

# Identifying and Prioritizing Opportunities and Challenges of Sports Activities During Covid-19 Disease and Providing Solutions (A Case study of Sistan and Baluchestan Province)

Received: 2021-05-28

Vol. 2, No.1. Winter. 2021, 54-70

Accepted: 2021-07-06

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to identify and prioritize the opportunities and challenges of sports activities during Covid-19 disease and to provide solutions in Sistan and Baluchestan province.

**Methods:** The method of the present research is based on the purpose of applied research; In terms of nature, exploratory research; In terms of data collection, it is descriptive-survey research and due to the application of Q methodology and grand theory (Glaser), it is mixed research. The statistical population of this study was all sports elites (professors, managers, etc.), people involved in sports decision-making and policy-making in Sistan and Baluchestan province. From the statistical population, 28 people were selected as a sample by the purposeful method. Descriptive statistics were used to classify raw scores, design tables, frequency distribution, and calculate dispersion indices such as mean and standard deviation and standard deviation and variance and analyze demographic characteristics as well as the mean of responses. To open the consensus of experts, open, axial, and theoretical coding method, Glaser approach was used.

**Results:** Using factor analysis (Q method), 67 challenges of sports activities during Covid-19 disease were identified. Challenges in 7 distinct mental patterns, respectively: Economists mental pattern, Infrastructures mental pattern, Organizational mental pattern, Culturalist mental pattern, Events mental pattern, Athletes mental pattern, and Medias mental pattern, were categorized and prioritized.

**Conclusion:** By exploring the data of interviews with experts through the Glaser approach, 7 concepts were introduced as opportunities for sports activities in Sistan and Baluchestan province during the Corona period and were presented as a qualitative model. Finally, based on the opinions of provincial experts, solutions were provided for each challenge of sports activities.

**Keyword:** Covid-19 and Sports, Sports Challenges, Sports Opportunities, Sistan and Baluchestan Province.

## Introduction

Today more than ever, the value of physical activity and its role in public health is well known. In fact, machine life reduces daily motor activity and exercise is essential to prevent many diseases (Hoke et al, 2020). The benefit of physical health resulting from participation in physical activity and sports is an important principle that most people in society have accepted to prevent disease and increase the level of public health (Moradi, Hosseini, and Moradi, 2017). Sport is a kind of organized and purposeful game in which movements are performed in order to strengthen physical strength, increase morale and acquire skills (Moradi, Hosseini and Moradi, 2017). Today, the sport has been accepted as a social phenomenon in the world, including in our country, and has been well received. Has prevented the spread of social corruption and moral deviations in society and many other applications (Lashkari and Khoshnam, 2018); For this reason, in most countries of the world, increasing investment has been made in the development of facilities and information systems in sports organizations, and without a doubt, sports and physical activity have become a global phenomenon (Papaioannou et al., 2020). Medical experts believe that the only way to cure and save human beings from all kinds of diseases is to exercise and turn human beings towards physical and mental movement and activity (Chetty et al., 2020; Maugeri et al., 2020). As it has been said, sports activities have a decisive role in maintaining the physical and mental health of human beings, and depriving society of the effects and individual and social functions of sports will certainly affect irreparable damage not only to the current generation but also to many generations (Seyed Ameri and Jamei, 2014).

New societies need sports more than ever because a healthy society needs a healthy and vibrant workforce. Some scholars consider

sport to be a "small world in society" that, like other phenomena in society, is influenced by social and cultural factors. Jackson (1988) defines any factor that is perceived by individuals and prevents them from participating and enjoying sports activities as a limitation and barrier. Taylor (2011) also states in his book that the way of sports activities is always subject to economic crises, rapid technological and industrial developments, socio-political consequences of societies. Now, since the beginning of December 2019, countries have been faced with the release of a new type of coronavirus family called Covid-19, and this crisis has caused sports activities to be affected and one of the producers of excitement (sports activities) to become completely immobile in communities. Sports and recreation centers, playgrounds, parks, clubs, swimming pools, attractions, slopes, beaches, promenades, hotels, guest-houses, camps, markets, travel, and all kinds of human gatherings are prohibited in all countries. The world's largest sporting event, the 2020 Olympics and Paralympics, has been postponed to 2021 due to the impossibility of human gatherings (Ozili & Arun, 2020). Juventus president Andre Anelli has warned European clubs that the global crisis caused by the outbreak of the Coronavirus could pose a serious threat to their existence, as Covid-19 is the biggest challenge the football world has faced in its history. Big clubs such as Real Madrid and Barcelona are facing severe economic problems. In recent days and weeks, several professional athletes have received covid-19 and this disease will definitely have a negative impact on the quality of athletes. And in the post-corona era, sports activities may not be popular with people and athletes (Gallego al., 2020). Safania and Brahmmand (2020), in evaluating the effects of coronavirus in the sports industry, which was done by the library method, noted that the co-

rona pandemic in the sports industry has numerous positive and negative effects. Most research has focused on the financial losses caused by the coronavirus, while other losses, such as psychological, social, and political trauma, have not received much attention. For example, Solé et al. (2020) in their research stated that quarantine due to the outbreak of coronavirus and physical inactivity during this period endangers the physiological health of individuals and leads to an increase in neuromuscular and cardiovascular diseases. In contrast, staying active in these situations helps people to strengthen their immune systems. They continue that inactivity during this period leads to loss of muscle mass and muscle damage. These negative effects of a sedentary lifestyle can be reduced with exercise. However, moderate to high resistance training, at home and without the need for advanced equipment, can have positive effects on a person's physiological condition (Narici et al., 2020). Among the positive effects of the coronavirus is the progress of exercise at home, due to the leisure time for the disease. Cruyff (2020) states that the effects of the coronavirus crisis on sport vary throughout the world. Therefore, in order to get out of the crisis, it is suggested that considering the importance of management in sports organizations, managers should provide appropriate strategies to deal with the post-corona era; And researchers look at the effects of the coronavirus from different aspects of the sports industry. Despite the variability of these effects anywhere in the world, it is suggested that the proposed strategies be localized.

The presence of the coronavirus in Iran was officially confirmed on February 19, 2020. And the country's crisis-ridden sports complex needs a supportive and boosting version today. Prevention of diseases that cause inactivity is very important and one of the important goals of the government is to prevent the spread of Covid-19 disease and promote

public health through sports activities. Motivating different segments of the population to participate in sports activities requires a great deal of opportunity, and if this interest is created in the community, many social anomalies will disappear and people will be at a higher level in terms of mental strength and physical talents and ability. Also Fighting social problems and enduring hardships will increase for them. Therefore, given the need for the successful expansion of sports activities today, planners and policy makers should be aware of the various challenges and opportunities for participation and perhaps more importantly, how to participate and the reasons and factors for non-participation in sports activities. Meanwhile, Kovid-19 has overshadowed the sports activities of Sistan and Baluchestan province, the largest province in the country with a population of about 2.8 million people, and the current generation of this province has been deprived of the effects and individual and social functions of sports activities. Therefore, considering the current situation, it seems that corrective measures should be taken by the officials of this province to turn these restrictions into opportunities and get out of this crisis faster. As a result, the purpose of this study is to investigate the opportunities and challenges of sports activities during the Covid-19 disease and to provide a solution in Sistan and Baluchestan province.

## Materials and Methods

The present research is based on the purpose of applied research; In terms of nature, from the type of exploratory research; In terms of data collection, it is a descriptive-survey research and due to the application of Q methodology, it is a mixed research (quantitative-qualitative). Sampling was also selected by snowball and available method and the data collected from library sources and interviews with 32 experts were theoretically saturated.

The Q questionnaire was designed and completed by experts. Finally, 28 of them completed the questionnaire correctly and their data were analyzed. The statistical population of this study consisted of all sports elites in Sistan and Baluchestan province. All people who were subject to the following conditions in this field, as sports elite and the statistical community formed the research;

- 1- Has at least 3 years of playing experience in the professional leagues of the province
- 2- Has at least 3 years of coaching experience

in the first levels of sports in the province

- 3- Has at least one championship at provincial, national or international levels
- 4- Has at least 3 years of experience in sports management in the sports and youth departments of the province
- 5- Has at least a doctorate in sports science management and are active in the universities of the province.

Finally, demographic information is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Demographic information of the samples under study**

Code	Age	Gender	Education	Specialty
S1	32	Man	Bachelor	Professional player
S2	31	Female	Masters	Professional player
S3	29	Man	Bachelor	Professional player
S4	26	Female	Bachelor	Professional player
S5	29	Man	Masters	Professional player
S6	30	Female	P.H.D	Professional player
S7	24	Man	Masters	Professional player
S8	46	Man	Bachelor	The Coach
S9	59	Man	Bachelor	The Coach
S10	55	Female	Masters	The Coach
S11	43	Female	Bachelor	The Coach
S12	41	Man	Masters	The Coach
S13	25	Man	Bachelor	Champion Athlete
S14	30	Man	Bachelor	Champion Athlete
S15	26	Man	P.H.D	Champion Athlete
S16	28	Female	Masters	Champion Athlete
S17	47	Man	Bachelor	Sports Director
S18	39	Man	Masters	Sports Director
S19	46	Man	Masters	Sports Director
S20	41	Man	Bachelor	Sports Director
S21	38	Female	P.H.D	Faculty member
S22	34	Man	P.H.D	Faculty member
S23	37	Female	P.H.D	Faculty member
S24	44	Female	P.H.D	Faculty member
S25	39	Man	P.H.D	Faculty member
S26	46	Female	Masters	Faculty member
S27	51	Man	P.H.D	Faculty member
S28	44	Man	Masters	Faculty member

Q methodology is a method that includes the simultaneous use of quantitative and qualitative methods; Therefore, the results of reviewing and analyzing the information obtained in this study include extracting the main factors mentioned in previous studies and conducting interviews to extract the

views and thoughts of experts. Also, from a quantitative point of view, statistical methods are used to categorize individuals, such as Q factor analysis and principal component analysis, and since the main purpose of this method is to reveal different patterns of thinking, not counting the number of people

with different thoughts, Qualitative research is also closer (Harandi, 2009). Q methodology is a technique by which the mentality of individuals is studied. Since the prevailing approach for this research is to identify and categorize the views, opinions, and mindsets of experts and thinkers in Sistan and Baluchestan province regarding the opportunities and challenges created for sports activities due to the Coronavirus crisis. By using

this research methodology, a deeper and more indigenous understanding of the prevailing facts for this research can be helped. In fact, the Q method is a technical method that enables the researcher to identify and classify individual perceptions and ideas, and secondly to categorize groups of individuals based on their perceptions. (Khoshgoyanfar, 2007). Finally, Delphi and expert surveys were used to identify effective solutions.

**Table 2. Research implementation steps**

Number	Executive steps
1	Refer to the subject literature, search and select appropriate articles, collect discourse space and extract effective factors
2	Interviews and polls of experts
3	Evaluate and summarize the discourse space
4	Select the final Q phrases
5	Create a Q category
6	Selection of participants from among specialists and experts
7	Sorting Q samples in Q charts
8	Statistical analysis of data (Q factor analysis)
9	Implement Delphi method to extract effective solutions

In the first step, the research discourse space should be collected, ie a collection of various materials related to the research topic that is discussed among the people of the discourse and from a combination of sources including structured interviews, debates, scientific and research articles, chapters of the book. Are constructive, stable, and diverse opinions, notes, and the like. After collection, this set should be converted into short and intermittent expressions so that one sample can be selected from them; Therefore, from these appropriate and desirable phrases that have been obtained from the theoretical foundations of the research, ie the findings and results of interviews, those that were highly related to the opportunities and challenges of sports activities were collected in a total of 88 effective items.

These 88 effective items that after reviewing in two stages by two sports management experts, making the necessary changes to the validity of the phrases such as deleting similar and repetitive phrases or removing their

ambiguity, 67 items as the final expressions of the Q sample in the present study. It was selected that these items are specified in Table 3, And each item was written with its own code on a card called the Q card.

The next step is to sort the chart Q by the research participants. Typically, in the Q-method for the number of participants, between twenty and eighty people can be selected to achieve different views on a topic (Khoshgoyanfar, 2007). The selection of participants is not done through probabilistic sampling methods, but the sample of individuals is usually selected purposefully and on a small scale. Therefore, in the present study, 28 sports experts were selected as research participants. This selection was made with the help of a combination of purposeful sampling and snowball sampling. The participants were selected based on "their close relationship with the research topic" and "the importance of their presence in the research".

Next, participants were asked to place each

card on the Q chart according to the Q sorting instructions. For this study, the Q diagram with forced distribution has been used. The chart is embedded for 67 terms Q of -5, which means complete opposition, 5+, which means complete agreement with the term Q. After sorting by the research participants, the scoring method of each participant, a special form designed for this purpose, was recorded. Participants' sorting data were entered in SPSS software to identify the different mindsets of participants using Q-factor analysis and to answer research questions. Finally, the Delphi method was used to answer the final question of the research, namely the identification of effective solutions. So that the opportunities and challenges identified by the Q

method were extracted by designing the first and second phase Delphi questionnaires for design experts and final solutions.

## Results

Researchers believe that there is no definite criterion for the number of Q expressions, Q studies require 20 to 70 expressions (Yassini et al., 2016). Therefore, in order to identify and frame the types of challenges for sports activities in the Covid-19 disease crisis in Sistan and Baluchestan province, Out of 88 statements obtained from interviews and theoretical foundations, finally, 67 statements were confirmed, which can be seen in Table 3.

**Table 3. Challenges for sports activities in the Covid-19 crisis**

Row	Challenges
1	Losses to manufacturers and sellers of sports equipment in the province
2	Losses to the tourism industry of the province
3	Reduction of revenues and closure of some sports media in the province
4	Losses to the owners of teams and sports facilities in the province
5	Reduction of credits for sports constructions in the province
6	Reduction of sponsors of the province's sports teams
7	Reducing attention to the livelihoods of the province's heroes and veterans
8	Postponement of payment of salaries of personnel working in the province's sports
9	Reducing the income level of families and reducing the purchasing power of sports products
10	Reducing the amount of private sector investment in sports in the province
11	Unemployment and indecision of corporate, contract, and daily staff of sports organizations in the province
12	Reducing the activities of sports delegations at the level of cities and provincial centers
13	Reduce media support for the province's sports organizations
14	Reduction of organized athletes in the province
15	Reducing the demand for hosting sports events in the province
16	Reducing the supervision and monitoring of sports facilities in the province and the possibility of their destruction
17	Low financial ability of sports organizations to help the livelihood of unemployed people in sports in the province
18	Impossibility of purposeful and long-term planning for the province's sports
19	Lack of planning and preparation of sports delegations in the province in accordance with this disease
20	Reduction of women's sports activity in the province compared to men
21	Reducing the ability of sports organizations to pay the arrears of sports activists
22	Problems in paying contracts of provincial players
23	Reducing the side income of athletes in the province
24	Mandatory reduction of salaries of provincial players
25	Lack of supervision of coaches over the championship training of the province's players
26	Lack of space and equipment suitable for championship sports activities at home
27	Possibility of injury to athletes due to non-standard sports activities at home
28	Uncertainty of the province's athletes for the time of resumption of sports competitions and formation of sports camps
29	Increased stress, depression, and anxiety among athletes in the province
30	Reduce athletes' motivation to train

31	The poverty of movement and decline in the performance of amateur and professional players in the province
32	Athletes are more likely to get the Coronavirus
33	Disruption of athletes' diet planning and weight gain due to forced housework
34	Lack of enclosed outdoor space suitable for women's activities throughout the province
35	Lack of sufficient space for sports activities with physical distance
36	Lack of proper health facilities and equipment in the province's sports facilities
37	Lack of adequate home space for sports activities
38	Lack of proper equipment in the market for sports activities of people at home
39	Uncertainty about the completion time of unfinished sports projects
40	Lack of appropriate technology infrastructure for virtual sports activities
41	Prevent sports fans from going to stadiums
42	People are more inclined to play virtual and inactive games in their spare time than in the past
43	Change active lifestyle to inactive
44	Inability to communicate with friends and peers for leisure sports
45	Lack of motivation for people to spend their leisure time playing sports
46	Fear of family members for exercising outdoors, including parks, mountains, etc.
47	Increased mental and physical illnesses such as depression, obesity, and overweight
48	The decline of sports enthusiasm among community members and sports fans
49	Lack of necessary health standards for the presence of families in sports facilities
50	Reducing sports tourism
51	Reduce the holding of specialized meetings and conferences for coaches and athletes
52	Reduce sports content for sports media
53	Rising unemployment of sports reporters and presenters
54	Increased sports news controversy during the coronavirus era
55	Lack of prior planning for digital media use
56	Existence of filtering of some cyberspace media
57	High inefficiency of internal virtual network platforms for information
58	Lack of uniform access to the Internet for athletes in the province
59	Closing of amateur sports competitions in various institutions (universities, education, etc.)
60	Closing of sports sub-group competitions in the province
61	Closing of the league and super league matches in all disciplines
62	Unemployment of contract staff and daily wages of sports activity centers
63	Cancel additional costs, cancel and change the program of sports activities
64	Uncertainty of the organizers to plan the resumption of the tournament
65	Uncertainty of sports teams to invite and select sports heroes
66	Reducing the support of sports team fans
67	Closing the borders of neighboring countries and reducing international events in the province

Like exploratory factor analysis, the Q factor analysis process is done in two stages; In the first stage, the factors are extracted and in the second stage, the factors are rotated in such a way that they can be interpreted. The use of

the second stage is necessary when the factors resulting from the first stage are not easily interpretable, and we can not consider them as a particular mentality. The amount of variance of each mental pattern and its specific value are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. Total Variance Explained**

Row	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings	
	The cumulative percentage	total	Percentage of variance	The cumulative percentage
1	18.84	5.27	16.50	16.50
2	36.00	4.80	14.72	31.23
3	52.20	4.53	14.01	45.25
4	62.72	2.94	13.33	58.58
5	72.20	2.65	10.08	68.66
6	78.24	1.69	7.31	75.98
7	83.11	1.36	7.13	83.11

The results of Q factor analysis showed that in total, the experts identified 7 factors, which explains and covers about 83% of the variances. The rotation matrix of the factors (Varimax method) was used to find out what mental pattern these 7 factors shown by the

experts. Varimax method is one of the common methods of orthogonal rotation of factors. In this study, in order to interpret the factors, the orthogonal rotation of Varimax has been used, the results of which are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5. Factor analysis matrix (weekly classification of participants' mental patterns)**

Partici- pants	mental patterns						
	Mental pattern 1	Mental pattern 2	Mental pattern 3	Mental pattern 4	Mental pattern 5	Mental pattern 6	Mental pattern 7
S1	-.123	0.084	-0.124	0.060	0.939	-0.081	0.047
S2	0.046	-0.049	-0.134	0.953	-0.060	0.078	-0.069
S3	0.885	0.075	-0.105	0.078	0.121	-0.120	-0.151
S4	0.020	0.975	-0.054	-0.107	0.055	0.015	-0.083
S5	0.006	0.954	-0.052	-0.151	-0.053	0.029	-0.063
S6	0.173	0.158	0.785	-0.013	0.051	-0.156	-0.190
S7	0.017	-0.239	-0.368	0.092	-0.261	0.736	0.052
S8	-0.227	-0.006	-0.137	0.200	-0.150	0.859	0.091
S9	-0.028	-0.158	0.751	-0.083	-0.259	0.037	0.169
S10	0.945	-0.010	0.012	0.142	-0.11	0.017	-0.062
S11	-0.023	-0.122	0.723	0.008	-0.149	-0.066	0.124
S12	-0.335	-0.024	0.038	-0.060	0.629	-0.161	-0.459
S13	-0.099	0.042	-0.118	0.029	0.940	-0.086	0.019
S14	0.055	-0.164	-0.154	0.890	0.038	0.192	-0.068
S15	-0.002	-0.146	-0.010	0.920	-0.020	-0.011	-0.047
S16	-0.193	-0.099	0.135	0.487	-0.182	-0.215	0.641
S17	-0.113	0.304	0.0510	-0.094	0.033	0.631	-0.210
S18	-0.328	-0.308	0.072	0.060	-0.198	-0.330	0.593
S19	-0.063	0.950	-0.078	-0.116	0.093	0.105	-0.001
S20	-0.102	0.019	0.809	-0.004	0.131	-0.050	0.236
S21	0.914	0.034	0.023	0.055	-0.050	-0.099	-0.079
S22	0.174	-0.060	0.091	0.844	0.171	-0.060	0.215
S23	-0.163	-0.070	0.312	-0.259	0.118	0.159	0.736
S24	0.887	-0.094	0.080	-0.050	-0.205	-0.010	0.021
S25	0.117	-0.104	0.805	-0.051	0.049	-0.036	0.137
S26	-0.028	0.965	-0.055	-0.042	0.052	-0.067	-0.074
S27	0.917	-0.083	0.051	0.009	-0.166	-0.091	-0.048
S28	-0.115	-0.086	0.716	0.108	-0.344	-0.147	-0.402



Based on the results and outputs of SPSS software, factor loads were compared with each other and key ideas and factors that were more important were identified. In addition, to interpret the factors and factor analysis,

important criteria for the factors were considered, which are finally specified in Table 6, in order of priority of the experts' mental models regarding the challenges for sports activities in the Covid-19 crisis in Sistan and Baluchestan province.

**Table 6. Prioritize the mental model of experts on the challenges of sports activities in the coronavirus crisis**

Experts	Q factors	Mental pattern
S3, S10, S21, S24, S27	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Losses to manufacturers and sellers of sports equipment in the province</li> <li>2.Losses to the tourism industry of the province</li> <li>3.Reduction of revenues and closure of some sports media in the province</li> <li>4.Losses to the owners of teams and sports facilities in the province</li> <li>5.Reduction of credits for sports constructions in the province</li> <li>6.Reduction of sponsors of the province's sports teams</li> <li>7.Reducing attention to the livelihoods of the province's heroes and veterans</li> <li>8.Postponement of payment of salaries of personnel working in the province's sports</li> <li>9.Reducing the income level of families and reducing the purchasing power of sports products</li> <li>10.Reducing the amount of private sector investment in sports in the province</li> </ol>	Economists
S4, S5, S19, S26	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Lack of enclosed outdoor space suitable for women's activities throughout the province</li> <li>2.Lack of sufficient space for sports activities with physical distance</li> <li>3.Lack of proper health facilities and equipment in the province's sports facilities</li> <li>4.Lack of adequate home space for sports activities</li> <li>5.Lack of proper equipment in the market for sports activities of people at home</li> <li>6.Uncertainty about the completion time of unfinished sports projects</li> <li>7.Lack of appropriate technology infrastructure for virtual sports activities</li> </ol>	Infrastructuralist
S6,S9, S11, S20, S25, S28	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Unemployment and indecision of corporate, contract, and daily staff of sports organizations in the province</li> <li>2.Reducing the activities of sports delegations at the level of cities and provincial centers</li> <li>3.Reduce media support for the province's sports organizations</li> <li>4.Reduction of organized athletes in the province</li> <li>5.Reducing the demand for hosting sports events in the province</li> <li>6.Reducing the supervision and monitoring of sports facilities in the province and the possibility of their destruction</li> <li>7.Low financial ability of sports organizations to help the livelihood of unemployed people in sports in the province</li> <li>8.Impossibility of purposeful and long-term planning for the province's sports</li> <li>9.Lack of planning and preparation of sports delegations in the province in accordance with this disease</li> <li>10.Reduction of women's sports activity in the province compared to men</li> <li>11.Reducing the ability of sports organizations to pay the arrears of sports activists</li> </ol>	Organizational
S2, S14, S15, S22	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Prevent sports fans from going to stadiums</li> <li>2.People are more inclined to play virtual and inactive games in their spare time than in the past</li> <li>3.Change active lifestyle to inactive</li> <li>4.Inability to communicate with friends and peers for leisure sports</li> <li>5.Lack of motivation for people to spend their leisure time playing sports</li> <li>6.Fear of family members for exercising outdoors, including parks, mountains, etc.</li> <li>7.Increased mental and physical illnesses such as depression, obesity, and overweight</li> <li>8.The decline of sports enthusiasm among community members and sports fans</li> <li>9.Lack of necessary health standards for the presence of families in sports facilities</li> <li>10.Reducing sports tourism</li> </ol>	Culturalist

S1, S12, S13	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Closing of amateur sports competitions in various institutions (universities, education, etc.)</li> <li>2. Closing of sports sub-group competitions in the province</li> <li>3. Closing of the league and super league matches in all disciplines</li> <li>4. Unemployment of contract staff and daily wages of sports activity centers</li> <li>5. Cancel additional costs, cancel and change the program of sports activities</li> <li>6. Uncertainty of the organizers to plan the resumption of the tournament</li> <li>7. Uncertainty of sports teams to invite and select sports heroes</li> <li>8. Reducing the support of sports team fans</li> <li>9. Closing the borders of neighboring countries and reducing international events in the province</li> </ol>	Events
S7, S8, S17	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Problems in paying contracts of provincial players</li> <li>2. Reducing the side income of athletes in the province</li> <li>3. Mandatory reduction of salaries of provincial players</li> <li>4. Lack of supervision of coaches over the championship training of the province's players</li> <li>5. Lack of space and equipment suitable for championship sports activities at home</li> <li>6. Possibility of injury to athletes due to non-standard sports activities at home</li> <li>7. Uncertainty of the province's athletes for the time of resumption of sports competitions and formation of sports camps</li> <li>8. Increased stress, depression, and anxiety among athletes in the province</li> <li>9. Reduce athletes' motivation to train</li> <li>10. The poverty of movement and decline in the performance of amateur and professional players in the province</li> <li>11. Athletes are more likely to get the Coronavirus</li> <li>12. Disruption of athletes' diet planning and weight gain due to forced housework</li> </ol>	Athletes
S16, S18, S23	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduce the holding of specialized meetings and conferences for coaches and athletes</li> <li>2. Reduce sports content for sports media</li> <li>3. Rising unemployment of sports reporters and presenters</li> <li>4. Increased sports news controversy during the coronavirus era</li> <li>5. Lack of prior planning for digital media use</li> <li>6. Existence of filtering of some cyberspace media</li> <li>7. High inefficiency of internal virtual network platforms for information</li> <li>8. Lack of uniform access to the Internet for athletes in the province</li> </ol>	Mediaists

To identify and frame the various opportunities for sports activities in the coronavirus crisis in Sistan and Baluchestan province, using interviews with experts and open, pivotal, and theoretical coding methods, the Glaser approach was followed because this approach leads to wider and more diverse patterns. Provides data integration. In fact, in-

stead of imposing theory on data, this approach explores theories from the heart of data. Table 7 reveals the codes and concepts obtained in this step. Of course, it should be noted that in this table only the titles of the codes are mentioned and the frequency of each of these codes is different from each other.

**Table 7. Concepts and examples of codes derived from data analysis**

Concept	code
Economic and supportive factors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase construction</li> <li>2. Increase budget to strengthen IT infrastructure</li> <li>3. Using the capacities of donors and supporters in the development and equipping of places</li> <li>4. Increasing the presence of donors in the completion of semi-finished sports projects</li> <li>5. Entering the private sector to invest and equip places and spaces</li> <li>6. Using the capacity of faithful assistance to the livelihood of athletes and sports veterans of the province</li> <li>7. Increase more investment in entrepreneurship in the province's sports</li> </ol>

	8. Making more use of non-governmental organizations (NGO) for sports activities in the province
Factors related to events	9. Increase online competitions 10. Diversify activities and promote various and new sports 11. Increase exercise at home 12. Increase beach sports 13. Increasing the exercise of the elderly in the province to strengthen their body against covid-19 14. Predicting activities in accordance with the seasons and in natural spaces 15. Holding quality competitions and various competitions 16. Holding competitions and sports camps virtually
Factors related to infrastructure and facilities	17. Increasing the online communication equipment of the sports offices of the province 18. Increasing the IT infrastructure and reducing the inequalities of the province's athletes in accessing the Internet and information technology 19. Accelerate the rejection of the privatization process in the province's sports 20. The need to create creative business infrastructure 21. The need to move from mechanical structures to organic structures in sports organizations in the province
Socio-cultural factors	22. Institutionalizing and paying attention to activities that will promote a healthy lifestyle in the athletes of the province 23. Establishing appropriate relations with other institutions and organizations to carry out joint activities 24. Increasing awareness of the role of exercise in physical health 25. Increasing public access to information technology resources
Factors related to coach and athlete	26. Increase the creativity of coaches and athletes 27. Decentralization of sports training opportunities from the provincial capital to the cities through the virtual activities of coaches 28. Increasing the decision-making power and participation of athletes and coaches in the province for the province's sports issues 29. Designing sports exercises using circular exercises based on body weight 30. Increasing the activities of sports counseling to athletes in the province virtually 31. Increase opportunities for the development of family sports
Scientific factors	32. Increasing the importance of employing specialized and knowledgeable experts and officials in complexes and places 33. Increasing the provision of scientific and consulting services to universities virtually 34. Increasing the importance of proper management in scheduling activities and sports venues 35. Increasing attention to safety, health, and standards in the design and construction of premises and equipment 36. The right opportunity for sports organizations to plan and adopt the right strategy for the post-coronavirus 37. Increasing the need for continuous innovation in sports organizations 38. Increasing training courses for human resources and sports executive bodies of the province
social Media related factors	39. Increase the effectiveness and visits of advertisements in cyberspace 40. Intelligent media use of cyberspace in interpersonal communication 41. Strengthen local journalism and digitize media content 42. Increasing media literacy education during the Coronavirus 43. Increasing the impact of virtual media and social networks on sports activities in the province 44. The need to create systems to develop media literacy learning of the province's sports human resources 45. Creating virtual sports activity applications along with physical activities 46. Increasing digital marketing opportunities for sports products through virtual networks 47. Increase new sports businesses such as online consulting 48. Use the challenges of virtual networks to change the passive style of families

In this research, by combining the obtained categories, the research model is placed in the "type family" and was drawn as follows.



**Figure 1. A qualitative model of various opportunities for sports activities in the coronavirus crisis in Sistan and Baluchestan province**

In line with the experts' opinion, solutions were provided for the current challenges in the province's sports, which are shown in Table 8.

**Table 8. The solution to getting rid of the challenges faster**

Row	Challenge	Approach
1	Economic challenges of sports in the province	Reduce running costs, including rent Exemption from paying bills for some sports venues Contribute to the tourism sector using the virtual world Creating low-interest banking facilities for the affected owners of the province Use the capacity of sports donors
2	Challenges of the province's sports organizations	Exemption from taxes on sports facilities Contract with employees for the post-corona period and pay part of the contract amount Appreciation from fair owners of rented sports venues Assignment of sports venues in the new year without increasing rental rates Providing livelihood packages for the poor Creating specialized working groups in the club Use the capacity of advocacy centers, coaches, volunteer movements to make decisions
3	Challenges of provincial athletes	Unemployment insurance payment for all sports insured persons working in sports clubs who have become unemployed due to the spread of the coronavirus and the closure of sports facilities. Donations to professional players of the province Walking and walking in accordance with health protocols in open spaces Perform a variety of plank exercises, meditation and yoga at home

		Increasing the number of sports classes with fewer people Existence of health certifications at the beginning of each class and course Education by sending specialized pamphlets and books Attendance of athletes in coronavirus prevention and control workshops
4	Challenges of the province's sports infrastructure	Cooperation of the Sports Medicine Board on athlete insurance and free one-year extension of athlete insurance Creating a suitable space for athletes and women to train Provide masks and hygiene items for clients Allocate funds to standardize infrastructure in this area Upgrading training equipment and facilities to health issues
5	Socio-cultural challenges of sports in the province	Preparation of health and care packages by sports and youth boards and departments Increasing emphasis on home sports and cyberspace program production by sports staff Help from popular figures of the province to create a culture in using masks and encouraging sports at home Observance of health protocols in sports tourism places and jobs Sale of semi-tourist places for the post-Coronavirus era Assigning sports equipment to families to spend their free time
6	Challenges of the province's sports media	Use cyberspace to increase the desire for sports Creating regular meetings and reporting on various sports in the province in cyberspace Employing creative entrepreneurs to access virtual tourism applications
7	Challenges of sporting events in the province	Supporting sports start-ups in the province Hold virtual competitions and challenges Holding sports in open environments in compliance with health protocols

## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to identify and prioritize the opportunities and challenges of sports activities during Covid-19 disease and to provide solutions in Sistan and Baluchestan province. The results showed that in coronavirus conditions, there are a total of 67 challenges facing sports activities in the province. These 67 factors were classified and prioritized by the province's sports experts in 7 general categories. The first category is the mental pattern of economists, where experts say that economic factors and challenges are among the most important challenges. Crawford and Gadbi (1987) believe that economic problems are one of the important limitations of sports leisure, which varies according to sociological characteristics such as country, city, and gender. Domestic research, along with current research and foreign research, also consider the economic factor to be important. Salmanzadeh, Heidarinejad, and Azmasha (2019) identified

financial barriers as a missing link in the effectiveness of sports leisure for adolescents and youth in Khuzestan province. Farahani, Hosseini, and Moradi (2017) introduced the economy as a deterrent to the activities of women athletes in Alborz province. Therefore, according to this mental pattern, the permanent closure of sports venues and jobs will lead to the unemployment of hundreds of people and the exclusion of thousands of people from sports, and if employees in this field can not survive for financial and economic reasons, the province's sports industry will face a serious crisis. Certainly, governments can alleviate economic concerns by supporting sports as one of the most affected businesses. Of course, the results of this mental model must be acted upon cautiously; Because at this time, the problems of sanctions, inflation, devaluation of the national currency, and declining incomes can certainly be one of the main reasons for the economic problems in this area.

The second category and the second priority are the mental pattern of the Infrastructures. Infrastructures were those who believed that the Covid-19 crisis posed the greatest challenge to the province's sports infrastructure. This part of the research is consistent with the research of other researchers. In their study, Gargiolo et al. (2020) assessed the environmental factors associated with sports activities and identified the need for access, maintenance, and safety of facilities as a critical factor. Andrad et al. (2019) described the lack of space, unsafe environment, and lack of equipment as limitations in sports. Salmanzadeh, Heidarinejad, and Azmasha (2019) named the obstacles of facilities and facilities as the most important damage to the youth sports of Khuzestan. Shaterian and Gholami (2016) introduced the lack of adequate flooring and adequate lighting and the lack of adequate light as structural barriers in the city and parks of Shiraz. Unfortunately, at the time of writing this study, governments have ordered the reopening of clubs and places of recreation and tourism due to the economic problems in the country and the inability to support this vulnerable group. The activity of these centers, without considering the infrastructural problems in this area, will have the possibility of serious damage to the health of the people; Also, if people get Covid-19 disease in these places, the club or center will stop reactivating.

It was the third mental pattern of the organizers. Experts in this mental pattern believe that the disease has posed a new challenge to sports and recreation organizations. The Covid-19 virus has disrupted a country's grand plans and challenged the long-term plans of strategists in developed and underdeveloped countries; In this case, we can mention the postponement of the 2020 Olympic Games. Barr et al. (2020), by studying social inequalities in sports participants in sub-Saharan Africa, citing the lack of integrated management and uniform development as a

barrier. Silva et al. (2016), in their research, introduced the lack of extra time and commitment of individuals as important obstacles to sports leisure of different segments of the Brazilian people. Salmanzadeh, Heidarinejad, and Azmasha (2019) introduce managerial barriers as injuries of Khuzestan youth sports. Chaman Pira et al. (2014), in line with the results of this study, mentioned management factors as effective barriers to how the elderly in Bojnourd spend their sports leisure time.

The fourth mental model was culturalists. This pattern states that people should be educated on the basis of culture to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. This part of the research with Fazeli Research (2020); Taybi et al. (2020) and Taheri Kia (2020) were consistent. The outbreak of coronavirus has led to the suspension of many normal routines of human life. Although we knew more about the disease from a medical perspective, we must not forget that the coronavirus crisis is a pervasive biological, social, economic, and political crisis. The fifth mental pattern was event-oriented. This part of the research with researchers; Demirchi et al. (2020), Fazeli (2020), and Ahmadizad and Basami (2020) were in line. The Olympic torch is still lit despite the global coronavirus epidemic. The Tokyo Summer Games torch is scheduled to be transported to various cities from April 26 and finally arrives in Tokyo, with the slogan "Hope lights our way." According to experts, due to the current situation, even if the situation improves in another four months, athletes in Tokyo will compete in completely unequal conditions. However, experts have considered these types of challenges important.

The sixth mental pattern was athletes. This part of the research was in line with the research of Kashif et al. (2021), Saberi et al. (2020) and Bagheri et al. (2020). Athletes are struggling with the coronavirus, and athletes

in Sistan and Baluchestan are no exception. In total, more than 160 sports clubs in the province have been damaged since the coronavirus outbreak. Some have been forced to close forever. The seventh mental pattern was the media of attitudes. This part of the research was in line with the researches of Abdullah Zadeh et al. (2021), Khaleghi et al. (2020), and Salamzadeh (2020). The media is also struggling with the crisis in Corona, the province's reporters and reporters are facing many problems in preparing their news and jobs, and the problems on the Internet for all people are among the factors that shape this mental pattern. In other parts of the results of this research, opportunities and solutions were presented in detail, which due to the clarity of opportunities and solutions, we refuse to discuss them again in this part of the article due to limited space.

### Conclusion

In this regard, it is suggested; Launch specialized magazines and print books and educational videos on sports activities in times of coronavirus crisis, attract sponsors for online sports competitions by sports clubs, marketing, and sponsorship committee in provincial boards and an advisory council consisting of investors and chairmen Factories as well as elite sportspeople of the province should be formed. In future research, it is suggested to study the obtained conceptual model with quantitative methods and using the structural equation model to obtain the impact of each opportunity on the province's sports activities. Also, in order to reduce the limitations of future sports research in the province, the sports of Sistan and Baluchestan province should be carefully organized.

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