



Investigating Economic Management Factors in the Development of Sports Equipment and Facilities in Iran

Mohammad Saeid Kiani^a

^a Department of Sports Management, Kermanshah Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran.

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to identify and analyze the managerial factors affecting the development of sports equipment and facilities in Iran, with an emphasis on economic indicators. In terms of purpose, the research is applied, and in terms of nature, it is exploratory. The research method is combined (qualitative-quantitative) and with a descriptive-survey approach. The statistical population included all professors and managers of state sports centers in the country in 2023, and the sampling was purposefully carried out using the snowball technique until theoretical saturation was reached. In the qualitative part, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 15 experts in the field of sports facility management and analyzed using open and axial coding. In the quantitative part, a structured self-interaction questionnaire was used to classify the barriers and explain the relationships between them. Experts confirmed the validity of the tool, and its reliability was confirmed by the test-retest method (reliability coefficient 0.875). The findings showed that the most important economic barriers to the development of sports facilities include the country's economic barriers, structural barriers, and low quality of domestic products, which are at the first level. Also, weak management skills and lack of authority were categorized at the second level, and facility deterioration and chronic budget deficit were categorized at the third level. Social and human barriers were also at the lowest level. In a situation where the country is facing economic problems and restrictions, identifying these barriers can pave the way for effective use of resistance economy policies in the field of sports.

Keywords

Economy, Places, Equipment, Management, Sports.

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1. Introduction

The development of sports in Iran requires a long-term vision. For this reason, a comprehensive plan is needed in which the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of sports are identified, and based on them, an appropriate vision and strategies are designed and developed. One of the things that can have a great impact on the development of sports is economic issues. From the second half of the 20th century, the economic boom in the West and the need to have a market to sell goods at the international and domestic level made investors think about using the economic potential of sports (Khazaei et al., 2018). The sports industry is a leading element in the economy as well as an active element in the formation of personal identity, and is very important in both the micro and macro-economic levels. It is also a market in which people, activities, businesses, and organizations are involved in production, facilitating, promoting, or holding any activity with a focus on sports. In this market, businesses offer products to their buyers. These products include any goods, services, people, places, or ideas related to sports. Among these, sports facilities are considered the most basic hardware part of sports and a part of human facilities and organizations, and a large part of the effects related to sports on society and the environment are affected by them (Eschenfelder and Li, 2007). Resistance economy is a term that was first mentioned by the Supreme Leader in 2009 in a meeting with a group of entrepreneurs from the country. After that, he emphasized it in his many speeches. In fact, this term is used for an economy that has the ability to deal with shocks to the economy. Such an economy should have flexibility in various situations and the ability to overcome a crisis. In short, a resistance economy can be considered as an economy in which, in addition to dynamic interaction with the outside world and the use of free trade facilities, the economic security of the country is maintained. The fluctuations of the international economic environment and its threats have the least negative impact on the long-term trend of macro variables. They are economical (Saif, 2012). Correct and principled management of sports facilities directly affects the productivity of sports facilities as well as the quantity and quality of sports programs and events. The increase in population and the development of living standards in today's societies have increased the demand and use of sports resources and facilities. This increase in demand and the consequent increase in production or services has caused more use of sports resources and facilities. Identifying managerial obstacles in increasing the productivity of sports facilities is of particular importance (King, 2014). Sports can be one of the most important influential areas in implementing the resistance economy. Today, resistance economy has been used as a belief and a desirable truth in many societies under certain conditions, and it is considered a

platform for economic self-sufficiency and economic stability, which provides an invulnerable background to sanctions, threats, and damages. It is definitely beneficial for the country and especially sports (Khazaei et al., 2018). Austerity measures in sports are usually accompanied by budget cuts in services, staff, and most importantly, the development of sports and community recreation (King, 2014). In this research, based on the theory of resource dependence (Walker and Hayton, 2019; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978), the challenges of managing sports facilities in the economic resistance era are examined to cover both the existing knowledge and theoretical gap, and policymakers. Consider appropriate solutions to overcome these obstacles and challenges. This research provides an original insight that is able to inform policymakers about the correct design of management strategies for sports venues, while they have to use forced economic changes. Saif (2012), with research entitled *The Proposed Model of the Resistance Economy of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Based on the View of the Supreme Leader)*, showed that the implementation of the resistance economy causes economic growth. Mozafari (2013), in his research titled "Resistance economy and national self-confidence, opportunities and challenges of its realization", stated that the resistance economy has conditions and requirements that use all government and people's capacities, change in economic conditions through the implementation of principle 44 policies, empowerment of the private sector, and reducing dependence on oil are among them. Based on the components that were extracted from the Supreme Leader's statements, it is possible to propose the model of Iran's resistance economy with four basic components, including economic growth, economic justice, economic stability, and economic resilience.

According to the review of the conducted researches, it is clear that very limited researches have been done on sports in the period of economic austerity and resistance economy (Parnell et al., 2017), which due to its role in education, health and social cohesion It is surprising, sports can contribute significantly to the country's strategic goals in policies related to health, education, and community cohesion, and the evolution of sports can help increase inequality (Widdop et al., 2019). Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) stated that dependence on external resources can reduce the autonomy of organizations. It also affects the power relations between organizations that provide services and those that provide funding. Yeager et al. (2015) identify three particularly significant factors in the environment in which any organization operates: equipment or resources, dynamics, and competition. The first one refers to the availability of resources. Yeager et al. (2015) have pointed out that organizations that operate in low-privileged environments should reduce their dependence on specific resources and find

alternative resources. Dynamics can be described as environmental change or innovation ([Dess and Beard, 1984](#)).

A dynamic and changing environment creates uncertainty and can destabilize organizations. Finally, competition is reflected in the number of stakeholders an organization thinks it is likely to rely on when formulating its strategy. In fact, increasing the number of stakeholders involved in funding and providing services can also increase uncertainty and thus lead to reluctance to test new strategies ([Parnell et al., 2017](#)). In the era of resistance economy and economic austerity, most sports organizations and especially sports complexes are not able to produce all the resources they need, and this leads to a degree of dependence on external resources ([Kenyon et al., 2019](#)). Sports facilities and complexes are heavily dependent on the government budget ([Aharoni et al., 1981](#); [Kenyon et al., 2019](#)) and improper management at this critical time can have irreparable consequences, the negative consequences of managing sports facilities in It is faced with two-way resistance economy conditions, on the one hand, these consequences cause small and large destructive effects in various directions on the environment and the lives of citizens, and on the other hand, it causes a decrease in productivity and in some cases, a change in the use of the sports facilities themselves. [Ramchandani et al. \(2019\)](#) conducted a study titled The performance of local sports facilities in England during recession and austerity. In this article, the performance of public sports in England, which is dependent on subsidies from local authorities, has been investigated during the period of economic recession and austerity. In previous research, the application of resource dependence theory in the fields of sports management ([Wicker and Breuer, 2011](#)), development of sports for all ([Collin and Hauden huyse, 2015](#)), governing bodies of sports ([Berry and Manoli, 2018](#)), and the effect of economic austerity on Sports organizations ([Walker and Hayton, 2019](#)) has been used. Using this theory, this research examines the challenges of sports venue managers in the period of resistance economy. [Afshari et al., \(2019\)](#) conducted research entitled Causal Analysis of the Effect of Transnational Management, Resistance Economy and Sports Development in the Economic Development of Iran's Sports Industry. Based on the findings of this research, after correcting the causal relationship model in some assumptions, all relationships between significant research variables and the research model based on the effect of trans-oriented management variables, resistance economy, and sports development in the economic development of Iran's sports industry had the necessary fit.

2. Research methodology

In terms of classification, the present research is of the applied and exploratory research. The reason for the applicability of this research is its ability to help managers of venues and sports facilities solve the problems and dilemmas of venues in the period of the resistance economy. In this way, venues can gain a competitive advantage and expand their services, since this research identifies the challenges of facility managers; Therefore, it is exploratory. Also, in terms of the research method, it is survey descriptive research that is conducted in a combined (qualitative-quantitative) method. The approach used is a structural analysis method that is based on the interpretative paradigm. This work has been done using the opinions of 15 experts and managers of places, with an emphasis on semi-structured interviews. The statistical population of this research includes all professors and managers of state sports centers and venues in Iran in 2023, which, according to statistics, included five academic staff members of the sports management group and 60 managers of sports facilities. More precisely, the sampling was targeted, and the use of the snowball technique was continued until the theoretical saturation of sampling was reached. Due to the start of the Corona epidemic, the work process progressed slowly in the interview section, and in the qualitative section, to answer the questions of the research on documents and interviews. A semi-structured interview form has been considered for the research questions for experts. The main questions of the researcher in the interview with experts were focused on 12 questions that were the basis of the researcher's exploration of obstacles:

Finally, 15 people participated in this study. In this research, the researcher pays attention to those who have a reputation and credibility in the field in question, or who are more likely to reveal more and deeper findings in the research problem, through examining their opinions. Also, in order to answer the second question of the research, a structured self-interaction questionnaire was used to identify the obstacles and specify the relationships between the obstacles. Due to the fact that sports facilities and equipment were a specialized matter, the Emari community used professors and managers of government sports facilities and facilities who have specialized in specialized sports facilities and equipment for many years, and in-depth interviews were conducted with these people.

By reviewing the literature on the subject, interview questions were designed, and to avoid bias, the questions were determined in advance. The questions asked are:

What are the problems and issues that exist for better management of the supervised sports complex at present?

What are the things that cause weakness in decisions and planning?
What problems are there in the direction of the development and more productivity of sports facilities? To what extent are managers responsible for these problems?
To what extent have chronic and persistent budget deficits created problems for a sports complex manager? What are the manager's duties regarding this problem?
According to the leadership's emphasis on the need to use resistance economy solutions for the development of sports equipment, what obstacles do you face?
How do you evaluate obstacles such as the high costs of maintenance and repair of sports facilities, or administrative bureaucracy in this era?
What are the management obstacles and problems within the sports complex, with an emphasis on resistance economy policy?
What are the management obstacles and problems outside the sports complex, with an emphasis on resistance economy policy?
Are the obstacles and problems mentioned only related to the management of the sports complex itself?
Who can be responsible for removing the obstacles and problems, other than the management of the places?
What solutions do you suggest for providing material and financial resources to increase the productivity of sports venues?
What suggestions do you have to solve the management problems due to the severe currency fluctuations and sanctions in the country, as well as the lack of supply sources?

The content validity of the structured self-interaction questionnaire (ISM) was confirmed by using the opinions of a group of experts, specialists in the field of sports management, and university professors. In the next step, the test-retest method was used to examine the reliability of the tool as mentioned above. For this purpose, the questionnaire was sent to three senior experts and specialists who could be accessed again at two separate times with a specific time interval. After collecting the responses in both stages, the correlation coefficient between the obtained results was calculated, and the value of this coefficient was equal to 0.875. This correlation coefficient indicates a high level of stability and internal consistency of the measurement tool and confirms the acceptable and reliable reliability of the questionnaire for use in scientific research. The main purpose of using the structured self-interaction method is to identify, analyze, and explain the relationships between key and influential variables in a complex and multifaceted system that has different levels of cause-and-effect interactions. Within the framework of this study, the variables under study are a set of management obstacles to the development of sports venues and facilities in the country, which have been identified, categorized, and analyzed with an approach emphasizing the principles and goals of the resistance economy. Using this method allows for the drawing of a hierarchical structure of relationships between obstacles and the determination of the level of effectiveness and impact

of each. It allows the researcher to present a logical and scientific model for intervention and decision-making in this area.

Table 1. Characteristics of the expert panel

number of samples	Sampling	The method of determining the sample size	Number of communities	Statistical Society
15	Targeted and with the snowball technique	Using the theoretical saturation criterion	Unknown	Professors and managers of state sports facilities

2.1. Steps in drawing an interpretive structural model (ISM)

The interpretive structural modeling (ISM) method was used to identify and analyze the relationships between management barriers to the development of sports venues and facilities, with an emphasis on resistance economy policies. The steps in implementing ISM in this study are as follows:

Identification of key variables and barriers

First, by reviewing the research background and conducting semi-structured interviews with 15 experts and senior managers in the field of sports venue management, a set of management barriers was identified. The data was analyzed using open and axial coding, and ultimately, nine main barriers and 93 initial codes were obtained.

Preparation of the final list of barriers (expert consensus)

The initial list of barriers was reviewed using the Delphi technique and expert consensus so that only the key and influential barriers remained in the final model.

Formation of self-structured interaction matrix (SSIM)

To determine the binary relationships between the barriers, the experts compared both barriers and determined the type of relationship. Four symbols were used in this step:

- V: Variable i affects variable j.
- A: Variable j affects variable i.
- X: Mutual and two-way relationship.
- O: No relationship.

Conversion of SSIM into Reachability Matrix

The SSIM matrix was converted into a reachability matrix to determine direct and indirect relationships. In this matrix, the number 1 indicates the existence of a relationship and the

number 0 indicates the absence of a relationship. Transitive closure was also examined and corrected.

Determination of access and prerequisite sets

For each barrier, an access set (obstacles that are affected by it) and a prerequisite set (obstacles that affect it) were determined.

Level partitioning of barriers

By comparing the access and prerequisite sets, barriers with equal access and commonality sets were placed at the highest level of the model. This process continued iteratively until the levels of all barriers were determined.

Drawing an interpretive structural model

After leveling, barriers were placed at different levels of the model, and the direction of relationships was determined using arrows. Upper levels include key and influential barriers (such as economic barriers in the country), and lower levels include dependent barriers (such as social and human barriers).

MICMAC analysis

Finally, MICMAC analysis was used to examine the influence and degree of dependence of barriers. Accordingly, the barriers were divided into four groups: independent, dependent, linked, and autonomous influencers.

2.2. Structured self-interaction questionnaire (ISM)

A structured self-interaction questionnaire was used to determine the causal relationships between management barriers to the development of sports venues and facilities, with an emphasis on the economy of resistance. This questionnaire was designed in a tabular form and based on pairwise comparisons, and all identified barriers were compared with each other in pairs. For each pair of barriers, the experts determined the type of relationship by selecting one of the following four symbols:

- V: The row barrier affects the column barrier.
- A: The column barrier affects the row barrier.
- X: Both barriers interact with each other.
- O: There is no relationship between the two barriers.

Sample questionnaire question:

“In your opinion, to what extent does the barrier “economic barriers of the country” affect the deterioration and low quality of sports venues”? Please specify the type of relationship by selecting one of the options V, A, X, or O.”

This questionnaire was developed for all nine identified barriers, and the results were used to form the Self-Structured Interaction Matrix (SSIM) and then the Modified Access Matrix.

3. Findings

In the qualitative part, using interviews with experts, the most important obstacles to the management of places were identified with an emphasis on resistance economy, and then using a structured self-interaction questionnaire, an interpretive structural model of the obstacles was presented.

3.1. *The characteristics of the samples in the interviews section*

In the qualitative part of this study, 15 people were selected purposefully using the snowball method, after which theoretical saturation was achieved. Among these people, 4 were faculty members of the sports management department of universities. Of these four people, one had the rank of professor, two were associate professors, and one was an assistant professor. Also, 11 other people were executive managers of government sports facilities and venues in the country. In the education section, seven people had a master's degree in sports science and four people had a doctorate in sports management. The average work experience of these people was more than 10 years, and all of them had experience in the field of sports facility leadership and management. The diversity in academic rank, education level, and job experience led to the collection of diverse and in-depth perspectives on managerial and economic obstacles. The interviewees were selected in such a way that they could provide a more accurate understanding of the existing challenges. The composition of this group well represents the target population of the study at the scientific and executive levels of the country.

Table 2. Characteristics of the sample population in the qualitative part of the research

Row	Interviewee group	Number of people	Educational qualification	Academic level/position
1	University faculty members	4	1 Assistant Professor 2 Associate Professor 1 Professor	Sports Management Group
2	Sports facility managers	11	7 people have a Master's degree in Sports Science 4 people have a PhD in Sports Management	Executive managers of government sports centers and venues

In the qualitative part of this study, 15 people were selected purposefully using the snowball method to ensure scientific, administrative, and geographical diversity of the data. These people were from different provinces of the country, especially Tehran, Isfahan, Fars, Khorasan Razavi, and Kermanshah provinces, to obtain a comprehensive view of the management conditions of sports venues in different regions of Iran. The composition of the participants included four faculty members of the sports management department of universities (1 full professor, two associate professors, and one assistant professor) and 11 executive directors of government sports venues and facilities. In terms of education level, seven people had a master's degree in sports sciences and four people had a doctorate in sports management. The average work experience of the participants was more than 10 years, and most of them had direct experience in the field of management and supervision of large-scale sports venues and facilities (multipurpose halls, stadiums, and aquatic complexes). This geographical, educational, and occupational diversity allowed the research to identify and analyze diverse and multidimensional perspectives on managerial obstacles to the development of sports venues and facilities, with an emphasis on resistance economy policies.

4. Identifying managerial obstacles to the development of sports facilities and facilities with an emphasis on resistance economy

This part of the research was designed and implemented to answer the first research question, and a semi-structured interview method was used, drawing on the perspectives and experiences of specialists and experts in the field of sports venue management. The main goal of using this method was to identify in-depth and systematically the existing management obstacles in the development of sports venues and facilities in the country, with special emphasis on the principles and strategies of the resistance economy. To extract rich and reliable data, a set of

strategic and purposeful questions was designed and raised during the interview process with the participants. The interviews were conducted in person and face-to-face with 15 academic experts, executive managers, and experienced experts in the field of sports management and macro-sports policymaking. These individuals were sampled using a purposeful sampling method, observing the criteria of expertise, field experience, and familiarity with topics related to the resistance economy. To strengthen the validity of the results obtained, the Delphi technique was used in the various stages of data collection and refinement. Each interview session lasted between 40 and 60 minutes, during which open-ended questions allowed for diverse and in-depth perspectives to emerge, ensuring the richness of the information content of the interviews. The validity of the interview content was confirmed through review and approval of comments by the project supervisors and advisors, and to assess reliability, the interview data were reviewed and re-analyzed by two independent researchers, which led to convergence in the results. In general, the use of the semi-structured interview method at this stage is considered a scientific and methodological choice because it allows for in-depth analysis of qualitative data and access to hidden and multi-layered dimensions of the phenomenon under study.

The researcher recorded the interviews by observing all the ethical principles of qualitative research and with the complete consent of the interviewees. Then, all the interviews were accurately translated into the text. In this regard, after conducting the interviews, the data from the interview process in the form of written texts were studied and revised many times. On the other hand, related research articles and existing documents were also studied, and by combining these in two ways, a list of codes was created. Open coding was done paragraph by paragraph. In open coding, which is the first step in the implementation of the qualitative analysis strategy, the key points of the interviews were identified and coded in relation to the managerial obstacles to the development of sports facilities and places, with an emphasis on the resistance economy. By re-examining and further refining the codes, we tried to make the codes sufficiently specific, separate, non-repetitive, and macro to include the set of ideas raised in parts of the text. It allowed the data to be reduced and converted into a set of important codes. More precisely, the axial coding stage includes the classification of different codes in the form of selective codes and arranging all coded data summaries. In fact, the researcher begins the analysis of his codes and considers how different primary concepts can be combined to create an overall code; Therefore, many duplicate and similar codes are observed between them; To be able to work with fewer codes, the researcher, after reviewing several times and determining

the similarities and differences, merged the codes that had common content and named them with a common code that was more abstract than the initial codes; This was done by considering the theoretical findings with successive shifts between open codes and primary focal categories. Finally, categories that had more conceptual power and could better link concepts and subcategories were selected. The following table shows the results of open and axial coding.

Table 3. Results of open and axial coding

Number of codes	Primary or open coding	Axial coding
9	People's unwillingness to spend money on sports Improper use of the infrastructure of sports facilities (such as water, electricity, gas) and heating and cooling systems. Lack of financial ability of the public to use sports services Not considering the basket of sports goods for people Inadequate access to sports facilities for all Ignoring the possibility of women using sports complexes Lack of enough advertising in the community for health and wellness Irresponsibility of users Failure to promote the reputation and social benefits of sports venues	Social barriers
7	Weak work culture among employees Low level of productivity and enthusiasm among human resources Different shifts of service forces Low salaries and benefits for human resources Lack of coordination and synergy of the administrative elements of sports complexes Lack of motivation and low commitment of employees Lack of technical, experienced, and educated sports science and practical experts in managing sports venues	Human barriers
5	Weaknesses in the production technology of products used in places Lack of a competitive environment in the field of sports products Lack of products related to sports facilities in the country Low quality of domestic products for equipping sports halls Dependence of sports complexes on foreign products	Lack of quality of domestic products
12	-It was a stable economic income Inadequacy of facilities (bank loan) Allocation of insufficient funds in proportion to the existing inflation Lack of sustainable financial resources to carry out repairs and improvements High cost of maintenance and repair of sports facilities High cost of setup and construction The high cost of purchasing sports equipment Delay in providing the necessary funds Failure to return collection revenues to the collection itself Spending the revenues of the sports complex in other sectors Full deposit of the income of sports complexes into the pocket of the government Not allocating 10-15% of the collection's income to maintenance and improvement	Chronic and persistent budget deficit
10	The strong dependence of the country's annual budget on revenues from the sale of crude oil Multiple fluctuations in stock market indices High and continuous inflation in the country Many disturbances in the country's foreign exchange market	Economic obstacles of the country

Number of codes	Primary or open coding	Axial coding
	Intensification of sanctions Increase in rent, embezzlement, and administrative corruption in the state economy Inefficient tax system Failure to fully implement the policies of Article 44 of the Constitution in the direction of liberalization and privatization Inadequate determination to prevent corruption Carrying out illegal imports	
12	Poor support Top-down decision-making centralized structure The inflexible structure of sports complexes Bureaucracy, heavy administrative paperwork The difficulty of handing over collections to the private sector It is time-consuming and difficult to allocate credits and to repair equipment Formal and unnecessary administrative activities Inflexible and inappropriate rules and regulations The linearity of communication between administrative elements Absence of a comprehensive plan for the development of sports facilities Improper decision-making and planning	Structural barriers
13	Lack of multipurpose halls Low-quality construction and production of sports facilities and equipment Lack of sports facilities and equipment Depreciation of the structure of sports spaces or the hardware part of sports spaces Wear and tear of the physical part Lack of proper location of sports facilities (decentralization) Lack of neatness and attractive appearance of facilities Lack of development of the country's infrastructure according to the drawn vision Lack of necessary international standards Exploitation and non-sporting use Malpractice and negligence in handling sports spaces Neglecting the basic maintenance of sports facilities Lack of a detailed study to build sports complexes	Dilapidation and low quality of sports facilities
11	Inability to deliver creatively The involvement and influence of non-specialists and upper management in the management of collections Lack of independent decision-making by managers Inability to control income and expenditure Lack of influence of sports officials in the upper hand system Managers' lack of authority to use the exclusive income of sports complexes Managers' lack of authority for the cost of developing, equipping, and maintaining the collection Lack of proper support from managers Lack of job security for managers Lack of ability and authority of managers to encourage and punish human resources Preventing the creativity of managers	Lack of sufficient authority

Number of codes	Primary or open coding	Axial coding
14	Lack of scientific and practical expertise Lack of financial literacy Low communication skills Inadequate diagnostic skills Poor time management Weak change management skills Lack of proper perception of the situation Lack of criticism and flexibility Failure to create a sense of responsibility among the managers of the premises Negligence and delay in maintaining the sports space Lack of experience in the assigned responsibility Lack of consecutive correct training Lack of understanding of the resistance economy policy Low knowledge of managers in the field of sports	Skill weakness of upstream and downstream managers

Finally, 93 basic codes were extracted from the interviews. In the next steps, the obtained open coding was categorized into similar and coherent groups, and the codes were analyzed and revised several times. Finally, nine core codes and 93 basic codes were identified and extracted to identify the management barriers of places and facilities. The reliability of the structured self-interaction questionnaire. The retest method is used. To evaluate the said questionnaire twice, it was sent to 3 experts and experts who could be contacted again, and finally, the total correlation of the answers announced for both stages by the experts was 0.875, which indicates the acceptable reliability of the questionnaire. A qualitative approach with open and axial coding and interpretive structural modeling was used to analyze the obstacles of the managers of sports facilities and facilities with an emphasis on resistance economy.

Table 4. Identified barriers

Number of open codes	Axial code
9	Social barriers
7	Human barriers
5	Lack of quality of domestic products
12	Chronic and persistent budget deficit
10	Economic obstacles of the country
12	Structural barriers
13	Dilapidation and low quality of sports facilities
11	Lack of sufficient authority
14	Skill weakness of upstream and downstream managers

As it is known, the managerial barriers to the development of sports facilities and facilities with an emphasis on resistance economy according to the interviewees to answer the first question of the research include nine barriers including social barriers, human barriers, lack of quality of domestic products, chronic and stable budget deficit, barriers The country's economy

is structural obstacles, wear and tear and low quality of sports facilities, lack of sufficient authority and weak skills of upstream and downstream managers.

4.1. *The relationship between managerial obstacles to the development of sports facilities and facilities with an emphasis on resistance economy*

In order to provide a suitable model and examine the relationship between barriers, using the interpretive structural analysis method, the management barriers of sports facilities have been leveled with an emphasis on resistance economy. To implement the structural-interpretive technique, to obtain the internal relationships and priorities of the elements in a system, the following process must be followed: First, a structured self-interaction matrix (structural matrix of internal relationships of variables) was formed to create a structured self-interaction matrix of all identified obstacles two by two in terms of relationship or the lack of relationship was compared with each other. The way of scoring the type of relationship between obstacles is as shown in Tables 3 and 4, which is the structured self-interaction matrix. Next, to make the matrix compatible, the questionnaire was filled out again by the samples, and then the compatibility of the access matrix was checked and confirmed again. In order to determine the level of obstacles in the final model, input, output, and joint sets were formed for each of them. The more shared sets and the output of a factor, the higher the level of that variable.

Table 5. Scoring key for the structural self-interaction matrix

O	X	A	V
Absence of a relationship	Bilateral relationship	Variable j affects i	Variable i affects j

Table 6. Structural Self-Interaction Matrix (SSIM)

I	H	G	F	E	D	C	B	A	
									A
									B
									C
									D
									E
									F
									G
									H
									I

According to the final structured self-interaction matrix, the adapted access matrix was designed.

Table 7. Final reachability matrix

infiltrate	I	H	G	F	E	D	C	B	A	
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	A
4	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	B
5	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	C
6	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	D
9	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	E
8	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	F
4	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	G
7	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	H
8	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	I
	5	4	8	6	4	7	3	8	9	dependency

Table 8. Level partitioning of barriers to the development of sports facilities and facilities with an emphasis on resistance economy

Level	Subscription	Input: Effectiveness	Output: Effect	
4	A,B	A,B,C,D,E,F, H,I	A,B	A
4	A,B,G,I	A,B, D,E,F,G,H,I	A,B,G,I	B
1	C,D,E	C,D,E	A,C,D,E,G	C
3	C,D,F,G,	C,D,E,F,G,H,I	A,B,C,D,F,G,	D
1	C, E,F,I	C, E,F,I	A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I	E
1	,D,E,F,G,H,I	,D,E,F,G,H,I	A,B, D,E,F,G,H,I	F
3	B, D, F,G	B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I	B,D,F,G	G
2	,F,H,I	E,F,H,I	A,B, D,F,G,H,I	H
2	B,E,F,H,I	B,E,F,H,I	A,B,D,E,F,G,H,I	I

The final pattern of identified obstacles is shown in the figure below. In this picture, the meaningful relationships of the elements of each level on the elements of the lower level, as well as the meaningful internal relationships of the elements of each line, are considered.

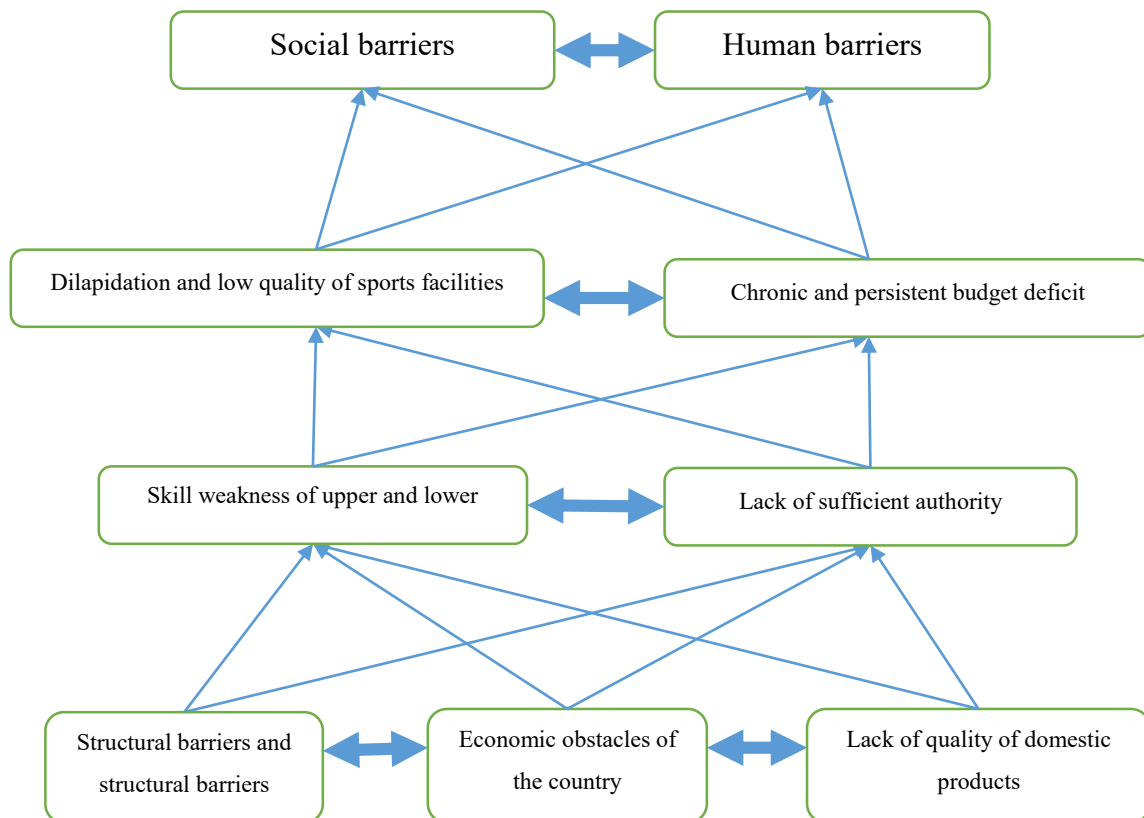


Figure 1. Structural model of the researchers' identified interpretation

After drawing an interpretive structural model and using the MICMAC method, by creating a penetration-dependence matrix of the barriers, they were classified into four main groups: 1) independent variables, 2) linked (related) variables, 3) dependent variables, and 4) autonomous variables (Pankal et al., 2016). The results of this analysis are as follows:

1. Independent variables (High driving power and low dependence)

Three barriers – country economic barriers, structural barriers, and poor quality of domestic products – were placed in this group. These barriers are located at the first level of the model and are known as key and underlying barriers, whose control and improvement can also affect other barriers.

2. Linking variables (High driving power and high dependence)

Two barriers – chronic and persistent budget deficit and wear and tear and low quality of sports facilities – were placed in this group and at the third level of the model. These barriers are strongly influenced by independent barriers and at the same time affect other dependent barriers.

3. Dependent variables (Low driving power but high dependence)

Social barriers and human barriers are located at the fourth level of the model and have the greatest dependence on other barriers. These barriers are a direct result of the conditions created by key and link barriers.

4. Autonomous variables (Low driving power and low dependence)

None of the barriers identified in this study were included in this group, which indicates the interaction and chain and systematic connection of all barriers with each other.

The results also showed that lack of skill of upstream and downstream managers and lack of sufficient authority are located at the second level of the model and on the border between independent and link variables; these two barriers have a mediating role and can directly affect the intensity of the impact of key barriers.

Based on the findings of Table 8, the variables of social barriers, human barriers, wear and tear, and low quality of sports facilities are more influenced by other factors and are effective and dependent elements from a systemic perspective. In other words, many factors are involved in removing these obstacles, and they themselves are less likely to become the basis of other variables. Variables that have a weak influence and weak dependence include the lack of quality of domestic products. Also, the variables of the country's economic obstacles, the skill weakness of upstream and downstream managers, and the lack of sufficient authority have a high influence power and low dependence. These variables have a great influence on overcoming other obstacles. In this research, the variables of structural obstacles and chronic and stable budget deficit are among the linking factors. These obstacles are both highly dependent and have a lot of influence.

5. Conclusion and suggestions

To highlight the results and findings of the research, the results are compared with previous research. Also, the necessary interpretations are provided to determine the place of this research among the conducted research, as well as the deficiencies and deficiencies related to the management of sports facilities and facilities with an emphasis on economy. Resistance appears. According to the results of the open and central coding, it was found that the administrative barriers to the development of sports facilities and facilities with an emphasis on resistance economy include social barriers, human barriers, lack of quality of domestic products, chronic and stable budget deficit, economic barriers of the country, structural barriers,

The deterioration and low quality of sports facilities, lack of sufficient authority and weak skills of upstream and downstream managers are now interpreted separately for each of these factors.

Iran is facing economic problems and limitations, and its non-compliance with the ruling structures of the world in various areas. It is the understanding of these limitations in sports that clarifies the importance of implementing the general policies of the resistance economy.

Regarding social barriers, it can be said that the incorrect use of the infrastructure of sports facilities (such as water, electricity, gas) and heating and cooling systems by users can lead to the fact that more money is needed to operate the facilities, and this is a form of irresponsibility. Users leave destructive works on sports facilities, in line with this result of researchers such as [Ebrahimi and Zirak \(2012\)](#); [Moharramzadeh et al. \(2015\)](#); [Ramchandani et al. \(2019\)](#) have pointed out the social factors and obstacles for managing sports facilities and [Moharramzadeh et al. \(2015\)](#) has considered the impact of the economic recession on home sports expenses in Ireland to be positive. On the other hand, the general public's lack of financial ability to use sports services and the lack of budget for buying and using sports facilities in the household goods basket automatically limit the percentage of sports participation and thus the statistical population of the facilities. Another social obstacle may be that it is not possible for all members of society to have enough access to sports, and more importantly, the possibility of women using sports complexes has been neglected. Regarding human obstacles, it should be stated that human resources are the most important resource of any organization, and emphasizing this resource can be the source of huge changes in sports venues. [Ebrahimi and Zirak \(2012\)](#) and [Iversen \(2019\)](#) have considered human obstacles as important in their research for better management of sports complexes, therefore, the low salaries and benefits of human resources and the lack of technical, experienced and educated experts in scientific and practical sports management Sports venues have severely affected the management of sports venues, and in a way, the lack of motivation and low commitment of employees has greatly reduced the level of productivity and has caused the inconsistency and synergy of the administrative elements of sports complexes to face a problem. The lack of quality of domestic products is another obstacle that has been identified in this research. No research was found that considered the quality of domestic products as a management obstacle in the field of sports. However, based on the results of the interviews, this obstacle has been considered very important. In this regard, the weakness in the production technology of the products used in the places is quite evident, considering the current dynamic environment, and the production tools and materials inside the country in the field of sports products are largely competitive. They do not have foreign-

produced products because there are many restrictions for manufacturing companies in the country. Also, according to the existing demand, there is no competitive space in the field of sports products. In many cases, we are facing a shortage of products related to sports facilities in the country, which is important. The quality of domestic products for equipping sports halls is low, and in this regard, the dependence of sports complexes on foreign products is high.

Another main category identified for managerial obstacles to the development of sports venues and facilities is the category of chronic and stable budget deficit. In this context, for all places, the lack of sustainable economic income, the lack of sustainable financial resources to carry out repairs and improvements, and the delay in providing the necessary budget cause irreparable damage to the management of the places. On the other hand, insufficient facilities (bank loans) and allocation Insufficient budget compared to existing inflation are other factors that make the budget of sports facilities with many problems, so the high cost of setting up and building, the high cost of maintaining and repairing sports facilities, or the high cost of purchasing equipment for sports facilities are the main concerns of the managers of the facilities, perhaps the source of these problems. Can be related to the non-return of the income of the complex to the complex itself and the spending of the income of the sports complex in other sectors, the full deposit of the income of the sports complex into the pocket of the government seems unreasonable to a large extent. It allows the managers to use their income, and somehow, they lose their motivation to work. Despite severe international sanctions, our country faces many economic obstacles, and [Moharramzadeh et al. \(2015\)](#) and [Khazaei \(2016\)](#), in their research, have considered economic factors as factors that can affect the management of places. In this research, it has also been considered as one of the management obstacles for the development of sports places and facilities, while the annual budget of the country is highly dependent on the revenues from the sale of crude oil. The increase in rent, embezzlement, and administrative corruption in the state economy is increasing day by day. The full implementation of the policies of Article 44 of the Constitution in the direction of liberalization and privatization has not yet been implemented. More importantly, there is high and continuous inflation in the country's economy, which has involved not only sports venues but all organizations and companies. It remains closed, and they cannot implement their goals as they should.

Structural obstacles are another category of obstacles that the managers of sports facilities face, with emphasis on resistance economy. And an inflexible organizational focus. It is very clear that in a system where decisions are made at the top, the communication between

administrative elements is linear, and delegation of authority rarely happens. When there are bureaucracy and intense administrative paperwork, the manager is more than involved in the transformation and thinking about their duties. Therefore, in this situation, inflexible and inappropriate rules and regulations, the time-consuming and difficult allocation of credits, and the repair of the equipment inflict severe blows on the management body of the places, and they cannot properly implement resistance economy policies. Another factor that managers face in this difficult situation is the deterioration and low quality of sports facilities. Many of the sports facilities are old or existing, or if they are newly built, they are facing many deficiencies, and many of these complexes do not have standard qualities. A kind of wear and tear of places is quite evident in these conditions; the management of sports facilities and facilities is more challenging than before. Perhaps it is the use of low-quality materials or the neglect of basic maintenance and protection of these places. It is clear that in many cases, sports places are used for non-sports purposes without the slightest benefit reaching these places, and they are expensive.

Another category that was identified in this research is the lack of sufficient authority for the managers. Considering the centralized and inflexible administrative system of the country, this category is extremely harmful for the managers. It makes them look more like simple and orderly employees than worthy managers. It can be seen that every day, the involvement and influence of non-specialists and upper management in the management of collections is increasing, so the managers are losing their decision-making independence more and more. When a manager does not have enough authority and cannot have enough control over his income and expenses, he certainly cannot act according to the policies of the resistance economy and cause the transformation of the group under his supervision, because the lack of sufficient authority for managers deprives them of the ability to deliver creatively. In a way, the creativity of managers is questioned. The last main category of identified obstacles is dedicated to the skill weakness of upstream and downstream managers. The identification of this obstacle is in line with the research of [Moharramzadeh et al. \(2015\)](#) and [Parnell et al. \(2019\)](#). The reason for the scientific and practical expertise, or the lack of expertise, related to sports management, especially the management of sports venues, is that the managers do not have the necessary skills and do not have proper diagnostic skills. The expertise in the financial field is also very low, and this inability of them in times when the country should show resistance. The economic approach deals with its own phenomena and increases. Every manager must have several skills, and these skills, from human and communication skills to crisis management and diagnostic

and perceptive skills, help overcome many obstacles. Unfortunately, many managers of places do not have a proper understanding of the existing resistance economy policy, and their lack of criticism and flexibility makes them unable to perform their duties properly.

In response to this question, it was found that the country's economic obstacles, structural obstacles, lack of quality of domestic products are placed on the first level and are among the most important obstacles that, if more attention is paid to these obstacles, can facilitate the removal of other obstacles, on the second level are the obstacles of lack of skills. There are upper and lower managers, and a lack of sufficient authority. These obstacles, in turn, can be influenced by the first-level obstacles, which are the country's economic obstacles, structural obstacles, and lack of quality of domestic products, and they themselves can influence the third- and fourth-level obstacles. In addition to the third-level barriers of obsolescence and low quality of sports facilities and chronic and stable budget deficit, there are third-level barriers from the first-level barriers, i.e., economic barriers of the country, structural barriers, lack of quality of domestic products, and second-level barriers, i.e., the barriers of the lack of skills of upper and lower managers. Manual and lack of sufficient authority have a great impact; that is, if the first and second level obstacles are partially removed, the third level obstacles, i.e., the obstacles of wear and tear, low quality of sports facilities, and chronic and stable budget deficit, will be removed with ease. Chronic and stable budget deficits can affect the fourth-level barriers. Finally, social barriers and human barriers are placed in the fourth level. These two barriers are affected by all other barriers.

On the other hand, the analysis of Mik Mak showed that the variables of social barriers, human barriers, wear and tear, and other factors more influence the low quality of sports facilities, and from a systemic point of view, they are effective and dependent elements. In other words, many factors are involved in removing these obstacles, and they themselves are less likely to become the basis of other variables. Variables that have a weak influence and weak dependence include the lack of quality of domestic products. Also, the variables of the country's economic obstacles, the skill weakness of upstream and downstream managers, and the lack of sufficient authority have high influence and low dependence. These variables have a great influence on overcoming other obstacles. In this research, the variables of structural obstacles and chronic and stable budget deficit are among the linking factors. These obstacles are highly interdependent and have a lot of influence.

In general, based on the findings, it should be said that the economic obstacles of the country, the lack of skills of the upstream and downstream managers and the lack of sufficient authority

are important factors that focusing on them can transform the management of places in these difficult conditions and solve their problems with. The economic consequence of the direct and indirect effects of sports in development has caused an increasing attention to this industry. In line with other areas, it is necessary to turn to the policy of resistance economy when facing difficult conditions to turn threats into opportunities. Knowing that the realization of this requires a road map for the implementation of a resistance economy in the field of sports, in this regard, [Afshari et al., \(2019\)](#) considered it necessary to focus on the resistance economy and the development of sports. Based on [Giannoulakis et al. \(2017\)](#), the main strategies for dealing with the economic recession have included administrative downsizing, limiting the number of competitions, reducing the size of delegations, and using alternative sources of funding. [Harun et al. \(2013\)](#) have also given great importance to the basic maintenance of sports facilities. It is very clear that in a system where the economy is declining every day.

It is very clear that in a system where the economy is declining every day. People are facing many problems, and currency fluctuations are happening with power and political and economic sanctions increasing. The skill of a manager in managing a complex environment is crucial. Power and political and economic sanctions are increasing, the skill of a manager in managing a complex environment with emphasis on resistance economy is subject to tensions. Of course, these factors are mostly related to external factors. At the same time, inside organizations and complexes, managers do not have much decision-making independence and have an inflexible structure, so all these factors work hand in hand in a continuous and unfortunately regular system of facilities management. Sports for the transformation and promotion of the complex under the management and with emphasis on resistance economy policies will face innumerable tensions.

This study aimed to identify management barriers to the development of sports venues and facilities with an emphasis on the economy of resistance. The results showed that management barriers include several key dimensions that can be classified into three levels: structural, economic, and human. At the first level, the country's economic barriers, poor quality of domestic products, and inefficient organizational structures are the most important limiting factors that have the greatest impact and the least dependence and can affect other barriers. These findings are consistent with the studies of [Moharramzadeh et al. \(2015\)](#), which emphasize the impact of economic and structural factors on sports management. The second level of barriers is dedicated to the weakness of the skills of upstream and downstream managers and their lack of authority. The lack of specialized knowledge, managerial skills, and decision-

making autonomy has created serious problems in the management of stadiums, which is consistent with the findings of [Ebrahimi and Zirak \(2012\)](#) and [Iverson \(2024\)](#). These weaknesses have also reduced staff motivation and productivity and weakened organizational coordination. At the third level, the deterioration of sports facilities and facilities, chronic and persistent budget deficits, and poor quality of equipment were identified as major operational barriers that are closely related to the first and second level barriers. In particular, the budget deficit, which is affected by inflation and inadequate resource allocation, has severely limited the possibility of maintaining and developing venues. This is consistent with the studies of [Harun et al. \(2013\)](#), which have pointed out the importance of sound budgeting and maintenance. Finally, social and human barriers, such as abuse of infrastructure by users and lack of equitable access to sports venues, are ranked at the fourth level and are highly influenced by other barriers. For example, the role of gender constraints and social inequalities in the use of sports services is one of the prominent challenges that has been less addressed in previous studies. The MICMAC analysis showed that economic, skill, and structural barriers play a pivotal and effective role in creating and perpetuating other barriers, while social and human barriers are more dependent on other factors and require comprehensive and systematic approaches to overcome. This multilayered and interdependent structure highlights the need to develop comprehensive management plans that simultaneously address all dimensions of barriers. Based on the results, it is suggested that effective steps be taken to realize a resistance economy in the field of sports through a systems thinking approach and increasing managerial capabilities, optimal budget allocation, and support for domestic production. Also, delegating sufficient authority to managers and developing social and communication networks can improve productivity, increase managers' motivation, and contribute to the sustainability of sports facilities. Creating a clear roadmap for implementing a resistance economy in sports, considering the specific economic conditions of the country, seems essential. These results, emphasizing the importance of a resistance economy and modern management of sports venues, are consistent with recent studies such as [Afshari et al., \(2019\)](#) and [Giannoulakis et al. \(2017\)](#), and can be a basis for future research and macro-policies in sports in the country.

Based on the results, it is recommended to pay attention to all management obstacles with a systems thinking approach so that none are ignored. Saving on public costs and optimal use of energy, along with improving the quality of domestic products, can improve the performance of sports facilities and reduce their wear and tear. Delegation of authority to managers and the use of internal revenues of complexes, along with fair distribution of sports budgets at the

national level, are solutions to reduce budget deficits and remove financial obstacles. Also, the development of social networks and social interactions can be effective in improving sports services.

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