) provides for commercialization. It enables the investors to reach their material and spiritual goals, through which the investor is encouraged to repeat research and innovation. This positive cycle leads to wealth creation, increases welfare, and presents its fruits to society. Strong and practical support of copyright law is a cornerstone to developing sound investment in research, science, and technology that bears long-term economic benefits. It is suggested that the country's policymakers include copyright laws and related issues in the framework of the executive law.

It seems that due to the undeniable role of the sports economy in the macro-economy of developing countries and its role in employment, as well as the need to inform professionals, industries, and brands, legislative authorities, and policy-making activists of this fledgling. And the active sector should take advantage of legal capacities, receive specialized advice from legal experts and take action to support the sports industry. It creates a compelling connection between legal knowledge and sports sector management and provides legal development, prosperity, and secure economic bedrock for sports.

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نقش حقوق مالکیت فکری در توسعه ارزش ویژه برند محصولات ورزشی ایرانی

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کلیدواژه

اخلاق
اقتصاد ورزش
حقوق قانونی
کیبی رایت
مالکیت معنوی

نوع مقاله

پژوهشی اصیل

چکیده

هدف: این پژوهش با هدف بررسی نقش حقوق مالکیت معنوی در توسعه ارزش ویژه برند در کالاهای ورزشی ایرانی انجام شد.

روش: با روش تحقیق توصیفی- پیمایشی و با رویکرد معادلات ساختاری، داده‌های آماری به روش میدانی جمع آوری شد. جامعه آماری بازار کالاهای ورزشی ایران بود که به روش نمونه‌گیری در دسترس انتخاب شد و داده‌ها از شهرهای تهران، کرج، خوزستان، سمنان و اصفهان جمع‌آوری شدند. حجم نمونه ۴۸۵ نفر بود. برای جمع‌آوری داده‌ها از پرسشنامه حقوق مالکیت فکری اصلاح شده (هیرشیل، بوون انگ هوو، ۲۰۱۷) و پرسشنامه ارزش ویژه برند (آکر، ۱۹۹۱) استفاده شد. اساتید حقوق و مدیریت ورزشی روایی و پایایی پرسشنامه‌ها را ارزیابی کردند. برای ارزیابی روایی سازه پرسشنامه از تحلیل عاملی تاییدی و برای ارائه مدل تحقیق از مدل سازی معادلات ساختاری تحت نرم افزار AMOS استفاده شد.

یافته‌ها: نتایج آزمون مدل پژوهش نشان داد که مدل برازش مناسبی با داده‌ها دارد و ضرایب چهار عامل حقوق مادی، حقوق اخلاقی، حقوق بین‌الملل و حقوق کیبی رایت تأثیر مثبت و معناداری بر توسعه ارزش ویژه برند ورزشی دارند. توصیه می‌شود تولیدکنندگان لوازم ورزشی برای ثبت نام برند قانونی محصولات خود از مشاوره حقوقی بهره‌مند شوند. با توجه به وجود اسناد بالادستی مرتبط با حمایت از تولید داخلی و سیاست‌های اداره کل در اقتصاد، سیاست‌گذاران و مسئولان نسبت به توسعه، اجرا و نظارت بر حسن اجرای حقوق مالکیت معنوی در صنعت محصولات ورزشی اقدام می‌کنند.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: در این پژوهش برای اولین بار به مقایسه حقوق مالکیت معنوی و ارزش ویژه برند در محصولات ورزشی ایران پرداخته شده است.

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The Role of Human Capabilities Development in the Sustainable Development of Sport Business

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aims to identify human capabilities, determine their developmental levels, and, finally, determine the role of human capabilities in the sustainable development of sports business.

Methodology: It was conducted through a qualitative research method with a fundamental-exploratory nature. Research data were collected through snowball sampling based on in-depth interviews and focus groups composed of experts. Then, the data were coded and analyzed based on grounded theory via a constructivist approach.

Findings: The results showed that human sports capabilities fall within the three categorical levels of fundamental, supportive, and operational capabilities. It was also revealed that individual, structural, and contextual transforming factors are needed to transform human capabilities in sport to desired functions. Moreover, the results indicated that the consequences of developing human capabilities in sports business include economic, cultural, security, health, educational, political, industrial, and moral ones. Overall, the development of human capabilities in sports can lead to sustainable development in the sports business.

Originality: In this article, the role of human capabilities in the sustainable development of sports businesses with a qualitative method was investigated. This work aims to expand the existing knowledge about the role of human capabilities in development.

Keywords

Human Capabilities
Qualitative Method
Sports Business
Sustainable Development
Transforming Factors

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1. Introduction

Fundamental changes in the activities, practices, and business during the past decades have caused the human capability approach to receive the attention of leading organizations (McLagan, 1996). In recent years, organizations have recognized that human resources are paramount in achieving sustainable and compelling competitive advantage (Harris et al., 2013). In fact, in a world where knowledge and communication with clients have assumed importance more than ever, human capital reflects the bulk of knowledge, technical skills, creativity, and experience of organizations. It will also become increasingly important, and the workforce is considered a productive asset rather than a costly asset (Gasper, 2007). Fundamental changes in the activities, practices, and business of the management of human resources during the past decades have caused the human capability approach to receive the attention of leading organizations (Cave & McKeown, 1993) has defined capability as correctly applying knowledge and skills. In terms of this definition, Hantstin (2000) argues that human capability is generally considered as a set of behaviors or relevant activities, a variety of knowledge categories, skills, and incentives that are viewed as behavioral, technical, and motivational prerequisites for successful performance in a specific job or role. Based on these definitions, (Rodriguez et al., 2002) have described the capability approach as combining the knowledge, skills, and attributes required to accomplish a role effectively.

As the most prominent contemporary theorist in development economics, (Sen, 1993) defined capability as one's ability and talent for doing practical activities or obtaining opportunities and proper welfare conditions and access to the functions. In other words, as (Gasper, 2007) argues, the capability is a complete set of alternative and accessible activities that one can do (5, 14). (Sen, 1993) believes that whatever one can do is their capability, and what he does is their function. When realized, the processes create consequences that lead to the development and the progress of objectives (Gasper, 2007). The critical issue that must be discussed here is whether the enjoyment of basic capabilities such as literacy, education and skill, nutrition, and a healthy body is sufficient to expand the range of an individual's possibilities? It is essential to select their favorite lifestyle or develop a combination of their capabilities to prevent failure in critical conditions. Therefore, one should be provided with a more significant number of selection opportunities to have a wide range of selection alternatives, for example, a sports field. There are some conditions out of the individual's control. Even the acquisition of these individual capabilities seems to largely depend on social and environmental needs (Sen, 1997).

If social and environmental contexts are not prepared, individual capabilities cannot be developed, or they will not be functional (Maitland et al., 2015). Today, new approaches such as sustainable and human development are raised towards the final goal of development, that is, human beings, not humans, as a means for development. Sustainable development requires human development and deals with those aspects of human development that can meet the present and future needs and remove deprivations without reducing vital sources (Schultz, 1994). Sustainable development is referred to

as the development that meets the present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Two key concepts are at play in this definition: the idea of "needs," fundamental human needs. In this regard, it should be specified which needs should be assigned priority and be allocated specific resources. The second concept is "limitation," which has been imposed on environmental abilities to achieve present and future needs due to the conditions of technology and social organization (Nussbaum, 2003). Sustainable development aims to meet the present and future needs and reduce known limitations. Indeed, sustainable development is a process for obtaining sustainability and stability in each activity that requires fast and integrated substitution and resources (Seippel, 2006). Sustainable development, along with economic growth and human development in a society or a developed economy, is an attempt to achieve stable development apart from economic development. In sustainable development, various aspects should be considered. First, needs and deprivations should be dealt with, and then, the resources that can improve the status quo and permanently remove forfeitures should be identified and allocated. Finally, this development should not be limited to economic growth, but social, cultural, and political development should also be considered.

Research has shown that human development should be obtained to achieve sustainable development (Nussbaum, 2003; Sen, 1993). The concept of human capabilities exists in human development. Studies show that a prerequisite for human development is the consideration of human capabilities (Gasper, 2007; Nicholson & Hoye, 2008; Sen, 1997). The concepts of capability and human development were extended by the efforts of researchers such as "Amartya Sen" and "Mahbub ul Haq" (Pakistani economist and Yale University researcher). "Sen" and "Anand" raised the issue of sustainable human development with an emphasis on this approach in 1994 and reiterated the rights of minorities, exploited groups, women, and attention to future generations. "Sen" believes that a concept broader than development focused on improving human life and freedom is required (Alkire, 2005).

Human development is a freedom- or people-oriented developmental process that expands people's opportunities and choices and grows and realizes their capabilities. The human development that seeks to improve the quality of life has two aspects: on the one hand, it emphasizes the formation of human capabilities; on the other hand, it focuses on how to use these developed capabilities (Sen, 1997). (Nicholson & Hoye, 2008) studied the available capital in sport for development and argued that the direction and prospects of human capabilities development in sports organizations are interpreted differently. These differences are due to vague and ambiguous issues and various interpretations of the capabilities available in the sport.

In this approach, an expanded selection of features is developed, emphasizing the influential role of cultural issues introduced to determine the main direction of development thinking and action. In this approach, development was introduced as an expansion of people's selection capabilities, emphasizing the influential role of cultural issues in determining the main direction of thought and developmental measures. (Harris et al., 2013) suggested that professional sports should consider factors such as internal relationships, social networks, and public support that lead to better

performance efficiency in sports teams to determine the available human capabilities. (Ferkins et al., 2009) concluded that intra-organizational relations affect the development of strategic capabilities of sports organizations. (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000) stated that social contexts such as sports, social networks, and relationships that are one of the most critical factors in development are paid less attention; instead, potential sources and political issues are emphasized. (Munro, 2005) acknowledged that an association between sport and social services should be established to develop human capabilities in sport (with a focus on football as a social process). He also emphasized participatory decision making, collective learning, experiential learning, the presence of necessary opportunities to pursue a college education, and opportunities required to improve knowledge and skills in administrative procedures to realize human capabilities in sport. Since sports environments are dynamic spaces in which humans play a significant role (Oja et al., 2015), understanding the dimensions and consequences of the development of human capabilities can lead to the improvement of the codification of performance indicators at the national and international levels. Thus, this study attempts to identify human capabilities, the factors transforming human capabilities to functions, and their role in sustainable development in the sport.

2. Methodology

The present study is exploratory to develop the existing knowledge and understanding of The Role of Human Capabilities Development in the Sustainable Development of Sport. This study is qualitatively based on data mining. Grounded Theory was used in this study. Researchers are allowed to extract commonalities from massive amounts of data systematically and theorize in the research scope. The main objective of this approach is to explain a phenomenon via the specification of its key elements (concepts, categories, and propositions). Then, the classification of the relations of these elements within the context and process of that phenomenon. A summary of the study is as follows Table 1:

Table 1. Research process elements.

Elements	Type
Research nature	Exploratory-basic
Research type	Qualitative
Research paradigm	Interpretative
Research approach	Inductive
Research strategy	Grounded theory
Data collection source	Interviews/ focus groups/ studies relating to program documents/ existing theoretical studies
Data Analysis Method	Coding, Conceptualizing, Categorizing

Creating concepts, categories, and propositions is a cyclical and repetitive process. In this method, research questions should be open and general rather than hypothetical; the resulting theory should explain the phenomenon under study. Three overlapping processes are at play in the analysis of grounded theory, i.e. initial coding, focused

coding, and theoretical coding. In conducting this research, data collection and analysis were performed knowingly at the same time. Initial data collection was done for the formation of continuous data collection. This gave the researcher opportunities to increase the competence level of appropriate categories.

Hence the sampling process is guided by the ongoing theory development. Data collection and analysis take place in alternating sequences (Figure 1). This can also be described as an iterative cycle of induction and deduction, consisting of the collection of data and constant comparison between results and new findings to guide further data collections.

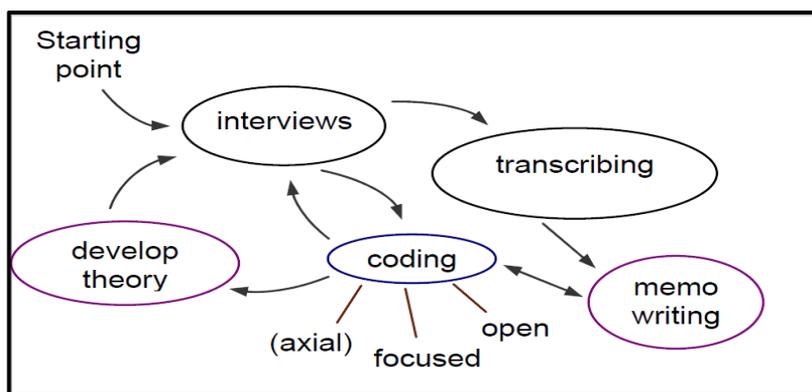


Figure 1. Steps in developing a grounded theory.

To select the sample for in-depth interviews, the researcher attempted to use both academic subjects (faculty members) and those with managerial experience in athletic organizations. Faculty members of the academic majors of sport management, sociology, and Development Economics; all high-ranking, middle-ranking, and executive managers of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and National Federations; and all the people experienced in the field of sports organizations constituted the study population. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were employed to perform in-depth interviews. In this technique, an initial group was selected for an interview, and the initial group was introduced to the following groups. After that, sampling continued (17 in-depth interviews and two focus groups) until the research reached sufficient theoretical saturation. The data were inductively obtained from in-depth interviews with elites and establishing focus groups and were constructively analyzed. An example of the method of data analysis is as follows:

Table 2. An example of data coding.

Interview text	Initial coding	Sub-category	Categories	Focused coding
Human capabilities and development reflect the progress and development of communities. This is since the power of choice increases when development occurs in sports. The enjoyment of numerous capabilities leads to extricating from many problems. Individuals should exert self-determination to develop human capabilities in sports, and suitable structures should be available to develop their abilities. Sports environments are variable and dynamic, wherein individuals should be equipped with multiple capabilities to reach success.	Human capability and development show the progress and development in societies. Choice power is more vital in more advanced situations. People should exert self-determination in developing capabilities. Appropriate structures are needed for the development of capabilities. Sports environments are variable and dynamic.	Having multiple choice Assistance in solving problems One's willingness to develop capabilities Availability of appropriate structures Availability of changing and dynamic environments	Appropriate organization in dynamic environments Creation of opportunities for multiple choice	Operational capability

3. Results

Coding and analysis of the results showed that human capabilities in sports lie at three fundamental, supportive, and operational levels. Three levels, including individual, structural, and contextual, are also required to develop human capabilities. Overall, the model of human capability development in sports is schematically shown as follows in the initial, focused, and axial coding (Figure 2):

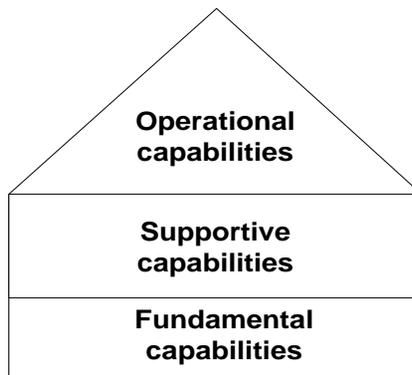


Figure 2. A model of human capabilities in the sport.

The data analysis and coding results indicated that three categories of transforming factors are required to develop human capabilities, each of which includes specific components. These factors include individual changing factors, structural transforming factors, and background transforming factors. Transforming elements and their features are presented in the following Figure 3.

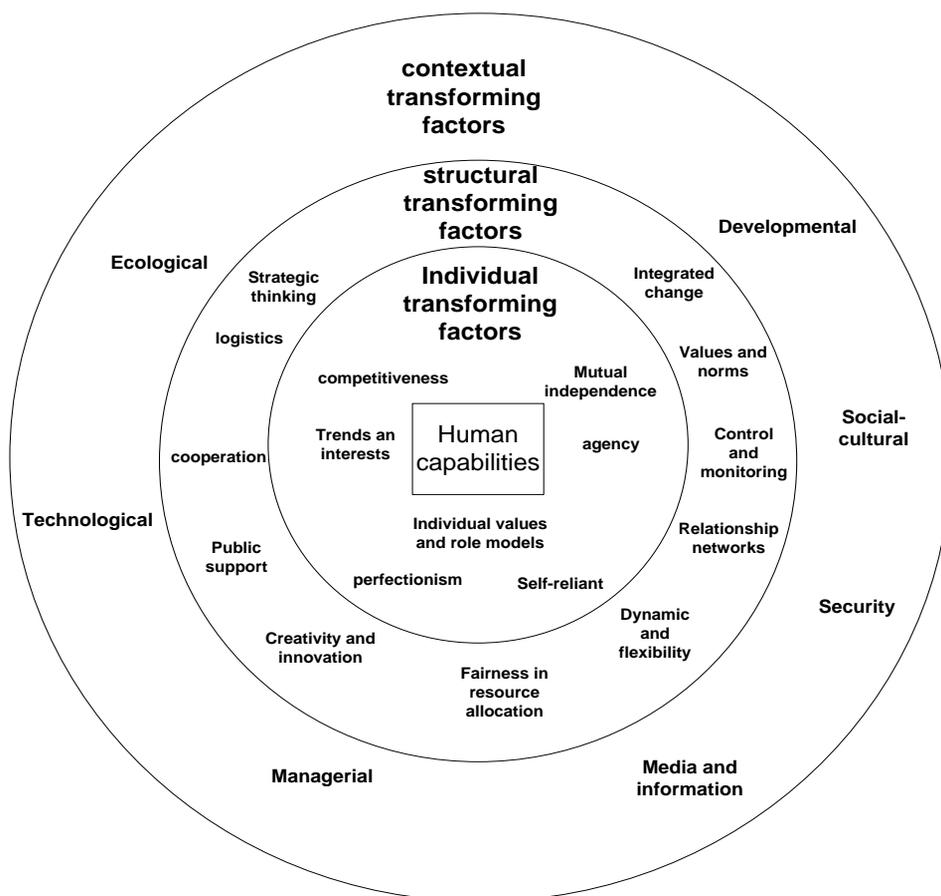


Figure 3. A typology of transforming factors in human capabilities in the sport.

Coding and analysis of the results showed that consequences of human capability development in sport are educational, health, social-cultural, economic, security, industrial, political, moral, and ethical. Overall, the model of consequences of human capability development in sports is schematically shown as follows after the initial, focused, and axial coding (Figure 4):

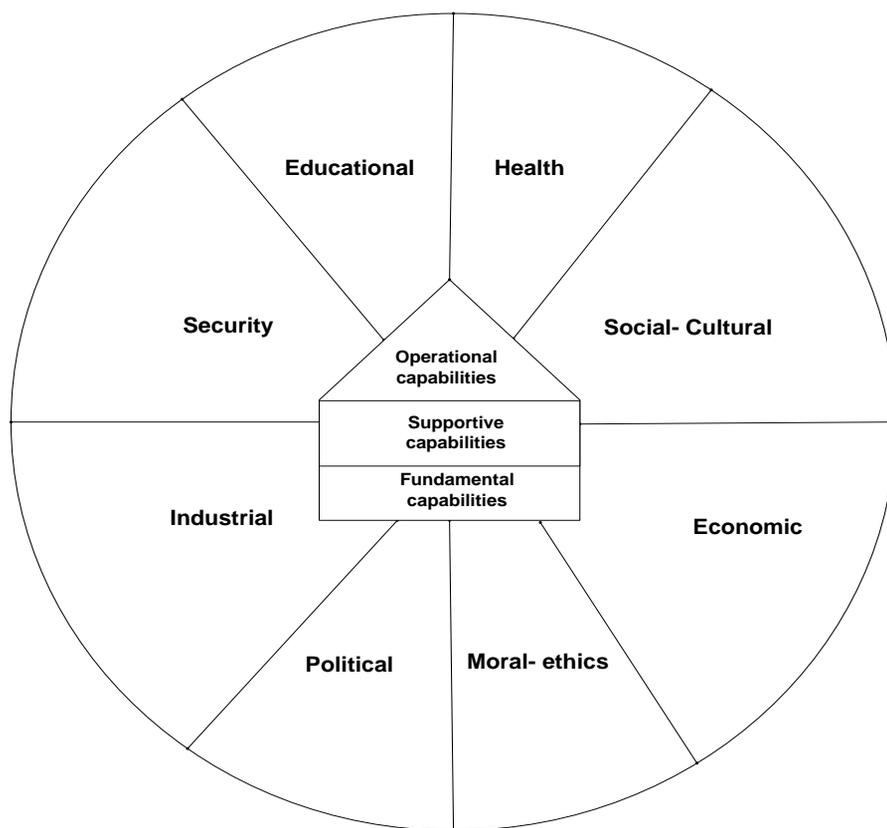


Figure 4. Consequences of human capability development in sport.

4. Discussion and conclusion

This study attempted to identify and classify human capabilities in sports and their role in sustainable development in the sport. In general, it can be stated that human capabilities in sports enjoy three fundamental, supportive, and operational levels. Essential human capabilities are referred to as the capabilities whose existence is necessary for optimal performance in sports—such capabilities as intelligence. Supportive human capabilities are believed to be helpful along with fundamental capabilities through which the opportunities in sports can be taken advantage of. Such capabilities as education and experiential learning lie within supportive capabilities. Finally, operational capabilities are the last type of human capabilities in sports. These capabilities can be used in sporting practical applications. For example, participating in a particular kind of sport is associated with a family history of the sport.

It can be stated that there are three types of transforming factors in the development of human capabilities, namely individual changing factors, structural transforming factors, and contextual transforming factors. At the personal level (individual transforming factors) in which the person should demonstrate sufficient will for the

development of their capabilities, factors such as unique values and patterns, competition seeking, willingness and motivation, interdependence, self-reliance, and perfection-seeking are at play. It's worth mentioning that these factors can lead to the development of individual capabilities. Interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships and also relationships with peers and friends fall into this category. The existence of sports values and models and the achievement of respect and identity can also be helpful in the development of human capacities at the individual level. Structural transforming factors are the following transforming factors in developing human potential in sport. At the structural level, factors such as collaboration and cooperation, systemic thinking, general support, support, innovation and creativity, mobility and flexibility, equitable distribution of resources, networking, monitoring and control, and the values and norms are at play. Finally, in the contextual transforming factors lie environmental factors which indirectly influence the development of human capabilities. These factors include socio-cultural, security, technological, media-information, developmental, ecological, and management factors. At this level, the presence of cultural and economic factors can play a more prominent role in the development of human capabilities. When there is an appropriate cultural environment in which attention to athletes and sports models and values are founded within the social and economic facilities are at a desirable level, it can be hoped that human capabilities in sport will be developed and expanded.

As a multidimensional phenomenon, sports can have desired functions and consequences in today's world. However, the condition of achieving such outcomes and products is the presence of such factors as financial and economic resources, equipment items and infrastructures, rules and regulations, relevant organizations, and media. Cultural and economic factors are an outcome of the development of human capabilities. An appropriate cultural environment wherein attention to athletes, models, and sports values are institutionalized in the context of social and economic facilities lies at a desirable level. It is hoped that human capabilities can expand in sports and reach the desired economic level (Maitland et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the availability of new concepts such as sports diplomacy is indicative of the outcomes of the development of human capabilities. When a country is prosperous in sports, it will obtain more power at the global level and, thereby, it can progress its political objectives. In addition, sport contributes to the growth of ethics and morale, the health of society, and the improvement of education dimensions. As (Nicholson & Hoye, 2008) suggest, sport is an instrument at the authorities' disposal utilizing which they can bring up a happy and efficient generation. Industrial development is another consequence of the development of human capabilities, which is obtained from human health resources in the community.

Since the development of human capabilities in sports plays an essential role in actualizing sports talents, increasing knowledge and skills, economic growth, and reduction of socio-cultural deprivations. Therefore, attention to and recognition of human capabilities in sports and determining their development levels are of the utmost importance. In conclusion, it can be stated that human capability development can lead to sustainable development in the sport. Hence, it is suggested that the authorities adopt appropriate policies and determine appropriate structures, providing desired contexts

and environments to identify and cultivate talents. In this context, the primary onus is on the ministry of education to fully consider such capabilities and provide appropriate contexts and structures for their development. Therefore, it is recommended that the development of human capabilities in sport gets done in the early childhood years through the specification of appropriate policies.

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نقش توسعه قابلیت‌های انسانی در توسعه پایدار کسب‌وکارهای ورزشی

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کلیدواژه

توسعه پایدار
روش کیفی
عوامل تبدیل
قابلیت انسانی
کسب‌وکار ورزشی

نوع مقاله

پژوهشی اصیل

چکیده

هدف: هدف از انجام این تحقیق، شناسایی قابلیت‌های انسانی و تعیین سطوح توسعه آن‌ها و درنهایت تعیین نقش قابلیت‌های انسانی در توسعه پایدار کسب‌وکارهای ورزشی است.

روش: این تحقیق با روش تحقیق کیفی و با ماهیت اکتشافی- بنیادی انجام شد. از طریق روش نمونه‌گیری گلوله برفی و بر اساس مصاحبه‌های عمیق و تشکیل گروه‌های کانونی با متخصصان، داده‌های تحقیق جمع‌آوری شد. بر اساس نظریه داده بنیاد و با رویکرد ساخت‌گرا داده‌ها مورد کدگذاری و تجزیه و تحلیل قرار گرفتند.

یافته‌ها: نتایج نشان داد که قابلیت‌های انسانی در ورزش به سه سطح قابلیت‌های بنیادی، قابلیت‌های حمایتی و قابلیت‌های عملیاتی دسته‌بندی می‌شوند. همچنین نتایج نشان داد که برای تبدیل قابلیت‌های انسانی در ورزش به کارکردهای مطلوب نیاز به عوامل تبدیل فردی، ساختاری و زمینه‌ای است. علاوه بر این نتایج نشان داد که پیامدهای توسعه قابلیت‌های انسانی در کسب‌وکارهای ورزشی شامل پیامدهای اقتصادی، اجتماعی- فرهنگی، امنیتی، سلامتی، تربیتی، سیاسی، صنعتی و اخلاقی است. به صورت کلی توسعه قابلیت‌های انسانی در ورزش می‌تواند منجر به توسعه پایدار کسب‌وکارهای ورزشی شود.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: در این مقاله به بررسی نقش قابلیت‌های انسانی در توسعه پایدار کسب‌وکارهای ورزشی با روش کیفی و با هدف بسط دانش موجود در مورد نقش قابلیت‌های انسانی در توسعه پرداخته شد.

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Women's Career Development in Sport Management A Grounded Theory Approach

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The tourism industry is one of the most important industries of the new century, which is very dynamic and profitable. Sports tourism is an essential part of this industry. The research aimed to identify and categorize the sports attractions in Iran and to design a development model for the sports tourism industry.

Methodology: The research method was Grounded-Theory, with a systematic approach. The sampling method was theoretical sampling. In addition to studying literature, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 35 experts, including 19 faculty members of Iranian universities and 16 travel and tourism agency professionals, to achieve theoretical saturation.

Findings: In the first part of the research, the results showed that there are 11 types of sports attractions in Iran. The second part of the research showed that identifying and analyzing sports attractions, marketing, planning, and organizing to welcome tourists are the essential measures necessary for developing sports tourism. The development of sports tourism in section tourist welcoming is related to the development of the entire tourism industry and requires investment, planning, and organization. Marketing, providing necessary services, and creating distinct and exciting experiences for tourists and satisfying them are the key variables to success in the development of the industry. All these works require the cooperation and coordination of people and organizations in the sovereign, government, public and private sectors.

Originality: We have identified and categorized the types of sports attractions in Iran and presented a comprehensive development model for the development of the sports tourism industry.

Keywords

Culture
Discrimination
Gender Approach
Iranian Society
Job Opportunities
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1. Introduction

Women are half of the human resources in any society or organization. However, rare Iranian organizations are striving to make effective use of their full human resource potential. Combining all human resources can realize the valuable gender equality of women and men in attaining a country's development goals. Apart from considerations of democracy and social justice as well as the most efficient use of human resources, female participation in politics, particularly at the highest levels, is vital since it provides representation for another point of view (Jensen, 2008). The poor involvement and sometimes total absence of women in Iranian society is palpable at different intensities. However, the crystal-clear point is that such inequality often manifests in developing countries like other social and cultural realms. Another traditionally male-defined industry is the sports industry. Most certainly, men have dominated the playing fields regarding the number of participants, salaries earned, and media coverage (Hums & Sutton, 1999). There are challenges at different levels. For example, the number of female athletes has increased over the last decade, but the opposite is true of female head coaches nationally and internationally (Culver et al., 2019).

Nevertheless, an awareness of the underrepresentation of women in top positions in the corporate world has prompted many corporations to review their policies and practices (Oakley, 2000). Such inequality will be eliminated, and women will be employed in high-level management only by understanding the problem's details. It should be noted. However, women's participation can only be effective and meaningful when underlying gender power relations are transformed, and attention and support are given to women's specific knowledge and capacities (UNWomen, 2014)¹. As women constitute a minority in leadership positions, the factors that impact their emergence as leaders—success factors and barriers—are essential to understand (Peus et al., 2015). The people in bureaucratic ranks reflect the public's diverse values, racial makeup, socioeconomic backgrounds, and gender (Aguado & Frederickson, 2012). Gender and racial discrimination in organizations are institutionalized at critical stages in the employment process (recruitment and selection, reward systems, working time, equal treatment, training, promotion, redundancy) (Bradley et al., 2004). Personnel systems, approaches, structures, and operations inside organizations have created barriers to equal opportunities. Career development is essential for understanding whether organizations have created equal opportunities for women and men. The dynamic nature of a career may be characterized as 'career development. Popular associations of the term 'career' with promotion and material rewards will provide only partial insight (Bradley et al., 2004). While the issue of career development can be associated with higher material benefits, a promotion in bonuses and benefits per person will not necessarily be considered career development. Career development combines career planning, the individual's responsibility, and career management, which relates to the organization's training and development requirements and initiatives. Career planning is the process that the individual undertakes to assess their strengths and development

¹ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality And The Empowerment Of Women

opportunities relative to the job they are currently performing and the future career that they aspire to (Taylor et al., 2015).

The current reality in the Iranian organizations indicates the low number of women involved in management, whether at the macro or micro scale. (Zahedi, 2007) argued that women and men with comparable conditions have no equal opportunities in the Iranian academic community. She concluded that development and progress plans would not guarantee enforcement no matter how systematically or rationally devised. She believed that weaknesses lay not in the current projects but in putting them into practice and commitment to enforcement. In this sense, Iran has not been performing desirably compared to many other countries worldwide. Iranian women not only barely benefit from employment opportunities equal to men but are also limited in terms of career advancement, which is why there are a handful of female managers in Iranian society. In Iran, it is inevitable to understand women's career development, which has been evaluated to be poor in terms of quality and quantity. Accordingly, this qualitative study attempted to explore career development for women in the Iranian top sports management realm. The statistics indicate dramatic changes internationally. Most recently, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) reported that women in the new makeup of the commissions took up more than a third of the positions, expanding by 60% over the last three years. The IOC had 449 members on the Commission in 2016, of whom 150 were female (International Olympic Committee, 2016).

The researchers obtained reliable information about the involvement of women in middle and senior levels of the Iranian sport by making numerous visits to the Ministry of Sport and Youth. However, they faced an obstacle every time, thus restricting the project in the first place and ultimately preventing reliable data. Nonetheless, an overview of the organizational charts for 51 Iranian sports federations revealed that only two women were involved, one as a federation president and the other as federation secretary. Moreover, there are women engaged in vice-president posts in most federations, even though they were not more than a mere formality, since they have not been given much authority even in women's sports. The involvement of women in the Iranian sport senior positions at the national and provincial levels suggested unfavorable figures, not even amounting to a dozen. This result, in turn, demonstrates the importance of investigating the status quo in the senior management of Iranian sports.

Nowadays, gender inequality can be observed in most areas. Studies indicated that women were detained under a glass ceiling during past eras when unwritten rules blocked women on the road to engagement at high organizational ranks. The male-dominated culture prevailing the society prefers men under identical conditions for men and women; the masculine sports environment (Anderson, 2009; Steinfeldt et al., 2012). Sport management studies have been interested in gender diversity and women's leadership development in recent years. However, women continue to face challenges in sports organizations in developed countries. For example, despite the increased attention on leadership development within the sports industry, organizational gender and leadership development theory has not been applied within an Australian sports framework. In recent studies, participants believed that their organizations had gender policies, but they were unclear or limited in understanding (Banu-Lawrence et al., 2020).

2. Theoretical background

The issue of gender in the work environment can further scrutinize women's career development. We consider each approach as a frame to understand what gender is and why there is inequality between women and men at work. The first and perhaps most common approach to gender equity stems from a liberal strain of political theory, which posits that individuals rise and fall on their own merits. From this perspective, gender is an individual characteristic marked by one's biological category as male or female. Sex-role socialization produces individual differences in attitudes and behaviors between men and women, which have rendered women less skilled than men in competing in business (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). The second approach takes a nearly opposite standpoint to the first one. Although its conception of gender remains socialized differences between men and women, its proponents argue that these differences should not be eliminated but celebrated (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). The second approach seeks to create a well-modified structure that can include women and their feminine differences rather than as a weakened version of men. The third approach to gender equity focuses on structural barriers to women's recruitment and advancement. From this perspective, gender is still framed as differences between men and women; however, these differences result from socialization processes and differential structures of opportunity and power that block women's access and advancement (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). The fourth approach, however, is non-traditional and novel to the issue. The four frames are distinguished by their conception of gender and their grounding in different theoretical and epistemological positions. From this perspective, gender is neither an individual characteristic nor a basis for discrimination. Instead, it is a complex set of social relations enacted across various social practices within and outside formal organizations (Ely & Meyerson, 2000).

Research into gender-related diversity in sports organizations consistently demonstrates that sports organizations are far from being equitable for some reasons. While the aim of some policies is to increase the numbers of women in management positions, this does little to change the dominance of masculinities that are profoundly and historically entrenched in sport (Shaw & Frisby, 2006). However, how do they enter an executive office where women are generally afforded few political, social, and economic opportunities? (Jalalzai, 2008). Nevertheless, in a society grounded in hegemonic masculinity, women are considered off limits in certain areas, sport being one of the most obvious (Whisenant et al., 2002).

Although many aspects of career development might influence the decision to move into traditionally defined career advancement through senior management in parks and recreation, we were surprised that the number of women seeking senior management had not increased. Some of this lack of interest could be because of the high stress and time commitment women perceived, which may be challenging to negotiate and balance with their personal lives (Henderson et al., 2013). Since most women who have risen to the top were married and had children, they were confronted with the problems that affect most women who have both a family and a career. As a result, such as making provision for adequate childcare and dealing with feelings of guilt about not spending enough time with their families (Jensen, 2008). In the subcomponent of individual

desire, it should be noted that women suffered from psychological factors that mainly hindered their aspirations. Fear of failure, lack of confidence, and poor support from superior managers should be deemed the most important contributing factors. Waller et al. (2015) found that most women were not actively seeking career advancement. Of those who were, most were looking outside of campus recreation (Waller et al., 2015). Top management's attitude toward gender equality may significantly impact the representation of female managers in sports organizations. Previous authors have argued that maximum management support is critical to the effectiveness of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action initiatives (Moore et al., 2010).

Concerning the organizational factors, numerous researchers have pointed out the inadequate mentoring and database (Bower, 2008; Bower & Hums, 2009; Hums & Sutton, 1999). When discussing career lines, (Bower, 2008) concluded that the education level of women and the number of certificates obtained from authoritative organizations influence their progress—furthermore, mentoring leads to the successful promotion of individuals aspiring to take up management positions in sports industry. While the mentoring relationship is vital for the career development of both men and women, it is critical for women, especially those in male-dominated professions (Bower & Hums, 2009). (Rao et al., 1999) argued that gender inequality is rooted in the organizational structure, referring to it as a deep structure. The gender inequalities shown in the managerial rank of sports organizations are affected by human resource management (HRM) systems, and the tendency of traditional HRM practices to reinforce gender inequality is well documented (Moore et al., 2010). HRM is a system adopting standard dimensions. We use the term 'formalized HRM structures' to refer to formal rules, programs, positions, and procedures influencing personnel decision-making in an organization (Konrad & Linnehan, 1995).

The fact that women have fewer opportunities in the labor market may contribute to their unequal treatment in household settings. Parents have lower aspirations for their daughters than their sons, and female teenagers have lower aspirations (Duflo, 2012). Many successful organizations have distinctive personality that is shaped by gender. When a corporation has many more men than women (or vice versa) in influential positions, the culture tends to adopt attributes that favor the dominant gender (Klenke, 1996). It is generally argued that as women become educated and economically independent, they have the chance to lead a much more modern lifestyle. However, the essence of their traditions and customs may still govern their lives (Inal, 2011).

3. Methodology

This study was conducted through Grounded Theory. A grounded theory that is faithful to the everyday realities of a substantive area has been carefully induced from diverse data. As we have described, the process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)—grounded theory starts by uncovering the conceptual scheme contextually without any predetermined theoretical or conceptual framework (Cassell & Symon, 2004). The statistical population consisted of the academic elite in sports management, women's studies, and management, and individuals with managerial backgrounds working in sports organizations. The sample

included 17 researchers and managers adequately knowledgeable in senior management of Iranian sports or with high experience in investigating women's issues. The sample consists of the senior managers of Iranian sports for half a century. It is plausible that grounded theory focuses on a range of potential individuals who can enrich the essential reservoir throughout data collection. For that reason, the grounded theory uses non-probability sampling. For concepts and categories to emerge during the data analysis, the need for sampling specific data sources continues until each category is saturated. Therefore, at the beginning of the study, there are no limits set on the number of the participants, interviewees, or data sources (Cutcliffe, 2000). In data collection, instructions were offered to the participants for every interview. The questions during each interview were raised through a funnel, where general items progressed toward more specific ones. In the next phase, a three-step coding was completed:

In open coding, the researchers examined the content line by line and paragraph by paragraph while reviewing all open codes, including strategies, barriers, and suggestions in two forms of the researcher's impression and exact statements of interviewees. At the end of this stage, the interviews yielded a total of 502 duplicate open codes. Axial coding, Researchers in this phase constructed the categories through the open codes extracted in the first phase by inserting the similar open codes in separate groups. A total of 502 duplicate open codes were converted into ten axial codes.

Selective coding, this phase reveals what the management researchers find appealing in the grounded theory, i.e., a modern theory or model elaborating on the problem and the contributing categories.

4. Results

Having completed 14 interviews, the researchers arrived at a theoretical saturation. To ensure the theoretical saturation, however, researchers conducted three additional interviews. Six participants had management experience at the senior level, nine at the middle level, and two at the operational level. Regarding education, 13 participants were Ph.D., and the rest were masters. Moreover, 14 participants were educated in sports management, while the others came from irrelevant fields but had conducted research on women's sports. A total of 770 minutes of interviews were completed. Each interview took 45 minutes on average.

Full interview transcripts were implemented, and the first phase involved open coding. At the end of the first phase of data analysis, 258 non-duplicate open codes were obtained. Open codes were all converted into axial codes. After categorizing the axial codes and analyzing the data from one phase to the next, a total of general groups was obtained. The axial codes included ten general groups. After implementation, the key points were identified from 17 interviews with experts and research backgrounds. Then, the open codes were categorized into separate but akin constructs. In the next stage, the constructs were depicted at four distinct levels under a reasonable frame, relying on the relevant literature to understand women's career development in the Iranian sports industry. In the third coding stage (i.e., selective), the researchers adopted the frame proposed in qualitative research to create a new order (Humphreys, 2014). By axial

coding and identification of the main groups concerning the full interview transcripts and content analysis of relevant literature, the axial codes were divided into four levels:

4.1. Adequate Level: Directing Level from the Top

According to the literature review, the conditions of sports organizations, and the open codes derived from the participants, the primary construct directing the career development of women in the Iranian sport are stated culture-making institutions, which affect the career development of women in sport from top to bottom. They are constructs not related to sports organizations but set the groundwork for significant decisions adopted in those organizations. The culture-making institutions refer to agencies spreading information and educating the society at a macro level. Such agencies include the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Technology, IRIB, and other media outlets. The mass media plays a significant role in transmitting gender differences and inequality through daily visuals within print and television media (Trolan, 2013).

The critical point is that these culture-making institutions could also act as a data structure. As mainstream constructs, the state institutions in this model are beyond government. They cover the three branches of executive, judiciary, and legislative that can exercise their power on society. According to participant A15-35, 'Education is controlled by the State.'. In this light, the culture-making institutions are as critical as the state institutions, demanding further concentration on the former.

The state institutions playing rather strategic roles in terms of policymaking and legislation in Iran include (1) Legislative, (2) Judiciary, and (3) Executive. In Iran, a religion-oriented country, certain institutions in charge of religious affairs, including seminaries and the Islamic Propaganda Organization, which, together with the state institutions, influence women's career development. Religious institutions have been assigned to influential positions because people in religious societies tend to recognize modern changes through religion. The state institutions influence the women's career development in the sports industry through introducing new policies, adoption or rejection of laws, legal procedures, and ultimately the distribution of power in organizations. It is critical to explore where women stand in the state ideology. Table 1 displays how axial codes are obtained at the adequate level.

Table 1. The conversion path for open codes to axial codes at the adequate level.

Axial codes	Sub-groups	Open codes
State institutions	Upstream attitude	Strategic Council of Sports focuses on women
		The political approach to women
	Legislative bodies	The standpoint of women in state ideology
		Legal protection for women's freedoms and social rights
		Reforming legal macro loopholes
		Building efficient legal leverages
	Macro policies	The tendency of policies toward balance
		The harms of poorly-calculated policies to the grassroots
	Essential support from the state	We have increased participation and interaction between state agencies
		Profound reforming in legal origins

Axial codes	Sub-groups	Open codes
Culture making institutions	Executive bodies	A genuine desire for change from the upstream leadership
		Dependence of sports federations on the government
		The supportive role of the Ministry of Sport and Youth
	Media	The need for media content analysis
		Highlighting women in the media
		There is no positive feedback from mass media
		Mass media is the most potent tool to distill reasonable beliefs.
	Crucial attention from the culture-making institutions	The state controls education
		The fundamental cultural viewpoint should be scrutinized
	Raising awareness	Using technology to educate women
		Creating a data structure
	Education system	The central role of education
		Reforming the education system
		Initiation of training from the Ministry of Education
Transferring the training efforts to the higher education		

4.2. Intermediate level: dual effect

This level includes constructs that can overshadow the decisions adopted by culture-making and state institutions. It may act as a hindrance or facilitator, i.e., it cannot be stated with certainty that changes from top to bottom take place unilaterally. Changes might be affected by specific neutral or strengthening factors on their progress from the top to the operational point.

This level is composed of three constructs: (1) knowledge and attitude, (2) social elements, and (3) laws. Interviewee A1-14 stated that 'social and cultural factors reinforce gender stereotypes.' This indicates the importance of the intermediate level in shifting gender stereotypes. Knowledge and attitude are generally made up of four sub-groups covering society's attitude, both men and women. However, the attitude of men toward women is more important because men are currently considered the powerful forces in Iranian organizations. Another essential component of knowledge and attitude is social education, the open codes shown in [Table 2](#).

Table 2. Conversion path of open codes into axial codes at the intermediate level.

Axial codes	Sub-groups	Open codes
Knowledge and attitude	Society's attitude towards women	Women's sports dedicated solely to women's leadership
		Hostile public and household attitudes toward women's sports
	Subcultures	Local values and cultures
		Customs and traditions
		Self-sacrifice to family
	Adjustment of beliefs	Rejection of female directors in cultural beliefs
		Narrow-mindedness of men
	Social education	Duality of household responsibilities and the patriarchal culture
		Adjusted expectations in men
		Men rarely offer opportunities to women
Absence of social definition outside the family		
Multiple, complex roles assigned to women		
Social elements	The diversity of women's roles	Transparency of women's roles for men in the Iranian society

Axial codes	Sub-groups	Open codes
		Low-income family support in top positions
		The family recognized as the most minor and least-effective institution
	Family institution	The significant contribution of families to the development of girls
		Iranian women are an absolute reflection of their families
		Man's prominent role as husband
		Preference for household responsibilities over occupational responsibilities
	Women's associations	NGOs established and owned by women
		Women's voluntary movement
		Dependence of women on men in the sports sector
	Interpersonal factors	Men have the more profound social experience
		Mistrust of women in one another
		Women interact with each other poorly
	Social environment	Technological advances and the growth of cyberspace
		Social misperceptions
		Society strips women of development
	The absence of women in legislative	The lack of women in the political arena
		Underrepresentation of women in the Islamic Consultative Assembly
		Gender bias in promotion
Laws	Morality	Enormous financial resources in sports are corrupting
		Incorrect interpretation of laws
	Legally adopted protections	Adoption of bylaws for the engagement of women at the helm of organizations
		Legal means to mobilize women toward employment and management

The definition of social education covers all elements, the realization of which can improve the active participation of women in society. The culture-making institutions generally affect knowledge and attitude at the intermediate level. Any changes in the knowledge and awareness of the community can adjust and even entirely transform the wrong attitudes in society.

The social elements construct involves the society's micro-foundations, which can occur at large and potentially impact their lower level, i.e., the operational level and even the upstream level. This construct holds the family as one of the most important institutions. Hierarchical links between the intermediate level and its upper and lower levels are established when, for example, the upstream forces devise specific strategies for women's engagement at senior organizational ranks on the practical level. Still, boys and girls are not raised in line with such changes, thus neutralizing the effectiveness of such strategies. In this regard, one academic elite argued, 'the different ways boys and girls are raised in a family have indoctrinated the belief that female is secondary to male.' This confirms the importance of family as one of the institutions in social elements. Another social feature involves the women's entire organizations in sports. These organizations should be established by female sports administrators and pursue feminine aspirations in the industry. These organizations can relieve women from being under the

authority of men in Iranian sports. The social elements in the intermediate level are influenced partially by culture-making institutions and partially by state institutions.

The third construct of the intermediate level is laws. Part of this construct deals with the legal resolutions as the functional form of policies resulting from the adequate level. The Iranian Strategic Sports Council, for example, can fall under this category. State institutions influence the Council itself. It is seldom assigned executive duties but stipulates the sports macro policies based on the upstream guidelines, thus steering the Iranian sports industry. Another part of this construct refers to ethics guaranteeing the enforcement of many laws governing sports. The solid groundwork for enforcing statutes, called ethics in this paper, can be inhibited even if the legal loopholes in the resolutions are lifted.

4.3. Affected level: operational level

There is a lower number of women in the top ranks at the operational level. This level particularly points to what happens in practice in sports organizations. In axial coding, three sub-groups were achieved for this level: organizational climate, organizational factors, and overlapping organizational groups. Table 3 extensively shows the sub-groups and open codes on the affected station.

Table 3. The conversion path for open codes to axial codes at the affected level.

Axial codes	Sub-groups	Open codes
Organizational management factors	Human Resources Management	Weakness in the monitoring and evaluation system
		Eliminating the gender bias from the selection system
		Outlining a career line for women
		Inappropriate promotion measures
	Regulations and statutes	The predominance of nepotism over meritocracy
		Amendments in Federation statutes and bylaws
		Lack of incentive policies
		Poorly defined key decision-making posts for women
	Structure	Flexible structure for future changes
		The current structural defects in the Iranian sport
The upstream gap between senior and middle levels		
Planning	Setting goals for women	
	Poorly operational programs	
	Absence of organized changes	
Organizational climate	Assurance to female managers	Lack of trust in the capabilities of women
		Highlighted mistakes made by female executives
		Recognition of women by subordinates
	Political games	The political climate at higher organizational levels
		Women's moderateness
		Political treatment of women
	Women's engagement for the sake of formality	Offering poorly supported positions to women
		Organizational culture
Little attention is paid to individual attitudes		
Organizational overlapping groups	Informal groups	Women are not members of informal groups
	Communications	Terrible communications among women
	Roads to gain power	Networking

No exception to higher-level influence, organizational climate comprises culture-making institutions, knowledge, and attitude. Organizational climate is a construct dealing with recognition of women at senior ranks of sports by men and women in sports organizations and even the related ones. Therefore, it is essential to devise plans on the two upper levels, i.e., practical level and intermediate level, so that new individuals to an organization will shift their attitude toward women in managerial positions. The organizational employees come from the heart of society. It is undeniable that aside from corporate culture, society's culture can act as the parent culture.

The overlapping organizational groups intensely concentrate on women. It is critical to note women rarely participate in sports organizations within informal groups. It is somehow men that never allow women in their groups. Nonetheless, poor communication among women is another potent venom against building informal groups composed of women. Instead, the same venom tastes like nectar for men when expanding their communication networks. These groups within sports organizations are, to a great extent, like women's associations at the intermediate level.

One crucial construct on this level is organizational factors. The operational and affected level explores the organizations from within. At this level, organizational factors were the most frequent open codes (53 duplicates). When most of the elite highlighted the importance of organizational factors in understanding women's career development in sports, the outcome can be better modified. This construct holds all legal means available to a manager. Table 3 shows that HRM is more important. However, this does not imply that this construct's planning and other sub-groups are less critical.

In Iranian sports organizations, the upstream desire for change at the practical level passes through the intermediate conditions and is put into practice at the affected level. This relationship shows that Iranian sports organizations, mainly state-owned or affiliated with the government, cannot, without upstream authority, succeed in propelling the organization toward further employment of women in the senior management ranks.

4.4. Inhibiting /facilitating level: change from downstream

The three former levels can facilitate the environment for further involvement of women. The inefficiencies concerning the entire society rather than women can be tackled regarding the three former levels. However, women's career development cannot be resolved entirely without an in-depth concentration on women. Women in this respect are discussed as individual factors. Individual factors or internal inefficiencies are essential since the participants unanimously stated that the absence of women in senior management of Iranian sports should be addressed by making both upstream and downstream changes. The downstream changes refer to individual factors. In addition, open code A5-14 pointed out that 'internal deficiencies of women reinforce the external deficiencies.' It points to the hindrance of personal characteristics. Individual factors fail to direct the upstream changes when women underappreciate the

set of individual elements. In contrast, women's factors are reinforced when they make up for a part of current inefficiencies in the other three levels.

The outcome is a simple model of constructs and their interrelationships regarding women's career development in Iranian sports management. No social phenomenon in today's world is immune to changes in the surrounding environment. International organizations on two levels more often influence the career development of women in Iran. Furthermore, one academic elite in open code A pointed out that 'the global and national beliefs need to be changed.' General international organizations such as the United Nations and International Labor Organization are the environments steering the first level, i.e., an adequate model level.

In addition, the affected level in the third level is close to the internal environment of sports organizations. International sports organizations such as IOC and FIFA can initiate fundamental changes. At this level, slight pressures are exerted even though the Iranian sports organizations barely budge due to the current political situation. Nonetheless, women and managers can be informed of the changes in the international sports arenas. Recent changes are indicative of a global effort to incorporate women in organizations. Sooner or later, these sports organizations will be compelled to make changes. Hence, it is wiser for the upstream leadership to devise plans to prepare women on the road to career development.

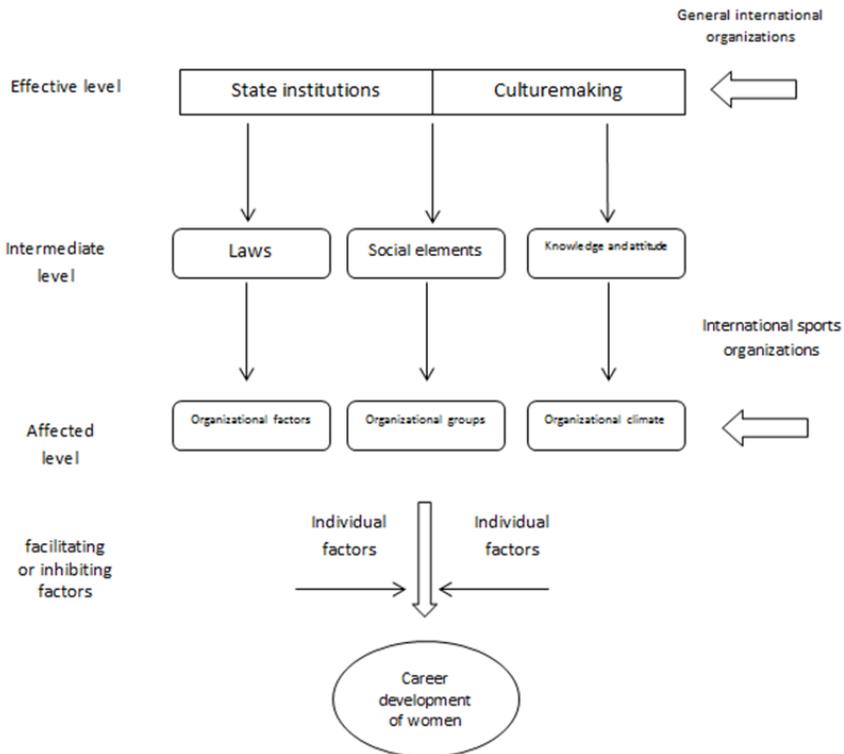


Figure 1. Women's career development model in the Iranian sports management.

5. Discussion and conclusion

It should be noted that the issue has nothing to do with being women and men, but it is instead all about being human. Such attitude in society can prompt organizations to focus on competencies rather than gender. Understanding the career development of women in sports management is tied up with massive forces unrelated to sports. Still, it can influence women's engagement in sports organizations. As indicated in Table (1), the constructs of the adequate level point to the significant forces in the society essential for making changes. Understanding the career development of women is made up of two dimensions found objectively on the practical level. One dimension relies on the nature of laws and the other on culture. The masculine treatment has shaped the Iranian culture in the workplace, the way girls and boys are raised in the family based on the deep-rooted beliefs in the society, and the general attitude toward feminism. It is crucial to instill modern beliefs and behaviors in understanding women's career development. In this regard, open code A3-27 argued that 'new behavior is institutionalized by repeating.' This can influence the intermediate level and gradually introduce such behavior to major social institutions such as families. As pointed out by interviewee A4 in open code 27, 'Pathological behavior can leak from the family into the workplace.' The beliefs and behaviors are so significant that they flow like blood in the vessels of a society, where each sector moves up in any free direction. In addition, the compliance of sports organizations with state institutions can be associated with their financial dependence on upstream and political bodies. Economic reliance has made it easier for upstream institutions to spearhead the ideology of sports organizations. The political approach to Iranian sports, especially women's sports, is an outcome of how state institutions treat women and their issues.

Above average listening skills, creativity, ability to apply innovative strategies and admit mistakes, willingness to learn new skills (e.g., delegating responsibilities, the art of crafting a memo or email), a readiness to network with internal and external stakeholders across institutional and industry boundaries. Also, an ability to hold to one's value system—even when pushed to do otherwise (Ransdell et al., 2008). These can be deemed vital as the top characteristic of managers at the helm of sports organizations. The ability to network is considered one of the personal characteristics of managers, as shown in Table (3), where it is one of the constructs leading to the affected level. Unfortunately, women have not progressed much in this respect. Women in Iranian sports organizations strive to achieve power with an emphasis on organizational hierarchy. Nevertheless, power in an organization can be based on three factors: order, control of resources, and networking (Astley & Sachdeva, 1984).

In Iranian sports organizations, women feel alien to the hierarchy of power and control of resources while performing poorly in terms of networking and staying in the spotlight, which to a great extent concerns women in sports organizations. However, the mere ability to build communication networks within the organizations will not benefit women, just as Table (3) illustrates how the political arena influences organizational climate. Women are unwilling to engage in political groups, whereas men's presence is projected. That is why women do not aspire to engage in overlapping corporate groups.

This suggests that at every level of women's career development model, it is essential to address the constructs in each level in addition to the upstream and downstream ones and parallel constructs. We suggest that women and men will have different policy preferences. First, women will prefer policies that better reflect their priorities. Since they are particularly concerned about child health and nutrition, they should choose guidelines to help them achieve these objectives (Duflo, 2012). The failure of women to pursue the goals, policies, and procedures supporting their future can jeopardize the prospects of their career line. One of the techniques to facilitate feminine-supporting approaches is the establishment of communication networks.

Organizations and authorities must interact multilaterally to gain a good understanding of the career development of women and women's access to the helm of Iranian sports organizations. Moreover, the concentration on the career development of women needs to transcend the glass ceiling of sports organizations, which originates from the attitude of society to sports and women. It is necessary to note that philosophical support of gender equality in the managerial ranks on the part of top management leads to the development of comprehensive substantive HRM programs to promote gender equality (Moore et al., 2010).

HRM is one of the essential components in forming the third construct of the affected level, i.e., the organizational factors. It may be argued that HRM is where the senior management ideas can be found in sports organizations. HRM can protect women's rights in managing sports organizations due to its legitimate nature. This very legal nature is one of the reasons why organizational factors fall under the laws of the intermediate level. The law requires employers to consider men and women for the same positions—unless the job fits into a narrow category of exceptions where sex is a 'bona fide occupational qualification' for performing the job (Brake, 2010).

In this light, the HRM can be described as one of the constructs of the affected level in understanding women's career development in Iranian sports management, which does not refer merely to the selection phase. Table (3) shows that HRM highlights the assessment and monitoring, system upgrades, and indicators. Women have management experience lower than their male counterparts, but the solution can be derived from the depth of HRM. The experience women need in these areas like operations, production, and marketing are not often recommended to a young female manager. Often these policy difficulties are not addressed in the lower ranks of management. Subsequently, when women rise to positions closer to the top later in their careers, they often find themselves excluded from the upper ranks of administration due to improper tracking earlier in their careers (Oakley, 2000). Management practice in smaller organizations, such as sports departments in municipalities in different regions, can enhance women's managerial experience.

The career development of women also depends on individual factors, given the model achieved in the research on the fourth level. These factors are partly aspired by women; the issues and problems surrounding women's career advancement should not be the sole concern of individual women (Waller et al., 2015). Interviewee A1 stated, 'the major focus in individual factors should be shifted onto the willingness and capability of women.' The capability of women to play a managerial role at the senior

level should be partly supported by the higher education system, i.e., the practical level. When discussing women's aspirations, all participants believed that women were performing poorly. Despite these inhibiting factors, individual factors are a facilitator in other areas. Nowadays, women are more frequently assigned to positions related to finance owing to their non-corrupt management. Due to organizational growth and diverse human resources, it is more than ever crucial to hire managers who treat conflicts appropriately. Open code A2-26 suggested that 'women can maintain the appropriate treatment and integrity far more efficiently.' This indicates the prominent characteristics of women who can better handle a sports organization when assigned administrative positions. The approach to gender is one of the factors leading to a better understanding of women's career development in sports management.

We conceptualize each approach as a 'frame' for understanding what gender is and why inequities exist between men and women at work (Moore et al., 2010). In the four-level model for understanding the career development of women in Iranian sports management, a fundamental approach involves the level directing the stream from top to bottom with the most significant authority. Accordingly, if women developed appropriate traits and skills, they would be better equipped to compete with men. They would advance at rates comparable to men and assume a proportionate share of leadership positions (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). The advice may help women obtain a management position by planning for the future, such as choosing an appropriate major, choosing a relevant professional certification, gaining practical experience, networking, and obtaining a mentor (Bower, 2008).

The critical point is that women's approach in a sports organization draws on better communication, this influencing the two constructs of organizational climate and laws. It can be a desirable solution to build contacts where women's influence is strengthened to facilitate the road to achieving their goals. However, the current approach adopted in the Iranian sports organizations dramatically resembles the third approach to gender. This approach concentrates on the structural barriers to women's employment and development. That reflects sexist attitudes toward and expectations of women and rewards men's structural position over women's (Ely & Meyerson, 2000).

That is why men have been deemed the only contributing structural factor in many sports organizations. At the same time, the solution to fulfillment of gender equality lies in a dependent structure for women within sports organizations. This is in line with the opinion of an elite participant, 'The separation of male and female sports will be in favor of women, even though it hardly expands their share of Iranian sport management.' This implies that the third gender approach to women's issues, i.e., changing the structural factors to build a larger effective share for women in the administrative sector, has only escalated the false representation of women as a trick to encounter the domestic criticism concerning the active engagement of women. There is a modern approach to gender, considering it as an outcome of social activities rather than biological factors. These social practices tend to reflect and support men's experiences and life situations because they have been mainly created by and for men (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). That is why the issue of gender equality in organizations is addressed as an isolated phase throughout their life cycles. So long as this approach effectively steers the mainstream

from top to bottom, it can redirect attention entirely toward social activities. Naturally, this trend will apply to the link with the intermediate level. However, such an approach affects the understanding of women's career development in the Iranian sport due to the 'absence of a common language resulting from a shared knowledge of women seeking top managerial positions, which has led to an obstacle to understanding women's problems. An identical, consistent approach to the issue of women's career development in sports management will enhance the participation and interaction with relevant agencies. The fact that they felt they weren't receiving administrative support, including from the media, reflects the ongoing battle women in sports have been engaged in for decades (Munk et al., 2014).

The impact of such changes will not likely be felt in the sports organizations in the short term due to their multiple complex structures and relationships. On the other hand, the top priorities pursued by the Iranian sports management include the involvement of women in higher education levels of sports science and physical training, Iranian successful female athletes in international arenas, and tangible changes in the gender composition of international sports organizations and concentration on career development of women. The newly proposed model can provide the Iranian sports authority and organizations with a crystal-clear image of the critical, complex road ahead so that the constructs and their relationships can be examined to improve the status quo and devise an appropriate plan for the future of women's career development.

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توسعه شغلی زنان در مدیریت ورزشی نظریه نظریه داده بنیاد

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کلیدواژه

تبعیض
جامعه ایران
رویکرد جنسیتی
سازمان‌های ورزشی
فرهنگ
فرصت‌های شغلی

نوع مقاله

پژوهشی اصیل

چکیده

هدف: امروزه نابرابری جنسیتی در بیشتر عرصه‌ها قابل مشاهده است؛ هدف این مطالعه فهم توسعه شغلی زنان در مدیریت ورزش ایران بوده است.

روش: این مطالعه به روش نظریه داده بنیاد انجام شده است. نمونه آماری در این مطالعه نخبگان دانشگاهی در رشته‌های مدیریت ورزشی، مطالعات زنان و مدیریت بوده و مشارکت‌کنندگان ۱۷ نفر از محققان و مدیران بودند. سه مرحله کدگذاری برای تجزیه و تحلیل داده‌ها انجام شد و کدهای محوری در چهار سطح دسته بندی شده و سه سازه هر سطح را تشکیل دادند.

یافته‌ها: خروجی مطالعه حاضر مدل ساده‌ای از سازه‌ها و روابط متقابل توسعه شغلی زنان در مدیریت ورزش ایران است. با به کارگیری این مدل، مدیران و سازمان‌های ورزشی ایران می‌توانند تصویری ساده از مسیر پیچیده توسعه شغلی زنان به دست آورند و می‌توان از آن برای بررسی عوامل و روابط به‌منظور بهبود وضع موجود و برنامه‌ریزی برای آینده توسعه شغلی زنان استفاده کرد.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: یکی از چالش‌های مدیریت ورزش در ایران حضور کم رنگ زنان در سطوح ارشد سازمان‌های ورزشی و ابهام در شکل‌گیری میسرهای توسعه شغلی آن‌ها است. پژوهش حاضر تلاش کرده است با استفاده از نظریه داده بنیاد تصویری واقعی از وضعیت پیچیده مسیرهای پیشرفت شغلی زنان در سازمان‌های ورزشی نشان دهد.

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The Viewpoint of Sports Clubs' Managers on Sports Marketing

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this study is the importance of sports marketing in Taekwondo.

Methodology: This research is considered applied research in terms of purpose, and the research method is a descriptive survey. A researcher-made questionnaire did the research. The statistical population of this study includes all managers (including 365 members of technical managers, executive managers, and coaches) of Taekwondo sports clubs in Guilan province. The statistical description of research variables and inferential statistics method was used to analyze the collected information.

Findings: The results of this study showed that the main components of price, product, place, and promotion have a positive and significant effect on sports marketing.

Originality: In this article, the researcher has suggested the importance of sports marketing for the growth of the sports industry and helping to develop the sport of Taekwondo. The results of this study are valuable for communities that seek to develop their sports marketing programs.

Keywords

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1. Introduction

In today's competitive world, customers are the focus of companies. It is necessary to satisfy customers, fully meet their needs and accurately identify their wants, expectations, desires, abilities, and limitations in preparing and purchasing products. It is possible to identify the factors influencing the customer behavior of service organizations and use them in making marketing decisions for companies (Hassangholipour et al., 2013). One of the common aspects of all human beings, regardless of education, income level, place of residence, etc., is that they are all consumers (Abdolmaleki et al., 2016). Entering new markets due to the complexity of customer needs requires investment in research and development, production, implementation, and support of new products and infrastructure. Creating these infrastructures and scoring new products has high costs in any industry, and the proper sale of these products can justify these costs (Davies & Cline, 2005). Moving to new sales markets requires new strategies. To determine which, one must know the specific parameters and factors affecting this movement and choose the proper treatment for them. Among these factors, consumer behavior and what influences their choice are critical; Because the goal of producing and selling new products is to gain customer satisfaction to stay in the market and maintain profitability (Behnam et al., 2015). Product expansion, globalization, and intense competition force markets to differentiate their products from other companies and create value for their buyers (Rafiei et al., 2013). Companies should keep in mind that customers' preferences, needs, and wants to evolve, and it is necessary to make appropriate decisions in this regard (Beheshtian Ardakani & Fathian, 2017). The era of modern marketing are marketing activities that are greatly influenced by changes in consumer behavior and attitudes (Kotler et al., 2010). According to "Philip Kotler," Marketing is a human activity to satisfy needs and wants through the exchange process.

Marketing is a social evolution that recognizes the consumer's demands and addresses those needs through the provision of services or goods and tries to lead consumers to this service or product. Marketing is essential for any business. In marketing, marketers try to make consumers better aware of this product or service (Nasirzadeh & Deskereh, 2014). Marketing should seek to find the most appropriate markets and segments in which the organization can be more valuable and practical; Hence, the basis of the marketing movement is to avoid wasting various resources and facilities and find the most suitable position for the product (McLaren, 2012). Domestic producers should pay special attention to quality improvement to continue operating in a competitive market (Azadi et al., 2015). Among the marketing tools, promotion and advertising can be because they are more visible. It was considered an important tool to influence the consumer. The primary purpose of advertising is to sell more product by controlling the consumer (Funk et al., 2009). Price does not significantly affect consumer consumption behavior (Khor, 2010). Efficient decisions need to be earned. It has knowledge and understanding of the market, which is in the shadow of organization's marketing (Ismaeili et al., 2016). Due to the changes in the environment and the requirements imposed on organizations, the marketing actions of organizations towards their customers have been severely affected (Pakdel et al., 2012). Quality of goods, services, reasonable price, after-sales service, place of

purchase, and advertising affect the behavioral tendencies of customers (Rekilä, 2013). Marketing is tied to new concepts such as customer retention and promotion, attention to satisfaction, and product quality (Ebrahimi & Mahdiyeh, 2008). Marketing can be used to satisfy and restore customer loyalty, achieving many spiritual and material benefits (Hosseini, 2009). There is a strong correlation between marketing and customer loyalty (Amirtash et al., 2016).

Taking advantage of sports marketing opportunities provides the basis for industry, trade, and sports interaction. It is a strategic bridge in the service of sports development and economic prosperity (Mahammad Kazemi et al., 2008). Communication quality significantly affects consumption behaviors in sports (Kim & Trail, 2011). Today, sports marketing has become a global revenue-generating industry, resulting in the acquisition of capital and revenue generation for sports organizations (Moharramzadeh, 2010). Sports marketing, to create a favorable image of goods and products, should highlight the main elements of the goods and developments concerning the chosen name. These features and components can include the functional quality of the product, price of services provided, distribution channel, and other elements mixed with marketing (Yousefi & Hassani, 2010).

The importance of sport to the economy is increasing every day, so sport has become one of the most lucrative economic fields (Rahulan et al., 2013). Mark acts as a driving force in the product market, and sports marketing attracts a wide range of audiences, while much first use the commercial sports market as a pure concept to prove their market. Anyone involved in sports should see themselves as part of sports marketing and make a significant effort to create sports attractions. The enormous task in marketing is that everyone who has a role in marketing is persuaded and brings together those who strive for the success and real marketing of sports (Poursoltani Zarandi & Zareipour, 2018). Economic factors clearly influence decision-making about sports and related issues, and financial organizations and commercial companies control and sometimes control the organization of sports activities (Abdolmaleki et al., 2016). Brand name, product quality, price, promotion, product variety, service quality, and store environment affect the consumer behavior of sports consumers (Yee & Sidek, 2008). Development in professional sports is considered a symbol of the power of a country, and without a doubt, sports marketing management guarantees the survival and growth of professional sports (Poursoltani Zarandi & Zareipour, 2018). Managers of sports organizations need financial support to promote their programs and projects. Marketing emphasizes the needs of customers or consumers, but sports marketing emphasizes the needs of customers or sports consumers (Nasirzadeh & Deskereh, 2014). How sports audiences think, behave, and make decisions, what factors influence their inclination towards different sports products, and other such questions are the key to developing effective marketing programs to achieve the goals of sports organizations and producers (Nazari & Ghaderi Abed, 2011). Because successful sports marketing begins with understanding why and how consumers and sports audiences behave. Understanding the factors influencing sports consumers' preferences and behaviors can be seen as the basis for consumer decisions (Lu, 2012). To create positive buying behaviors in consumers of sports services, marketers and managers must clearly understand the effectiveness of advertising and the motivation,

pleasure, and attitude it creates in consumers (Behnam & Toosi, 2013). Considering the theoretical foundations of the research and the results of various studies that will be addressed, it is observed that no comprehensive research has been conducted to compare the views of managers of sports clubs on the importance of marketing. In this study, the researcher has examined this category in a new way; therefore, it seems that in this study, the final answer to the question is what is the importance of sports marketing from the perspective of managers of Taekwondo sports clubs?

2. Theoretical background

In this section, studies and research related to research are reviewed. Examining the theoretical foundations of research is a past study and is a look at what others have done about this research or similar topics. Theoretical foundations of the research show that various investigations on marketing and factors affecting marketing have been conducted in different countries of the world:

(Scola & Gordon, 2019) explored integrated marketing with sports marketing professionals. They stated that the purpose of this study is to expand people's understanding of integrated marketing in sports from the perspective of sports marketers. The findings of this study highlight issues related to how integrated marketing is implemented, such as changing logos and shirts, celebrating anniversaries, milestones of activity, and old players, and integrating with marketing and the reasons for their effectiveness, such as nostalgia. Showed the charm of integrated design and connection with the life history of the sports team; The researchers also suggested that the current study should broaden people's understanding of integrated marketing in sports and be effective in assisting future researchers examining integrated marketing in sports.

(Ramya & Kartheeswaran, 2019), in a study entitled "The Future of Digital Marketing in 2020", stated that today digital marketing is a way for electronic communications that marketers connect goods and services to the market. Digital marketing has moved the industry around the world. The goal of digital marketing is consumer-centric and allows consumers to engage with the product through digital media and make the best choice. The Internet and mobile phones have created a substantially new and exciting trend in the future of marketing. Marketers are trying to measure the effectiveness of their work. Digital marketing is suitable for analysis and turning a regular business into a profitable business, and product innovation is used more with digital marketing. It will create a scene of many opportunities and predictions.

(Jarek & Mazurek, 2019) examined the impact of artificial intelligence on marketing. Their research results showed that in recent years, artificial intelligence in various fields, including science, business, medicine, and education, to an emerging trend, and today artificial intelligence has reached marketing. The researchers posed two research questions: Which areas of artificial intelligence are used in marketing, and what are the implications of artificial intelligence for marketing managers? To answer these questions, the researchers looked at secondary data with examples of artificial intelligence used for marketing purposes. Also, analysis of the collected samples showed that although these programs were operational, artificial intelligence is widely

used in all marketing areas, indicating the precise implementation of new technology. They further stated that artificial intelligence affects all aspects of marketing and is therefore significant for marketing managers, which has a considerable impact on the delivery of consumer value and the organization and marketing management. (Contreras & Ramos, 2016), in a study entitled "What is marketing?" A survey of marketing managers' understanding of the definition of marketing "showed several definitions and interpretations of marketing in the academic literature. This diversity of marketing conceptualizations has complicated the development of marketing practices. In this study, content analysis methods were used to discover how marketing managers define the concept of marketing in Puerto Rican companies, and their research showed that 16% of managers use images related to their strategic functions. Define; Fifty percent of executives define marketing using concepts related to marketing tactics, and other marketing executives say they reflect both positions in their marketing style.

(Abdolmaleki et al., 2016) showed that the components of the marketing mix have a positive and significant role in sports consumer behavior. Also, prioritizing the marketing mix elements showed that the product is the most critical component, followed by service quality, price, place channels, promotion, and brand personality. (Shadivand et al., 2016) examined the factors affecting domestic sports brands' intrinsic value through structural equation modelling. They stated that marketing mix factors on three dimensions of brand equity (brand awareness - association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty), and these three dimensions affect each other and the brand equity.

3. Methodology

Research methodology determines the general approach to thinking and studying social reality or the phenomenon under study (Ghasemi, 2021). Research methodology is a systematic way to solve a research problem by collecting data using various techniques, presenting the interpretation of the collected data, and drawing conclusions about the research data. In this study, a researcher-made questionnaire were used to collect information due to the lack of a questionnaire appropriate to the research topic. To evaluate the validity of the researcher-made questionnaire and content validity was used. Eleven professors and sports science experts were used to assessing the questionnaire's face and content validity. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the researcher-made questionnaire, and the reliability coefficient of Cronbach's alpha components was reported as 0.93%. The statistical population of this study includes all coaches and managers of Taekwondo sports clubs in Guilan province. Three hundred sixty-five people have calculated the number of research samples through cluster sampling based on the Morgan table. In the questionnaire of this research, the demographic information that is questioned contains gender, marital status, age, and level of education among the managers of Taekwondo sports clubs in Guilan province. In this research, two methods of descriptive and inferential statistics have been used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics were used to organize, summarize, and describe the sample sizes, adjust the frequency distribution

table and percentages, and calculate the scattering indices such as mean, standard deviation, and graph. In inferential statistics, a t-test was used.

4. Results

Describing the demographic characteristics of managers of Taekwondo sports clubs in Guilan province shows that in terms of gender, 53.1% of respondents are men and 46.9% of respondents are women, and most of the respondents are in terms of gender in this study It belongs to men. In terms of marriage, 71.2% of the respondents are married, and 28.8% are single, which is the most significant number of respondents in the present study. Most respondents with 36.8% in the age range of 26 to 45 years, and the lowest respondents with 14.2% in the age range of fewer than 25 years. The level of education of the 44.2% of respondents have expert degrees, and the lowest respondents with 7.8% have less than a diploma degree. [Table 1](#) shows the demographic characteristics of the coaches and managers of Taekwondo sports clubs in Guilan province.

Table 1. Describe the demographic characteristics of Taekwondo coaches and managers.

Property	Group	Abundance	Frequency
Gender	Male	194	53.1
	Female	171	46.9
Marital status	Single	105	28.8
	Married	260	71.2
Age	Less than 25	52	14.2
	26-45	134	36.8
	46-65	116	31.7
	More than 66	63	17.3
Education	Less than a diploma	25	7.8
	Diploma	47	12.7
	Expert	161	44.2
	Masters	92	25.2
	PhD	40	10.1

In the continuation of the research findings and to compare the views of managers of Taekwondo sports clubs about the importance of sports marketing, the factors of sports marketing Price, Product, Place, and Promotion are examined took. The results of sports marketing components from the managers of Taekwondo sports clubs in Guilan province were calculated at a significant level ($P \leq 0.05$). By means and standard deviation. Descriptive statistics of sports marketing components from the managers of Taekwondo sports clubs in Guilan province are shown in [Table 2](#):

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of sports marketing components from the perspective of managers of Taekwondo sports clubs.

Component	N	Average	SD
Price	365	13.060	6.1275
Product	365	12.725	5.8075

Component	N	Average	SD
Place	365	12.335	5.4445
Promotion	365	12.025	5.1195

The results of [Table 3](#) - There is no significant difference in the importance of sports marketing, the price component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 24.12$) and the product component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 23.70$), and the place component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 23.45$) and the promotion component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 23.08$) from the perspective of the coaches of Taekwondo sports clubs in the province Guilan:

Table 3. Inferential statistics of sports marketing components from the perspective of Taekwondo sports club coaches.

Component	N = 225	X / SD	t-test	P-Value
Price	225	13.11 ± 6.243	24.12	0.05
Product	225	12.62 ± 5.726	23.70	0.05
Place	225	12.55 ± 5.562	23.45	0.05
Promotion	225	12.06 ± 5.156	23.08	0.05

The results of [Table 4](#) - Inferential statistics of sports marketing components from the perspective of managers of Taekwondo sports clubs in Guilan province show that between the price component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 23.95$) and the product component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 23.82$) and the place component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 23.36$) and the promotion component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 22.97$) from the perspective of the managers of Taekwondo sports clubs in the province. Guilan There is no significant difference in the importance of sports marketing:

Table 4. Inferential statistics of sports marketing components from the perspective of Taekwondo sports club managers.

Component	N = 140	X / SD	t-test	P-Value
Price	140	13.01 ± 6.012	23.95	0.05
Product	140	12.83 ± 5.889	23.82	0.05
Place	140	12.12 ± 5.327	23.36	0.05
Promotion	140	11.99 ± 5.083	22.97	0.05

There is no significant difference between the components of price, product, place, and promotion of sports marketing from the perspective of managers of Taekwondo sports clubs in Guilan province about the importance of sports marketing ([Tables 3 and 4](#)). The above statistics have been calculated at the semantic level ($P \leq 0.05$). [Figure 1](#) shows a comparison of managers' views of Taekwondo sports clubs in Guilan province about the importance of sports marketing.

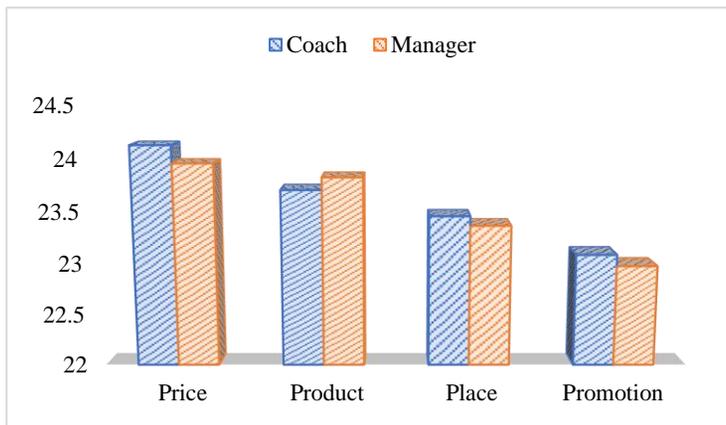


Figure 1. Comparison of the views of managers of Taekwondo sports clubs in Guilan.

5. Managerial implications

Obstacles and limitations to the development of sports marketing should be removed, and more awareness and information about the importance of sports marketing in the community should be provided.

6. Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of this study is the importance of sports marketing in Taekwondo. The results showed that there is no significant difference in sports marketing between the price component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 24.12$) and the product component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 23.70$), place ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 23.45$) and the promotion ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 23.08$). Also, the components of sports marketing showed that between the price component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 23.95$) and the product component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 23.82$), And the place component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 23.36$) and the promotion component with ($P \leq 0.05$ and $t = 22.97$) regarding the importance of sports marketing. Sports marketing is a process that identifies the wants and needs of sports customers and tries to meet these needs in a desirable way to offer various products. "Product" is the first component of sports marketing that provides a service or product for supply and sale. We do not necessarily just pay for a tangible sporting product; we pay for the value and value that that sporting product provides. It is suggested that by creating changes in Taekwondo sports products to gain more share of the sports market so that while retaining current athletes, new athletes can be attracted to Taekwondo. The "Product" component is in line with (Abdolmaleki et al., 2016; Davies & Cline, 2005; Hassangholipour et al., 2013; Nasirzadeh & Deskereh, 2014; Poursoltani Zarandi & Zareipour, 2018; Ramya & Kartheeswaran, 2019) research.

"Price" is the second component of sports marketing and is vital and decisive. Pricing for sports products is a clever and challenging task. The value is obtained from the outcome the athlete is willing to pay for. It is recommended to pay more attention to factors such as demand for sports products, the ability of taekwondo practitioners, and

prices of other sports when pricing Taekwondo sports products because the price directly impacts the market and profitability of sports organizations. The "Price" component is in line with (Behnam et al., 2015; Davies & Cline, 2005; Rahulan et al., 2013; Rekilä, 2013) research. "Place" is the third component of sports marketing. Customers may like a sports product and want to pay to buy it, but if they do not have access to it, they will not believe it. Sports products should be available in places that athletes can easily purchase. It is suggested that with the increase of sports venues, the availability of Taekwondo clubs, and any issues related to Taekwondo sports products, the product should be efficiently delivered to sports customers. The "Place" component is in line with (McLaren, 2012; Pakdel et al., 2012; Rekilä, 2013; Yousefi & Hassani, 2010) research. "Promotion" is the fourth component of sports marketing. If the sports product is produced according to the needs of the athletes and a reasonable price is considered. It will be readily available in Taekwondo sports clubs and shops, but customers do not have enough information about the price, features, and how to access the product. All sports marketing efforts will be in vain. Promotion is raising awareness and persuading and influencing sports consumers to buy the products they need. It is suggested that this sports marketing component promotes Taekwondo by increasing advertising, public relations, and product sales. Because promotional and promotional measures introduce the value of the sports product to customers and can be effective in attracting market share in Taekwondo. The "Promotion" component is in line with (Behnam & Toosi, 2013; Jarek & Mazurek, 2019; Nazari & Ghaderi Abed, 2011; Rekilä, 2013; Scola & Gordon, 2019) research. Therefore, the results of this study are consistent with all the studies mentioned in the present text.

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دیدگاه مدیران باشگاه‌های ورزشی تکواندو درباره بازاریابی ورزشی

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کلیدواژه

بازاریابی ورزشی
باشگاه
تکواندو
مدیران ورزشی

نوع مقاله

پژوهشی

چکیده

هدف: هدف این پژوهش مطالعه اهمیت بازاریابی ورزشی در رشته ورزشی تکواندو است.

روش: این پژوهش از نظر هدف به‌عنوان یک پژوهش کاربردی به‌شمار می‌رود و روش انجام پژوهش توصیفی - پیمایشی است. برای جمع‌آوری اطلاعات از محقق ساخته استفاده شد. جامعه آماری این پژوهش شامل: کلیه مدیران (مدیران فنی، مدیران اجرایی و مربیان) باشگاه‌های ورزشی تکواندو استان گیلان بودند. جهت تجزیه و تحلیل اطلاعات گردآوری شده، از توصیف آماری متغیرهای پژوهش و روش آمار استنباطی استفاده شده است.

یافته‌ها: یافته‌ها نشان داد در مؤلفه‌های اصلی قیمت، محصول، توزیع، و ترویج در سطح معنی‌داری ($P \leq 0.05$) مؤلفه‌های اصلی قیمت، محصول، توزیع، و ترویج بر بازاریابی ورزشی تأثیر مثبت و معنی‌داری دارند.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: محقق در این مقاله اهمیت بازاریابی ورزشی را برای رشد صنعت ورزش و کمک به توسعه رشته ورزشی تکواندو پیشنهاد کرده و نتایج این پژوهش برای جوامعی که به دنبال توسعه برنامه‌های بازاریابی ورزشی خود هستند، ارزشمند است.

تاریخ دریافت: ۱۴۰۱/۰۲/۲۸

تاریخ پذیرش: ۱۴۰۱/۰۴/۰۵

خدای مهربان را سپاس فراوان که با عنایت او توانستیم شماره 3 نشریه را با 7 مقاله منتشر کنیم. حال امیدواریم با احراز رتبه‌ای درخور، به اعتماد محققان مدیریت ورزشی برای ارسال مقالات خود به SBJ پاسخی شایسته دهیم. از این پس امیدواریم با دریافت رتبه مناسب و مقالات معتبر علمی در حوزه نشریه در به روزرسانی چاپ مقالات و به حداقل رساندن زمان داوری و نشر مقالات همکاران محترم دانشگاهی یک گام جلوتر رفته و گام بعدی را برای رویت پذیری بیشتر و کسب اعتبار بین‌المللی داریم.

امیدواریم این فرصتی باشد برای هر چه بیشتر قرار گرفتن این تولیدات علمی در معرض دید و نقد جهانیان تا فرصت‌های بیشتری را برای همکاری‌های بین‌المللی بین محققان و نویسندگان فراهم نمایند. بدیهی است، این موفقیت جز با حمایت‌های بی‌دریغ دانشگاه الزهرا^(س) و همکاری تمامی همکاران در انجام و ارسال نتایج تحقیقات با کیفیت و مرتبط با حوزه تخصصی SBJ حاصل نمی‌شد و نخواهد شد. همچنان، از محققان با تجربه و جوان نیز دعوت می‌کنیم مقالات باکیفیت خود را در حوزه تخصصی نشریه کسب‌وکار در ورزش ارسال کنند. لطفا توجه داشته باشید که مقالات در طیف گسترده‌ای از زمینه‌ها و موضوعات مرتبط با ورزش، کسب‌وکار و مدیریت از جمله موضوعات ذیل پذیرفته می‌شوند:

- کسب‌وکار، بازاریابی و کارآفرینی در ورزش
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- قانون تجارت و اخلاق در کسب‌وکار ورزشی
- برندهای ورزشی، رفتار مصرف‌کننده و مسئولیت اجتماعی شرکتی

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دانشیار مدیریت ورزشی دانشگاه تهران	دکتر ابراهیم علی دوست قهرخه
استاد یار مدیریت ورزشی دانشگاه تبریز	دکتر وجیهه جوانی
دانشیار مدیریت فناوری اطلاعات دانشگاه الزهراء (س)	دکتر نانا عبدالوند
دانشیار مدیریت ورزشی دانشگاه الزهراء (س)	دکتر مریم مختاری دینانی
دانشیار مدیریت ورزشی دانشگاه تربیت مدرس	دکتر رسول نوروزی سیدحسینی
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استاد یار مدیریت ورزشی دانشگاه فردوسی مشهد	دکتر سید مرتضی عظیم زاده
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دکترای مدیریت ورزشی	دکتر مریم نیازی تیلر
دکترای مدیریت ورزشی	دکتر مریم رهبر

نشریه

کسب و کار

در ورزش

نشریه دو فصلنامه علمی دانشگاه الزهراء (س)

دوره دو- شماره یک، شماره پیاپی ۳

زمستان (۱۴۰۰) و بهار (۱۴۰۱)

آدرس: ایران، تهران، میدان شیخ بهایی، خیابان ده ونک، دانشگاه الزهراء (س)

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