

## Designing a Model for Sustainable Cultural Development of Iranian Public Sports

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**Abstract:** The purpose of the study was to design a model for sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports. The study was applied in terms of purpose and descriptive (quantitative and qualitative) in terms of method. It was conducted using a survey method based on structural equation modeling (SEM). The population of study was all the employees of the sports and youth departments and Provincial Municipal Sports Organization. The sample size was determined as 384 people selected among five provinces according to Cochran's formula using stratified-cluster sampling method. The components of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports were determined using library studies and consensus of the experts in five scales and 58 subscales (qualitative method) and the intended model was designed using the samples' opinions (quantitative method). The results of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) indicated the good fit of sustainable cultural development model of Iranian public sports in five scales: "attitude," "participation and solidarity," "management and workforce" "technology, media and advertisement" and "optimization."

**Keywords:** Sustainable development, cultural, public sports

### 1. Introduction

In recent years, new indices like environmental development, social development, and cultural development and so on have been considered to explore the complex aspects of human development (Leftwich, 2003). In the new principles of development, human entry path and aspects of his life were considered and the experts concluded that its main content is to meet basic needs and enhance the living conditions of individuals and community (Ziari, 2000). Sustainable cultural development in sports means the transformation and creation of values and ethical relations and proper norms that enable the society to meet human needs in sports. A developed culture has some features accelerating the development process and attracting the attention of experts in this regard.

Public or amateur sport is a behavior shown just out of interest and voluntarily to maintain and promote individual and societal health and well-being and is one of the key indices of development and high level of welfare and social security and the criterion of dynamic economy of any country in the international community according to social and economic affairs managers, the extent of coverage and the multiplicity of people's interest in amateur sports in that country. Public sports involve most sports, yet the executive management of the public sports network is much extended and complex. Thus, the executive management of the public sports network is entrusted to sports boards, public NGOs like municipalities, associations and social and public organizations, with the government assuming the role of policy-making and macro-planning and financial and material support in most countries successful in the sustainable development of public sports. Donnelly (1991) considers the nature of public sports in possessing three principles of lack of discrimination and inequality in sports and equitable distribution of equipment and facilities, a top-down and bottom-up interactive decision-making process, and having a complementary or non-contradictory state with other championship and educational sports (Mohammad Gholinia, 2008).

Nowadays, the structure of organizations has become so complex that they cannot survive anymore without careful planning and the sports organizations are not an exception to this. Planning in sports organizations is the most important task of management like any other organization. Indeed, planning in a sports organization enables all the goals, activities and group efforts to be determined and reaching them planned (Mozaffari, 2009). Public sports and their sustainable development call for formulating macro goals, strategies and operational plans like any other system so that while aware of the movement path, it can avoid any rework, misguidance and the loss of its financial, human, physical and information resources, with the cultural aspect of sustainable development of public sports considered by the researcher in the present study.

From a specific view, non-recognition of needs in the 21st century is considered a serious obstacle to the development of sports. Although much attention is now paid to health and life quality, many physical education and sports policymakers are ignoring the role of exercise and its effects on health. Under such conditions, the lack of progress and development of public sports shows the inattention of stakeholders (Ghofrani, 2008). Indeed, informing people of the society to care about their health and providing facilities for access to sports facilities is of the indices of cultural and human development in the present age (Kharazmi, 2009). Different studies have proven

that participation in public and recreational sports can bring about enhanced physical well-being, job satisfaction, social relationships and moral behavior (Ramezani Nejad et al., 2010). The role of the media in the development of public sports has been well shown too. By analyzing the contents of 720 popular newspapers regarding the coverage of the document of the comprehensive plan for the development of sports in the country (Iran), Zarki et al. (2014) showed that these newspapers have devoted only one percent of their content to the discussion of public sports. Razavi et al. (2015) indicated that mass media have an effect on people's tendency to public sports, yet it is not at a desirable level. Moradi et al. (2011) reached a significant relationship between the four roles of mass media and the development of popular sports culture. Additionally, the priorities of mass sports have been investigated in various studies. In prioritizing the needs of Urmia citizens for public sports, Fathi et al. (2015) introduced the sociocultural need as the fourth need. Mohammadi et al. (2011) stated the cultural factor as the key factor in using the health routes in Urmia. Thus, given the points stated, the importance and necessity of physical activities and public and recreational sports in maintaining and promoting the physical and mental health of individuals and society is clear. Thus, special attention has to be paid to the expansion of public sports in society, which is one of the priorities of governments at the same time. One element helping reach this is to study the factors affecting the tendency of people towards this category. Among these, one can state the type of motivation of people to participate in sports, showing their attitude towards public sports and some of the factors affecting it like cultural status. Studies show that participation in public sports and development of active lifestyle is important with many countries trying to reach it, but knowledge about it in the discussion of sustainable cultural development remains unstudied (Beaton & Funk, 2008). Hence, the lack of reliable models in sports, especially public sports in Iran made the researcher try to reach a model of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports. The theoretical framework of the study is based on the qualitative model of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports. Grounded theory was applied for data collection and analysis to develop a qualitative model with the research strategy, and the model of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports was developed.

#### Methods =

The study was applied in terms of purpose in that it was intended to improve and perfect the behaviors, methods, structures and patterns used by human societies. It was descriptive (quantitative and qualitative) in terms of method. It was also performed using survey and SEM methods. In the qualitative or libraries stage, efforts were made to collect information by reviewing and studying books, papers and documents to search and explore components to design a model of sustainable development of Iranian public sports in the cultural sector. The results obtained were reviewed by professors, experts and theorists and the desired indices were finalized and confirmed by them. Then in the quantitative or survey stage, using the obtained tools provided to the staff of the general departments of sports and youth and Provincial Municipal Sports Organizations of the selected provinces, the fit of the construct and the model (confirmatory factor and measurement models) were examined and analyzed. The population in the quantitative part was all the employees of the general departments of sports and youth and Provincial Municipal Sports Organization. Cochran's sample size formula was used to determine the sample size, which was considered as 384 people, given the unknown number of population at this stage. Sampling method at this stage was cluster-stratified with the information collected from five provinces (Tehran, Khorasan Razavi, Isfahan, Hamadan, Bandar Abbas and West Azerbaijan) given the geographical distribution. Moreover, the validity of the questionnaire was confirmed at the qualitative stage and its reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient as is seen in Table (1). SPSS23 and LISREL8.5 were used to analyze the obtained results and CFA to evaluate the model fit.

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**Table (1):** Determining the reliability of the components of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports using Cronbach's alpha coefficient

| Standard                               | Number of questions | Cronbach's alpha coefficient |
|--|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Attitude                            | 9                   | 0.768                        |
| 2. Participation and solidarity        | 11                  | 0.796                        |
| 3. Management and workforce            | 13                  | 0.824                        |
| 4. Technology, media and advertisement | 13                  | 0.855                        |
| 5. Optimization                        | 12                  | 0.775                        |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>58</b>           | <b>0.994</b>                 |

**Results**

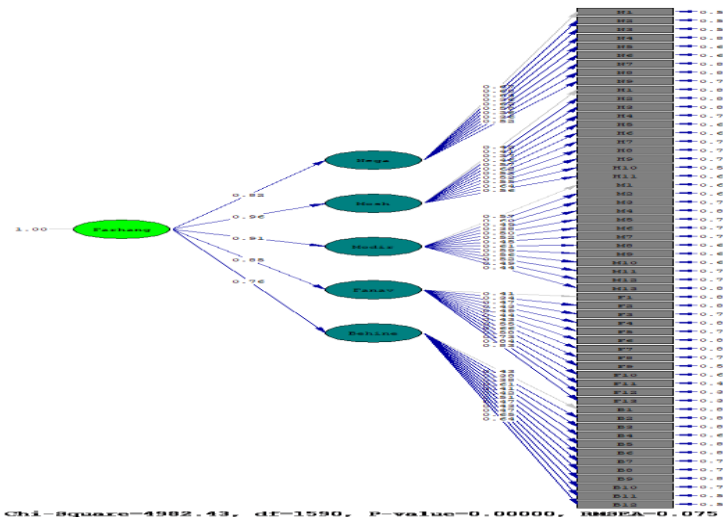
CFA of the model of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports

As the construct of the model of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports had five underlying factors, five-factor GFA model was performed for the variables of this scale. Table (2) presents the goodness-of-fit characteristics of the scale of the model of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports. These indices include the ratio of chi-square to freedom ( $\chi^2 / d.f$ ) 1.59, goodness of fit index (GFI) 0.9, comparative fit index (CFI) 0.91, and the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) 0.87. Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is 0.075, showing that the data of the study fit well with the factor structure of this scale that shows the alignment of questions with the construct of the model of sustainable cultural development of public sports in Iran according to the criteria proposed by Gefen et al. (2000).

**Table (2):** Goodness of fit characteristics of the model of sustainable cultural development of public sports in Iran

| Characteristics         | estimation | Gefen et al. (2000) |
|-------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| <b>X<sup>2</sup></b>    | 4982.43    | -                   |
| <b>df</b>               | 1590       | -                   |
| <b>X<sup>2</sup>/df</b> | 1.59       | Less than 3         |
| <b>GFI</b>              | 0.9        | Larger than 0.9     |
| <b>CFI</b>              | 0.91       | Larger than 0.9     |
| <b>AGFI</b>             | 0.87       | Larger than 0.8     |
| <b>RMSEA</b>            | 0.075      | Less than 0.08      |

Moreover, Figure (1) shows the results of factor analysis of the model examined along with the factor loadings of each question. Table (3) shows the factor loadings of the components, the explained variances and their T-Values. The significance of each of the variables observed in the model of sustainable cultural development of public sports in Iran has been determined given the factor loadings in this table.



**Figure (1):** The results of factor analysis of the model of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports

**Table (3):** Factor loadings, explained variance and T-Values of the construct

| Model components                              | Factor loadings | Explained variance | T-Values |
|---|-----------------|--------------------|----------|
| <b>1. Participation and solidarity factor</b> | 0.96            | 0.92               | 8.04     |
| <b>2. Management and workforce factor</b>     | 0.91            | 0.82               | 10.93    |
| <b>3. Technology, media and advertisement</b> | 0.85            | 0.72               | 7.68     |
| <b>4. Attitude</b>                            | 0.82            | 0.67               | 11.99    |
| <b>5. Optimization</b>                        | 0.76            | 0.57               | 7.53     |

The prioritization of the components based on the factor loadings in Table (3) indicates that according to the subjects, participation and solidarity was more important for the sustainable development of public sports in Iran and optimization has the least important.

**Discussion and conclusion**

The study was conducted with a quantitative-qualitative approach based on library and survey stages results. It was conducted to design a model of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports. The results could be used as a model for the sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports.

Thus, the country's sports planners can combine the macro goals of the country's public sports development based on sustainable development in the cultural dimension with the indices extracted from the study and design their long-term plans more accurately by identifying the development factors and contribute to the development of public sport culture. In this study, the default criteria designed based on the project records inside and outside the country were validated by experts in universities and sports organizations at different stages. Therefore, one can state that the five components designed as the model of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports have gone beyond the usual norms of accreditation and validation like consensus of experts, reliability analysis and CFA with acceptable validity. Thus, based on the results obtained, the model of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports has proven acceptable fit in five underlying factors: participation and solidarity, management and workforce, technology, media and advertisement, attitude, and optimization.

Additionally, given the literature, the five factors of the model of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports are in line with the factors extracted in other studies. Participation and solidarity was introduced in the model as the first and most effective factor in the sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports.

This factor can be examined and developed in activities like the provision of the presence of people with special physical and mobility needs, participating in the development of indigenous sports knowledge and updating sports science, using religious, ethnic and social habits to encourage society towards sports, using collective sports programs to create national identity and unity, to hold family sports events in schools and to support the comprehensive plan of physical education and sports as a codified program in promoting the culture of public sports. The results of Moradi et al. (2014), Esmaili et al. (2014), Javadipour and Saminia (2013), Keshgar and Soleimani (2012), Moradi et al. (2012) and Smith (2009) have indicated that the participation and solidarity has been tackled in the related studies in this regard. Management and workforce factor was another factor affecting the sustainable development of public sports in Iran. In line with this, one can mention cases like policy-making, planning and monitoring the sustainable development of public sports in the country, development of communication and information system between the Federation of Public Sports with other federations and government organizations, development of laws and regulations in municipal services to involve people for physical activity, development of enforcement mechanisms laws and regulations, using Article 44 of the Constitution and helping reduce the structure of the sports organization and establishing physical health institutes bases for individuals. Eslami et al. (2015), Bozhemehrani and Razavi (2015), Mehdizadeh and Andam (2014), Hamidi et al. (2013), Seyed Ameri and Mohammad Alaq (2012), Ha et al. (2015) and Harris (2013) have also pointed out the significance of management and workforce factor. Technology, media and advertisement is effective in the sustainable cultural development of public sports as it can be a very good lever to encourage more people to do public sports. Planning based on information, educational and cultural functions, holding national sports conferences in the media, appropriate modeling of sports champions in the media, using sports experts in sports programs and producing sports programs, using sports to develop mass communication, using the Internet and cyberspace for the development of sports and giving importance to localized technologies and innovations in the field of public sports can be of the effective strategies in the sustainable cultural development of public sports in Iran. The results are in line with those of Savari et al. (2015), Eidi et al. (2014), Iraqi and Kashef (2014), Ismaili et al. (2014), Goodarzi et al. (2013), Seyed Ameri and Mohammad Alaq (2012), Moradi et al. (2012), Chupankare (2011) and Honey Born (2002).

The fourth factor confirmed in the model of sustainable cultural development of Iranian public sports was attitude. Special attention to creating a culture of sports in children and adolescents, activating the general public in sports, changing the attitude of officials towards the significance of sports and its function, encouraging parents to show their sports skills beside the children, changing attitudes about sports publicity as a social norm and attention to the health-oriented dimension of sports are of the cases considered with an attitude about the importance of public sports and its role in sustainable cultural development, which are in line with the results of Moradi et al. (2014), Ghareh (2014), Iraqi and Kashef (2014) and Ehsani et al. (2014). Optimization was the last factor in the model, to develop which, one can point to diversification of the sports activities of schools and universities according to the existing potentials in local and indigenous sports, using sports capacities to protect and maintain the environment by people, standardizing infrastructure equipment of sports facilities in various cities, using new and beautiful designs in the construction of equipment and infrastructure needed for public sports, creating suitable conditions for using school sports facilities outside of school hours, financial support of insurances with the approach of increasing public health for sustainable development of public sports and support for programs and activities of non-governmental sports organizations. Eslami et al. (2017), Keshgar and Soleimani (2012) and Absalyamov (2015) have stated the optimization of affairs to develop public sports too.

In the end, planners of the Ministry of Sports and Youth, Deputy Minister of Resource Development and Support of the Ministry of Sports and Youth, Provincial Municipal Sports Organization, Coordination and Integration Committee of the Ministry of Sports and Youth, the Social Commission of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, the Cultural Commission of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, and the Health and Medical Commission of the Islamic Consultative Assembly can use the results in their planning given the nature of the study, which was determining the indices of public sports development in the country and using the designed model of managers.

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