

## Identifying and Ranking the Obstacles to the Development of Iranian Defensive Arts

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The present research was conducted to identify and rank the obstacles affecting the development of the sports field of defensive arts in the form of a model.

**Method:** the research method is of mixed exploratory type. The statistical community in the qualitative section included all sports management professors and experts in combat sports. In the quantitative section, the statistical population includes professors and students of physical education, as well as specialists and athletes of martial arts, and the questionnaire was sent to 400 people.

**Results:** In the qualitative phase of the research, 63 themes were obtained for the factors influencing the development of the sports field of defensive arts, and eight factors were identified from these themes during the central coding process. Also, the results showed that out of the eight variables specified in the qualitative interview, seven variables affected the development of this field and the prioritization of the identified obstacles from the perspective of the statistical samples of the research, respectively, including a low history of the field with 43%, media, and advertising weakness 37 percentage, lack of budget 34%, lack of workforce 32%, lack of facilities and equipment 29%, lack of education 17%, unwillingness of sponsors 17% and only cultural and social barriers with 3% were not significant.

**Conclusion:** Considering, the importance of developing this field inside and outside the country, it is suggested that the sports field managers make the necessary planning and investment for developing this field based on priority.

**Keywords:** Defense arts, sports, development, armed forces

## Introduction

Today, sports have become a global phenomenon and have penetrated the depths of various social institutions, including families, schools, municipalities, and private sectors. It has become one of the most significant social phenomena of the contemporary century and a turning point by influencing the hearts of large and popular media. The role of sports in the world's social, psychological, cultural, and physical aspects is undeniable. On the other hand, sports events and activities have an increasing influence on various human activities, including political, economic, social and cultural activities (Sajadi, 2019); In such a way, national governments and international assemblies have paid particular attention to it by forming relevant ministries and organizations at the national level and institutions and associations at the international level. They are using their roles and positions well in the direction of development. The main reason for the attention and importance of sports can be found in their permeability, where public attention and interest towards sports and, more specifically, their popularity has made them appear important and influential wherever they enter. The relationship of this variable with categories such as sustainable development, economic development, social development, peace, environmental participation, etc., has left profound effects on contemporary societies (Hamze Lo, 2015).

The development of physical education and sports on a macro scale, such as national, regional, or continental sports, is a complex subject and requires different scientific and applied fields to address it. Nations and other regions of the world have benefited from some scientific and experimental approaches and methods for promoting their sports. From the beginning, these methods were based on the theoretical foundations for the traditional techniques and strategies for promoting and developing sports among different nations.

Therefore, one of the general policies in developing sports and physical education after the revolution is generalizing sports and physical education so that people understand its importance in preventing mental and physical deviations. They should know how to ensure their health (Sajadi, 2019). Sports organizations, including federations and provincial boards, like non-sports organizations, are constantly exposed to many environmental changes and developments and deal with complex issues (Javadipour & Samiinia, 2013). Krimadis (2007) has reported that sports sectors face problems such as down periods, restrictive government laws and regulations, financial problems, and a competitive environment caused by environmental changes, especially in the sports services sector. Are facing. Also, due to global developments, developing countries have issues such as a sharp decrease in government aid to the sports sector, a lack of coherent programs, weak communication, and a lack of a process to attract the participation of others in the organization. Sportsmen have said that this issue has caused limitations in the growth and development of their sports (Hayhurst, 2014).

These issues indicate that sports organizations must consider solutions to these changes. In this regard, many sports organizations seek solutions to develop their sports fields. Martial sports, as attractive and popular disciplines among different sports, despite the growth in recent years, still need a favorable position at the community level and need special planning and attention for growth and development. Are stable throughout the country (Beldi et al., 2013 ). In the meantime, the author of this research introduced a new style of combat with the approach of improving social security and national security in the entire army. It was designed under the name of Iranian defensive arts style (personal defense, protection, and care) in 2013, which includes the fields of crisis prevention and management (conflict, conflict, and theft), public self-defense, personal and

personality protection, protection of places and facilities, hostage release and seizure. There are places and facilities, aviation protection, hand-to-hand and one-to-many combats, and individual and performing arts that can be imagined for many audiences if this field is developed.

On the other hand, due to the lack of unanimity in this field, imported martial styles, regardless of the organizational needs and social security of citizens and the practicality of training courses, have entered the field of human resources training in educational centers and by teaching some techniques that are mainly used for public and show purposes.

They are mostly taught with a club self-defense approach; day by day, the country's armed forces are far away from their vision and primary mission, causing severe damage and inducing false self-confidence, regardless of organizational missions and training, in natural conditions. Due to many sports, the spread of inactivity, and the tendency towards the virtual world, it isn't easy to attract a large audience for this fledgling sport.

Several research studies have been conducted on obstacles to developing sports disciplines. The results of the survey of Shah Mansouri and Balanjad (2017) showed that the lack of expert coaches in the province, the poor history of athletics in the province, the unwillingness of industrial factories to invest, and the lack of standard and equipped tracks are the obstacles to the development of athletics in the province. They are central. Abdzadeh et al. (2017) found out that there is no plan to maintain sponsors for a long time, there is a lack of attention to schools and sports teachers as the most critical infrastructure for the development of volleyball, lack of a written talent search program in volleyball in the province and suburbs, lack of sufficient support for players and Their lack of job security, lack of attention of officials and supporters to sustainable and long-term infrastructure development, and the

absence of a volleyball academy for the planning and development of volleyball in West Azerbaijan province. The research of Kahraman Tabrizi et al. (2016) showed that there were factors such as not giving importance to swimming in schools, lack of effective planners and proper planning at the swimming board level, lack of attracting supporters for financial support in the field of swimming, lack of support from the media. In the promotion of swimming, the lack of standard pools for training and competition is an essential internal obstacle to the development and progress of swimming in Kerman province. The results of Asefi et al.'s research (2015) showed that nine categories of obstacles are influential in the development of university sports, which in order of priority include policy and planning obstacles, cognitive obstacles, financial obstacles, educational obstacles, legal obstacles, informational obstacles, and human obstacles, individual barriers and infrastructure barriers.

Asgari et al.'s (2014) findings showed cultural, geographical, and media barriers, financial issues, management and planning, infrastructure, facilities and equipment, competitions and camps, educational and technology matters, human resources, and discovery and cultivation. Talent is the most critical obstacle to winning a medal in wrestling in the unsuccessful provinces of Iran. The results of Razavi et al.'s research (2013) showed that both group's lack of long-term planning for athletes' coaches and lack of media support are the most critical obstacles in swimming development, respectively. Kusniers et al. (2017) found that teaching martial arts to students leads to the growth and development of this sport. The findings of Nakuncheni and Galan (2017) showed that mass media can increase public awareness of sports culture. Wolff et al. (2016) found that the most participation occurs when the sports venue is close to the place of residence.

## Materials and Methods

This research was conducted in mixed ways regarding practical orientation and data collection methods. The first phase is qualitative and exploratory, and the second is explanatory. The statistical population and the selection of samples in the qualitative stage were among Iranian sports experts, sports management professors, and experts in martial arts. Since the size of such a community could not be estimated, purposeful chain reference or snowball sampling was used. At this stage, information was collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews. After conducting 16 interviews and reaching theoretical saturation, the resulting data were analyzed using the Foundation's data theorizing method with the Strauss and Corbin approach in three stages of coding (open, central, and selective). The statistical community in the quantitative section also includes professors and students in the field of physical education, as well as experts and athletes of martial sports.

The sample size was selected based on Morgan's formula for the unlimited population, taking into account the possible loss to be sure; 400 people were set and distributed by the available sampling method. Finally, 347 correct questionnaires were collected and subjected to statistical analysis. According to the nature of the research, data collection in the first part used in-depth semi-structured interviews to

conduct the interview; the general research questions were designed to identify factors affecting the development of this sports field and in the coding process. The core of 8 variables was determined, among which a 37-question researcher-made questionnaire was designed and distributed, and then its construct validity was confirmed using the exploratory factor analysis test. The reliability of the researcher-made questionnaire was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha test. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient value in this research was reported as 0.90 for the used questionnaire. The method of data analysis used in the qualitative section was according to the Foundation's data theory method. This method emphasizes data analysis steps through open, axial, and selective coding. In the quantitative part, by using inferential statistics methods, including calculating the construct validity of the questionnaire and checking the structure of its exploratory factor analysis using Spss software version 24, the final model of the research was calculated and tested with structural equation analysis test through Imus 24 software.

## Result

In the qualitative part of the research, 16 people were selected as a statistical sample based on the purposeful sampling method, and the descriptive findings of the participants and the codes used to analyze their interviews are presented in Table 1.

*Table 1.* Characteristics of interviewees in the qualitative phase

| Row | Position / specialization                            | Abundance | Percent | Activity  |            |
|-----|--|-----------|---------|-----------|------------|
|     |  |           |         | executive | university |
| 1   | University faculty                                   | 6         | 0/36    |           | *          |
| 2   | Sports managers of combat teams                      | 5         | 0/32    | *         |            |
| 3   | An expert in the field of defensive arts of Iranians | 5         | 0/32    |           | *          |

In the quantitative part of the research, 347 people were selected as a statistical sample, of which 68% were men, 32% were women, 74% were between 30 and 50 years old, and 60% had 10 to 20 years of experience in martial arts.

Education of the respondents was 15% graduate, 42% bachelor, 23% master and 17% doctorate. The findings of the research in the qualitative stage and the process of open coding for the causal conditions affecting the

development of the field of defense arts of Iranians, several 63 themes were obtained. During the central coding process, eight factors were identified from these themes, which include the variables of weak media and advertising barriers, low history field, lack of human resources, lack of funds, lack of facilities and equipment, unwillingness of sponsors, educational weakness and cultural and social obstacles. As it was said, in the quantitative section, a researcher-made

questionnaire based on the findings of the qualitative section was used. Experts confirmed the validity of the questionnaire, and reliability was reported through Cronbach's alpha of 0.90 (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Final Cronbach's alpha of research variables

| Variable                         | Object reliability | total reliability |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Media and advertising weakness   | 0/88               | 0/90              |
| Low degree history               | 0/81               |                   |
| Lack of manpower                 | 0/89               |                   |
| Lack of funds                    | 0/91               |                   |
| Lack of facilities and equipment | 0/87               |                   |
| Unwillingness of sponsors        | 0/75               |                   |
| Educational weakness             | 0/88               |                   |
| Cultural and social barriers     | 0/92               |                   |

*Bartlett's test and KMO index were used to check the data's appropriateness to perform factor analysis. Bartlett's sphericity test results indicate the correlation and appropriateness of the desired variables for factor analysis. For the adequacy of the sample size, the Keizer-Meir-Olkin test showed that the sample size is suitable for factor analysis (Table 3).*

| Assumption  | amount             |        |
|---|--------------------|--------|
| <b>Kaiser-Meier value (adequacy of sample size)</b> | 0/7194             |        |
| <b>Bartlett's test of sphericity</b>                | chi square value   | 4/1152 |
|   | degree of freedom  | 2573   |
|   | significance level | 0/001  |

The structural equation analysis method was used in the research model test. The standard t-coefficient determines the significance level of this test. If the standard t coefficient is greater than 1.96, it will be significant at 95% confidence. As shown in Chart 1 and Table 4, eight of the 12 variables identified in the

qualitative interview affected the barriers to developing this field. The most significant impact is related to the barrier of low experience in the field, with 43%, and the impact of cultural and social barriers. It was not meaningful.



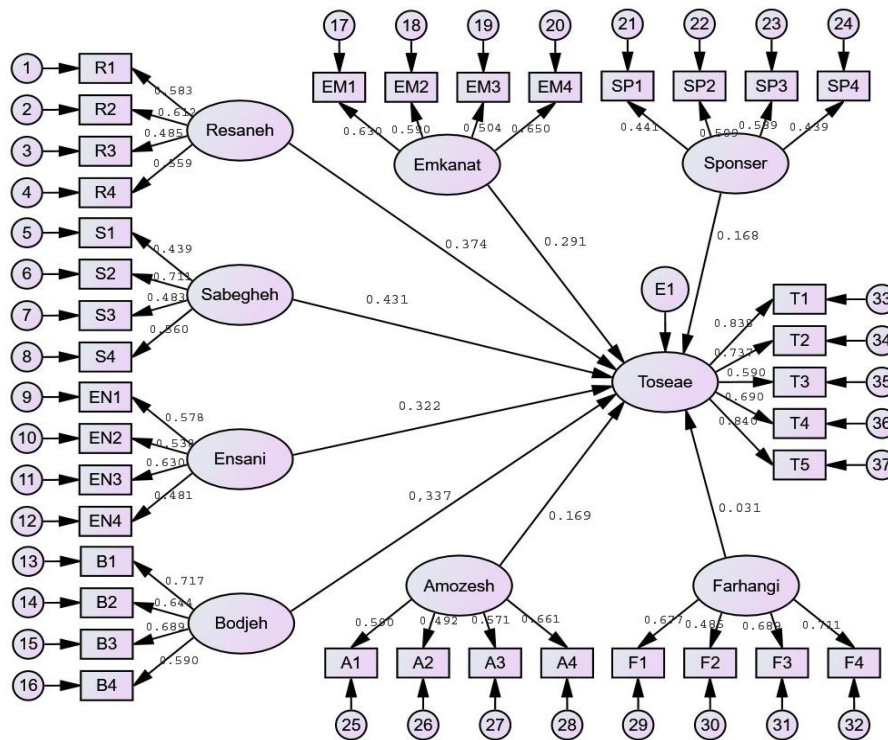


Figure 1. The output of amos software for testing the standardized coefficients of the variables of the proposed research model.

Table 4. The results of the path analysis of the accountability system model

| rank | Direction  | The amount of effect | standard error | Amare T | Significance level |
|------|--|----------------------|----------------|---------|--------------------|
| 1    | Low field history ---> development                 | 0/431                | 0/085          | 9/26    | 0/001              |
| 2    | Weakness of media and advertising ---> development | 0/374                | 0/909          | 7/19    | 0/001              |
| 3    | Lack of funds ---> development                     | 0/337                | 0/101          | 5/98    | 0/001              |
| 4    | Manpower shortage ---> development                 | 0/322                | 0/107          | 5/80    | 0/001              |
| 5    | Lack of facilities and equipment ---> development  | 0/291                | 0/130          | 4/85    | 0/001              |
| 6    | Educational weakness ---> development              | 0/169                | 0/163          | 2/90    | 0/001              |
| 7    | Unwillingness of sponsors ---> development         | 0/168                | 0/160          | 2/84    | 0/001              |
| 8    | Cultural and social barriers ---> development      | 0/031                | 0/243          | 0/60    | 0/611              |

Table (4), to test the model of the organizational accountability system, shows that the value of t statistic, the path of the factor of low significant experience on the development of the field of defense arts of Iranians is equal to 11.52 and more important than the value of 1.96, that is, at the confidence level of 95 The percentage of the factor of low field experience has a significant impact on the development of Iranian defense arts field. The

impact value is equal to 43%. This means that for one unit increase in the field's history, 43% will be added to the development of this sports field. Other routes also showed a significant effect in this way. The prioritization of the variables of the identified obstacles from the perspective of the statistical samples of the research, respectively, includes the factor of low field experience with 43%, weak media and advertising 37%, lack of budget 34%, lack of human resources 32%, lack of facilities and equipment 29%, educational weakness 17%

percentage, unwillingness of sponsors with 17% and only cultural and social barriers with 3% were not significant. The research model was confirmed in the continuation of the goodness of fit test. The indices and the coefficients obtained from the research are mentioned in the table below.

## Discussion

Today, sports organizations, including federations and provincial boards, like non-sports organizations, are exposed to many environmental changes and developments and are grappling with complex issues due to global developments, with topics such as a sharp reduction in government aid to the sports sector, lack of coherent plans, weakness Communication and the lack of a process to attract the participation of others have been encountered in sports organizations, which has caused limitations in the growth and development of their sports (Hamze Lo, 2015). These issues indicate that sports organizations must consider solutions to these changes. Sports development in society has always been one of the goals of sports federations and associations. Due to the developing nature of Iranian defensive arts sports, the development of this sport among society has always been one of the most important goals of this organization. Therefore, the present research has been conducted to identify the influential factors on the development of Iranian defensive arts sports in the form of a model. In the findings section of the qualitative stage, eight practical barriers were identified, which include the variables of weak media and advertising barriers, lack of professional experience, lack of human resources, lack of funds, lack of facilities and equipment, unwillingness of sponsors, lack of education, and cultural and social barriers. The research findings in the quantitative part showed that out of the eight factors identified in this research, only the cultural and social barrier variable had no significant effect on the sports development of

this discipline.

Among them, the most significant effect was related to the obstacle of low major with 43%. This finding means that with the increasing history of Iranian defensive arts among the people, 43% will be added to the development of this sport. The results of this finding are consistent with the research of Shah Mansouri and Balanjad (2017). The new nature of this sport and the lack of important sports events and competitions cause it to be unknown to most of society. Therefore, while introducing this discipline through the media, its advantages for the general society and its differentiation compared to martial disciplines should be done so that it can be well accepted among all classes. The development of sports fields can be seen especially in different federations worldwide. Suppose many new disciplines, not so famous and with not so powerful resources, of course, with the strength of their managers and management, have been able to take fundamental steps in the path of internationalization. In that case, these examples can be excellent for the Iranian Defense Arts Association to expand beyond national borders.

The weakness of media and advertising was identified as the second variable affecting the development of defensive arts in this research. This effect rate is 37%, which is consistent with the research of Kahraman Tabrizi et al. (2016), Asgari et al. (2014), and Nakoncheni and Galan (2017). As a part of the new structure of society and one of the comprehensive and widespread devices available to everyone, the media plays a sensitive and vital role in various political, cultural-social, economic, and... fields in all countries. The analysis of theories and foundations of the research shows that mass media as information highways and communication bridges influencing public opinion play an essential role in informing and creating discourse, education, social participation, and sports culture in society and

promoting sports in the country. They are responsible for developing and spreading it (Khaldin et al., 2012). Therefore, the media can be a suitable spreader and informer of this sport in people's minds. Advertising is also one of the prominent promotional activities that has a significant impact and role in improving the consumers' perspective. The cost spent on advertising and introduction leads to a positive view of the quality created. Also, when the volume of advertising is high, recall and awareness of it increases (Chadupadhai et al., 2010). Therefore, it is recommended that this field and its social benefits be introduced through media advertising because knowledge is needed for its development.

Another finding of the research is the need for more funds to develop this sport, which has an effect of 34%. This finding is consistent with the research results of Abdzadeh et al. (2017), Asefi et al. (2015), and Asgari et al. The lack of specific revenues for the association makes for more weakness and financial problems. The weakness of sports marketing in this field and the need for proper material support is the lack of enthusiasm of financial sponsors. On the other hand, considering the current state of sports in the country in terms of financial resources and the severe lack of budgets of federations and provincial sports boards, it is a big problem for the development of this sport. Therefore, this association should attract financial sponsors and funds from non-governmental sectors to secure its required credits.

The need for more workforce is also a practical obstacle for developing defensive arts sports, with another 32%. Human power is a central element of the identity of the sports organization. Players, coaches, managers (owners), and administrative staff of the organization form a positive image of the organization in the community's mind with their technical performance in specialized areas and with their appearance and grooming,

behavior, and speech. They also increase the organization's overall performance, ultimately leading to this sport's development. Supplying managers, lecturers, and coaches of this sport at the level of the whole country requires the holding of numerous courses in all provinces to accelerate the development process of this field in the country. Therefore, it is recommended that Iranian defense arts managers train experts in this field by holding training courses and workshops.

The need for more facilities and equipment is the next factor affecting the development of this martial style. The club's capital and capabilities are in the infrastructure, including sports space, equipment, technology, and physical facilities such as training academies, training camps, and a museum. This finding is consistent with the research results of Kahraman Tabrizi et al. (2016), Asgari et al. (2014), Asefi et al. (2015), and Wolf et al. (2016). Managers in this field should use these capabilities well and try to create them. It may not be possible to have a dedicated hall. Still, clubs can use places by interacting with other organizations, such as municipalities, in the form of rent or lease under the condition of ownership. Clubs should be able to use all the stadium facilities and raise the quality of the provided services to the highest level to give the ground for fans to come again as cash for the club. If the stadiums are packed, sponsors and commercial companies will also attend. Appropriate, well-equipped, and attractive physical facilities such as home stadiums, training camps, club buildings, museums, and exclusive club stores all create a favorable image in the audience's minds, making them want to experience it again. Since home, stadiums are full of bitter and sweet experiences reminiscent of victories, defeats, and nostalgic events. At the same time, provide the club with many sources of income (ticket sales, environmental advertising); suitable facilities should be provided for the construction or handing over of a dedicated stadium. To be supplied to the activists in this



field.

With 17%, educational weakness is the sixth most influential obstacle to developing Iranians' field of defense arts. This finding is consistent with Asefi et al. (2015), Asgari et al. (2014), and Kusniers et al.'s research results. The lack of suitable training and promotion programs for Iranian defense arts sports, a unified educational system for training worthy people to teach this sport, and the lack of proper training classes have hindered the development of defense arts sports. The overall quality of life will increase through education, knowledge, and public awareness of sports and physical activity values. In addition, the positive attitude towards participation in sports and physical activity, as well as the specific skills that enable people to participate in this sport, will be improved through various educational channels. Therefore, teaching defensive arts sports in society has a vital role in its development, so research results have shown that preparing educational pamphlets and holding academic seminars effectively promote sports (Momatazbakhsh, 2016). According to these materials, teaching defensive arts sports can be one of the most critical factors in developing public sports in the university. Therefore, the officials of defensive arts sports should design and implement suitable educational methods for promoting and developing defensive arts sports in society.

Finally, the unwillingness of sponsors with 17% is another obstacle to the development of the field of Iranian defense arts. This finding is consistent with the research of Abdzadeh et al. (2017) and Kahraman Tabrizi et al. (2016). Financial support is the motivation to participate in many sports activities, and financial support and sponsorship are two of the main reasons for developing sports. Therefore, a written program should be made to attract sponsors and keep them for the sports field of defensive arts. Therefore, due to the lack of budget, more attention should be paid to the

marketing program and the attraction of sponsors specific to the sport of Iranian defensive arts, and taking into account the obstacles of attracting sponsors in this field of sports with proper management and planning and the use of sports marketing specialists to attract and maintain Financial sponsors should make more efforts.

## Conclusion

In this research, the variable effect of cultural and social barriers was insignificant. It can be justified that in the first step, when this field is new, the impact of other factors is more critical, and other factors should be strengthened first, and then cultural and social factors should be strengthened at the community level. Therefore, it is recommended to the managers and officials of the Iranian defensive arts sports field to maintain, attract, and employ expert and experienced human resources, attract financial resources and sponsors, improve the facilities, equipment, and infrastructure, and provide nationwide training for this sports field through media advertising. Ultimately, it will lead to the development of the Iranian defensive arts style at home and abroad.

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