

Determine and Validate the Needs of Competencies for Sport Managers in Sport Centres in Isfahan City, Iran

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Abstract—previous studies have identified initial components including items. This paper therefore, aims to identify and verify the components and items of competencies for sports managers in Physical Education and Sports Centres in Isfahan City, Iran. It is, in fact crucial to determine whether identified variables in previously theoretical frameworks after clustering are suitable for reflecting the skills, abilities, attitudes, knowledge based on the conditions of sports organizations and centres. The sample size was 250 managers, selected randomly from a research population of 700 sports managers. The findings of this study also showed the interviews and Delphi iterations with a baseline mean of 3.00 to confirm remaining items and components whereas EFA and PCA were then employed to construct the final required competency. As a result indicated nine components of required competencies including 62 items in the last iteration were finally confirmed and validated with Cronbach's alpha (0.967).

Index Terms—needs of competencies, sport managers, sport centres, components and Items of competency

I. INTRODUCTION

Competencies are a collection of abilities and capacities that enable the individual to have a desirable performance in the framework of internal and external limitations of the organization in doing of his role and working tasks [1]. Moreover, they guarantee organizational success. Actually, according to [2], competencies can be regarded as features and attributes that are associated to the assumed job's performance at a high or influential level and are evidences denoting that the individual have characteristics for superior or effective performance. Training and educating of managers requires a comprehensive framework, so that materializes purposes and strategies of the organization through correct and impressive selection and training of managers. Various environmental and

inter-organizational variables are considered in designing of such models in order to identify accurate competencies and to make major decisions based on these competencies in human resources management [3].

Therefore, there are some weak points in competency of sport managers in Iran because according to findings of Research Centres of Physical Education and Sports Science in Iran, has been indicated that there it is the lack of competent and efficient managers in management of sports boards and deficiency of scientific principles in education as the prominent points are identified [4]. The researcher intends to address and resolve the problem found in sports centres in Isfahan city, where managers are selected without consideration of a compiled and practical competency model. Competencies denote purposeful behaviours that are included in the following elements: Knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, motivation, self-supposition, social roles will be resulted in the superior or effective performance of the manager in a job [5]. Based on [6], all types of institutions have made use of competencies in the areas of management which includes non-governmental associations. The researches in the field of investigating managerial competencies have almost all concerned the marketing and educational sectors [7], [8]. The reason is the use of these sectors for the purpose of employing or choosing students and personnel [8], [9].

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Some of the research related to competency argue that sports administrators need to be effective and diligent in learning and knowing about 1) public speaking, 2) sports knowledge and information, 3) writing skills, 4) the ability to investigate in various fields of sports, 5) time management, 6) communication human, and 7) physical fitness [10],[11]. States that managers will not be able to have creative and high quality tasks unless they have the necessary qualifications and competency. He proposes 112 required competencies that should be required of

managers and then divided them into 12 main categories with separated training programs. He outlined business methods in the principles of trade in sports, repair and maintenance of foundations and equipment, familiarity with the general regulations and rules of various sports disciplines, techniques and management methods, research in sport, exercise, time management, health and prevention of sports injuries, communication, familiar with the philosophy of sport and the techniques of planning as the required competencies for sports managers [12].

Recognizing the hidden talents of employees is often difficult. However, in the future, systematic education will be a necessary and effective method for training managers [13]. Today every organization that has more than three hundred (300) employees must apply for one type of human resource competency development model based on what discussed by [14], if the establishment of a universal model of competency is intended, companies such as Personnel Decision Incorporated, Hay Groups and Development.

Dimensions International which are very distinguished and important consulting institutions as well as the countless minor agencies and individual Counsellors follow, on a universal level, the similar plans.

In 2003, the same year, a study was conducted by using a questionnaire and interview by [15]. The purpose of the study was to determine the required competencies for club and federations sport managers of Germany. The findings showed that sport club managers perceived the following competencies as important: publications, personnel management, and basic knowledge about sport, financing, budgeting, event management, resource management, sport science, and information technology [16].

Used a questionnaire survey to identify the competencies prioritizing the competencies of sport event managers from the viewpoints of managers holding national sport competitions in the Federations. His finding according to the prioritization of the Components in a descending order included event management, facilities management, research and marketing management, business procedures, governance, public relations, management techniques, risk management and computer skills. The findings were consistent with those of previous studies [17].

Studied strategies in developing a sports club management competency model for Albania. She intended to generate such a model which comprises a list of essential competencies that are normally used for successful management of sports clubs in Albania. The Delphi method was applied to find out the perceptions of 13 sports club managers who represented members of the stakeholders in Albania. The result was a management competency model of the 11 most important competencies. They are leadership, communication skills, personnel management, sports knowledge, legislation knowledge, and achievement of objectives, marketing, problem solving, public relationship, financing, and facilities management.

In addition, [18] conducted a study to identify the sport event managers' competencies in the United States. He investigated the perceptions of two groups of academicians and practitioners concerning the essential competencies of sport event managers in order to see whether there was a difference in the perceptions between these two groups. The academicians were chosen from 200 sport management programs that offered event management courses in the United States. The descriptive statistics, and percentages were applied to obtain information from the data analyses. Moreover, factor analysis was performed to determine the number of factors in the COSEM questionnaire. The results of this study expressed 10 important competencies Items.

By reviewing the literature in management competencies of recreational sport managers, the instrument by used [19]. Competencies of Sport Managers (COSM), was selected but with some modification being made. Henceforth, this instrument was recognized as the Competencies of Golf Course Directors (CGCD). A total of 91 competency statements in 10 categories were maintained in the content validation process by expert jurors. The findings indicated the existing golf management competencies among golf course directors in the United States.

These findings underscored an understanding of the theoretical and foundational areas which one important to golf management field, including business procedures, communications/public relations, computer skills, facilities/equipment management, governance, legality/risk management, management techniques, research/evaluation, philosophy/sport science, and programming technique/event management [20], also probed the competencies needed for athletics and recreational facility managers. This study also focused on the necessary sport management curricular except for the studied competencies. Six curricular areas were perceived as important. They included facility planning, computer skills, facility operation, philosophy, marketing, and event management [21], conducted a study on preferred management competencies of golf course directors in the United States. This study intended to identify differences in response to the importance of management competencies among golf course directors in diverse regions of the United States, and also to identify the differences in the perceived importance of management competencies among golf course directors in disparate types of golf courses (private, semiprivate, and public) in the United States.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGR AND SAMPLE SIZE

A mixed method in the form of interview and Delphi techniques for qualitative and the exploratory factor analysis for quantitative method was used in this study. Due to, the population included 250 sport managers in Sport centres were used with random sampling as final sample that included from 700 sport managers, leaders of Sports Boards and managers, deputies, and the heads of Sports Committees and Sports Clubs of Physical

Education Offices in cities in Isfahan province, Iran. These samples chose by random sampling.

IV. FINDINGS OF THE QUALITATIVE

The qualitative findings based on the analysis of the interviews conducted with 10 sport managers. The purpose of the qualitative data collection and subsequent qualitative data analysis was to explore the dimensions of competency as described by the sport managers. The findings of the first phase of the study are derived from qualitative analysis of the verbatim transcriptions of the interview, the research question that guided this first, qualitative phase of the study was: What are the dimensions of competency as described by sport managers in sport centres? Therefore, this part details the emergent themes that reflected the dimensions of competency through exemplar statements from verbatim transcriptions of the interviews.

A. Understanding the Dimensions of Competency

Ten themes emerged from the interviews as the dimensions of competency. These dimensions are:

(1) Business procedure, (2) Communication (3) Supervision & Evaluation, (4) Management technique & risk management, (5) Sports foundation, (6) Programming technique, (7) Professional ethics, (8) Performance management & improving, (9) Culture, (10) Responsibility & result oriented. Throughout the rest of this chapter, pseudonyms are used to protect the participants' identities.

B. The Modified Delphi Technique

The original Delphi involves a panel of expert participating in three or more rounds [22]. It is suggested that there is still a change between the first and second round [23]. The consensus is reached within four rounds. It is not advantageous to conduct the Delphi technique with more than two rounds. In fact, it hardly has any further change of opinion after the two rounds. The first round is frequently structured to help monitor the team and the panellists will feel more convenient to work. There is a variation in the number of rounds in spite of the fact that it seldom goes beyond one or two iterations [24].

C. Selection of the Expert Jury

There are no specific indications about a specific number of experts on the panel being more appropriate than another. In a study by [25]. Nine experts were used, while other studies have used upwards of one hundred experts. The number of experts depends on the study, and the expense of having a large number on the panel [26]. The panel only needs to be large enough to insure the amount of expertise deemed necessary to get effective results [25]. For this study, nine experts were selected, one from each of the states included in the study. An expert is an individual having special skills or knowledge derived from training or experience [27]. It was determined that the panel members should have (1) a strong teaching background at the university level and (2)

a strong equine background. However, it is slightly different from the Delphi method because a set of Items is established. Based on these established Items, experts will know how to work [28].

V. DATA ANALYSIS FOR DELPHI TECHNIQUE

Data were analyzed using percentages and frequencies. [29], suggested researchers use the frequency distribution valid percentage approach to analyze data from rounds two and three. This study employed said data analysis procedures and looked at specific frequency distribution of variables among the panellists. Percentages were derived from these frequencies. The panellists were asked to rate their level of agreement for those remaining Items by either retaining the mean initial score or by revising it up or down [30]. The Round Three instrument included the mean score the Items had been given in the previous round. Items that scored a "3," "4," or "5" by 75% or more of the panellists were said to have reached consensus of agreement in Round 2 [31]. Items that did not report a consensus of agreement of 75% or more in round three were removed from the final list [32].

A. Iteration I

With changes within the past years, the instrument was taken into considerations based on the interview. The expert jury consulted the literature review and gave useful suggestions to the researcher. The literature reviewed through broad research articles, dissertations, and books unfolded a large number of competencies for the managers in sports centres in Isfahan Province. In addition, the literature review helped the researcher to understand this issue more clearly. That provided a wide range of background knowledge for this study. Iteration 1 is the first list in which all related dimensions and Items of sports competencies in sports centres in Isfahan Province are included. An envelope with a cover letter given instructions was sent to each expert by email. It aims to let them know about what they are going to do with the list. Each of them also told to send the list back to the researcher. To collect experts' ideas, this iteration began with an open-ended question. The competency Items were evaluated and validated again by the jurors. Moreover, they were encouraged to add, delete, and change if necessary. It is explained that dimensions and Items

More specifically, in the first iteration, the experts got a total of 92 competency Items. To form the first part of the needs of competencies, the experts ranked each of 92 competency Items. The ranking with a 5point Likert scale was used. It ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Second part of the needs of competencies list was designed to collect demographic information including age, gender, level of education, position title and working experience. In fact, in order to assist the expert jury in their validation process, the total of 92 Items was categorized into 10 competency areas including (1) business procedure (10 Q), (2) communication (10 ITEM), (3) supervision & Evaluation (11 ITEM), (4) management technique & risk

management (12 ITEM), (5) sports foundation (12 ITEM), (6) programming technique (8 ITEM), (7) professional ethics (4 ITEM), (8) performance management & improving (13 ITEM), (9) culture (5 ITEM), (10) responsibility & result oriented (7 ITEM).

B. Results of Iteration I

Iteration 1 includes a highly structured competency list that resembles iteration 2 in the traditional Delphi.

It was set up based on competencies. These competencies were grouped into 10 headings or dimensions. It is noted that there is a space for making suggestions in which the panel members could give a written feedback at the end of the competency rankings. In round 1, the panel of experts was asked to rank a list of 92 competencies in equine science curriculum. Each ranking is based on a five point Likert-type scale. It decided to select which competency would be kept in the list. In actual fact, if three or more of the 9 panel members responded with 3 or higher on the Likert scale, the competency would be omitted. If three or more panel members responded with 2 or less on the Likert scale, the competency statement would be removed. The dimensions includes (1) business procedure (10 ITEM), (2) communication (10 ITEM), (3) supervision & Evaluation (11 ITEM), (4) management technique & risk management (12 ITEM), (5) sports foundation (12 ITEM), (6) programming technique (8 ITEM), (7) professional ethics (4 ITEM), (8) performance management & improving (13 ITEM), (9) culture (5 ITEM), (10) responsibility & result oriented (7 ITEM).

The experts were also asked to give comments concerning the existing competencies or make suggestions of additional competencies considered important. According to the ranking of each competency, a total of 20 statements of 92 competency Items ranked lower scores than 3 points and were therefore deleted.

C. Iteration II

The second iteration of the Delphi study results from the analysis of iteration. It is considered as a resource of sports managers' competency in sports centres located in Isfahan Province. In the second iteration, the experts got a list of 72 Items of competencies. These Items are divided into 10 dimensions. It ranks from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Examples of the tasks involved are also included. In this iteration, the experts were asked to rank them again. Its purpose is to make each competency concept clear. In addition, they were asked to give a brief explanation about their decision. They were also encouraged to think and evaluate data before making decisions. The researcher sent an email to remind experts who delayed their responses. The researcher found out that during data analysis, two experts did not provide accurate information. Thus, she contacted them again to get correct information.

After their comments and suggestions were taken into considerations, the instrument yielded 72 Items with 10 dimensions including (1) business procedure (8 ITEM), (2) communication (7 ITEM), (3) supervision & Evaluation

(8 ITEM), (4) management technique & risk management (9 ITEM), (5) sports foundation (10 ITEM), (6) programming technique (5 ITEM), (7) professional ethics (4 ITEM), (8) performance management & improving (9 ITEM), (9) culture (5 ITEM), (10) responsibility & result oriented (7 ITEM). All competencies ranked 3 or higher scores than 3 were kept in the study, whereas those rank 2 or less were removed.

D. Results of Iteration II

The competencies were adjusted in the second round. The competencies that got 3 or more by three or more experts was kept in the list. The panels made suggestions of changes to existing competencies or additional competencies. In round 2, removed competencies were discussed. Five statements of competencies included 72 statements of competencies were deleted. In this iteration, the component of culture and professional ethics were grouped together. The panels were told that a total of 72 statements of competencies was ranked again. The results of two rounds in the Delphi study produced a competency list of 67 statements of competencies. They are categorized into nine dimensions, namely:

- 1) Business procedure (7 ITEM),
- 2) Communication (7 ITEM),
- 3) Supervision & evaluation (7 ITEM),
- 4) Management technique & risk management (8 ITEM),
- 5) Sports foundation (10 ITEM),
- 6) Programming technique (5 ITEM),
- 7) Professional ethics, & culture (7 ITEM),
- 8) Performance management & learning improving (9 ITEM),
- 9) Responsibility & result oriented (7 ITEM).

E. Iteration

After analysing data from Iteration 2, the obtained list of competencies was sent back to the experts. In this iteration, the participants were asked to answer the following questions:

1. Do you agree with the order of these competencies?
2. If yes, would you eliminate any of the competencies due to their unimportance? Which ones are eliminated?
3. If you disagree with the list, how can you change it? And why do you change it?

At this time, participants were able to review the list ranked by the panel, and they were free to change or agree with it. It is true that in iteration 3, the majority of experts agreed with the list of the competencies for sports managers in sports centres in Isfahan province. The consensus was reached; therefore, this was the final iteration for this Delphi study. The result of this iteration is consistent with the findings of previous stage. In this stage, the experts suggested that it was better to rearrange the Items in the list of needs of competencies to prevent the bias and direction of the respondents. The content validity of component and Items related to the competencies needs was measured by 5 experts. Some changes and corrections have been done by the

consideration of these experts in several steps to confirm the content validity.

The Kaiser–Mayer–Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett’s tests were carried out prior to conducting factor analysis [33]. These tests determined the appropriateness of factor analysis and degree of correlation among variables. Bartlett’s test of Sphericity and the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) determine the factorability of the entire matrix. According to table I the results showed that the Barlett’s Test of Sphericity was significant with Kaiser-MeyerOlking (KMO) measure of sampling

adequacy of 0.881 which is above the accep level of 0.50 (I). The anti-image correlation matrix results indicated all Items with measurement of sampling adequacy (MSA) were above the acceptance level of 0.50

0.967 was determined as the reliability coefficient of the instrument. This is to say that the reliability and internal consistency of the revised instrument was satisfactory. Therefore, a total of 62 competencies statements were used for constructing the final instrument. The Cronbach's alpha for the 62 Items was. 0.967.

TABLE I. PRINCIPLE COMPONENT MATRIX AND RELIABILITY RESULT (N=250)

Variables	Items	Factor Loadings
Business Procedure (BP)	ITEM1	.529
	ITEM66	.679
	ITEM28	.608
	ITEM32	.757
	ITEM9	.695
	ITEM38	.735
	ITEM49	.793
Communication (CM)	ITEM16	.760
	ITEM43	.821
	ITEM60	.748
	ITEM10	.516
	ITEM55	.767
	ITEM37	.831
	ITEM59	.793
Supervision/Evaluation (SE)	ITEM31	.808
	ITEM8	.782
	ITEM50	.718
	ITEM27	.583
	ITEM44	.783
	ITEM42	.744
	ITEM11	.789
TechniItemue Management/Risk Management (TM)	ITEM48	.683
	ITEM58	.794
	ITEM18	.726
	ITEM26	.629
	ITEM7	.587
	ITEM51	.672
	ITEM39	.790
Sports Foundation (SF)	ITEM45	.741
	ITEM64	.692
	ITEM17	.751
	ITEM29	.671
	ITEM36	.719
	ITEM52	.694
	ITEM6	.772
Variables	ITEM41	.706
	ITEM15	.749
	Item	
	Programming TechniItemues (PT)	
	ITEM63	.785
	ITEM33	.811
	ITEM24	.770
	ITEM13	.833
	ITEM65	.796

CONTINUING OF TABLE I: PRINCIPLE COMPONENT MATRIX AND RELIABILITY RESULT (N=250)

Performance Management and Learning Improvement (PM)	ITEM23	.597
	ITEM30	.761
	ITEM57	.754
	ITEM5	.699
	ITEM19	.697
Organizational Culture and Professional Ethic (OR)	ITEM47	.741
	ITEM25	.768
	ITEM2	.688
	ITEM46	.709
	ITEM34	.738
	ITEM56	.795
	ITEM21	.707
	ITEM67	.812
	ITEM14	.829
Responsibility /Result Oriented (RO)	ITEM61	.801
	ITEM20	.804
	ITEM4	.617
	ITEM22	.669
	ITEM54	.786
	ITEM3	.687
KMO Sampling of adequacy		.881
Bartlett's test of Sphericity		34302.375, p<0.01
Total Variance Explained		68.777
Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)	.899 .924 .903 .926 .939 .910 .914 .90 .901	.967

VI. CONCLUSION

As a result of the analysis of the interviews conducted with nine sport managers from the population, this part focused on identifying and describing the dimensions of competency. Based on the findings from this phase 1, ten dimensions of competency were identified. These dimensions are:

(1) Business procedure, (2) communication, (3) supervision & Evaluation, (4) management technique & risk management, (5) sports foundation, (6) programming technique, (7) professional ethics, (8) performance management & improving, (9) culture (10) responsibility & result oriented. Then, in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, the researcher conducted Delphi technique to confirm the required data. The results of three stages of Delphi analysis among nine experts, the components of sport managers' competencies are drawn out. A competency list of 67 statements of competencies.

They are categorized into nine dimensions, namely:

(1) business procedure (7 ITEM), (2) communication (7 ITEM), (3) supervision and evaluation (7 ITEM), (4)

management technique and risk management (8 ITEM), (5) sports foundation (10 ITEM), (6) programming technique (5 ITEM), (7) professional ethics, and culture (7 ITEM), (8) performance management and learning improving (9 ITEM), (9) responsibility and result oriented (7 ITEM).

According to [34], each Item should load 0.50 or greater on one factor and the other factor should load 0.35 or lower as the rule used to identify and interpret unique factors. Based on this rule, 5 Items were dropped due to cross-loadings with 2 Items from sport foundation, 2 Items from performance management and learning improving, 1 Items from responsibility and result oriented. Finally, the result of exploratory factor analysis and principle component analysis show that there are 9 components involved 62 Items of competencies were achieved and used for constructing the needs of competencies for sport managers. Based on the data presented in of Cronbach's alpha scores are ranging from 0.899 to 0.939 and [35] introduced all variables show internal consistency.

And also the components of business procedure and management techniques in this study is similar the findings of [16]. Otherwise the component of

communication also similar to findings of [17]-[19] and [10]. Also in their study indicate that the component of sport foundation same as component in this study. In result of [11], study also similar with component of programming technique with this study. Since these previous studies did not include responsibility and result oriented, organizational culture and professional ethic. There was no basis for comparison in these competency domains. However, all the other competencies were included in competency studies for sports managers in Sport Centres. The reason of these differences between current research and the other previous researches could be because of population, culture, policy and guidelines in organizations.

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