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RANKING FACTORS AFFECTING SARI CITIZENS' TENDENCY TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC SPORTS

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ABSTRACT

The present study was carried out to ranking the factors affecting Sari citizens' participation in public sports. It is an applied research and concerning data collection method, it is a descriptive (non-experimental) study. Statistical population includes all Sari citizens from which, 384 people were selected as sample using Morgan table. Data were analyzed by mean test and Friedman test using SPSS software. Data indicated that informing by public media, notifying by educational institutes, friends and personal and social thinking had effect on citizens' tendency to participate in public sport. Moreover, results of Friedman test showed that the most effective factors were informing by public media (3.43), social thinking (3.28), friends (2.95), personal thinking (2.79), and notifying by educational institutes (2.55); respectively. Finally, some recommendations for enhancing Sari citizens' participation in public sports are offered.

INTRODUCTION

Despite its simple exercises, public sport can play important role in citizens' health. Moreover, this type of sport is free and does not need huge investment by the citizens. Thus, it is necessary to investigate the social factors affecting citizens' tendency to participate in public sport as by identifying these factors, public managers and planners can include the sport in citizens' leisure time by a sophisticated planning and help the people select the sport as the base of their life style. Public sport is not a duty, but is an opportunity; it is not a public sport, rather, it is an individual sport that can be practiced individually or in a group. However, a global movement is required that extends highly different life styles and plans [1]

Today, by extension of urbanism, popularity of business systems and mechanization of activities, people access to various services has been enhanced, the activities have been more specialized and people physical activity has been reduced. Extension of public sport proportional to activities types and personal and professional conditions can compensate a part of immobility and bring about social vitality and national productivity [2].

Since public sport is cheap and easy to access, all citizens can be benefited by it. This sport type is established to enhance participation of all social groups and to provide athletic pluralism, improved public sport, competitive sport, healthy recreations and recreational sport (Roshandel, 2007, 54). However, public sport depends on geographic, regional and social-cultural condition and includes all organized athletic practices and unorganized recreational activities and native-local games and is completely public [3].

Under sport architecture of Iran, sport management in macro level is interested in championship sport and a lot of time, power and financial resources have been allocated to championship sport. Severe tendency to championship and neglecting public sport, that can be important for public health, is a major defect in Iran sport structure. Public attention is also directed to championship due to its beauties and propaganda of public media. Thus, public sport has not been well established among people [4].

Like every other system, public sport requires setting general goals, strategies and operational programs so that along with identification of the way, any kind of repetition, deviation and financial, human, physical and informational loss is avoided. Despite its simplicity, public sport plays important role in citizens' health. Moreover, public sport is free and does not require huge investment by citizens. Thus, it is necessary to investigate social and political factors affecting citizens' tendency to public sport, because identification of such factors can help public planners and managers to include the sport within citizens' leisure time via an exact planning and thereby, people adopt a sport-based lifestyle.

Literature review

In a study entitled "public sport in Iran and establishment of future horizon, strategy and plans", Javadipour et al [2013] found out that public sport lies on SWOT coordinate system which is placed in strength region regarding internal factors and in opportunities region concerning external organizational factors. Thus, offensive strategy was recommended for extension of public sport. Moeinodolati [2012] investigated the sociocultural factors affecting citizens' tendency to public sport in Gorgan. Results indicated that personal attitude to body, media usage and sport-based cultural capital had direct effect on citizens' tendency to public sport; while sport-based economic capital and sport-based social capital had an indirect effect which was mediated by sport-based cultural capital. Saminia [2012] studied strategic pathology of public sport in Iran and development strategies based on SWOT model. Data analysis was

KEY WORDS

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performed by mean comparison and Friedman test. By investigating current status of public sport in various fields as human source, coaches, education, talent discovery, equipment and infrastructures, referees, finance, research, information technology and marketing and data analysis, ten strength points, ten weakness points, twelve opportunities and seven threats were identified. The results showed that public sport is placed in strengths region regarding internal factors and in opportunities region regarding external factors in SWOT coordination system. Michael F Collins [2002] investigated public sport in England and showed that housewives, people without or with low special skill in athletic courses, people lacking vehicle, low income or unemployed people and people with mental abnormality were not able to use public sport facilities. Hoven [1999] emphasized cultural aspects of sport. In this regard, most researches have dealt with ethnics and races and their participation in sport and some authors have tried to approve that sport can address the problem of racial discrimination and differences.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Regarding its objective, this is an applied study and concerning data collection procedure, this is a descriptive (non-experimental) field study and regarding the variables interrelations, this is a correlation survey. Statistical population includes all Sari citizens who practice public sport in Sari parks which is an infinite population. According to Morgan table and Cochran formula, 384 people were selected as sample and to ensure questionnaire return, 200 questionnaires were distributed among the citizens by simple randomized method. Data were collected by a combination of library and field methods. In this method, two author-synthesized questionnaires were used. Although the questions were extracted from valid resources, content validity method was used to evaluate validity of the questionnaire for localization. For this, a version of the questionnaire was submitted to professors to evaluate its content validity and their comments were considered in the questionnaire. For this, some ambiguous questions irrelevant to topic, special field and statistical population were removed and some items and questions were expressed more explicitly. Reliability was measured by Cronbach's alpha method. Data analysis was conducted by descriptive statistical indices such as frequency, mean, standard deviation, tables and graphs. Data normality was measured by Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. In inferential statistics part, one population mean comparison and Friedman tests were applied. Data were analyzed by SPSS software.

Hypothesis test

Table 1: Significance level of normality test for the research variables

Significance level	Variable
0.169	Informing by public media
0.122	Notification by educational institutes
0.166	Friends
0.109	Personal thinking
0.062	Social thinking

According to [Table 1], error level of every variable is higher than 0.05; thus null hypothesis is approved suggesting normality of data distribution and thus, parametric statistics can be used.

Table 2: Results of t-test for hypothesis

Standard deviation	Mean	Significance level (p)	T	df	Variable
0.618	3.375	0.001	109.173	383	Informing by public media
0.679	3.0961	0.001	91.159	383	Notification by educational institutes
0.592	3.29	0.001	110.215	383	Friends
0.593	3.204	0.001	107.64	383	Personal thinking
0.556	3.36	0.001	119.642	383	Social thinking

Hypothesis 1

Informing by public media has significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport. [Table 2] shows that mean value of informing by public media is 3.375 which is three times higher than test value. Regarding estimated significance level as 0.001 which is lower than 0.05; null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is approved; meaning that informing by public media has significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport ($p < 0.05$).

Hypothesis 2

Notification by educational institutes has significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport.

[Table 2] shows that mean value of notification by educational institutes is 3.0961 which is three times higher than test value. Regarding estimated significance level as 0.001 which is lower than 0.05; null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is approved; meaning that notification by educational institutes has significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport ($p < 0.05$).

Hypothesis 3

Friends have significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport.

[Table 2] shows that mean value of friends is 3.29 which is three times higher than test value. Regarding estimated significance level as 0.001 which is lower than 0.05; null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is approved; meaning that friends have significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport ($p < 0.05$).

Hypothesis 4

Personal thinking has significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport.

[Table 2] shows that mean value of personal thinking is 3.204 which is three times higher than test value. Regarding estimated significance level as 0.001 which is lower than 0.05; null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is approved; meaning that personal thinking has significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport ($p < 0.05$).

Hypothesis 5

Social thinking has significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport.

[Table 2] shows that mean value of social thinking is 3.36 which is three times higher than test value. Regarding estimated significance level as 0.001 which is lower than 0.05; null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is approved; meaning that social thinking has significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport ($p < 0.05$).

Table 3. Results of Friedman test

Average rate	Variable
3.43	Informing by public media
2.55	Notification by educational institutes
2.95	Friends
2.79	Personal thinking
3.28	Social thinking

[Table 3] shows that informing by public media and notification by educational institutes have the highest and the lowest scores; respectively.

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

Hypothesis 1

Informing by public media has significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport.

Mean value of informing by public media is 3.375 which is three times higher than test value. Regarding estimated significance level as 0.001 which is lower than 0.05; it can be claimed that informing by public media has significant effect on Sari citizens' tendency to public sport ($p < 0.05$). Results of Friedman test indicated that informing by public media has the highest influence on Sari citizens' tendency to public sport. This finding is in agreement with those reported by Moeinodolati [2012].

Hypothesis 2

Notification by educational institutes has significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport.

Mean value of notification by educational institutes is 3.0961 which is three times higher than test value. Regarding estimated significance level as 0.001 which is lower than 0.05; it can be claimed that notification by educational institutes has significant effect on Sari citizens' tendency to public sport ($p < 0.05$). Results of Friedman test indicated that informing by public media has the lowest influence on Sari citizens' tendency to public sport. This finding is in agreement with those reported by Moeinodolati [2012].

Hypothesis 3

"Friends" variable has significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport.

Mean value of "friends" is 3.29 which is three times higher than test value. Regarding estimated significance level as 0.001 which is lower than 0.05; it can be claimed that "friends" has significant effect on Sari citizens' tendency to public sport ($p < 0.05$). Results of Friedman test indicated that "friends" has

the third priority regarding influencing on Sari citizens' tendency to public sport. This finding is in agreement with those reported by Hoven [1999].

Hypothesis 4

Personal thinking has significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport.

Mean value of personal thinking is 3.204 which is three times higher than test value. Regarding estimated significance level as 0.001 which is lower than 0.05; it can be claimed that personal thinking has significant effect on Sari citizens' tendency to public sport ($p < 0.05$). Results of Friedman test indicated that personal thinking has the fourth priority regarding influencing on Sari citizens' tendency to public sport. This finding is in agreement with none of previous researches.

Hypothesis 5

Social thinking has significant effect on citizens' tendency to public sport.

Mean value of social thinking is 3.36 which is three times higher than test value. Regarding estimated significance level as 0.001 which is lower than 0.05; it can be claimed that social thinking has significant effect on Sari citizens' tendency to public sport ($p < 0.05$). Results of Friedman test indicated that social thinking has the second priority regarding influencing on Sari citizens' tendency to public sport. This finding is in agreement with those reported by Moeinodolati [2012] and Hoven [1999].

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest

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None

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