



Explaining scenarios affecting sports with emphasis on the development of educational sports in the city of Ahvaz

Hamid Faramarzi¹ , Esamaeil Veisia² * Tahereh Azmsha³ , Seyed Hossein Marashian⁴ 

1. MA degree student in sports management, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Ahvaz, Iran.

2. Associate Professor in Sport Management Department, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Ahvaz, Iran.

3. Assistant Professor in Sport Management Department, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Ahvaz, Iran.

4. Associate Professor in Sport Management Department, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Ahvaz, Iran.

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Abstract

Background and Objective: The development of educational sports is a comprehensive and purposeful approach that uses sports activities to cultivate various dimensions of human existence. This approach is not limited to physical skills, but also focuses on personality development, emotional intelligence, social skills, and mental health. Scenarios are developed for this purpose in order to predict and prepare for future challenges and opportunities in this area.

Methodology: In this regard, the present study was conducted with the aim of examining the effectiveness scenarios of the development of educational sports in the city of Ahvaz. Which is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-analytical in terms of method, the data collection method was library, document, and interview (with 50 experts) and using future research techniques and Micmac and Scenario wizard software.

Results and Findings: First, with the participation of professors, officials, sports experts, and sports teachers, the main drivers in 6 dimensions and 45 factors were identified. Then, using the MicMac and ScenarioWizard software, the data were analyzed and effective scenarios on the development of educational sports were developed. In the present study, 45 main factors were initially identified in six different dimensions. Then, using the Mic Mac and ScenarioWizard software, 21 key drivers were selected from these factors and three main scenarios for the future were drawn. The first scenario, titled the desirable (golden) scenario, presents the best possible path, which, with a compatibility value of 5 and a total interaction score of 733, indicates a strong synergy between factors such as lifestyle and educational policies that leads to comprehensive development. In contrast, the undesirable scenario, with a negative compatibility value of 2 and a total negative interaction score of 117, depicts a future in which economic stagnation and incoherence lead to a serious regression of educational sports. The third scenario, the probable scenario (standing still), with a negative compatibility value of 1 and a total score of 45, predicts a static situation without significant progress. Finally, the results of this analysis emphasize that to achieve an ideal and sustainable future, we must focus on influential drivers in the dimensions of culture building, management, and macro-policy making to form a positive cycle in the development of educational sports.

Keywords: Sports, sports development, education, educational sports, Wizard scenario, Ahvaz.

* Corresponding Author: vaysia@scu.ac.ir

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Introduction

In today's world, sport is a key indicator of national development and plays a vital role in the physical and mental health of society. Sports federations aim to develop sport and increase public participation at both competitive and recreational levels. Sport is considered a smart investment that facilitates social and demographic goals. The UN's 2030 Agenda emphasizes the role of sport in sustainable development. Physical education (sport pedagogy) in schools goes beyond physical activity, teaching values such as teamwork, fair play, and respect for rules. The education system, as the backbone of society, plays an irreplaceable role in promoting physical education. The development of physical education requires balanced attention to various components. This field includes all organized activities in formal educational institutions and is the starting point for sustainable sports development. Integrating physical education into the educational system cultivates a dynamic and responsible generation. However, physical differences due to puberty affect the quality of students' experiences. A futures studies approach, as a purposeful process, paves the way for sustainable development. In Ahvaz, the development of physical education consists of two parts: curricular and extracurricular. Key institutions in this area include the education system, family, and social institutions. Physical education positively impacts social and environmental sustainability, gender equality, and mental-social health. Research literature shows that factors such as comprehensive planning, support systems, talent identification, and modern facilities are key. Additionally, networking among stakeholders and the synergy of family and community are major uncertainties for the future of physical education in Iran. The innovation of the present study is the analysis of six dimensions—political, economic, psychological-individual, physical, socio-cultural, informational, and managerial—using the Scenario Wizard method for the first time in physical education.

Methodology

The present study aims to investigate various scenarios affecting the development of physical education (sport pedagogy). In terms of purpose, this research is applied, as it seeks practical ways to enhance the effectiveness of physical education using an appropriate approach. The research method is a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches, specifically employing scenario writing as a tool that enables researchers to identify influencing factors and formulate possible scenarios for the future of physical education. This study is a normative analysis using futures studies methods to address complex issues in this field. The methodology is inspired by the French futures studies approach developed by Godet and Durance (2011), allowing the researcher to examine the topic descriptively-analytically and provide innovative solutions. Data were collected from various sources, including scientific and documentary sources, as well as interviews and expert meetings with specialists and stakeholders. The statistical population consisted of 50 knowledgeable experts in the field of physical education, selected from university professors, sports managers and specialists, physical education teachers, and experts in sport pedagogy. The selection process combined random sampling and in-depth interviews, with criteria including educational background, work experience, research records, and participation in relevant projects. In the first stage, 45 key components across six dimensions (political, economic, psychological-individual, physical, socio-cultural, informational, and managerial) were extracted from previous research and presented to the experts. Subsequently, using a questionnaire and impact matrices, the necessary information was collected and key factors were identified. To formulate scenarios, the Delphi method and document review were first used to identify key variables. Then, using MICMAC software and structural analysis, the main driving forces affecting the development of physical education were determined. Next,

ScenarioWizard software and the Cross-Impact Balance (CIB) method were employed to formulate compatible scenarios. After formulating the scenarios, each scenario's impacts were evaluated in terms of acceptability, variability, and feasibility. Finally, by combining the results and expert feedback, the best scenarios and practical solutions for the development of physical education were presented. The validity and reliability of the research instrument were confirmed using professors' opinions and Cronbach's alpha test (with values above 0.93).

Results and Findings

The results showed that 45 factors in six dimensions—political, economic, psychological-individual, physical, socio-cultural, informational, and managerial—were extracted from the literature and evaluated by 50 experts. Using structural analysis in MICMAC software, 21 key drivers were identified as the main driving forces from among the 45 factors. For each driver, three states (favorable, semi-favorable, and unfavorable) were defined, and a total of 45 hypotheses were formulated. Then, using a cross-impact matrix and ScenarioWizard software, the direct influence of these hypotheses on one another was examined on a scale from +3 to -3. Analysis of 3,780 cell judgments showed that 30.32% of the relationships had a weak limiting effect (-1), 26.40% had no interaction (0), and only 2.91% had a very strong positive effect (+3). Using the Monte Carlo method, 21 possible scenarios were identified, among which one scenario with strong consistency (zero inconsistency) was selected as the favorable scenario, and one plausible scenario with the highest total impact score was chosen. The three final scenarios are: the Golden Scenario (favorable) with a cross-impact score of 733 and a consistency value of 5; the unfavorable scenario with a score of -117 and a consistency value of -2; and the plausible scenario with a score of 45 and a consistency value of -1. The Golden Scenario is based on all 21 drivers being in a favorable state, the most important of which are: lifestyle (score 17), educational center policies (16), understanding the importance of sport's role (14), and optimal management of educational conditions (13). Realizing this scenario requires increased public and private investment, diversification of income sources, shifting attitudes from individualism to participation, service branding, infrastructure improvement, and removal of legal barriers. Analysis of the descriptor network indicated that some factors, such as "increased investments" and "attitude change," have a dual role (both influencing and being influenced) and can create a positive cycle. Evaluation of the internal consistency of the scenarios showed that the favorable scenario has full coherence, while scenarios based on "continuation of the current trend" or "decline" suffer from contradiction and inefficiency. Overall, the results emphasize that focusing on drivers with high consistency values and creating convergence among all key factors is the main condition for achieving sustainable development of physical education over a 20-year horizon.

Conclusion

Physical education (sport pedagogy) goes beyond mere physical activity; it is a powerful tool for personality development and the internalization of values such as cooperation, discipline, and responsibility. This approach, by fostering resilience and self-confidence, prepares individuals for real life, and investing in it is considered a strategic investment in the social future. The present study, aiming to comprehensively analyze the development of physical education, has identified 21 key drivers across six dimensions (political, economic, psychological-individual, physical, socio-cultural, informational, and managerial). Based on this, three main scenarios are outlined: the favorable (Golden) scenario with a consistency value of 5 and a cross-impact score of 733, in which factors such as lifestyle and educational policies act synergistically; the unfavorable scenario with a consistency value of -2 and a score of -117, indicating stagnation and regression; and the plausible (status quo) scenario with a consistency value of -1 and a score of 45, predicting a static situation with no significant progress. The results show that the favorable scenario has high internal coherence, and all its hypotheses logically and harmoniously reinforce each other.

Realizing this scenario requires a comprehensive approach including training coaches and teachers, reforming educational structures, providing suitable platforms, and the participation of families, educational institutions, and sports organizations. Ultimately, the development of physical education is not a choice but a social necessity, which, through the implementation of appropriate policies, leads to social justice, equal opportunities, and a responsible and committed generation.

Declarations

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Authors' Contribution

Authors contributed equally to the conceptualization and writing of the article. All of the authors approved the content of the manuscript and agreed on all aspects of the work declaration of competing interest none.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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