

## Institutionalization of Sports for All in Iranian Families

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** The institutionalization of sports in families plays a significant role in promoting the health of society. This study is aimed to extract effective background factors in institutionalizing sports in Iranian families.

**Methods:** The present research follows an interpretive paradigm, inductive logic, and qualitative approach. Besides meta-synthesis approach and interviews were conducted. The research population of the present study included 166 national and international articles presented over the last twelve-year period. After screening the articles, 15 studies were finally selected which met the necessary criteria and were analyzed using the content analysis technique. In the next step, an interview was conducted with 23 experts in "public sports" in a targeted manner using the snowball and theoretical saturation techniques, and finally, the codes of the first and second stages were combined.

**Results:** Meta-synthesis results led to the identification of 36 indices, the overlap of the codes was compared, and the results showed a reliability of 0.92. After the interview was conducted, 41 indices were identified. The comparison of the results in two time periods showed a reliability of 0.89. Finally, by latent content analysis, summarizing, overlapping, and merging the codes of the previous two steps, 47 influential indices affecting the institutionalization of sports in Iranian families were extracted.

**Conclusion:** Based on the results of our research it can be concluded that by recognizing, planning, and creating mechanisms for the operationalization of the discovered factors, the process of institutionalizing physical activity in Iranian families will be facilitated.

**Keywords:** Institutionalization, public sports, family

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## Introduction

Today, with the expansion of urbanization and the mechanization of activities, the physical activity of people has been greatly reduced, and as a result, the sedentary lifestyle has taken the initiative from man and made him suffer from a lack of physical activity. This lack of activity has created many problems in physical, mental, and social health for people in society. Especially in recent years, physical activities have been severely affected by COVID-19, and as a result, the level of physical activity has greatly decreased (1). In recent years, physical inactivity has become one of the four main risk factors for mortality worldwide, and it accounts for one in six deaths in the UK (2).

Participation in sports activities significantly reduces the risk of cardiovascular diseases (3), type 2 diabetes (4), chronic pain (5), and behavioral problems (6), and physical activity has a positive effect on the mental health of people while improving their social anxiety, self-esteem, and body image (7). Improvements in the mental and physical health of people as a result of exercise reduce absenteeism and increase the performance and productivity of employees. This has a positive effect on the country's economy (8). For example, the Australian government saves 600 million dollars annually from the country's health budget due to the participation of only ten percent of the country's adult population in gentle and effective exercises. In New Zealand, due to the participation of 15-23% of adults in physical activity programs, 163 million dollars are reduced annually from the medical expenses of this country (9).

Therefore, physical activity seems necessary in the new era, and promoting sports according to the type of activities and personal and professional life conditions at the community level covers part of the effects of physical inactivity, and also increases social vitality and national productivity (10). The development of education and institutionalization of Sports for All individuals can guarantee the health of society and are one of the effective factors in the

development of sports in countries. Institutionalization means providing contexts and conditions that cause stability, sustainability, and generalization of desirable behaviors. Continuity is an important feature of institutionalized practice, meaning that practice tends to be implemented over time (11).

Undoubtedly, one of the influential institutions in the institutionalization of behavior in society is the family. The level of activity in the family, family support for sports activities, family attitude towards sports and physical activities, as well as the level of acceptance of sports among family members have a direct effect on socialization and the institutionalization of sports in people (12). Raising the awareness of families and changing their attitude towards sports can help to develop sports in the family and increase the participation of adolescents in physical activity (13). Experiences show that one organization with all its power and facilities cannot alone increase the participation of people and families in sports, because Sports for All is a social and interdisciplinary product and requires the cooperation of many institutions for institutionalization (14). In various studies conducted on different groups of society, various factors have been stated in the motivation of people to exercise, including factors such as individual personality and level of education (15), characteristics of the neighborhood (16), local ecology (17), development of women's sports, civic movements of sports, development of educational sports, culture-creating attitude, management and planning (18,19), and availability of physical activity facilities (20).

Examining the results of studies in the field of public sports shows that there has not been comprehensive research about the social contexts and factors that can institutionalize the tendency to Sports for All in Iranian families. This research tries to provide the maximum participation of families in physical activities by extracting the background factors that are effective in institutionalizing physical activity in Iranian

families, so it is necessary to include the dispersion of factors in a coherent framework. This research, with a systematic review of previous studies and interviews with experts, seeks to identify the indices that influence the institutionalization of sports in families. Identifying these indicators will help managers and government planners to include sports in people's daily lives with careful planning and give importance to a health-oriented life as a superior lifestyle in their view. Therefore, the researcher in this study seeks to answer this question: what factors play an effective role in institutionalizing Sports for All in Iranian families?

### Methods

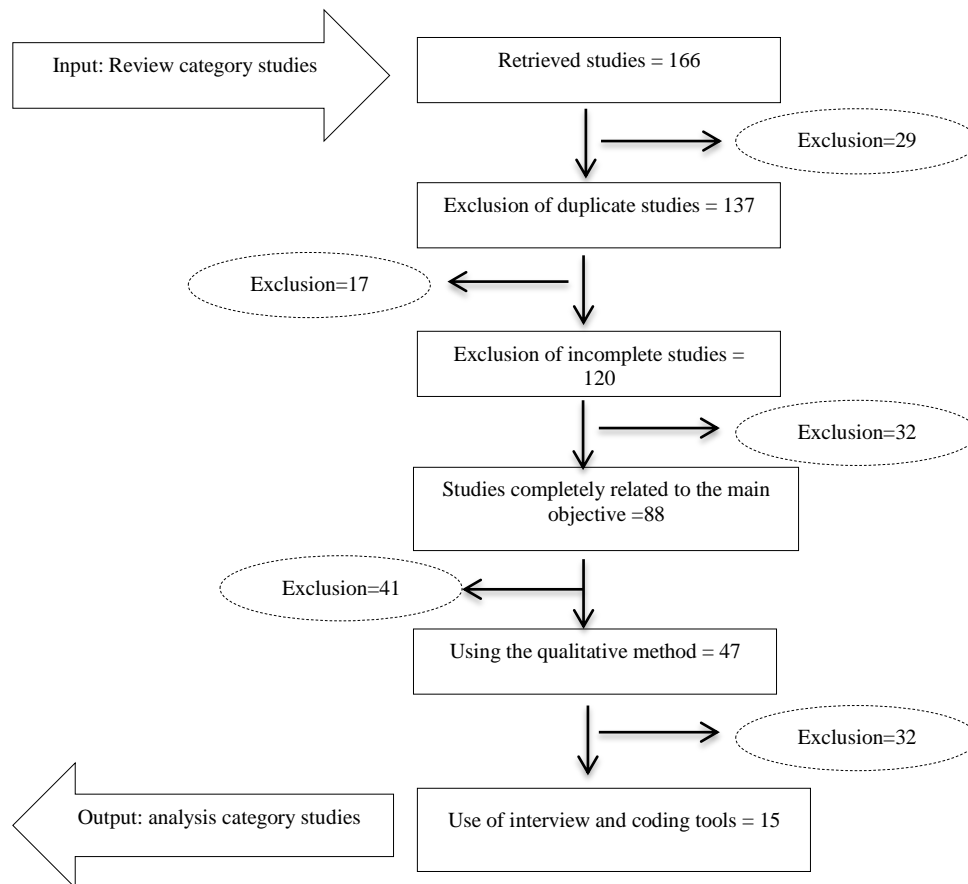
The current research follows an interpretive paradigm, inductive logic, and qualitative approach, and it uses a combination of meta-synthesis method and interview. Data analysis based on latent content analysis, and summarizing overlapping and merging the codes obtained from meta-synthesis and interviews was conducted to discover the effective indices of the institutionalization of sports in Iranian families.

#### *First step: meta-synthesis*

Meta-synthesis, similar to meta-analysis, is done to integrate multiple studies to create comprehensive and interpretive findings. Compared to the quantitative meta-analysis approach, which relies on the quantitative data of the literature and statistical approaches, meta-synthesis focuses on qualitative research, and in other words, it combines the interpretations of the main data of selected research (21). By providing a systematic approach for researchers through the combination of different qualitative researches, meta-synthesis discovers new and fundamental

topics and metaphors, and using this method promotes the current knowledge and creates a comprehensive view of issues. Meta-synthesis requires that the researcher conduct a detailed and in-depth review and combine the findings of related qualitative research. In this research, the seven-step meta-synthesis method by Sandelowski & Barroso (22) was used, whose steps include: setting the research question, systematic literature review, screening and selecting appropriate articles, classifying existing findings, analyzing and combining qualitative findings, controlling quality and presentation.

The studies required for the research were retrieved from seven national and international databases including Irandoc, Jahad University, NoorMags, Science Direct, PubMed, Emerald, Taylor, and Francis by searching the keywords “sports”, “strategic foresight”, “household budget”, and “sports for all” within the last 12 years since 2023. Choosing national and international databases and the diversity in their choice based on two different languages (Persian and English) was due to the prevention of publication bias and language bias. 166 articles were initially retrieved. The inclusion criteria of studies for analysis were to comply with the protocols compiled by the research team, which include: being close to the main objective of the research, which is the institutionalization of sports in families, using interviews to collect information, having specific participants, using theoretical saturation for completing the interviews, using content and data analysis method, using coding method, and publication in the last 12 years. In the end, 15 studies were included in the analysis category after meeting the inclusion protocols, which is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** The way the studies were selected for analysis

Studies of the analysis category based on documented forms with topics such as title of the research, name of the authors, place of publication, year of publication, type of report, and number of participants, have been used as a research measurement tool, which is described in Table 1.

To assess the validity of the research, acceptability, transferability, and reliability were evaluated; three analysts who were proficient in

the qualitative approach and latent content analysis were consulted, and the codes obtained from 20% of the studies, i.e. three studies from the analysis category were compared in terms of the overlap of the codes and the results showed that the reliability of this stage of the research is equal to 0.92. Considering that the reliability of the research is more than 0.70, the coding is valid.

**Table 1.** Studies selected for analysis

Row	Topic	Writers	Place of publication	Year of publication
1	The methods of institutionalizing sports for all through the national media from the experts' point of view (case study: TV sports channel)	Mohammad Qoli Minavand; Saeed Bagheri; Hamid Ghasemi	Communication research	2015
2	A strategic model for the development of sports in the police force	Jafar Ali Qadri, Farzad Ghafouri, Habib Honari and Youssef Mohammadi Moghadam	Scientific Quarterly of Police Management Researches	2020
3	Analysis of the development factors of sports for all based on the foundational data theory	Ali Vafai Moghadam, Farzam Farzan, Mohammad Hossein Razavi, Mostafa Afshari	Sports management studies	2018
4	Identification and analysis of factors affecting the institutionalization of sports culture in children and adolescents from the point of view of physical education teachers.	Mohsen Manouchehrinejad, Mehr Ali Hamtinejad, Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati, Ismail Sharifian	Sport Management	2018
5	Sociological study of institutionalizing sports for all in the country and providing a desirable model	Azam Shiroui, Sara Keshkar, Reza Esmaili, Hossein Asadi	Sports Management and Development Quarterly	2016
6	Identifying and prioritizing effective groups in institutionalizing sports for all in Iran	Ahmad Ali Asefi	Research in educational sports	2018
7	Designing a sports participation development model (a case study of Gilan province)	Noushin Banar, Salah Dastoum, Hamid Reza Gohar Rostami and Fateme Mohadas	Journal of Human Resource Management in Sports	2018
8	The importance of family culture for participation in sports	Sharon Wheeler	International Review for the Sociology of Sport	2012
9	Perspectives of program providers: Strategies for recruiting and retaining women in physical activity programs	Clare Hanlon, Tony Morris, Susan Nabbs	Sport Management Review	2014
10	Physical activity among adolescents in India: a qualitative study of barriers and enablers	Ambika Satija, Neha Khandpur, Shivani Satija, Shivani Mathur Gaiha, Dorairaj Prabhakaran, K. Srinath Reddy, Monika Arora, and K. M. Venkat Narayan,	Health Education & Behavior	2018
11	A qualitative study examining healthy eating practices and physical activity among adolescent girls in rural South Africa	Heather M Sedibe, Kathleen Kahn Kerstin Edin, Tabitha Gitau, Anneli Ivarsson4 and Shane A Norris	BMC Public Health	2014
12	Adolescents', parents', and teachers' perspectives on barriers and facilitators of physical activity among adolescents: a qualitative analysis.	El-Ammari Abdelghaffar , El Kazdough Hicham, Bouftini Siham, El Fakir Samira1 and El Achhabcla Youness	Environmental Health and Preventive Medicine	2019

Row	Topic	Writers	Place of publication	Year of publication
13	Overweight adolescents' Views on physical activity - participants' experiences of an Internet-based Intervention: a qualitative study	Turid Kristin Bigum Sundar, Knut Lønda, Per Lager, Kari Glavin and Sølvi Helseth	BMC Public Health	2018
14	Effects of school and work status on diet and physical activity in rural Guatemalan adolescent girls	Sophie Kurschner, Luisa Madriga, Violeta Chacon, Joaquin Barnoya, and Peter Rohloff	Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 17	2019
15	A model for promoting physical activity among rural adolescent girls in South Africa	John Kinsman, Shane A. Norris, Kathleen Kahn, Rhian Twine, Kari Riggle, Kerstin Edin, Jennifer Mathebula, Sizzy Ngobeni, Nester Monareng & Lisa K. Micklesfield	Global Health Action	2015

### ***Second step: interview***

In the second step, the interview method was used. In this method, using open-ended and semi-structured questions, the initial questions of the interviews were formulated after studying the theoretical foundations and background literature related to the research topic and reaching a conclusion in the form of 7 open-ended questions, which were used as a tool for collecting data. The scholars and experts participating in the research were 23 people who were selected using targeted and snowball methods from the sports activists in the country. The criteria for the selection of the experts included having knowledge and awareness of the literature on the subject and also having an aristocracy on the development of Sports for All in families based on cultural, social, political, economic, technological, and environmental conditions in Iran. The diversity in the selection of experts was also due to the prevention of possible bias in the research results.

Interviews were done after making agreements with selected people, in a calm and safe environment for 40 to 70 minutes, with the consent of the participants, and they were fully recorded. After each interview, key sentences were immediately implemented and extracted, and in cases where more explanations were needed from the interviewee, they were referred to for a second time and data extraction was done simultaneously. Finally, by reviewing the interviews, theoretical

saturation was reached in the 21st interview and continued until the 23rd interview to ensure that the theoretical saturation was reached.

Data were analyzed using the content analysis method and the coding method. Acceptability, transferability, and confirmability were evaluated for the validity of the research. The use of three people in the doctoral degree in sports management for analysis and coding, as well as the diversity in the selection of interviewees and the use of various methods of collecting data, interviews, libraries, and the study of upstream documents indicate the acceptability of the research. Repeated review of the interviews and extraction of maximum and non-duplicate content indicates transferability in the research. Also, the report of all the steps of the research process and the maximum use of the research group is an indication of the respect for verifiability in the research. To evaluate the credibility of the research, the researcher, while conducting the research and coding 20% of the interviews, i.e. re-coding and analyzing 5 interviews in a two-week interval, indicates that the numerical value of the credibility of this research is equal to 0.89. Considering that the reliability rate is more than 0.70, the coding is valid.

### ***Third step: combining***

In the third step of the research, which follows the interpretive paradigm and inductive logic and qualitative approach, the results and indices

extracted from the previous two steps, i.e. interview and research review, were combined and 47 indices affecting the institutionalization of sports in the economic portfolio of Iranian families were extracted. Finally, these indices were classified into 11 main categories. In this step, data analysis was done using latent content analysis and summarizing overlapping and merging the codes of the previous two steps to discover the effective indices of the

institutionalization of sports in Iranian families.

**Results**

In this step, data analysis was done by summarizing and overlapping the codes of the previous two steps. Finally, 47 effective indices of the institutionalization of sports in the economic portfolio of Iranian families were extracted as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Influential indices of the institutionalization of sports in the economic portfolio of Iranian families

1	Expansion of sports for all	25	Reducing the costs of participating in sports
2	Parents support their children in physical activities	26	Marketing and income generation in sports for all
3	Family awareness about the importance and effects of exercise	27	Having economic stability in the country
4	Sports advertising	28	Driving donors to the field of sports and physical activities
5	Raising awareness and increasing motor literacy of people in the community	29	Privatization of sports
6	Modeling sports in society	30	Construction of sports facilities and equipment
7	Carrying out symbolic sports actions and holding sports competitions	31	Development of an active city (physical activity-friendly)
8	Highlighting religious advice on the importance of health and exercise	32	Creating incentive systems and lower per capita payment for treatment in active people
9	Scientific awareness (sports) of community members	33	Local and easy access to sports facilities
10	People's sports skills	34	Access to sports software and applications
11	Providing sports and health-oriented indicators and criteria in society	35	Use of virtual communication channels and sports information bank
12	Promoting traditional and Indigenous sports	36	Promoting sports in organizations
13	Ethno-cultural needs assessment in sports	37	Development of coaches for sports for all
14	Development of recreational sports	38	All-round support of officials for athletes
15	Giving importance to sports at school	39	Establishing and implementing laws to support sports for all
16	Increasing the variety of games and sports in children	40	Organizational structure of sports institutions
17	Implementation of educational and sports policies for children and teenagers	41	Formulating correct policies and taking examples from successful countries in public sports
18	Expansion of special infrastructure for women's sports	42	National and international political stability of the country
19	Social support of women's sports activities	43	Placement of sports in the priorities and measures of officials and politicians
20	Creating a feeling of excitement from exercising	44	The importance of sports in the country's health system
21	Peer influence, especially in teenagers	45	Emphasizing and accompanying doctors in sports programs
22	Encouraging participants	46	Reviewing the insurance system from patient-oriented to health-oriented
23	Providing financial facilities to supporters to support sports for all	47	Standardization of sports facilities
24	Subsidy payments to community members to support sports for all		

Finally, these indices were classified into 11 main categories. According to the findings of the research, the final model of effective factors in the

institutionalization of sports in the economic portfolio of Iranian families was compiled (Figure 2).

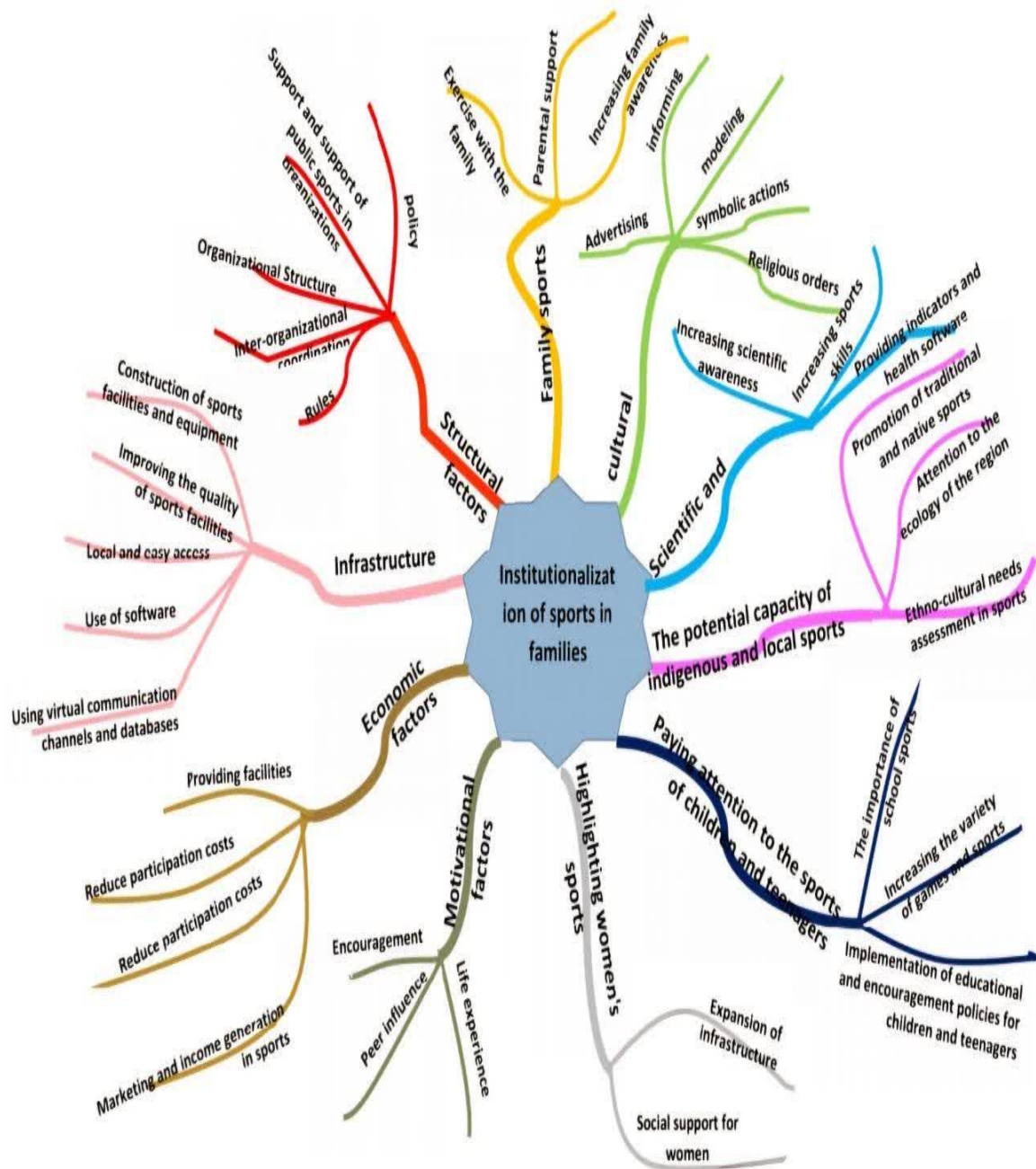


Figure 2. Neuronal model, effective factors in the institutionalization of sports in the economic portfolio of Iranian families



In this graph, which is named the neuronal model, it is shown that the direction of the institutionalization of sports in families is not the only effective factor, but various factors are effective in the institutionalization of sports in families. After combining these factors, the main outcome, which is the institutionalization of sports in families, is obtained.

### Discussion

The purpose of this research was to institutionalize physical activity in Iranian families, and the data analysis in this research was done by summarizing and overlapping the codes obtained from studies and experts' opinions.

The development of sports in society will help a lot in improving the quality of life of people, the development of social relations, people's vitality, and people's health. One of the ways to develop sports is to identify the effective factors and try to provide the ground for the realization of the institutionalization of sports in families as the smallest social unit. In the current research, it was shown that 47 effective indices play a role in the institutionalization of sports in Iranian families, and these indices were classified into ten groups in the neuronal model as follows: the development of family sports, attention to children's and teenagers' sports, cultural, scientific and skill-related aspects, the potential capacity of native and local sports, highlighting women's sports, motivational factors, economic factors, infrastructure, and structural factors.

In the factors of development and increasing the participation rate of society in sports, the role of the family is more prominent. As one of the most important social institutions, the family has effects such as education and socialization of children; children are always influenced by family values and norms before starting school and even after that, and they learn the ways and methods of living in the family. Most of the behaviors that children show are an imitation of the behaviors that they have learned in their families; which is consistent with the studies of Minavand et al. (23), Asefi (11), and Darogheh et al. (24).

Since the institutionalization of sports in childhood is faster and more permanent, more attention should be paid to this period. In this period, in addition to the family, school, and peers are also influential in the formation of children's behavior. The results of the studies of Mehralinejad et al. (25), Casey et al. (26), and Gunathevan Elumalai and Saryono (27) are consistent with the results of this research.

On the other hand, the sport has a social structure and has caused sociologists to study its social and cultural relations. The results of this research showed that another influential index in the institutionalization of sports is cultural issues, including religious orders, advertising, etc. which is consistent with the studies of Javanmard and Sanat Khah (28) and Ghafouri et al. (29).

Another index shown in this research that plays a role in the institutionalization of sports in families is scientific and skill-related education regarding Sports for All. In this regard, Asefi et al. (11) in research concluded that training is an influencing factor on the levels of physical activity among people, and in addition, training specific sports skills and developing sports skills increases the motivation of people to participate in sports activities.

Another influential factor in encouraging people to participate in Sports for All, which was found in this research, is the attention to the diversity of Iran's geographical and weather conditions and the development of sports suitable for the climate and culture of each region. Native and local games are one of the examples of physical activity. In fact, in different regions and ethnic groups, we see indigenous and local sports or games that are specific to the people of the same region and have cultural origins. By paying attention to these games and introducing these games to the young generation, they can be introduced and popularized in society. This is in line with the results by Minavand et al. (23) and Taherzadeh et al. (30).

Moreover, the results of the research showed that paying special attention to the half of the society who are women and culturally have certain limitations in society, providing the context for

their participation in sports can play an important role in the institutionalization of sports in families and increasing the health level of the society. Shahriari et al. (31) stated that by providing the necessary grounds and infrastructure for the participation of women in sports activities, which constitute half of the country's population and are also the focus of the family, it is possible to encourage families towards Sports for All.

Another index that was shown to be effective in the institutionalization of sports is motivational factors. Physical activity with friends and peers, accompanying and encouraging friends to participate in sports, showing sports letters of encouragement and medals to friends, giving prizes, etc. can encourage people to do physical activity. This is in line with the results of studies by Heather et al. (32), El-Ammari et al., (33), and Benar et al. (14).

Another influential factor in encouraging families to do sports, found in this research, is the economic index. When the economic conditions of the society are not stable, sports are not included in the family's financial portfolio due to the priority of providing physiological needs and security. Therefore, it is necessary to promote sports that the majority of people in society can easily do and without spending high costs, which is consistent with the results of studies by Minavand et al. (23) and Saminia and Shahbazi (34).

Sports infrastructure was also shown in this research as another influential factor in the institutionalization of sports in families. The lack of proper infrastructure for the development of public and recreational sports and finally health-oriented sports is the missing link in the chain of development of culture for sports for all. The indices of proximity and access to sports complexes and the number of sports venues affect the level of people's sports participation. In this regard, Ebrahimi et al. (35) stated in a research that the more sports facilities and infrastructures are available to the citizens, the situation will be more appropriate, with better and more attractive standards, and also in terms of access and neighborhood, the level of people's participation

will increase.

It was also shown in this research that the structural factor is also effective in the institutionalization of sports in families. The government can play an important supporting role in the growth and development of public sports and their institutionalization in society. In other words, by setting goals, strategies, and macro policies in the field of public sports, taking the necessary measures to realize the goals and strategies, allocating and distributing funds appropriately, creating the necessary coordination between the responsible units, determining the institutions responsible for Sports for All, expanding sports facilities, and approval of organizational regulations in sports, etc., the government can take important steps in the growth, development and finally, institutionalization of Sports for All in the society. It is consistent with the research results of Asefi (11) and Ali Vafai Moghadam et al. (36). As it can be seen from the results of the reviewed studies, each of them in some way refers to one or more health-oriented factors influencing the institutionalization of sports in families, so it can be said that the results of the present study are consistent with the results of other studies. In the present study, however, all factors have been proposed in a focused manner.

Due to the use of experts' opinions and the use of qualitative methods in data extraction, caution should be taken in generalizing the results, which is considered one of the limitations of the research.

### Conclusion

In this research, it was shown that one index alone is not effective in the institutionalization of sports in Iranian families, but different indices are effective in their way and should be considered in planning. Based on the results of this study, it is assumed that Iranian decision-makers and policy-makers consider the 47 influential indices (in 10 general indicators) introduced in this research when determining policies and developing programs. Various suggestions can be used from the results of this research in a practical way, including prioritizing the construction of small and

local training halls instead of large and competition halls, and giving priority to women's sports, reviving native and local competitions, promoting inexpensive sports and appropriate to the culture of each city, passing laws to encourage donors to sports, using physical education experts in schools and creating dynamic life in schools, creating spaces for family sports, considering sports spaces in the design of parks, conducting advertisements to encourage people to do sports, paying subsidies to people in the community to support Sports for All, establishing and implementing laws supporting Sports for All, increasing the sports-related literacy of people in the community, developing sports coaches, reducing the customs cost of sports equipment in times of economic instability, giving low-interest loans to the private sector to set up local sports clubs, etc. It goes without saying that with the development of Sports for All and its institutionalization among society members, we will witness its direct and indirect effects on the sustainable development process of Iran and the health of society.

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### Conflict of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare for this study.

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### Ethical considerations

Cases related to ethics in research and also Trustworthiness in citing texts and The references of the article are fully respected

### Code of ethics

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### Authors' contribution

A.K., data collection; A.K. and R.N., analyzed

the data and review of literature and manuscript preparation. The manuscript was reviewed by R.N. and M.S.

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