

IDENTIFYING THE EFFECTIVE FACTORS ON CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE SPORTS OF IRAN

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Original scientific paper

Abstract

The aim of this study was to identify the effective factors on capacity building in the sports of Iran. The research method was mixed (qualitative-quantitative), in the qualitative part the phenomenological method was used and in the quantitative part the descriptive-survey method was used. The statistical sample in the qualitative part was specialists and experts in the field of sports management in the country and the statistical population in the quantitative part included all managers and elites of sports management in the country, including general managers, presidents of federations and faculty members of sports management in physical education colleges of the country's. Sampling method in qualitative part was purposeful sampling and in quantitative part was non-random purposeful sampling that out of whom 270 people were selected as a statistical sample for study. The data collection tool in qualitative section was a semi-structured interview and in quantitative section was a researcher-made questionnaire. Data analysis was performed in qualitative part using thematic analysis method based on open coding and in quantitative part exploratory factor analysis in SPSS software. Based on the research results, seven factors of skill level, knowledge and resources, nature of social relations, community conversation space, leadership quality, social participation, value system and learning culture were identified as effective factors on capacity building in sports of Iran.

Key words: capacity building, sports, Iran.

Introduction

Sport is recognized as an important tool in promoting peace, beyond social borders and classes, and plays an important role in strengthening social correlation and economic development in various geographical, cultural and political fields (Reiche, 2015). It is a powerful tool for strengthening relationships and social networks to promote the ideals of peace, correlation, non-violence, tolerance and justice (Marcellini, 2018). In recent years, UNESCO has supported a number of projects, including sports for peace in Central America and the West, to use sport as a moderator for peace and social development. According to this organization, it can be easy to deal with the problems raised in post-conflict situations, because sports can bring people closer together (UNESCO, 2015). Today, sport is used as a tool for domestic politics to develop a healthy society and to attract human resources from abroad, as well as a tool for foreign policy to build relationships with many countries and peoples in the world that may be to gain soft power and for national security reasons (Reiche, 2015). Researchers believe that exercise can attract young people and those in the margins to strengthen social context. It also promotes social communication and helps to improve relationships among individuals, communities and all nations, and establishes a complex, for example, fair play (Coakley & Pike, 2014; Darnell, 2010; Levermore & Beacom, 2009). With the dramatic increase in the role of sports in the economic, social, cultural and even political development of countries, progress in the field of sports has become one of the strategic priorities of

planners in different countries of the world (Jackson & Palmer, 2004). Kay (2009) argues that supporting broad policies based on sports development aimed at promoting social, educational, and health goals and the use of sports in pursuit of international development goals is expanding.

Considering the strategic, diverse and important roles and functions of sports and cultural sports competitions, adopting developmental and comprehensive policies in this field can expand culturalization, improve the level of vitality and personal and social health, social correlation and participation, economic and cultural dynamism, influence the socio-cultural value and originality of the nations, expand the concepts of peace, security and understanding in international relations, etc. (Moradi & Mostafaei, 2014). In a study entitled "Sports Management for Social Change", Sherry et al., (2015) reported that sport provides a platform for development as a tool to achieve positive outcomes in areas such as economic development, social cohesion, and cultural cohesion, a healthy lifestyle, education, sexual justice, reconciliation and peace (Sherry, Schulenkorf, & Chalip, 2015).

In this regard, capacity building is an ongoing development approach in various social, political, cultural, economic areas etc. that have been considered by Western societies over the past decade (Mohammadi, 2010). The first condition for the adaptation of the traditional part of developing societies to radical changes caused by globalization

is to create the necessary capacity for adaptation in people. The traditional part of developing countries is generally made up of small, local communities, the most important features of which are high levels of illiteracy, traditional technology, high levels of government dependence, and low institutional and local capacities. The troublesome negative effects of structural adjustment as one of the manifestations of globalization suggest that in local communities in most developing countries, there are still no organizational resources and skills needed to adapt to globalization policies and transition to a global economy. As a result, achieving sustainable development in these communities will not be easy. The first necessary step to succeed in this intensifying challenge is a broad effort to improve adaptation capacity (capacity building) in people. Capacity building means creating adaptability and proper response to the process of continuous change (Zahedi Mazandarani, 2010).

In development literature, capacity building is a relatively new concept, therefore, like other concepts in this field, such as sustainability, social capital, empowerment, and participation, there is little consensus on its exact meaning and clear implications (Jones, Edwards, Bocarro, Svensson, & Misener, 2019). Capacity building is a developmental approach that covers all areas dominating the development environment. This definition mainly clarifies implicit guidelines and frameworks for groups and individuals active in the development process, and pays close attention to the composition and diversity of real working conditions in developing countries (Zahedi Mazandarani, 2010). Capacity building has a variety of definitions and scope, and includes the development of human resources such as research, education, training and vocational training and infrastructure, and physical development, as well as the development of a favorable environment for growth and promotion within and outside the organization, especially international participation.

Many researchers believe that capacity building is actually a proper timely activity and performance that strengthens the core capacities within organizations. Capacity building is an abstract term that has a wide range of meanings and includes various areas of knowledge and resources that governmental and non-governmental organizations must use to establish efficiency and improve productivity (Mousavi Movahedi, Kiani Bakhtiari, & Eskandari, 2006). One of the dimensions of capacity building is the expertise and skills that should be available for the development of a sports organization and allow it to operate (Yang, Ren, Turrin, Sariyildiz, & Sun, 2018). The goal of capacity building process is to improve the skills of individuals, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities to perform key tasks, solve problems, define and achieve goals, and be able to understand and deal with the requirements to manage these issues sustainably (Swierzy, Wicker, & Breuer, 2018).

This process aims to strengthen the skills of an organization or group of organizations to improve their performance. The point is that the goal is to improve the organizational skills, not just those within the organizations (Abedi, 2018). Wendel et al. (2009) argue that capacity building requires a number of individuals and organizations to lead in society.

The highest level of capacity building is the social level, that is, the level of the environment in which national development begins. The process of social capacity building is such that it includes the whole country or society and all its subdivisions. Examples of community-level capacity building can be seen in macro-programs and policies, legal and civil frameworks, and the long-term prospects of countries (de Voogt, Bisschops, & Munaretto, 2019). Countries that draw long-term plans and future prospects provide the necessary infrastructure to achieve their goals, and build capacity comprehensively with a strategic mindset to meet the needs of the country through a proper understanding of policies and following successful models, especially in its scientific way (Hoseini, 2011).

In its strategic report for 2014, the Ministry of Sports and Youth stated that capacity building of sports is one of the policies for the development of sports from the perspective of the Supreme Leader. The report explores the use of sports cultural capacity and the promotion of religious values and spirituality in sports as general strategies for cultural development in sports. A 20-year perspective on the horizon of 2025, its cultural policies and principles, the National Youth Charter, the National Document on Education and Training, the 5-year development plans of the Islamic Republic and the like all have clauses and articles on sports and physical education and its principles, goals and approaches in society and social institutions. The Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution also has approvals in the field of sports and physical education and its cultural and educational dimensions and capacity building of this phenomenon in the society in accordance with the values and norms of Iran.

Having a global and international perspective on sports can play a significant role in industry and economy, expanding international relations, recognizing and understanding different nations, developing cultural and social ties, and building global cohesion and integration (Farajzadeh, Kashef, & Aghapour, 2015). Unfortunately, awareness of the important approach of capacity building, especially in the sports industry is low in our country, and the need for research in this area is essential. So far, no research has been conducted in the field of sports capacity building in the country. There is a need to introduce the concept of capacity building in our country in theory and practice, especially in the field of sports management. Although capacity building is not an immediate step, it is an essential and integral part

of a sustainable development approach to addressing related issues. Understanding what has been said, this study seeks to answer the question what the factors affecting the capacity building of sports in the country are.

Methods

The present research method is applied in terms of objective and combined (qualitative-quantitative) in terms of data collection approach. In the first step, the factors affecting capacity building in the country's sports are identified through a qualitative study. In this section, the phenomenological research method is used. In the second step, little research has been done. This step aims to determine which of the factors affecting capacity building in the country's sports are significant and which of them are not significant and should be excluded from the model. Descriptive-survey research method is used.

The statistical sample of the research in the qualitative section includes specialists and experts in the field of sports management in the country. In this section, in order to be informed from the views and opinions of experts and thinkers, theoretical purposeful sampling with 11 people is used. The sample size is estimated based on theoretical data saturation.

In the quantitative step, the statistical population includes managers and elites of the country's sports management, including general managers, presidents of federations and members of the faculty of sports management of the country's physical education faculties. 270 subjects were selected as sample using non-random purposeful sampling.

The data collection tool in the qualitative part is the semi-structured interview. To observe the principles of research ethics, the participants during the interviews are asked to record their conversations, and after the interview, the interview will be

carefully reviewed and written on the paper. After collecting the data obtained from the interview, the process of qualitative data analysis and summarizing begins. The data are summarized and coded according to the research topic. As a result of coding and deleting duplicate data and final data summarization, 64 categories are identified and extracted, out of which 37 items are approved based on the opinions of experts. Then, the categories that purposefully represent a more general category are identified and put together, and a general title that can include all of them is identified and named for them.

In the second step, a researcher-made questionnaire extracted from qualitative step is used to collect quantitative data. The formal and content validity of the questionnaire is confirmed by experts and professors. The reliability of the questionnaire is calculated to be 0.84 through Cronbach's alpha coefficient in a preliminary study on 40 samples. The questionnaire consists of 37 closed-ended questions based on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire measures seven dimensions like skill levels, knowledge and resources, nature of social relationships, community conversation space, leadership quality, social participation, value systems, and learning culture.

In order to analyze qualitative data, the theme analysis method based on open coding is used. Data analysis is performed in the quantitative part using SPSS19 at both descriptive and inferential levels. At the descriptive level, statistics such as mean, standard deviation, skew and kurtosis are used, and at the inferential level, after ensuring compliance with the defaults of parametric statistics, exploratory factor analysis is used.

Results

The concepts and sub-factors and the main extracted factors from the qualitative section based on the semi-structured interview are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Qualitative stage findings.

Factors of capacity building in sports	Concepts (code)
Levels of skills, knowledge and resources	Access to sports facilities
	Supporting infrastructure
	Developing volunteer skills
	Supporting national sports organizations
	Resource development
	Developing skills within sport community
	Positive social interactions among participants
	Supportive behavioral interactions among spectators
	Social capital development
The nature of social relations	Developing trust within the sports community
	Establishing constructive interactions among officials and sports organizations
The conversational atmosphere of society	Development of intra-organizational social participation
	Development of sports events
	Collective identity development
	Development of national and ethnic solidarity
	Organizational mental space
	Development of social networks

Leadership quality	Development of leadership among participants and volunteers
	Increasing the credibility and status of athletes and coaches at the community level
	Managers try to serve athletes and coaches
	Development of components of security-oriented leadership
	Managers' smart acting in sports development
	Development of social leadership in the country's sports
Social participation	Encouraging citizens to participate in public sports
	Identifying society through sports
	Increasing the ability of citizens to participate in social processes
Value system	Development of public sports support programs
	Development of democratic values and patterns to encourage public sports
	Teaching participants ideal cultural values
	Re-defining values in proportion to social changes
	Institutionalization of shared social values
Learning culture	Increasing understanding and awareness of the history of the sports community
	Increasing the ability of critical thinking in sports participants
	Geographical collaboration to transfer experiences and information
	Development of public education programs
	Providing feedback to sports stakeholders on sports processes and events
	Development of applied and basic research in the field of sustainable sports development

Kline (2011) suggests that in factor analysis, the absolute value of the skewness and kurtosis of variables should not exceed ± 1.96 . According to results, the absolute value of skewness and kurtosis of all variables is less than the values proposed. Further exploratory factor analysis is examined using Bartlett test and KMO's sampling adequacy index. The adequacy index is 0.74. The closer the KMO index is to 1, sample size is sufficient to perform factor analysis. Also, the value of the Bartlett test 3712.63 with a degree of freedom of 666 at the level of 0.001 is significant, which shows that the correlation matrix in the society is not equal to zero.

Studies have stated different values for accepting items in factor analysis, but there is a consensus on

0.30, accordingly the propositions that have not been able to explain more than 0.30 of their changes, must be modified or deleted, which are more than 0.30 in the current study. In the next step after factor analysis, the eigenvalues of the factors are determined by the analysis of the main components and the power to explain the variance and the cumulative percentage of the test variance. Seven factors with an eigenvalue of one, explain 56% of the variance of whole items which has a relatively good explanation. According to results and the conclusion of the slope test are shown in the form of gravel diagram (Figure 1), which shows 7 factors for affecting capacity building in the country's sports. Table 2 shows the rotating matrix of the factors affecting capacity building in sports after varimax rotation.

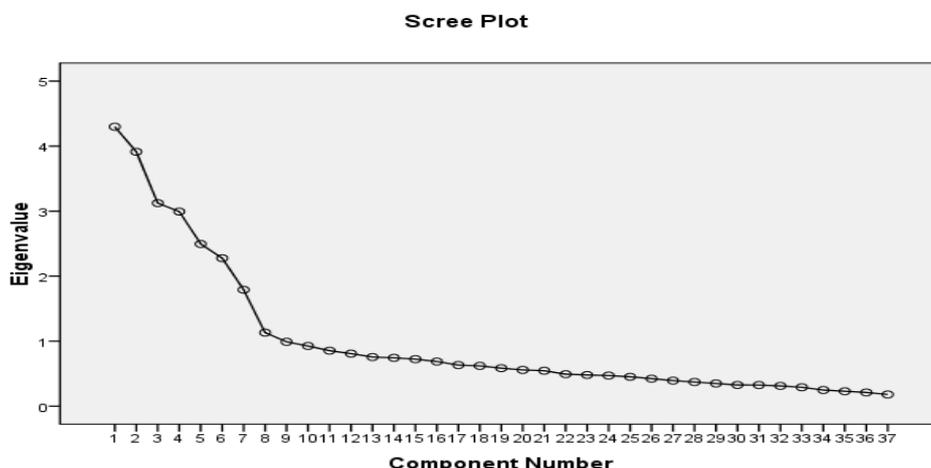


Figure 1. The slope test are shown in the form of gravel diagram

Table 2. The rotating matrix of the factors affecting capacity building in sports.

The conversational atmosphere of society	Leadership quality	Levels of skills, knowledge and resources	Learning culture	The nature of social relations	Social participation	Value system
.80	.71	.76	.66	.70	.77	.63
.81	.70	.73	.67	.72	.75	.71
.80	.65	.62	.68	.77	.81	.70
.84	.73	.68	.70	.64	.78	.65
.83	.70	.67	.70	.72		
.77	.71	.71	.73			
α						
.90	.80	.77	.79	.79	.81	.90

Discussion and conclusion

Sport, as a cultural and educational phenomenon and tool, should serve the promotion of the Iranian individual and society. This point has been repeatedly emphasized by the principles of cultural policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which have been approved by the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution – the highest cultural authority in the country. Policies in which the duties of the institutions in charge of culture in the country are clearly expressed and it is stipulated that the Ministry of Sports and Youth also play a role of an institution in charge of the culture sector (Mohammadi, 2015). Understanding this important issue, the research aimed to identify the factors affecting capacity building in the country's sports.

The results showed that seven factors i.e. society's conversational space, leadership quality, skill level, knowledge and resources, learning culture, nature of social relations, social participation and learning culture are effective in building the country's sports capacity. Edwards (2015) states that the potential role of sport as a mechanism for capacity building in society is very clear, and recognizing the role of sport in the process of human and social development has been an important challenge in the scientific fields of sports management in recent decades. The results of his research showed that the capacity building process in society is facilitated by factors such as social capital, community leadership, power distribution in society, individuals' ability to participate in communities, development of social values, and social justice. In the study by Hall et al. (2003), it was found that five factors i.e. human resources, financial affairs, communications and networks, infrastructure, planning and development are five key factors in the development of sports capacity building.

In the study by Wendel et al. (2009) the development of comprehensive knowledge, development of social relations, development of social networks, development of self-efficacy, development of public participation, development of democracy and development of social awareness were identified as factors affecting capacity building. Millar and Doherty's (2016) study found that four key processes i.e. focusing on capacity building needs, capacity building readiness,

capacity building strategies, and capacity building results and outcomes play important roles in developing sports capacity. (Millar, 2015) reported that there was a three-factor structure for capacity building that included organizational readiness, correlation, and existing capacity. The results also showed a stronger understanding of the readiness of community sports organizations to build capacity and coordinate capacity building strategies with current systems than to try to support existing capacity. Clutterbuck (2018) also reported in a study aimed at sports capacity for development that the processes involved in capacity building in the context of social change and enrichment of the experiences of the National Sports Organization can be developed. These results could be consistent with the findings of the present study.

In line with the obtained results, it can be stated that the factor of skill level, knowledge and resources means development and access to resources and skills within the society that the life of the organization can also depend on them (Almasi, Eydi, Abbasi, & Zardoshtian, 2019). This factor included indicators such as access to sports facilities and support infrastructure, development of volunteer skills, support for national sports organizations. There were two key indicators of community feeling and social capital in the nature of social relations which includes positive social interactions among participants, volunteers and spectators. The institutionalization of sport is a mechanism for creating social capital in society.

Regarding the factor of structures, mechanisms and the conversational space of society, focusing on social and inter-organizational networks, has mechanisms for citizen relations. This factor includes the development of intra-organizational social participations for the development of sporting events, the institutionalization of sport as a mechanism for creating collective identity, and ultimately the consolidation of sport as a comfortable psychological space for intergroup dialogue. The next factor that has been identified was the quality of leadership, referring to the effective and efficient leadership of the community and the development of leadership in the structure of sports systems, which, if used properly, could establish positive relationships in the organization (Jalali Farahani, Goudarzi, & Saberi, 2019). This factor emphasized on leadership development

among participants and volunteers, the symbolic credibility and power of athletes and coaches within communities. The next factor identified was social participation, which focused on the distribution of power in society and the ability of citizens to participate in social processes. It should be noted that sports encourage citizens to engage in social participation, and sport forms the basis of society's identity. Another factor was the value system, common social values that support democracy and social justice. It should be noted that "sport for all" is an approach that encourages democratic and inclusive processes, culture-related sports are sports programs designed to teach participants the ideal cultural values. Finally, the learning culture factor, referring to understanding and knowledge of the history of society and the ability to think critically in shared experiences, sports programs that include the process of critical reflection and feedback from different stakeholders, geographic interactions that allowed access to information, learn and evaluate

programs, that ultimately provided the basis for the development of learning culture at the community level that could lead to improved organizational performance in the long run (Azarian Soosahab, Kashef, & Behnam, 2019).

The present study was among the first efforts in Iran to identify the factors affecting the capacity building of sports. The generalizations of this research were limited to other cities. It is also recommended to repeat this study in other samples to increase the generalizability of the results. Sports managers and officials are also recommended to define target communities, to understand the basics of community health, to have strong local management and to create competition in communities, to share information, and to have strong participation networks and flexibility in sport development processes and to take effective steps to develop the country's sports capacity.

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Received: July 1, 2020

Accepted: August 1, 2020

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