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Designing a Development Strategy for the Public Sport – a Case Study in Mazandaran Province

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to design a development Strategy for the Public Sport in Mazandaran province. A sample of 73 individuals who were the physical education teachers of higher education institutions, senior managers of the department of the youth and sports, senior experts, heads of the state offices, provincial and municipal authorities and bodies of sports participated in this study. A researcher-made questionnaire was used to collect the data; its validity was confirmed by several experts and its reliability was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha=0.92$). The questionnaire consists of 46 items rated on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to Public Sport of the province. The findings revealed that one of the main reasons for the unfavorable sports situation in Mazandaran was the lack of development strategy for Public Sport. The results of the analysis were extracted after analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and after evaluating the matrix of the internal and external factors for the Public Sport .SO strategies include the development of the sport in the state offices and the provision of sport facilities in the province. ST strategies include the provision of raw sport materials which are easily accessible to the athlete and which are with an affordable price. WO strategies include an increase of the resources and funds for improving the programs of the Public Sport. WT strategies include the use of modern sport facilities and the involvement of senior officials in the Promotion of the Public Sport.

Key Words: Public Sport, Development Strategy, SWOT.

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INTRODUCTION

Today's life style deprives us from activity and movement bringing about lots of physical, physiological, psychological, and social problems. Sports as strategic tool and public sport as a logical solution can solve such problems well (1).

Physical inactivity, along with other lifestyle-related health risk factors (e.g. consumption and use of unhealthy diet, alcohol, and tobacco), is becoming increasingly usual in developing countries which encounter rapid with economic and social development, urbanization and industrialization (2).

In general, exercise is of great importance throughout the life, it provides a good opportunity for the individuals to spend their leisure time, and it is important in maintaining the individuals' physical and mental health. So the exercise can have positive effect on the social environment, economic status, family and hereditary issues (3). According to European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992), the exercise means as any form of physical activity that helps to improvement of the mental and physical health through the casual or organized participation. Sports can form the social relationships of the individuals (4). During the childhood, the sport means as a game to you, but when you get older it takes a form of competition for you. The meaning of competition has lead to the development of competitive and professional sports.

Adelkhani, Vaez Mosavi, and Farahani (2012) in study of cultural capital among participants in Sport for All (policy problems and practical solutions) based on SWOT observed that the most important proposed policies and guidelines include developing ICTs and using new technology in training and promoting culture of sport for all, establishing a sport house in scientific

centers, programming deliberately and creating national infrastructure regarding sport for all, and promoting a culture based on public partnership in dealing with urban problems and social abnormally through promoting Sport for All (5).

Moeinodini and Sanatkah (2012) in studying social and cultural factors affecting citizens' inclinations towards Public Sports (case study: the city of Kerman) showed that the variables personal conception of the body, mass media usage, and sports-centered cultural capital had direct influence on residents' inclinations towards public sports and that their effects were 0.13, 0.20, and 0.16, respectively. The variables sports-centered social capital and sports-centered economic capital had indirect effects through sports-centered cultural capital (4).

Recent studies have shown that the media is a very important factor in the development of sport (6).

Ramezaninezhad, Rahmaninia, and Taghavi Takyar (2009) in a study of socioeconomic status and motives of participants in Sport for All indicated that the motives of "health care and fitness" and "pleasure and enjoyment" occupied the first place. "Improvement in occupational and life relationships", "prevention and treatment of diseases" and "social interaction" occupied the next place. Women gained more scores than men in all motives and married participants had higher personal reasons to participate in these activities (3).

Khaki, Tondnevis, and Mozafari (2005) investigated the development of the sport programs in Iran. The results showed that improvement of the economic status, the media, the status of the family, the competitions and awards, development of public transportation, prioritizing other areas of sport, participation of the private sectors in the sport programs are the most important factors in developing the sport programs.

They believed that the cultural barriers can prevent from the development of sport programs, so appropriate solutions should be provided to the cultural barriers; and also, the statistics provided by the Iranian department of physical education showed that enough sport facilities are not provided for the people (7).

Today, organizations are compelled to constantly monitor the internal and external events and to adapt themselves to the changes occurring in the society. Organizations need a systematic way to identify the changes and to adapt themselves to it. The present world is changing at a staggering pace. The intuitive and experimental decisions and judgments are no longer used. Today's successful organizations will be able to use science and strategic management (8). Fry and Stoner (1995) and David (1998) define the strategic planning as a management tool designed to help the small organizations to adapt to the predicted changes (9, 10).

So the success of many organizations and projects can be managed by the analysis of the organization's current status (strengths and weaknesses) and by the review of external factors affecting the organization's status (opportunities and threats) (11). These observations indicate that in every organization, there is an area of responsibility that is not relevant to any specialist management: it is the strategic management. To determine its directions and objectives, a space should be created with a shared commitment for the success of the program.

Javadi Pour and Samie Nia (2013) in explanation of strategic position and presentation of development strategy in Sport for All in Iran showed that this exercise on the coordinates of SWOT in terms of internal factors in the region's strengths and the external factors of the area of opportunity lies. Based on this strategy of "aggressive and development "has been

recommended for the development of mass sports. Moreover, appropriate context is provided of strengthening the culture of sport in the country, Increase active participation and cooperation of organizations, Realization Purposes of sport and national capacities in order to use all of the sport's development (11).

Seyed Ameri and Mohammad Alegh (2013) in determining techniques to attract and increase citizen, s participation in Sport for All and recreational sport programs (evidence from Urmia) showed that the offered solutions about mass media, sport facilities and complexes, sport managers and programmers and education play a significant role in attracting and increasing the participation of Urmia citizens in sport for all and recreational sport programs. Therefore, allocating more time for sport in media, planning parks and recreation courts to reinforce unstructured activities such as walking and cycling; motivating citizen to attend sport activities free of charge; and the use of the expert coaches are proposed as some techniques that can improve public participation in sport for all and recreational programs (12).

Ghofrani et al. (2009) into design and codify a developmental strategy for Public Sport in Sistan and Baluchestan province of Iran observed that out of 2.5 million populations in Sistan and Baluchestan, below 0.007% participated in public sport. If the specific geographical location of the province, unemployment rate, smuggling of fuel and narcotics as well as an outbreak of different sorts of diseases due to inactivity are taken into consideration, we can submit practical solutions (through the codification of a developmental strategy for public sport and based on the data analysis) to directors of Physical Education Organization of the province so that they can program and organize a suitable ground to improve the culture of public sports and amateur sports in the province, increase the participation and

active cooperation of other organizations and departments, realize the goals of public sport and employ national and native capacities along with the growth and development of public sports and native sports of the province (8).

Mozafari and Gharah (2006) compared Iran's sport programs with the foreign countries; it was found that a low percent of the Iranian people participated in the sport programs compared to the people of 23 other countries. Furthermore, in 1996, 40 percent of the people participated in sport programs and in 1995 it increase to 54 percent (13).

As far as the province of Mazandaran is concerned, there is not an optimal strategy for developing the sport activities in this province. This Province has 1/46 percent of Iran's total land area (187,502 square kilometers) with an unemployment rate of 10/3%. However, because of the geographical and strategic importance of this Province, investigating the important issues of this province is of importance. In 2011, around 3 million individuals lived in this province and 27362 individuals died. According to the relevant organizations, more than 10 percent of these individual died because of the lack of physical and mental health. This made the authors to conduct a study about designing a development strategy for the Public Sport to maybe can prevent such deaths.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Descriptive analytical method was used in this study and it is an applied research because its results can be generalized to other Provinces.

Subjects. Population of the study incorporated physical education teachers of higher education institutions and senior managers of the department of the youth and sports, heads of state offices and provincial and municipal authorities and bodies of the sports; as a whole, 75 persons participated in the study. Since the population of the study

was limited to 75 individuals, those who had a desire to complete the questionnaire were considered as the sample of the study. To collect the data, the relevant questionnaire was distributed among them and then the completed questioner was returned back.

Instruments. At the first stage of the study, the internet and library resources were used to collect the data and issues related to the study and the sports in Mazandaran. Furthermore, along with the internet sources and library sources, a questionnaire was developed to collect the data; this questionnaire, developed by the SWOT executive committee, sought to identify four important factors, weaknesses, strengths, opportunities and threats (SWOT), existed as for the Public Sport in the Province of Mazandaran. So, there was four parts in the questionnaire. The first part of the questionnaire with 9 questions was related to the strengths, the second part with 11 questions was related to the weaknesses, the third part with 17 questions was related to the opportunities and the fourth part with 9 questions was related to the threats. For each of these questions four answers were provided by the question developers: very good, good, average, unacceptable. It should be said that these questions were developed by considering the current status of the Public Sport in the province of Mazandaran. Furthermore, the validity of this questionnaire was checked by the experts and its reliability was 0.92.

Statistical analysis. To describe the sport facilities and the Championships of this province, descriptive statistics was used. In this study, the means comparison test was used to check the status of the items of the questionnaire developed for measuring the strengths and weaknesses. Also to prioritize the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, friedman analysis of variance was used.

RESULTS

Population of the study incorporated 75 individuals who were physical education teachers of higher education institutions and senior managers of the department of the youth and sports, heads of state offices and provincial and municipal authorities and bodies of the sports in the province of Mazandaran. 33.45 percent of the subjects had a bachelor degree. Most of the subjects

had a degree related to the fields of physical education and sports science and 28.5 percent of the subjects aging less than 31/35 years.

There is significant ranking ($\chi^2=87.8$, $p=0.001$) among the participants in terms of the strengths of the Public Sport in Mazandaran province (table 1). Also, table 2 Prioritize the strengths based on the rank mean.

Table 1. The rate of the strengths of the Public Sport in Mazandaran province

Item	Mean Rank	rank	χ^2	p
S1	6.88	1 st	87.8	0.001**
S2	4.57	5 th		
S3	4.30	8 th		
S4	5.28	3 rd		
S5	3.97	9 th		
S6	4.71	4 th		
S7	6.23	2 nd		
S8	4.57	8 th		
S9	4.50	7 th		

** : significance at $p < 0.01$.

Table 2. Priorities of the strengths of the Public Sport in Mazandaran province

Priority	Item	Strengths (S)
1	S1	Support of Physical Education Management from the Public Sport
2	S7	Having an interest to the athletes
3	S4	Having experts in the Department of Physical Education for the Public Sport
4	S6	Having laws for protection and enhancement of the sport
5	S8	Providing free Public Sport
6	S2	Having access to sport places and sport facilities
7	S9	Holding competitions related to the Public Sport
8	S3	Participation of young people in the sport events
9	S5	Having coaches for the Public Sport

As table 2 shows, five priorities of the strengths of the Public Sport in the province of Mazandaran are as follow: Support of Physical Education Management from the Public Sport, having an interest to the athletes, having experts in the Department of Physical Education for the Public Sport, having the laws for protection and

enhancement of the sport and Providing free Public Sport.

There is significant ranking among the participants ($\chi^2=114.4$, $p=0.001$) in terms of the weaknesses for the Public Sport in Mazandaran province (table 3). Also, table 4 shows the priorities of the weaknesses of the Public Sport in the province based on the rank mean.

Table 3. The rate of the weaknesses of the Public Sport in the province

Item	Mean Rank	rank	χ^2	p
W1	6.52	4 th	114.4	0.001**
W2	8.46	1 st		
W3	6.75	2 nd		
W4	6.06	6 th		
W5	4.93	9 th		
W6	4.54	11 th		
W7	4.57	10 th		
W8	6.01	7 th		
W9	5.16	8 th		
W10	6.33	5 th		
W11	6.67	3 rd		

** : significance at $p < 0.01$.

Table 4 .Priorities of the weaknesses of the Public Sport in the province

Priority	Item	Weaknesses (W)
1	W2	Lack of long-term sport programs
2	W3	Paying little attention to the sport by the sport managers
3	W11	Having no schedule for the development of sport
4	W1	Lack of short-term sport programs
5	W10	Absence of instructions and regulations for holding the sport events
6	W4	Lack of a comprehensive and integrated information systems
7	W8	Lack of actions in the sports bodies
8	W9	Lack of quantity in sport places
9	W5	Lack of sport facilities and infrastructure
10	W7	Lack of sport facilities
11	W6	Lack of quality in the sport facilities and bases

As table 4 shows, five priorities of the weaknesses of the Public Sport in the province of Mazandaran are as follow: Paying little attention to the sport by the sport managers, Having no schedule for the development of sport, Lack of short-term sport programs, Absence of instructions and regulations for holding the sport events and Lacking of a comprehensive and integrated information systems.

There is significant ranking among the participants ($\chi^2=224.7$, $p=0.001$) in terms of the opportunities for the Public Sport of Mazandaran province (table 5). Also, Table 6 shows the priorities of the opportunities of the Public Sport in the province based on the rank mean.

As table 6 shows, five priorities of the weaknesses of the Public Sport in the province of Mazandaran are as follow: emphasizing on the religious teachings of the exercise, popularity of the Public Sport among people, having natural places in the province, ethnic unity and Culture of the Public Sport in among the People of the Province.

There is not a significant ranking among the participants ($\chi^2=11.13$, $p=0.194$) in terms of the treats to the Public Sport in Mazandaran province (table 7). Also, table 8 shows the dimensions of the treats of the Public Sport in the province. As it is shown in Table 8, there is no priority and all the threats to the Public Sport are in the same level.

Table 5. The rate of the opportunities of the Public Sport in the province

Item	Mean Rank	rank	χ^2	p
O1	13.38	1 st	224.7	0.001 **
O2	11.82	2 nd		
O3	9.27	8 th		
O4	11.68	3 rd		
O5	9.22	9 th		
O6	10.72	4 th		
O7	9.09	10 th		
O8	9.69	6 th		
O9	6.75	15 th		
O10	7.10	13 th		
O11	7.15	20 th		
O12	9.68	5 th		
O13	6.96	14 th		
O14	8.90	11 th		
O15	6.63	16 th		
O16	9.37	7 th		
O17	5.40	17 th		

** : significance at $p < 0.01$.

Table 6 .Priorities of the opportunities of the Public Sport in the province

Priority	Item	Opportunities (O)
1	O1	Emphasizing on the religious teachings of the exercise
2	O2	Popularity of the Public Sport among the people
3	O4	Having natural places in the province
4	O6	Ethnic unity
5	O12	Culture of the Public Sport among the People of the Province
6	O8	Atmospheric conditions (no need of indoor facilities)
7	O16	Encouraging by the broadcasting
8	O3	Multiplicity of sports media
9	O5	Support and supervision of officials
10	O7	Activities of the sports bodies
11	O14	Participation in the Public Sport
12	O11	Interaction and coordination between the offices of the Province
13	O10	Attention of the authorities of the province to the Public Sport
14	O13	Radio and television programs
15	O9	Exercises among the employees
16	O15	Participation of the private sector in the Public Sport
17	O17	Understanding the role of Public Sport

Table 7. The rate of the threats of the Public Sport in the province

Item	Mean Rank	rank	χ^2	p
T1	4.60	-	11.13	0.194
T2	5.40	-		
T3	4.84	-		
T4	4.84	-		
T5	4.71	-		
T6	5.44	-		
T7	5.31	-		
T8	5.19	-		
T9	4.66	-		

Table 8. Dimensions of the threats of the Public Sport in the province

Priority	Item	Threats (T)
1	T1	Unemployment rate in the province
2	T2	Increase of drug addicts
3	T3	Increase of the prices of the Sport equipments
4	T4	Politicization of the sport fields
5	T5	Increased costs of the halls maintenance
6	T6	Lives of machine people
7	T7	Urban restructuring
8	T8	Little attention to the sports by governor
9	T9	Not supporting the management of Physical Education

The score of the matrix of the internal factors is more than 5.2 (9.2), and this suggests that from the perspective of the

internal factors the sport has a strong place in the province of Mazandaran (table 9).

Table 9. The matrix of the internal factors

	row	item	Importance Index (Weight)	Score \approx	The final score (Weight \times score) \approx
Strengths (S)	S1	Physical education management support	0.084	3.71	0.312
	S2	Access to the public spaces and sports facilities	0.074	3.32	0.248
	S3	Participation of the young people in the sports events	0.073	3.28	0.240
	S4	Experts in the Department of Physical Education	0.077	3.4	0.261
	S5	sport coaches	0.072	3.23	0.235
	S6	laws to protect and enhance the sport	0,074	3.34	0.247
	S7	People having an interest to the athletes and champions	0.079	3.54	0.281
	S8	The emphasis of the constitution on the free exercise	0.076	3.39	0.258
	S9	sport competitions	0.0741	3.27	0.242
Weakness (W)	W1	No short-term sport programs	0.028	1.74	0.049
	W2	Not long-term sport programs	0.020	1.53	0.031
	W3	Little attention to the sport by sport managers	0.026	1.69	0.044
	W4	Lack of a comprehensive and integrated information systems	0.026	1.70	0.045
	W5	Lack of sport facilities and infrastructure	0.030	1.82	0.054
	W6	Lack of quality in the facilities and bases	0.031	1.88	0.059
	W7	Lack of sport facilities	0.033	1.89	0.062
	W8	Lack of sports bodies	0.028	1.77	0.051
	W9	Lack of sports spaces	0.030	1.84	0.056
	W10	Absence of instructions to the sports	0.028	1.81	0.052
	W11	No schedule available for the development of the sports	0.028	1.79	0.052
	SUM		$\Sigma = 1$	-	$\Sigma \approx 2.9$

The score of the matrix of the external factors is more than 2.5 (3.2), and this suggests that from the perspective of the

external factors, the province of Mazandaran has good sport opportunities (table 10).

Table 10. The matrix of the external factors

	row	item	Importance Index (Weight) \approx	Score \approx	The final score (Weight \times score) \approx
Strengths (S)	O1	Emphasizing on the religious teachings of the exercise.	0.060	3.75	0.229
	O2	Popularity of the sports among the people	0.057	3.61	0.207
	O3	Multiplicity of sport media.	0.052	3.39	0.177
	O4	natural places in the province	0.056	3.61	0.202
	O5	Support and supervision of officials	0.050	3.31	0.166
	O6	Ethnic unity	0.053	3.45	0.183
	O7	Activities of the sports bodies	0.052	3.37	0.175
	O8	Atmospheric conditions (no need of indoor facilities)	0.051	3.35	0.172
	O9	Exercises among the employees	0.045	3.16	0.144
	O10	Attention to the sport	0.046	3.23	0.151
	O11	Interaction and coordination between the State agencies	0.047	3.23	0.151
	O12	Culture and sport in the province	0.052	3.43	0.181
	O13	Radio and television	0.047	3.21	0.153
	O14	Participation in the sports events	0.052	3.34	0.173
	O15	participation of the Private sector in the sport events	0.047	3.21	0.153
	O16	Encouraging by the broadcasting	0.051	3.36	0.173
	O17	Understanding the role of the sport	0.045	3.15	0.144
Weakness (W)	T1	unemployment	0.013	1.63	0.022
	T2	drug addicts	0.013	1.62	0.022
	T3	Sports equipment prices	0.014	1.64	0.023
	T4	Politicization of the sport fields	0.014	1.68	0.024
	T5	maintenance costs	0.015	1.66	0.025
	T6	Lives of machine people	0.014	1.61	0.023
	T7	Urban restructuring	0.013	1.66	0.023
	T8	Little attention to the sport Province	0.013	1.62	0.021
	T9	Not Supporting the management of Physical Education	0.014	1.70	0.024
		SUM	$\Sigma = 1$	-	$\Sigma \approx 3.2$

To determine the “Strategic Position and Action Evaluation Matrix (SPACEM)” of the department of Physical Education through the matrix, the scores of the internal factors were put in the horizontal line and the scores of the external factors were put in the vertical line (figure 1).

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

Results of the tables 9 and 10 as well as the internal and external matrix imply that the sport of the province is located in the SO region of the strategic position, so the sport

of the Province has strong place in terms of the internal factors and have opportunities in terms of the external factors. Based on the final scores of the matrix of the internal and external factors appropriate strategies should be developed by the physical education department of the Province. In the SWOT analysis, a total of 20 were provided. Six SO strategies, five ST strategies, seven WO strategies and two WT strategies were developed for the Public Sport of the Province. Tables 11, 12, 13 and 14 show these strategies.

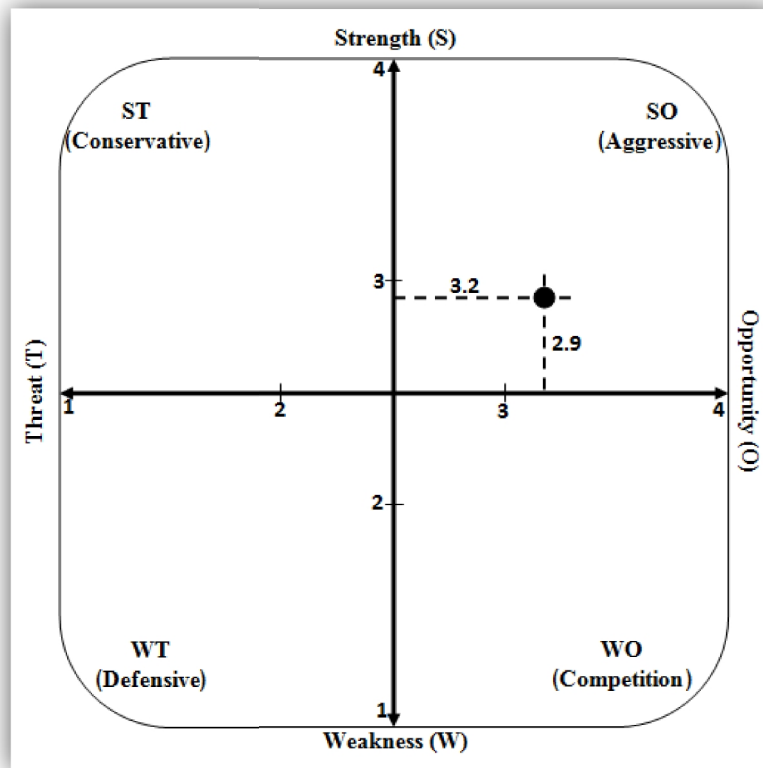


Figure 1. SWOT graph indicating Strategic Position and Action Evaluation Matrix (SPACEM) of the Public Sport in Mazandaran province.

SO strategies:

The most favorable position for the organization is to use all its positive points and its benefits to maximize the opportunities and demands. The goal of any organization is moving from SWOT position of the matrix to the SO position. If these organizations be able to identify their weaknesses and try to fix them, they will not have severe problems.

ST strategies:

The objective of these strategies is to obtain Maximum utilization of the organization's internal strengths to deal with the threats and to minimize their harmful environmental bottlenecks. Therefore, an organization must use its strengths in the areas of technology, finance, management, operations, production, engineering and

marketing to encounter with threats and bottlenecks.

WO strategies:

The objective of these strategies is to reduce and to minimize the weaknesses and vulnerable aspects of the organization and to maximize the opportunities, situations and demands. Therefore, the organizations must remove the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of the organization and use the new technology and skillful workforce to solve their problems.

WT strategies:

Their aim is to reduce and to minimize the weaknesses and vulnerable aspects of the organization as well as the external threats and dilemmas. To prevent from the problems the organizations should reconstruct, assess and evaluate itself.

Proclamation of the Public Sport in the Province of Mazandaran:

Development of the Public Sport in the classes of the Province of Mazandaran.

Mission of the Public Sport in the province:

The underlying causes for the development of sport programs are improvement of the life, enrichment of the leisure time, encouragement of mobility and the improvement of life.

Long-term goals of the Public Sport in the province:

1. Participation of 7 percent of the people involved in the Public Sport programs

2. Promotion of sports space per 1 square meter

The prioritized main strategies in the province:

The main development strategies of the province of Mazandarn included making culture in the sport, financial strengthening of the athletes, sport development strategy, investment of the private sector in the sport programs, creation of the right talent with the right patterns and the promotion of the sport industries.

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تازه‌های علوم کاربردی ورزش

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طراحی راهبرد توسعه ورزش همگانی استان مازندران

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گروه تربیت بدنی و علوم ورزشی، دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی واحد آیت‌الله آملی، آمل، ایران.

چکیده

هدف از انجام این پژوهش، طراحی راهبرد توسعه ورزش همگانی استان مازندران بود. جامعه آماری این پژوهش، ۷۳ نفر از اساتید تربیت بدنی مؤسسات آموزش عالی استان، مدیران و کارشناسان ارشد اداره کل ورزش و جوانان استان و شهرستانهای استان و رؤسای هیأت‌های ورزشی استان و جمعی از صاحب‌نظران بوده است. برای جمع‌آوری داده‌ها از پرسشنامه محقق‌ساخته استفاده شد که روائی آن توسط چند تن از اساتید صاحب نظر و پائینی آن از روش آلفای کرونباخ ($\alpha = 0/92$) تایید گردید. پرسشنامه مشتمل بر ۴۶ سؤال رتبه بندی شده در زمینه بررسی نقاط قوت، ضعف، فرصت و تهدیدهای ورزش همگانی استان مازندران بود. یافته‌های پژوهش نشان داد یکی از مهمترین دلایل این وضعیت نامطلوب، نداشتن یک برنامه راهبردی جهت توسعه ورزش همگانی بوده است. نتایج تحقیق پس از تجزیه و تحلیل نقاط قوت، ضعف، فرصت‌ها و تهدیدها و تشکیل ماتریس ارزیابی هر یک از عوامل داخلی و خارجی (SWOT) ورزش همگانی استان، استخراج گردید که چند نمونه از آن ذکر می‌گردد: راهبردهای SO شامل توسعه ورزش در ادارات استان، ایجاد پایگاه‌های ورزش همگانی در استان. راهبردهای ST شامل: دراختیار گذاشتن لوازم اولیه ورزشی در بین ورزشکاران با قیمت مناسب، دسترسی آسان مردم به مکانهای ورزشی. راهبردهای WO شامل: افزایش منابع و اعتبارات ورزش همگانی، استفاده از توان مالی بخش خصوصی در کمک به ورزش همگانی. راهبردهای WT شامل: به روز نمودن اماکن و امکانات ورزشی، استفاده از نفوذ مقامات ارشد استان جهت توسعه ورزش همگانی.

واژگان کلیدی: ورزش همگانی، راهبرد، SWOT.

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