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Explanation and design of organizational sports development model for employees of the National Drilling Company (with a regional sustainability approach in Ahvaz City)[1]

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Abstract

Background and Objective: Considering the vital importance of human resources in the National Iranian Drilling Company, especially in the city of Ahvaz, and the exposure of employees to job stress and high workplace risks, it is essential to develop a local and comprehensive model for sports development. In this regard, the aim of the present study was to explain and design a model for the development of sports for employees in the National Iranian Drilling Company with a regional sustainability approach in Ahvaz. This research is applied in terms of its purpose and is classified as qualitative research in terms of its nature, and has been conducted with a data-based theory approach (grand theory).

Methodology: The statistical population of the study consisted of experts and employees familiar with the subject of sports and organizational development in the National Ahvaz Drilling Company with a regional sustainability approach, as well as academic experts in the field of sports management. The sample size was determined as 30 people using the purposive sampling method (snowball) and based on the principle of theoretical saturation. The data collection tool was in-depth semi-structured interviews that were conducted with the participation of sample members. Three stages of open, axial, and selective coding were used to analyze the data.

Results and Findings: The results of the study showed that sports development in the National Iranian Drilling Company is a comprehensive and cyclical system that has been formed around the main category of "model of sustainable sports development in the organization". This model was explained based on six paradigmatic categories (causal, contextual, interventionist, strategies and consequences). Causal and contextual factors initiate the development path, which then faces interventionist obstacles (political, financial, managerial). To overcome these obstacles, four key strategic roles (cultural-interactional, managerial-executive, financial and educational) were presented. The successful implementation of these strategies has led to four types of consequences (fundamental, health, structural and economic) that transform sports development from a cost to a strategic investment with high returns on health, vitality and productivity of human resources. This indigenous model provides a comprehensive framework for policymakers to promote sports into a systemic and managerial process.

Keywords: Sports, sports development, regional sustainable approach, grand theory, paradigmatic model, National Ahvaz Drilling Company.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Introduction:

Today, sport has become more than a simple physical activity, it has become a global and multifaceted phenomenon that has deep cultural roots and acts as a powerful tool for developing the physical, psychological and social dimensions of man. This transformation has turned sport into a "smart investment in society" that, if properly managed, facilitates the achievement of many social and demographic goals. Achieving these functions in the national and international arenas depends only on the effective development of sport. The development of sport is a comprehensive and purposeful process that provides sustainable facilities and opportunities for the participation of all members of society, at any level of ability, in sports activities. This concept includes strengthening infrastructure, training specialized human resources, culture building, identifying talents and ensuring equitable access to sports facilities, and ultimately, it contributes significantly to the promotion of health, social vitality and sustainable urban and social development. With economic progress, increasing quality of life, aging population and expanding urbanization, sports development has become increasingly important and is referred to as the "sunrise industry" and "green industry". This key and multidimensional factor plays an unparalleled role in responding to urban needs and means the continuity of sports programs. Two main arms of sports development have been conceptualized, including "sports development" (focusing on increasing the opportunities and specific qualities of athletes) and "sports for development or development through sports" (which extends beyond sports itself to the more complex area of community development and social impacts such as increasing emotional intelligence and socio-economic status). The deep integration of the sports industry with related industries such as "sports + culture", "sports + tourism" and "sports + health" will not only ensure the effective supply of sports services, but also significantly increase the vitality and dynamism of urban development and make it a strategic driving force for shaping modern and healthy cities.

To achieve strong development, sports development needs to be accompanied by several factors, of which urban economic growth is one of the most key, because there is a complex and close relationship between the two. In this regard, sports development in the structure of the National Ahvaz Drilling Company (NIDC) is not a side activity, but a vital strategic investment in human capital. Given the difficult nature, high workload, and constant need for physical and mental fitness of employees in the drilling industry, sports development in NIDC is inevitable to promote vitality, team spirit, operational safety, and reduce accidents. Unfortunately, the lack of attention of officials and acting according to taste are among the reasons for the lack of development in this area, and sports organizations need strategic planning to survive and progress. Therefore, identifying and accurately analyzing the factors affecting the development of sports in this huge industrial company, whose employees need sports programs more than ever due to difficult working conditions, is an undeniable necessity so that managers can adopt effective strategies and overcome challenges, providing a suitable platform for improving the level of participation and development of sports for the sustainable development of human resources.

Methodology:

This qualitative research, using the Grounded Theory method, seeks to develop a local model/theory for the development of sports in the National Ahvaz Drilling Company through the perspectives of experts. Data are collected through in-depth and semi-structured interviews with the statistical population, including the board of directors, vice presidents, professional athletes of the company, and sports experts outside the company. Theoretical purposive sampling is used in this research, meaning that the interviews proceed simultaneously with the analysis and continue until theoretical saturation (no new concepts emerge) is reached (the initial estimate is about 30 people, but the final sample size will be between 15 and 25 interviews). Data analysis is carried out in three stages: open coding (breaking down the data and initial conceptualization), axial coding (associating the initial codes around a central category based on the Strauss and Corbin paradigmatic model), and finally selective coding (developing the final model by selecting the core category). To ensure the quality of the research, instead of traditional validity and reliability, validity criteria (such as member review and

triangulation) and dependability were used; in this regard, the reliability study between two coders on three sample interviews showed an agreement rate of 90.6%, which indicates high reliability of the coding and data analysis process.

Results and Discussion:

Data analysis of this qualitative study was conducted using grounded theory (grand theory) and Strauss and Corbin's three-stage coding method. All in-depth interviews conducted with 30 experts and specialists were transcribed, and the data analysis process began simultaneously with the interviews and continued until theoretical saturation was achieved. In the open coding stage, the interviews led to the identification of 193 initial non-repetitive codes. In the next stage, axial coding, these codes were organized based on thematic similarity into 16 key concepts that formed the main components of the paradigmatic model (including causal, contextual, intervening conditions, strategies, and consequences). In the axial coding stage, key concepts were centered around six main paradigmatic categories and the logical relationships between them were explained. Causal conditions (triggering causes) included organizational factors (such as managers' strategic thinking and budget) and non-organizational factors (such as employee motivation and awareness). The background conditions (governing framework) included the inherent capabilities of sport and the infrastructural capabilities and facilities of the organization. The intervening conditions (facilitating or inhibiting factors) included obstacles such as political-legal, socio-cultural, structural-instrumental and human-management barriers. To manage these conditions, strategies were defined in four roles: cultural-interactional, managerial-executive, financial-supportive and educational-promotional, the implementation of which leads to four outcomes (fundamental development, health, structural and economic). At the highest level of coding, namely selective coding, a central category was discovered that integrated all the categories and relationships of the paradigm model around itself. This main category is probably the "comprehensive system of sports development with an organizational approach" that explains the ultimate goal of the model. Finally, the entire process can be analyzed based on a systemic and cyclical approach that includes three main axes: primary mechanisms (bedrocks) such as strategic planning and infrastructure, processes for creating sustainability (management) such as communication and event management, and finally the consequences of sustainability in sport including social, economic, and structural outcomes that serve the ultimate goal of achieving sustainability in the health, vitality, and productivity of the National Ahvaz Drilling Company's employees.

Conclusion:

The results of the study showed that sports development in the National Ahvaz Drilling Company is a comprehensive and cyclical system that has been formed around the main category of "model of sustainable sports development in the organization". This model was explained based on six paradigmatic categories (causal, contextual, interventionist, strategies and consequences). Causal and contextual factors initiate the development path, which is then faced with interventionist obstacles (political, financial, managerial). To overcome these obstacles, four key strategic roles (cultural-interactional, managerial-executive, financial and educational) were presented. The successful implementation of these strategies has led to four types of consequences (fundamental, health, structural and economic) that transform sports development from a cost to a strategic investment with high returns on health, vitality and productivity of human resources. This indigenous model provides a comprehensive framework for policymakers to promote sports into a systemic and managerial process.

Declarations

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•**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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