
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Barriers in the Physical Education Administration of Afghanistan's Ministry of Education

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| ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study was to identify the strengths, weaknesses, barriers and opportunities in the Physical Education Directorate of the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan. The population of the study was the directors of the Physical Education Department and the faculty members of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports Sciences of Kabul Education University. Thirty-five individuals were the participants of the study. The research questionnaire employed consisted of four parts (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and barriers) which were used after determining the validity and reliability. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data in SPSS 24 software. The results showed that the most important strengths were the existence of sports networks, paying attention to sports and physical education, the existence of participatory management space as well as setting for collective decision-making. The most noticeable weaknesses are the lack of a strategic plan in the General Directorate of Physical Education, lack of well-trained physical education instructors and its disproportion to the student population of the country. The opportunities available in this field were the young population and the existence of many talents in physical education in the country, increasing the level of education of physical education instructors; and the big threats were the influence and interference of other bodies and non-specialized officials in physical education administration, as well as lack of sufficient funds for sports education. Managers and staff members of the Physical Education General Directorate should better plan for the achievement of high efficiency and effectiveness by identifying strengths and weaknesses and taking advantage of environmental opportunities and barriers.

| KEYWORDS

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Barriers, Physical education, Education

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Education is acquiring knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that enable individuals to lead productive and fulfilling lives. Educating takes place in a variety of settings, including formal and informal settings. It involves a variety of teaching methods, such as reading, writing, listening, speaking, and doing hands-on activities. (UNESCO, 2015).

Sports nowadays are actually physical education and related activities that are an essential component of education in all nations, with an emphasis on social and cultural values for the growth and development of young people's physical and mental development (Najafi et al, 2017). Sports and physical education are the main contributors to every individual's mental and physical well-being. By participating in them regularly, people can achieve physical and mental fitness, prevent social and ethical deviations, decrease health costs, and increase their capacity for productivity and effectiveness (Arya Manesh & et al, 2018).

Several studies have looked into this matter. For instance, Tsakiridis et al.'s (2019) evaluation of the resource distribution of Greek football clubs revealed that teams with greater financial budgets performed better on the field. This emphasizes the value of financial resources and the necessity of efficient allocation in sports organizations.

This study highlights the importance of supporting youth development programs as an effective resource allocation strategy. According to literature analysis, the majority of sports organizations experience poor resource allocation, inefficient management in associated organizations, and subpar goods and services from the aforementioned businesses. The aforementioned issues that have a negative impact on everyday operations and service quality also influence Afghanistan's physical education directorate and administration. The researchers sought to examine the internal and external surroundings of the business using the SWOT model in order to precisely define and identify and analyze the elements that have the impacts on both positive and negative roles of this organization's quality..

2. Literature Review

The challenges and potential for progress in physical education are numerous in developing nations. According to several studies (Kelishadi et al., 2014; Holzer et al., 2016; Ojofeitimi et al., 2019), common obstacles include scarce resources, a lack of qualified teachers, poor infrastructure, cultural beliefs and attitudes, and the prioritizing of academic courses. Due to these obstacles, children and teenagers frequently have less access to high-quality physical education programs.

Despite the obstacles, there are several ways to improve physical education in underdeveloped nations. First of all, collaborations between NGOs, governments, and educational institutions can assist mobilize resources and knowledge (Giannaki et al., 2020). Second, physical education can be given priority by being incorporated into national curricula with precise norms and standards (Bailey et al., 2013). Additionally, teachers' and administrators' professional development opportunities can enhance the implementation of physical education (Kelishadi et al., 2014). Other methods for removing obstacles include providing suitable infrastructure and equipment, encouraging community involvement, and increasing public understanding of the advantages of physical activity (Ojofeitimi et al., 2019).

Organizations involved in sports and non-sport are both impacted by contemporary trends. According to Crimaddis (1997), various sports are dealing with a number of concerns, including declining governmental norms and regulations pertaining to sports-related matters and financial issues, particularly in the area of services. Furthermore, some of the other factors that adversely affect sports organizations in developing countries include a decrease in government subsidies and contributions, a lack of precise planning, managerial difficulties, weakness in strategic plans, and a lack of processes and systems for attracting government support. The absence of SWOT analysis processes in sports organizations is also a notable factor that adversely affects them. Sports organizations can overcome the aforementioned weaknesses by paying attention to their mission statements and selecting effective strategies to reduce the negative effect of environmental weakness and threats as well as maximize the positive effect of internal strengths and external opportunities (Najafi et al, 2018).

Human resources are indeed a valuable asset for any organization, and this has been a well-established fact for years. Human resources is an essential element of economic and social development. In developing countries, the availability, quality, and development of human resources determine the pace and extent of economic progress (Gustav Ranis and John P. Humes, 2000) To play a key role in society, sports organizations must coordinate their sport and physical education programs with their countries' mega and strategic goals. Despite the many changes in the internal and external environment experienced by sports and physical education organizations and other non-sports organizations, they have to evaluate their daily and strategic goals and activities in order to adapt to the new and essential changes occurring in society by utilizing the knowledge of strategic management (Mirzazadeh, 2017).

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3. Methodology

In order to identify the strengths, weaknesses, barriers and opportunities in the Physical Education Directorate of the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan, the study used a quantitative approach.

3.1 Data Collection

The instrument for collecting the data for the research was a researcher-made questionnaire. Items and questions for evaluating internal (strengths and weaknesses) and external (barriers and opportunities) factors of the companies were included in the finally validated and reliable questionnaire. These questions and items were related to human, financial and cultural resources. The total number of items was (45) of which (10) items were strengths, (12) weaknesses, (11) opportunities and (12) threats. The respondents have expressed their views by selecting one of the 5 value Likert's scale. The allocated values for the scale were: (5)

completely agree, (4) agree, (3) neutral, (2) disagree, and finally (1) completely disagree. Table (1) shows the total items of the questionnaire. The validity of the questionnaire was checked by (10) professors of Physical education and sports management and the reliability was calculated by SPSS version 24 ($\alpha = 0.85$). The population of the research included sports managers and work experts of physical education administration of the Ministry of Education, professors of physical education and sports management. The total number of respondents was 35 individuals. Experts in sport management, physical education professors, and other senior administrators made up the group for the administration's strategic planning. The members of the aforementioned committees participated and took an active part in practically all stages of assessing the administration's current state, making diagnoses, and assigning scores to related aspects in both the internal and external settings.

3.2 Data Analysis

The data analysis of the questionnaire led to the incorporation of 22 items linked to the administration's internal environment (10 items of strengths, 12 items of weaknesses), and 23 items linked to the administration's external environment (11 items of opportunities, 12 items of opportunities). The data was analyzed statistically using both descriptive and inferential methods. In this study, the mean, mode, and standard deviation were defined using descriptive tests. The comparison of means test and Friedman's test were among the inferential tests. Additionally, evaluation matrices for internal and external environmental elements have been used. Data analysis was carried out using SPSS version 24.

4. Results and Discussion

The overall results of the Ministry of Education's physical education administration's strengths, shortcomings, possibilities, and dangers are displayed in Tables 1 through 4.

Each table includes the linked items' means and standard deviations. Items have been ranked according to Friedman's test.

The General Directorate of Physical Education of the Ministry of Education's general findings of its strengths, shortcomings, opportunities, and barriers are displayed in Tables 1 through 4. There are 5 strengths, 8 weaknesses, 6 opportunities, and 6 barriers listed in each table below. They are ranked using the Freeman test in addition to the mean and standard deviation.

Table 1: Administration's strong points

No	Items	mean	Standard deviation	Ranking
1	The existence of sports network for sports education	4.06	1.027	4
2	Collective decision-making and collaborative management ground	4.11	1.105	3.4
3	Observance of obligations by department managers and staff members	4.06	1.027	3.2
4	Hiring graduates as physical education instructors and trainers at schools and other educational institutions	4.06	1.305	4
5	Merit-based hiring is practiced when hiring managers.	3.29	3	1.487

According to Table 1, it can be concluded that the presence of a participatory management space and group decision-making is the most significant factor in this industry among all the factors covered in the Department of Physical Education of the Ministry of Education's strengths. Obviously, special attention was paid to this department in order to promote work and participation among the managers of this department. It is also less important among all the items raised in the process of recruiting managers.

Table (2) weakness points of the physical education administration

No	Items	mean	Standard deviation	Ranking
1	Lack of strategic planning at sports administration	4.14	1.141	1.57
2	Lack of sufficient number of physical education teachers at schools of the country	4.13	1.274	1.5
3	Low amount of salary and wages of employees and workers in sports administrations	4.06	1.211	1.8
4	Sever independency to governmental resources	4.14	1.167	1.2
5	Lack of encouraging and supportive programs for staff managers of physical education	4.14	1.115	1.6
6	Lack of sufficient sports equipment and facilities for performance of sports curriculum and extra-curricular programs and activities	4.12	1.157	1.6
7	Not prioritizing sports and physical education programs at government	4.1	1.011	1
8	Lack of coordination and discipline within the administration of physical education	4.03	1.98	1.65

With attention to the contents of the table (2), it seems that among all the weak points of administration, the item number (7) "Not prioritizing sports and physical education programs at government" has the most impact on the administration from the viewpoint of respondents. To decrease the negative impact of this item, it is recommended that managers and in charge of the administration try their best to pay attention to the high-ranking authorities of government to the importance and positive role of physical education on society and country students. Item number (8) "Lack of coordination and discipline within the administration of physical education" had the least negative impact on administration from the viewpoint of respondents.

Table (3) Opportunities of physical education administration

No	Items	mean	Standard deviation	Ranking
1	Existence young population enough talent of physical education and sports activities in the country	4.71	0.458	3.75
2	Building up the capacities of physical education teachers	4.11	1.078	3.1
3	Emphasis of religious guides about importance of physical education and physical activities	4.06	0.906	3
4	Emphasizing constitution on development and expansion of sports and physical activities	4.51	0.508	3.5
5	Emphasizing the health experts on performance and positive role of physical activities on physical and mental well-being of members of society	4.63	0.91	4
6	Teaching physical education as a subject at educational institutions	4.57	0.655	4

Considering the contents of the table (3), it is revealed that among all items of opportunities, the item number (1) "Existence of young population and enough talent of physical education and sports activities in the country" has the most important role as an opportunity from the viewpoint of respondents. The item number (2) "Building up the capacities of physical education teachers" has the least significance based on respondents' viewpoints.

According to Table 3, the item of the presence of a collaborative management environment and collective decision-making is the most significant in this entity among all others raised in the strengths of the General Directorate of Physical Education of the Ministry of Education. It obviously paid special attention to this directorate to encourage and improve work and participation among the administrators of this department. Additionally, meritocracy in hiring staff is a less significant concern than the other issues highlighted.

Table (4) barriers in the physical education administration of Education Ministry of Afghanistan

No	Items	mean	Standard deviation	Ranking
1	Influence and interferences of non- sports organizations in the internal affairs of physical education administration	4.37	1.003	1.56
2	Allocation of insufficient budget for student sports	4.54	0.78	1
3	Noncompliance of present sports infrastructure and facilities with international standards	4.29	1.010	1.78
4	Preference of educational activities on physical activities in educational system of the country	4.37	1.003	1
5	Existence of warlords and insurgents as the big challenge and hurdle against development of physical education programs at schools and educational institutions	4.37	1.003	1.3
6	Insufficient support of government from physical education programs	4.26	0.802	1.4

The contents of table (4) show that among all items of barriers related to the administration of physical education of the Ministry of Education, the item number (6) "Insufficient support of government from physical education programs" has most negative impact as threat and barrier on the activities of administration from the perspective of respondents. From the other side the, item number (4) "Preference of educational activities on physical activities in educational system of the country" has the least negative impact on the administration based on respondents' view.

The findings of the current study revealed that the educational level of the majority of the respondents has descending order (51.4% bachelors of physical education, 18 respondents), (31.4% masters of physical education, 11 respondents) and (17.1% graduate of 14th class of physical education institutes, 6 respondents).

The findings of the research also showed that the managerial level of (60%) of respondents was medium, (20%) high, and (5.7%) of respondents did not experience the role of manager at any sports organization.

It states that 65.7% of the respondents were male in gender and the rest 34.3% of the respondents were female. With attention to Afghan society's dominant cultural and classical conditions, the mentioned number of female respondents looks satisfactory. The study showed that 48.6% of respondents had a sport antecedent of (6 – 10 years), 26.7% (1 – 5 years), 14.3% (16 – 20 years) and 11.4% had a sports antecedent of (11 – 15 years).

The research indicates that 26.9% of respondents had an age interval of (26 – 30 years), 14.3% (31 – 35 years), and 8.6% (36 – 40 years). The marital status of 64.8% of respondents was single, and the remaining 31.4% were married.

As it is seen in table (1), among all the strength points of the administration, the item number (2) "Collective decision-making and collaborative management ground" has the most positive impact from the viewpoint of respondents. This point is similar to research results of some researchers in Iran, in which the item was formulating strategies and defining the strategic plan of Iran's national Olympic committee (Yad Ailahi & et el, 2012). According to their findings, one of the most important strengths of the National Olympic Committee is dominance of the scope of collaborative management and decision-making. It is clear and experienced that collaboration of employees in the decision-making process positively impacts the productivity and effectiveness of organization's output. With reminding the positive role of collaborative management, it is recommended that the administration of physical education of the Ministry of Education take advantage of this point and work to improve its internal situation.

With reference to table (2), it is seen that the mentioned weakness points have similarities with the findings of some other researches. For example, the mentioned weakness point "Severe dependency on governmental resources" has similarities with the research findings of Hamidi and et el (1395), Khisrawzadeh (1397), Aryamanesh, et el (1397).

It should be noted that the most effective weakness point of physical education administration of Afghanistan, "Severe dependency to governmental resources" that no organization can reach its goals without sufficient financial resources. After human resources, an organisation's second most valuable resource is financial. It is mentionable that the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has not allocated a sufficient budget for development sports and physical education programs. Because of the dependency on the budget, the physical administration has no financial ability to holster sports tournaments, sending sports teams to national and international sports competitions and training programs. On the other side, because of abnormal security situation of the country and not being of suitable infrastructure for sport activities, the private sectors do not show eagerness to invest in this aspect.

With attention to the contents of table (3), it has been seen that the most important opportunity for the physical education administration of the Ministry of Education is the young population and is the actual and potential talent of physical education among Afghan citizens. This point is similar to the research finding of some other researchers. Najafi et al (1397), in research under title of "determining a strategic position of the sports administration of Azad- Islamic university" has mentioned two important opportunities for the administration. They are: being of young generation and talent of physical activities at Iranian students. Khisrawzadeh (1388), in research under the title of "diagnosis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of Iran national Olympic committee" being of young population and talent of physical education, mentioned two important opportunities for the committee.

Based on published data about quality and kind of human resources, Afghanistan has proved its dignity in a column of countries with the youngest human resources. Being of young human resource is a happy tiding and achievement for all the country administrations, especially sports organizations. Kabul as the capital of Afghanistan, has approximately 6 million populations, in comparison to other provinces, the opportunity for the youngness of generation is more tangible here, which means the authorities of physical education administration should take advantage of this condition and plan effective programs for expansion and development of sports programs at capital and big provinces level.

Based on table (4), the external threat that negatively affects the physical education administration of Afghanistan's Ministry of Education is item number two of the table, "Allocation of insufficient budget for student sports". These findings are similar to research findings of some other researchers. For example, (Hamidi, 1395) at the research under the title of formulating strategies of physical education and sport activities of ministry of education, one of the threats mentioned as the allocation of the insufficient government budget for doing physical activities. Tawfiq, 1394) states that one of the association's threats is a dependency of this organisation's economic structure on the governmental budget. It should be said that without allocating a

sufficient budget for sports students and their related activities, it is impossible to reach the goals of promulgation and development of physical education at Afghan schools and society.

5. Conclusion

Based on the above findings and discussions, it is concluded that the most important strengths were the existence of sports networks, paying attention to sports and physical education, the existence of participatory management space, and the setting for collective decision-making. The most noticeable weaknesses are the lack of a strategic plan in the General Directorate of Physical Education, lack of well-trained physical education instructors and its disproportion to the country's student population. The opportunities available in this field were the young population and the existence of many talents in physical education in the country, increasing the level of education of physical education instructors. The big threats were the influence and interference of other bodies and non-specialized officials in physical education administration and insufficient sports education funds. Managers and staff members of the Physical Education General Directorate should better plan for achieving high efficiency and effectiveness by identifying strengths and weaknesses and taking advantage of environmental opportunities and barriers. It is the first study that is conducted on the four above-mentioned themes within the administration of the General Directorate of Physical Education of the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan.

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