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Privatization Priorities of Iranian Football Clubs from the Perspective of Experts

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ABSTRACT

Today, the role of government is considered so much; precise regulations, foresight and initiative of the public sector in the economy can trigger market growth. But usually because the private sector activity is affected by interactions of the market and government, markets' development process is slow and governmental clubs have become a consumer of financial resources by their inefficient function and do not allow the private sector to carry out economic productive activities in a competitive environment. Under these conditions, privatization puts forward a clear and obvious solution. The study purpose is applied and data collection method is a descriptive survey. The study population consists of football managers, university professors of physical education and sports' experts. In order to determine factors' priority, Mean Rank technique from AHP, TOPSIS, SAW ranking technique was used and software Excel and Expert choice were used to identify the challenges. According to the findings of the present study, the most important challenges are prioritizing, political-legal challenges, economic challenges, socio-cultural challenges and technological challenges. Privatization with no program and step was the most important legal and political challenge, lack of importance of sport in socio-economic development programs' set was the most important socio-cultural challenge, non-realization of television broadcast as a source of income was the most important criterion of economic challenge and lack of facilities granted by the government to the private sector, such as electricity and gas was considered the most important criterion of technological challenge.

Key Words: Privatization, Football, Political-Legal Challenges, Economic Challenges, Socio-Cultural Challenges, Technological Challenges.

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INTRODUCTION

Iran is among the countries that are proponents of privatization. In this regard, several movements have been made in different industries including the sports industry (1). Privatization is a means to improve economic activities' function through increasing the role of market forces, provided that at least 50% of governmental share is granted to the private sector (2). Professional clubs as football industry businesses (sports) can have doubled efficiency by private enterprise (1). Sports share in national economy has a direct relationship with the amount of investment in the sports sector that at the moment, limitations and constraints of the private sector to participate in the development of the country sports is low compared with that of developed countries, such that in countries like Italy, England and Germany, sports economy ratio to GDP is 2, 1.7 and 1.4%, while the ratio in the country is 38 hundredths of one percent (3).

Today, governmental sports' facilities in terms of operational efficiency and financial function are less than the desirable level, and are not desirable for the public. For this reason, many sports facilities that are fully owned and managed by the government are faced with a budget deficit (4). In today's world, sports clubs are units that are formed and managed for economic objectives. Clubs for economic interests choose special sports, in which they are active, invest in stadiums' establishment and try to reach top position in their selected sport scope to earn more income (5). On the other hand, the private sector can play an effective role in the development of public, championship sport and also objectives such as job creation, and increase the efficiency of sports' facilities and equipment (4).

Investigating the attitude of managers of various levels of the sport sector on decentralization of championship sport from

the public sector to the private sector shows that almost all managers agree with this. In one study, managers and heads of organizations declared minimum agreement with 77.8% and managers of clubs declared maximum agreement with one hundred percent; in this area unfortunately, championship sport developmental priority has not been clear, the share of the private sector has not been determined and most of the leading Premier League clubs are still in the hands of government and governmental institutions (6).

Football in Iran is only costs with no revenue. Iranian clubs gain government budget, and do not have a high revenue ability. The main cause of problems of football in Iran is that Iran economy is governmental and acts as intra-oriented and monopolistic, this has made Iran's football industry problematic because football is not different from other industries. Governmental ownership of most of the companies causes no competition between them. On the other hand, our clubs are also governmental and this is considered as an obstacle to football optimized revenue. As long as the government helps clubs, they do not make money. Given that we act intra-oriented on our economy, most of the sponsors are reluctant to invest directly in Iran; for this reason of mismanagement we have lost a lot of sponsors.

In a study, the most important factors affecting privatization of sport clubs were reviewed with an emphasis on football, and economic factors were the first priority, legal and regulatory factors were the second priority, social factors were the third priority and administrative factors were the fourth priority (7). In another study, obstacles of the development of Iran football clubs' privatization were reviewed that economic and financial obstacles were the first priority, legal and regulatory obstacles were

the second priority and structural obstacles were the third priority (8).

Elahi (2009) considered outside environmental obstacles of football industry not controlled much by sports industry policy makers and planners to include: "lack of economic market system, introversion and lack of market liberalization in the economy of the country", "governmental ownership of many institution", "lower amount of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the country's economy", "legal problems in the issue of property rights", "uncertain economic environment and high risk of investing in the country football industry", "lack of will, consensus and strategy for delegating governmental clubs to the private sector", "lack of a specific system ground and support necessary to create new sport clubs", "the presence of some obstacles (administrative, political, cultural and economic) against sport privatization", "too much interference of the government in managing affairs of football industry institutions", "less follow-up of the government and parliament to create and optimize the infrastructures and facilities required", "governmental administration of most of the sport facilities and stadiums", "non- follow up of some football industry managers on legitimate rights of football industry due to the presence of governmental and political dependence", "less attention to issues related to the main indices of Sports Economics in higher education dissertations in universities and research centers" and "little attention by researchers in other scientific areas to sports economy issues" (1). Barros (2006), in investigating the economic status of football in Portugal, focused on two issues, the government aid and the type of ownership of football clubs. The results showed that also football clubs need the government support for various reasons, but what is important is that the relationship between the government and club should be clearly defined; first the

government and municipality aid should not be direct but it should be in the form of stadium construction, land allocation for sport objectives and providing low-interest loans with long-term repayment deadlines. Then, the type of ownership of football clubs is one of the obstacles to economic development of Portugal football. For example, 5 clubs are non-profit that it is inconsistent with the nature of the profession, as well as only 2 clubs were in the stock market. So in order to increase financial and administrative accountability and responsibility of clubs, and improve financial transparency and professional management of clubs, all clubs should be registered in the stock exchange (9). Michie and Oughton (2005), by analyzing clubs managed as a company, claimed that in order to deal with very difficult economic conditions that surrounded the football industry, management of clubs as a business can be considered as a good strategy (10).

According to the above, privatization can be used as a basic solution. Because there are challenges in the way of football clubs' privatization, so identifying the challenges and ranking and prioritizing them can play an effective role in providing practical and successful solutions that the study focuses on identifying the factors and prioritizing them.

Studies and research conducted in Iran show that the implementation of privatization strategy has not been successful and/ or at least we have not achieved the defined objectives (11). So that despite the passage of more than a decade of privatization of football clubs in developed countries in the world, most professional football clubs in the country are governmental while privatization seems to have a positive effect on the advancement of clubs. In this study, we decided to investigate obstacles created by clubs' privatization, as well as the benefits of privatization.

According to the above, namely expensive sport in Iran and non-profitable sports clubs

as well as the privatization debate raised from 2003, the researcher decided to prioritize factors affecting sports clubs' privatization using analytic hierarchy process.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants. Among 245 managers of the country football sector, including managers of football premier league and football federation, higher physical education professors and students in governmental universities of Tehran, and experts of football sector of Football League Organization and Iran Football Federation, 155 subjects were considered as the sample by the following formula and the questionnaires were distributed among them:

$$n = \frac{N \times (Z_{\alpha/2})^2 \times (P \times (1 - P))}{(N - 1) \times \varepsilon^2 + (Z_{\alpha/2})^2 \times (P \times (1 - P))}$$

Also in paired comparisons section, in order to rank 10 elites, 6 professors of sport management and 4 managers of sport section (managers of League Organization and Football Federation) were selected from available samples and questionnaires were distributed among them.

Tools. A researcher-made questionnaire was designed with 33 questions consisting of 4 political-legal components (14 items, 5 criteria), economic components (6 items, 3 criteria), socio-cultural components (8 items, 4 criteria) and technological components (5 items, 3 components). Its validity was confirmed by a number of experts, with some reforms. General reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed by Cronbach's alpha equal to 0.861. Questions were according to 5-point Likert scale with a range of scoring from "strongly disagree", score 1, to "strongly agree", score 5.

Research process. The results of 150 questionnaires were used to determine initial challenges and priorities. Geometric mean

was calculated through software EXCEL in order to integrate views and priority of criteria importance. Criteria with the highest importance (a score higher than general geometric mean) were selected (25 criteria) and the rest were removed (8 criteria). In the next step, in order to prepare elites' questionnaire, according to the advisor, consultant and a number of elites, some of the criteria with higher and more important average were determined (15 criteria) and accordingly paired comparisons' questionnaire was prepared for elites' survey. The questionnaire consists of 28 paired comparisons that the elites were asked to use a score between 1 and 9 in paired comparisons. 14 questionnaires were distributed among elites including 8 university professors of sports management of the studied universities and 6 sport managers of the country Football League Organization and Football Federation. Finally 10 questionnaires were returned, and according to the data obtained from the 10 questionnaires, ranking was performed.

Statistical Analysis. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze samples' demographic components, while Cronbach's alpha and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test were used to investigate the questionnaire reliability and data normality. Finally in order to prioritize the factors, average rank method based on ranking techniques of AHP, TOPSIS and SAW was used and in order to identify the challenges, software Excel and Expert Choice were used.

RESULTS

The study sample of 150 subjects consisted of 116 males (77.3%) and 34 females (22.7%), of which 86 subjects were 20- 30 years old (57.3%), 44 subjects were 31- 40 years old (29.3%), 15 subjects were 41- 50 years old (10%) and 5 subjects were 51- 60 years old (3.4%); 33 subjects were professors (22%), 15 subjects were sport managers (10%), 102 subjects were sport

experts (68%) in the sports experts' section, 78 subjects were sport management students (52%) and 24 subjects were experts of Premier League Organization and Football Federation (16%). The sample of 10 subjects comprised only male of which 5 subjects (50%) were between 40 and 50 years old, and 5 subjects (50%) were between 51 and 60 years old. 6 subjects (60%) were professors and 4 subjects (40%) were sport managers.

The study criteria were prioritized according to AHP method, so that paired comparisons matrices' questionnaires were entered into the software individually and then incompatibility rate of opinions' matrix of each one was calculated. The software made a combined matrix for each of the 4 matrices and presented final rank of 15 criteria with each weight separately as seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Criteria ranking according to AHP technique

Factors	Factors' weight	Criteria	Criteria weight	Final weight	Criterion rank in each factor	Final rank
Political- legal	0.585	lack of determination and practical and effective steps to implement privatization policy in accordance with Article 44 among the relevant authorities	0.079	0.0469	5	10
		little follow up and support of the government to create and optimize sports facilities	0.17	0.1	3	3
		lack of specific rules for clubs' privatization	0.181	0.106	2	2
		privatization with no program and step	0.427	0.249	1	1
		parallel and simultaneous involvement of Physical Education Organization and other institutions and authorities	0.143	0.084	4	4
Economic	0.127	unfair terms between the public and private sectors, in terms of having facilities, conditions and support required	0.254	0.0322	3	13
		non-realization of television broadcast right as a source of income	0.328	0.042	2	11
		high risk of investing in sports 'facilities	0.418	0.053	1	6
Socio- cultural	0.177	failure of some privatization programs and lack of trust in the private sector	0.187	0.033	4	12
		low importance of sporting a set of economic- social development programs	0.265	0.047	2	8
		poor media advertising in the field of culture	0.286	0.051	1	7
		lack of coordination of officials' views in the field of the importance of privatization	0.262	0.0463	3	9
Technological	0.111	inadequate facilities granted by the government to the private sector such as electricity and gas	0.527	0.058	1	5
		lack of advanced technology such as games' broadcast equipment and the equipment needed to do the advertising around the playing field	0.185	0.02	3	15
		high cost of construction or purchase of sport facilities and equipment	0.289	0.032	2	14

Also in Table 2, ranking of four main variables is shown. As is clear from the

results of AHP method, political- legal challenges have the greatest effect on the

process of privatization of football clubs and then there were socio-cultural challenges,

economic challenges and technological challenges, respectively.

Table 2. Ranking of Challenge Factors by AHP

Challenge Factors	Factors' weight	Priorities
Political- legal	0.585	1
Economic	0.127	3
Socio- cultural	0.177	2
Technological	0.111	4

Weights obtained from criteria were a basis for the formation of decision matrix to implement SAW and TOPSIS methods. The result of each respondent's evaluation in this equation was considered as a column of decision matrix and given that 10 questionnaires were completed and

collected, a decision matrix with 15 rows (criteria) and 10 columns (respondents) was obtained; that was the basis of the techniques of SAW and TOPSIS. After the implementation of the above techniques, the following results were obtained by the help of software Excel as seen in Tables 3 to 6.

Table 3. Criteria ranking according to TOPSIS technique

Factors	Factors' weight	Criteria	Final weight	Criterion rank in each factor	Final rank
Political- legal	0.92	lack of determination and practical and effective steps to implement privatization policy in accordance with Article 44 among the relevant authorities	0.208	5	9
		little follow up and support of the government to create and optimize sports facilities	0.377	3	3
		lack of specific rules for clubs' privatization	0.442	2	2
		privatization with no program and step	0.801	1	1
		parallel and simultaneous involvement of Physical Education Organization and other institutions and authorities	0.317	4	5
Economic	0.232	unfair terms between the public and private sectors, in terms of having facilities, conditions and support required	0.213	2	8
		non-realization of television broadcast right as a source of income	0.322	1	4
		high risk of investing in sports 'facilities	0.206	3	10
Socio- cultural	0.205	failure of some privatization programs and lack of trust in the private sector	0.116	4	15
		low importance of sporting a set of economic- social development programs	0.244	1	7
		poor media advertising in the field of culture	0.174	2	11
		lack of coordination of officials' views in the field of the importance of privatization	0.172	3	12
Technological	0.118	inadequate facilities granted by the government to the private sector such as electricity and gas	0.271	1	6
		lack of advanced technology such as games' broadcast equipment and the equipment needed to do the advertising around the playing field	0.133	3	14
		high cost of construction or purchase of sport facilities and equipment	0.143	2	13

Also in Table 4, ranking of the four main variables is shown. As is clear from the results of TOPSIS method, political and legal challenges had the greatest effect on

the process of privatization of football clubs and then there were economic, social-cultural challenges, and technological challenges, respectively.

Table 4. Ranking of Challenge Factors by TOPSIS

Challenge Factors	Factors' weight	Priorities
Political- legal	0.92	1
Economic	0.232	2
Socio- cultural	0.205	3
Technological	0.118	4

Table 5. Criteria ranking according to SAW technique

Factors	Factors' weight	Criteria	Final weight	Criterion rank in each factor	Final rank
Political- legal	0.529	lack of determination and practical and effective steps to implement privatization policy in accordance with Article 44 among the relevant authorities	0.049	5	9
		little follow up and support of the government to create and optimize sports facilities	0.094	3	3
		lack of specific rules for clubs' privatization	0.107	2	2
		privatization with no program and step	0.196	1	1
		parallel and simultaneous involvement of Physical Education Organization and other institutions and authorities	0.080	4	4
Economic	0.161	unfair terms between the public and private sectors, in terms of having facilities, conditions and support required	0.043	3	12
		non-realization of television broadcast right as a source of income	0.064	1	6
		high risk of investing in sports 'facilities	0.052	2	8
Socio- cultural	0.176	failure of some privatization programs and lack of trust in the private sector	0.031	4	14
		low importance of sporting a set of economic-social development programs	0.053	1	7
		poor media advertising in the field of culture	0.046	3	10
		lack of coordination of officials' views in the field of the importance of privatization	0.044	2	11
Technological	0.135	inadequate facilities granted by the government to the private sector such as electricity and gas	0.067	1	5
		lack of advanced technology such as games' broadcast equipment and the equipment needed to do the advertising around the playing field	0.03	3	15
		high cost of construction or purchase of sport facilities and equipment	0.037	2	13

As is clear from the results of SAW method, political and legal challenges had the greatest effect on the process of privatization of football clubs and then there

were socio-cultural challenges, economic challenges and technological challenges, respectively (Table 6).

Table 6. Ranking of Challenge Factors by SAW

Challenge Factors	Factors' weight	Priorities
Political- legal	0.529	1
Economic	0.161	2
Socio- cultural	0.176	3
Technological	0.135	4

But finally in order to rank the study criteria, one of the strategies of prioritizing the mean scores obtained by different

methods of MADM was used as seen in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 7. Criteria ranking according to Mean Rank technique

Factors	Criteria	MADM technique			Mean	ranking according to Mean Rank
		AHP	TOPSIS	SAW		
Political- legal	lack of determination and practical and effective steps to implement privatization policy in accordance with Article 44 among the relevant authorities	10	9	9	9.33	9.5
	little follow up and support of the government to create and optimize sports facilities	3	3	3	3	3
	lack of specific rules for clubs' privatization	2	2	2	2	2
	privatization with no program and step	1	1	1	1	1
	parallel and simultaneous involvement of Physical Education Organization and other institutions and authorities	4	5	4	4.33	4
Economic	unfair terms between the public and private sectors, in terms of having facilities, conditions and support required	13	8	12	11	12
	non-realization of television broadcast right as a source of income	11	4	6	7	6
	high risk of investing in sports 'facilities	6	10	8	8	8
Socio- cultural	failure of some privatization programs and lack of trust in the private sector	12	15	14	13.66	14
	low importance of sporting a set of economic-social development programs	8	7	7	7.33	7
	poor media advertising in the field of culture	7	11	10	9.33	9.5
	lack of coordination of officials' views in the field of the importance of privatization	9	12	11	10.66	11
Technological	inadequate facilities granted by the government to the private sector such as electricity and gas	5	6	5	5.33	5
	lack of advanced technology such as games' broadcast equipment and the equipment needed to do the advertising around the playing field	15	14	15	14.66	15
	high cost of construction or purchase of sport facilities and equipment	14	13	13	13.33	13

Also ranking of political- legal, economic, socio-cultural and technological variables was done according to the mean scores obtained by different methods of MADM such that political- legal component

with an average of 1 was ranked first; socio-cultural component with an average of 2.33 was ranked second, economic component with an average of 2.66 was ranked third,

and technological component with an average of 4 was ranked fourth (Table 8).

Table 8. Ranking of Challenge Factors by Mean Rank

Challenge Factors	MADM technique			Mean	Priorities
	AHP	TOPSIS	SAW		
Political- legal	1	1	1	1	1
Economic	3	2	3	2.66	3
Socio- cultural	2	3	2	2.34	2
Technological	4	4	4	4	4

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

The main objective of this study is to identify available challenges in the process of privatization of Iran football clubs according to PEST model and rank them. In identifying the challenges' section, a total of 24 criteria were identified: 1) parallel and simultaneous involvement of Physical Education Organization and other institutions and authorities, 2) lack of determination and practical and effective steps to implement privatization policy in accordance with Article 44 among the relevant authorities, 3) little follow up and support of the government to create and optimize sports facilities, 4) lack of specific rules for clubs' privatization, 5) privatization with no program and step, 6) no guarantee of national and international investment security by officials, 7) rent and relationships behind the scenes at clubs' delegation, 8) regulatory and legal problems in the field of clubs' stock in exchange, 9) gigantic bureaucracy in licensing privatization, 10) high risk of investing in sports' facilities, 11) non-realization of television broadcast right as a source of income, 12) unfair terms between the public and private sectors, in terms of having facilities, conditions and support required, 13) fear of loss and low return of capital for investors, 14) low income from the ticket for football clubs, 15) lack of coordination of officials' views in the field of the importance of privatization, 16) failure of some privatization programs and lack of trust in the private sector, 17) poor media

advertising in the field of culture, 18) low importance of sport in a set of economic-social development programs, 19) changing lifestyle and no tendency to spend too much cost for sport, 20) distrust among managers and executives to improve the status of privatization, 21) high cost of construction or purchase of sport facilities and equipment, 22) inadequate facilities granted by the government to the private sector such as electricity and gas, 23) lack of advanced technology such as games' broadcast equipment and the equipment needed to do the advertising around the playing field, and 24) lack of modern and advanced technologies of fitness.

The first 9 criteria were classified as "political-legal" component, the 5 next criteria (10-14) were classified as "economic" component, the 6 next criteria (15-20) were classified as "socio-cultural" component, and the 4 final criteria (21-24) were classified as "technological" component.

After weighting, among the 9 criteria of the political-legal component, 5 criteria with the highest weight to average total weight were selected as the most influential criteria that their final priority is as follows: 1) parallel and simultaneous involvement of Physical Education Organization and other institutions and authorities, (2) lack of determination and practical and effective steps to implement privatization policy in accordance with Article 44 among relevant authorities, 3) the government follow up and support to create and optimize sport

facilities, 4) the lack of specific rules for clubs' privatization, and 5) privatization with no program and step.

Among the 5 criteria of economic component, 3 criteria with the highest weight to average total weight were selected as the most influential criteria that their final priority is as follows: 1) high risk of investments in sport facilities, 2) lack of television broadcast as a source of income, (3) unfair terms between the public and private sectors, in terms of having facilities and support required.

Among the 6 criteria of socio-cultural component, 3 criteria with the highest weight to average total weight were selected as the most influential criteria that their final priority is as follows: 1) Lack of coordination in officials' views in the field of privatization, 2) the failure of some privatization programs and lack of trust in the private sector, and 3) poor media advertising in the field of culture.

Among the 4 criteria of technological component, 3 criteria with the highest weight to average total weight were selected as the most influential criteria that their final priority is as follows: 1) high cost of construction or purchase of sport facilities and equipment, 2) inadequacy of facilities granted by the government to the private sector such as electricity and gas and 3) lack of advanced technology such as games' broadcast equipment and needed equipment to do advertising of around the playing field.

Unlike the present study, Padash (2009) in connection with the most important factors affecting privatization of sports clubs with an emphasis on football, observed economic factors as the first priority, legal and regulatory factors as the second priority, social factors as the third priority and managerial and administrative factors as the fourth priority (7). Also Gharekhani (2010) by investigating challenges and obstacles of the development of privatization of Iran football clubs reported economic and

financial obstacles as the first priority, legal and regulatory obstacles as the second priority and structural obstacles as the third priority that in the present study, economic factors were the third priority and legal and regulatory factors were the first priority (8). Barros (2006) in investigating the economic status of Portuguese football concluded that football clubs need the help of government support in order to be profitable and can remain competitive. This is consistent with the present study results due to the criterion of "proper and sufficient government support for sport private sector" in technological factors section (9).

In sport industry generally, and in any sport field particularly, in addition to planning to achieve sport success, its revenue should also be considered. It is available through privatization; however, the factors that may affect the realization of this and/ or the factors that are obstacles of achieving this objective are very important.

The most important criterion of political and legal component that has a significant effect on privatization process as a challenge is no program and step process, which it is recommended to review conditions and context of privatization completely, plan carefully and implement privatization step by step and not suddenly.

The most important criterion of socio-cultural component that has a significant effect on privatization process as a challenge is low importance of sport in economic-social development programs' set that it would require special attention to this issue in strategic planning and periodic programs of the development.

The most important criterion of economic component on privatization process is lack of realization of television broadcast right as a source of income. Since today the world's great teams have a strong focus on this source of income, it is suggested to consider the source of income by managers of our football clubs and do more commercial and

advertising measures. National media can also take appropriate measures in this regard.

The most important criterion of technological component on privatization process is inadequate facilities granted by the government to the private sector such as electricity and gas that resolving the challenge requires comprehensive support of the government for clubs and special facilities provision.

Many experts and scholars in the study agreed with the idea that football clubs should be transferred from the public to the private sector. Regarding many governmental football clubs, privatization of country football clubs can be implemented in the form of delegating it to the private sector, but this requires a review of the provision of legal, organizational, economic policies and proper management to resolve weaknesses and threats and take advantage of strengths and opportunities.

APPLICABLE REMARKS

It should be revised:

- The unplanned and no staging privatization process in legal-political criteria.
- The importance of sport, from cultural-social criteria, in a periodic and strategic planning of socio-economic development.
- The non-realization of broadcasting rights, from the economic criteria, as an important source of club's income.
- The inadequacy of special facilities granted by the government to the private sector, from technological criteria.

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تازه‌های علوم کاربردی ورزش

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بررسی اولویت‌های خصوصی سازی باشگاه‌های فوتبال

ایران از دیدگاه متخصصین

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چکیده

امروزه توجه زیادی بر نقش دولت‌ها می‌شود، مقررات دقیق، آینده‌نگری و ابتکار عمل بخش دولتی در زمینه اقتصاد می‌تواند رشد بازارها را موجب شود. اما معمولاً به دلیل اینکه فعالیت بخش خصوصی تحت تأثیر روابط تقابلی بازار و دولت است روند توسعه بازارها به کندی پیش می‌رود و باشگاه‌های دولتی با عملکرد ناتوان خود به مصرف‌کننده منابع مالی دولت تبدیل شده‌اند و به بخش خصوصی اجازه انجام فعالیت‌های مولد اقتصادی را در فضایی رقابتی نمی‌دهند، در این شرایط است که خصوصی‌سازی راه حلی روشن و بدیهی را پیش‌رو قرار می‌دهد. این پژوهش از جهت هدف کاربردی و از جهت نحوه گردآوری داده‌ها، توصیفی از نوع پیمایشی می‌باشد. جامع آماری تحقیق شامل مدیران ورزش فوتبال، اساتید دانشگاهی رشته تربیت‌بدنی و کارشناسان ورزشی می‌باشد. جهت تعیین چالش‌ها پس از نظرسنجی از شرکت‌کنندگان، از نرم افزارهای Excel و Expert choice، و به منظور اولویت‌بندی عوامل و چالش‌ها از تکنیک رتبه‌بندی میانگین رتبه‌های AHP، TOPSIS و SAW استفاده شد. براساس یافته‌های تحقیق حاضر مهمترین چالش‌ها به ترتیب اولویت‌بندی چالش‌های سیاسی-حقوقی، چالش‌های اقتصادی، چالش‌های اجتماعی-فرهنگی و چالش‌های تکنولوژیکی می‌باشد. خصوصی‌سازی بدون برنامه و مرحله‌ای نبودن آن، مهمترین چالش سیاسی-حقوقی؛ اهمیت کم ورزش در مجموعه برنامه‌های توسعه اقتصادی-اجتماعی، مهمترین چالش اجتماعی-فرهنگی، عدم تحقق حق پخش تلویزیونی به عنوان یک منبع درآمد، مهمترین معیار چالش اقتصادی و ناکافی بودن تسهیلات اعطایی ویژه از سوی دولت به بخش خصوصی مثل برق و گاز مهمترین معیار چالش تکنولوژیکی شناخته شد.

واژگان کلیدی: خصوصی‌سازی، فوتبال، چالش‌های سیاسی-حقوقی، چالش‌های اجتماعی-فرهنگی، چالش‌های اقتصادی و چالش‌های تکنولوژیکی.

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