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## Identifying and Prioritizing Factors Affecting the Progress and Economic Development of Women's Professional Sports

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Article Info	Abstract
<p><b>Article type:</b> Research Article</p> <p><b>Received:</b> 30 Jan 2023</p> <p><b>Accepted:</b> 28 Feb 2023</p> <p><b>Published online:</b> 10 Dec 2023</p>	<p>The current research was carried out with the aim of identifying and prioritizing factors affecting the development of women's professional sports income generation. The research method in the present study is considered to be one of the types of field research in terms of applied purpose, in terms of descriptive survey type and in terms of data collection. The statistical population of the research included the members of the board of directors, marketing and public relations experts of large industries active in the field of sports financial support in Isfahan province, and faculty members of sports management. The statistical sample was selected by simple random method. The measuring instrument was a questionnaire made by the researcher, whose validity was measured with the Delphi technique based on the opinion of the professors. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to check the reliability of the questionnaire, and the results indicated the internal consistency of the questionnaire. In order to analyze the data, confirmatory factor analysis and hierarchical analysis process were used. The results showed that advertising media factors are considered to be the most important factors affecting the development of women's professional sports income generation, followed by managerial factors, executive factors, legal factors, and finally cultural factors. Therefore, strategic and comprehensive planning in the direction of the medialization of women's professional sports through traditional and modern media and advertising methods in the honor of Iranian sportswomen is considered essential in order to achieve the goals of income generation in women's professional sports.</p>
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## Introduction

Sports, like other social fields, must always strive for its growth and development and expand, stabilize and strengthen its dimensions and angles. Professional sports came into existence during the natural growth and development of physical training and sports in the world, and little by little, it occupied all minds, and as an industry or a profession that can be used to generate income, has attracted everyone's attention. Professional sports are organized sports activities that are performed in a purposeful manner in order to earn money for the development of economic and social values ([Hansen & Gauthier, 1989](#)). [Mull et al. \(2005\)](#) call the natural outcome of championship sports a level of sports known as professional sports and placed at the top of the sports hierarchy pyramid, where elite people compete at a high level. And in that process there is marketing and obtaining financial resources as well as strong management ([Rezaii Soufaii et al., 2017](#)).

Winning the title in major and international sports events, which is the focus of attention of many countries, can affect the cultural and social conditions of a society. The establishment of international standards in this industry has caused the economic growth of sports and the extensive effort of some countries to focus and develop national identity through sports, and in the meantime, the presence of women as an important part of society in the field of championship sports is an undeniable necessity ([Shabani et al., 2020](#)). Professional sports, in the sense of sports to earn money, has become a main part of the sports industry. If people like a particular sport, professional athletes receive high salaries. These rights are usually secured through ticket sales, television broadcast rights, and corporate support. It is estimated that more than half of the gross income generated by a sports team is paid to professional athletes; also, the income of professional clubs in advanced industrialized countries goes to the owners, managers, executives and coaches. Today, the number of professional teams in most sports and the growth of multinational teams in different countries has increased, and the members of professional teams are bought and sold in the world arena ([Rezaii Soufaii et al., 2017](#)). Today, many professional clubs play an important role in the macroeconomics of countries, for example, the material value of Spanish clubs in 2002 was equal to 4.64 billion euros. Also, Spain has created 47 thousand jobs with the development of the professional football club industry ([Elahi et al., 2009](#)). Georgia State University researchers have estimated the economic effect of the Super Bowl in the state of Atlanta in 2000 at about 292 million dollars. These statistics and figures prove that sports and sports competitions can have an effect on national and local economies ([Qaderpour et al., 2016](#)). In general, it can be said that today sports cannot survive without income generation.

The sports industry, by holding a stimulating factor such as holding sports competitions, has provided the opportunity to take advantage of the opportunities of advertising and media, which has also created the necessary platform for interaction between industry, business and sports, and serves as a strategic bridge. It is the development of sports and its economic prosperity. On the other hand, today the key to the success of an organization is earning money for survival. Without a secure income, organizations will go to liquidation and destruction and cannot survive in a competitive environment. Secure and stable income can provide the necessary facilities to face the costs and expenses. Also, income from financial support is an important source for sports organizations, from grassroots organizations to high levels of professional sports ([Lamont et al., 2011](#)). The principle of expectation of profit from investment is the most important factor attracting financial investors in sports, and sponsors will invest in sports if they are sure that they will benefit more than other options ([Al-Khaja, 2001](#)), and this is an issue which faces various restrictions in women's sports ([Ehsani et al., 2007](#)). [Abisha & Vincent \(2015\)](#) in a research focused on women's understanding of economic and social opportunities that arise for women when participating in sports activities. The results of the research showed that several factors can be an obstacle in achieving the economic and social forces resulting from participating in sports for women, which were male views, lack of education, poverty and low media coverage. On the other hand, [Ehsani et al. \(2007\)](#) conducted a study with the aim of investigating the causes of sponsors not supporting women's professional sports in Isfahan, and the results of the research show that the companies do not reach their goals in supporting women's sports (increasing the sale of goods and services, creating a suitable image of the company in the public mind, competing with other companies and expanding the amount of sales) and it seems that the reason why sponsors don't support women's sports is because the companies don't reach their goals ([Ehsani et al., 2007](#)). Due to the fact that compared to men,

women's sports face different conditions and limitations to attract capital and earn money, the need for special attention through the identification of factors affecting income generation in this area and targeted planning to achieve and use the opportunity the existing potentials are essential. Therefore, in the current research, the identification and prioritization of the effective factors on the development of income generation of women's professional sports were considered.

### Research Methods

The research method in the present study is considered to be one of the types of field research in terms of applied purpose, in terms of descriptive survey type and in terms of data collection. The statistical population of the research to answer the questions of the questionnaires included the members of the board of directors, marketing and public relations experts of large industries active in the field of sports financial support in Isfahan province, and members of the faculty of sports management. The data collection tool in the present study was a researcher-made questionnaire that goes through two stages in its design process. The first stage included the collection of primary components based on library studies and researching the theoretical foundations of the research. In this stage, 5 factors and 31 components were collected and organized in the field of factors affecting the development of income generation of women's professional sports. In the second stage, the Delphi technique was used for theoretical consensus about the factors and components of each factor, and finally, the research questionnaire was set based on a 5-point Likert scale consisting of 5 factors and 27 components. Finally, out of 240 questionnaires distributed in person and online, 205 questionnaires were returned and analyzed. The face and content validity of the questionnaire were confirmed by three experts in the field of research. The numerical value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.88, indicating the appropriate reliability of the questionnaire.

According to the predetermined objectives of the research, after identifying the factors and components affecting the development of income generation of women's professional sports and confirming the face and content validity and reliability of the questionnaire, after performing a confirmatory factor analysis on the validity of the obtained data, from Hierarchical analysis process was used to prioritize factors and components.

### Findings

The statistical population of the research to answer the questions of the questionnaires includes the members of the board of directors of sports clubs active in women's sports, marketing experts of large industries active in the field of sports financial support in Isfahan province, and university faculty members and professors in the field of sports management. Their demographic information is presented separately. The demographic information of the members of the board of directors, including age, level of education and management experience can be seen in table 1.

**Table 1- Description of the statistical sample in the section of the board members of sports clubs active in women's sports**

Row	Variable		Number	Percent
1	Age	Between 30 and 40 years	8	%25
		Between 40 and 50 years	15	%47
		Above 50 years	9	%28
2	Level of education	P.H.D	9	%28
		M.Sc.	18	%56
		Masters	5	%16
3	Management experience	Less than 5 years	5	%16
		Between 5 and 10 years	13	%41
		More than 10 years	14	%43
Total			32	%100

According to the information in Table 1, among the members of the board of directors of sports clubs active in women's sports, most of the people are between 40 and 50 years old; On the other hand, most of the sample people in this department have a master's degree and have more than 10 years of management experience.

Table 2 shows the demographic information of marketing experts of large industries active in the field of sports financial support in Isfahan province, including age and level of education.

**Table 2- Description of the statistical sample in the field of marketing experts**

Row	Variable		Number	Percent
1	Age	Between 30 and 40 years	18	%19
		Between 40 and 50 years	22	%50
		Above 50 years	17	%31
2	Level of education	P.H.D	5	%10
		M.Sc.	18	%31
		Masters	34	%59
Total			57	%100

According to the information in Table 2, most of the people in the sample group in this department have a bachelor's degree and most of the people are between 40 and 50 years old.

Table 3 shows the demographic information of academic staff members and university professors in the field of sports management, including age and managerial experience.

**Table 3- Description of the statistical sample in the department of faculty members and university professors in the field of sports management**

Row	Variable		Number	Percent
1	Age	Between 30 and 40 years	35	%29
		Between 40 and 50 years	46	%40
		Above 50 years	35	%31
2	Management experience	Less than 5 years	44	%39
		Between 5 and 10 years	57	%51
		More than 10 years	15	%10
Total			116	%100

According to the information in table 3, among the faculty members, most of the people are between 40 and 50 years old; On the other hand, most of the sample people have management experience between 5 and 10 years.

In order to collect data for confirmatory factor analysis, the researcher-made questionnaire was developed based on library studies and the results of the Delphi method, after confirming the validity and reliability among three statistical sample groups, including the members of the board of directors of the club managers active in women's sports, marketing experts of large industries active in the field of sports financial support in Isfahan province and academic staff members of sports management were distributed.

In conducting factor analysis, it is first necessary to ensure the appropriateness of the desired data for analysis in terms of the number of samples and the relationship between the variables, for this purpose the "Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin" test and Bartlett's test were used. If the value of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index is less than 0.6, the results of the factor analysis are not very suitable for the data in question, and if the Bartlett test is not significant, there is a risk that the correlation matrix is the only matrix used for analysis. It is inappropriate.

Table 4 shows the results of the Bartlett and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin tests for factors affecting the development of income generation in women's professional sports.

Table 4- KMO index and Bartlett's test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index for sampling adequacy		0.865
Bartlett's test	index	6952/22
	Degrees of freedom	351
	Significance level	0.001

Based on the results of table 4, the number of samples for factor analysis is sufficient and approved. At this stage, confirmatory factor analysis was used to confirm the construct validity of the questionnaire. For this purpose, AMOS 20 software was used, and the results of data analysis are presented below. The degree of agreement between the experimental data and the conceptual and theoretical model is of interest in the use of factor analysis. In order to know the degree of concordance, indicators and criteria are used, which are called goodness of fit of the model. The indicators related to the fit of the model in relation to the factors affecting the development of income generation of women's professional sports can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5- Indicators related to model fit

Index	Symbol	Acceptable range	The amount obtained
Chi-square ratio to degree of freedom	X2/DF	Smaller than 3	2/423
Comparative fit index	CFI	More than 0.9	0.904
Incremental fit index	IFI	More than 0.9	0.905
Normalized parsimonious fit index	PNFI	More than 0.5	0.716
Parsimonious adaptive fit index	PCFI	More than 0.5	0.763

The fit indices of the model are in the acceptable range, and in other words, there is agreement between the collected data and the theoretical model of the research. The second-order factor analysis model of factors affecting the development of women's professional sports income generation can be seen in Figure 1.

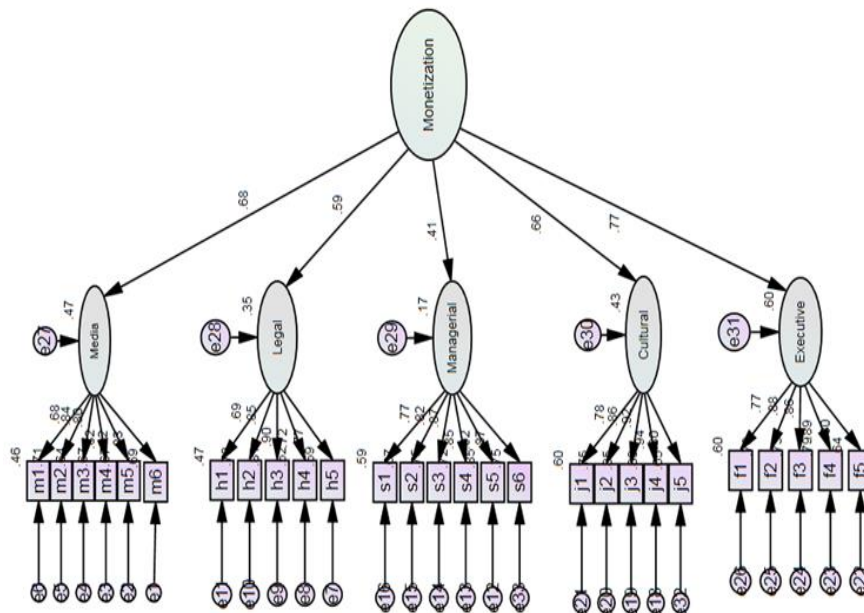


Figure 1. Second-order confirmatory factor analysis model in standard mode

Table 6 shows the factors and components affecting the development of income generation of women's professional sports along with regression weight in standard mode for each component.

**Table 6- Factors affecting the development of women's professional sports income generation based on the confirmatory factor analysis test**

Row	Factors	Standard regression weight
<b>Media-advertising factors</b>		
1	Using the potential of the media to brand female professional athletes	0.682
2	Detailed news coverage of women's professional sports	0.843
3	Media coverage of women's sports events, which is done with the observance of hijab	0.797
4	The existence of specialized women's professional sports programs in the media	0.821
5	Urban advertising of women's sports events	0.818
6	Promotion of women's sports events by traditional media (television, radio...) and social networks	0.833
<b>Legal factors</b>		
7	Clear and supportive rules in the field of branding of female professional athletes	0.687
8	Creating tax exemptions and key incentives for financial sponsors in the women's sports sector	0.852
9	Development of supporting laws for financial sponsors of women's professional sports	0.900
10	Removing legal obstacles to support financial sponsors of women's professional sports	0.721
11	Legal incentives and incentives in the field of advertising in women's professional sports	0.771
<b>Management factors</b>		
12	Development of short-term and long-term programs, especially in the field of income generation of women's professional sports	0.770
13	Applying monitoring indicators for the necessity of private and public sector support for women's professional sports	0.818
14	The use of marketing specialists in the human resources structure of women's professional sports	0.866
15	Modeling the management of successful countries in the field of marketing and income generation of women's professional sports (countries close to the country's culture and religion)	0.847
16	Allocation of financial resources of sports organizations separately in men's and women's sections	0.921
17	Employing capable female managers in high-level management positions of sports organizations	0.868
<b>Cultural factors</b>		
18	Iranian-Islamic modeling in the field of female professional athletes	0.775
19	Globalization of Iranian-Islamic modeling in the field of female professional athletes	0.863
20	Aligning the conditions of media presentation of women's sports events with the values and norms of the society	0.921
21	Promoting a positive social attitude towards women's sports in general and women's professional sports in particular through educational platforms (education, university)	0.944
22	Promoting a positive social attitude towards women's sports in general and women's professional sports in particular through the media	0.804
<b>Key executive factors</b>		
23	Using motivators to watch women's sports events (possibility and creating conditions for the presence of children, using the appropriate time and place of the event)	0.772
24	Use the market that fits the spirit of women to earn match day earnings and commercial earnings	0.884
25	Applying appropriate measures to strengthen the audience's relationship with women's sports teams and events	0.857
26	Holding international events with Islamic countries for the possibility of media coverage and attractiveness with maximum attendance	0.890
27	Holding women's national sports events as much as possible with Islamic coverage for maximum media coverage	0.801

As can be seen in table 6, the factors affecting the development of income generation of women's professional sports in the form of 6 media-advertising factors (6 components), legal factor (5 components),

management factor (6 components), cultural factor (5 components) and index executive factors (5 components) and a total of 27 components were considered.

After confirming the measurement model of factors affecting the development of income generation of women's professional sports, the prioritization of factors was done using the process of hierarchical analysis; In this way, a questionnaire of paired comparisons was compiled and distributed among the board members of sports clubs active in women's sports and faculty members of sports management (138 people in total) and finally the data was analyzed using Expert choice 11 software.

In the next step, the indicators were prioritized using the AHP technique. For this purpose, pairwise comparison matrices are formed in the order that in the first stage, the main criteria matrix was formed in the second level, and prioritization was done using pairwise comparisons (weighting). In this step, for each pair of factors, the relative value of one priority compared to another priority was determined by the sample people by choosing a number between one and nine; Next, the weight of each criterion was calculated, which was obtained as described in Table 7.

**Table 7- General prioritization of factors for the development of income generation of women's professional sports**

Rank	Relative weight	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	Factors
1	0.280	1	1.89	1.38	1.42	1.65	Media-advertising factors (A)
4	0.169		1	0.77	1.56	0.83	Legal factors (B)
2	0.233			1	1.88	1.47	Management factors (C)
5	0.133				1	0.60	Cultural factors (D)
3	0.185					1	Indicator performance factors (E)
Inconsistency rate: 0.01							

According to the results of table 7, among the factors affecting the development of income generation of women's professional sports, media-advertising factors have the highest priority, followed by managerial factors, index executive factors, legal factors and finally factors Cultural are the most important factors.

In a hierarchical process, the final weight of the options is obtained from the sum of the product of the importance of the criteria in the weight of the options. For this purpose, the "principle of hierarchical composition" will be used, which leads to a "priority vector" considering all judgments at all hierarchical levels. A general overview of the overall final ranking of factors affecting the development of income generation of women's professional sports can be seen in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. Priority vector of factors affecting the development of income generation of women's professional sports**

In the next step, pairwise comparisons were made in each of the groups at the third level of the hierarchy tree, the results of which are presented below.

The weight of each criterion in relation to the components of media-advertising factors can be seen in table 8.

**Table 8- Prioritization of media-advertising Factors**

Rank	Relative weight	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	Components
4	0.152	1	0.79	0.66	1.38	0.68	1.41	Using the potential of the media to brand female professional athletes (A1)
3	0.181		1	0.74	1.38	0.78	1.88	Detailed news coverage of women's professional sports (A2)
1	0.228			1	2.059	1.19	1.60	Media coverage of women's sports events, which takes place with the observance of hijab (A3)
6	0.115				1	0.64	0.81	Existence of women's professional sports programs in the media (A4)
2	0.201					1	1.59	Urban advertising of women's sports events (A5)
5	0.123						1	Promotion of women's sports events by traditional media and social networks (A6)
Inconsistency rate: 0.00537								

Based on the results of table 8 of pairwise comparisons in the media-advertising factor component, three components of media coverage of women's sports events that take place with the observance of hijab, urban advertising of women's sports events and detailed news coverage of women's professional sports, were ranked first to third, respectively.

The weight of each criterion in relation to the components of legal factors can be seen in table 9.

**Table 9- Prioritizing the components of the legal factor**

Rank	Relative weight	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	Components
2	0.251	1	1.58	0.53	1.90	1.46	Clear and supportive rules in the field of branding of female professional athletes (B1)
3	0.187		1	0.71	1.51	1.25	Creating tax exemptions and key incentives in the women's sports sector for financial sponsors (B2)
1	0.274			1	1.92	1.80	Development of protective laws for financial sponsors of women's professional sports (B3)
5	0.130				1	0.79	Removing legal barriers to support sponsors of women's professional sports (B4)
4	0.158					1	Facilitation and legal incentives in the field of advertising in women's professional sports (B5)
Inconsistency rate: 0.00274							

Based on the results of table 9 of paired comparisons in the legal factor component section, the three components of drafting supportive laws for financial sponsors of women's professional sports, transparent and supportive laws in the field of branding of female professional athletes and creating tax exemptions and incentives. The indicators in the women's sports section for financial sponsors were ranked first to third respectively.

The weight of each criterion in relation to the components of the management factor can be seen in table 10.

**Table 10- Prioritizing the components of the management factor**

Rank	Relative weight	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	Components
5	0.116	1	0.55	0.52	0.68	0.59	1.26	Development of short-term and long-term programs, especially in the field of income generation of women's professional sports (C1)
2	0.222		1	0.84	1.54	1.86	1.62	Applying regulatory indicators for the necessity of private and public sector support (C2)



Rank	Relative weight	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	Components
1	0.228			1	1.26	1.71	1.75	The use of marketing specialists in the human resources structure of women's professional sports (C3)
3	0.174				1	1.33	1.73	Modeling the management of successful countries in the field of marketing and income generation of women's professional sports (C4)
4	0.154					1	1.90	Allocation of financial resources of sports organizations in a segregated manner (C5)
6	0.106						1	Employing capable female managers in high-level management positions of sports organizations (C6)
Inconsistency rate: 0.01								

Based on the results of table 10, pairwise comparisons in the management factor component section, the use of marketing experts in the human resources structure of women's professional sports, the use of monitoring indicators for the need to support the private and public sector, and modeling the management of successful countries in the field of marketing and income generation of women's professional sports were ranked first to third respectively.

The weight of each criterion in relation to the components of cultural factors can be seen in table 11.

**Table 11- Prioritizing the components of cultural factors**

Rank	Relative weight	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	Components
4	0.151	1	0.75	0.59	1.19	0.55	Iranian-Islamic modeling in the field of female professional athletes (D1)
3	0.187		1	0.61	1.46	0.71	Globalization of the Iranian-Islamic model in the field of professional athletes (D2)
1	0.281			1	1.76	1.33	aligning the conditions of media presentation of women's sports events with the values and norms of the society (D3)
5	0.143				1	0.68	Promoting a positive social attitude towards women's sports in general and women's professional sports in particular through educational platforms (D4)
2	0.238					1	promoting a positive social attitude towards women's sports in general and women's professional sports in particular through the media (D5)
Inconsistency rate: 0.00537							

Based on the results of table 11 of pairwise comparisons in the cultural factor components section, the three components of aligning the conditions of media representation of women's sports events with the values and norms of the society, promotion of positive social attitude towards women's sports in general and women's professional sports to Specifically, through the media and the globalization of Iranian-Islamic modeling in the field of professional athletes, they were ranked first to third respectively.

The weight of each criterion in relation to the components of the executive factors of the index can be seen in table 12.

Table 12- Prioritizing the components of the executive factors of the index

Rank	Relative weight	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	Components
1	0.263	1	1.69	1.38	1.38	1.33	Using motivators to watch women's sports events (E1)
4	0.167		1	1.26	0.79	0.77	Use the market fit for women's spirit to earn match day earnings and commercial earnings (E2)
5	0.151			1	0.71	0.66	Applying appropriate measures to strengthen the audience's relationship with women's sports teams and events (E3)
3	0.198				1	0.81	Holding international events with Islamic countries for the possibility of attractive media coverage with maximum attendance (E4)
2	0.221					1	Holding women's national sports events as much as possible with Islamic coverage for maximum media coverage (E5)
Inconsistency rate: 0.505							

Based on the results of table 12 of pairwise comparisons in the components of the index executive factors, three components of using motivators to watch women's sports events, holding national women's sports events as much as possible with Islamic coverage for maximum media coverage and holding international events with Islamic countries were ranked first to third for the possibility of media coverage and attractiveness with maximum attendance.

## Discussion

Since the 1960s, economy and sports began to interact with each other with the help of the spread of media, and the process of commercialization of sports took a new form (Zohrabi et al., 2013). In the current research, the factors related to media and advertising were identified as one of the effective factors on the development of income generation of women's professional sports, which was prioritized as the most important factor in the prioritization of the factors. Media coverage of women's sports events, detailed news coverage, as well as the existence of professional women's sports programs in the media were identified as components of this factor; In this regard, Kristiansen et al. (2019) compared the media coverage of the Youth Olympic Games and the Olympic Games for female athletes, and the findings confirmed the role of media coverage in creating a positive relationship between teams and sponsors. In the research of Najafzadeh et al. (2012), the expansion of news and media coverage of national women's competitions was introduced as one of the factors influencing the development of women's sports marketing in West Azerbaijan Province; Also, the findings of Hosseini & Bakhtar's research (2018) showed that there is a significant relationship between virtual networks, television networks, satellite networks, digital media, electronic advertising and the attraction of financial sponsors in women's sports in Tehran. In Faraziani et al.'s research (2015), the media was recognized as a tool to play the role of women in the development of the international boundaries of sports; Meanwhile, the results of Golnabi et al.'s research (2018) showed that according to sports officials and mass media officials, the share of women's sports in media news is low and there is a need to take measures to increase the media's attention to women's sports. Also, the results of Hamidpour et al.'s research (2015) showed that the media in the current situation do not have a favorable cultural, educational, and promotional role in the development of women's championship sports. Based on the results of Morgan's research (2019), despite the increase in the level of participation of women in sports in England, their presence in the media is still very low, and the use of female athletes as endorsers of products has received limited attention. In the research of Shomali & Keshkar (2022), media challenges were introduced as one of the underlying conditions for the financial support of Iranian women's championship sports.

In developed countries, the media plays the role of a powerful arm for modeling women in the field of sports ([Faraziani et al., 2015](#)). In the current research, the use of media potentials for branding female professional athletes was introduced as one of the components of the media-advertising factor. The research findings of [Toffoletti & Thorpe \(2018\)](#) show that in the social media environment, female athletes are adopting new strategies for creating identity and branding, which market themselves through methods such as self-love, self-disclosure, and self-empowerment.

Legal factors in the field of income generation of women's sports in various sectors can be considered. Financial support and marketing is one of the main sources of income in the field of sports, and in general, in our country, the culture of marketing and the discussion of financial sponsors is in its earliest stages, and because managers are not familiar with this category, the necessary infrastructure for support is still lacking. Finance has not been formed, the legal space has not been provided for it, regulations and contract forms have not been developed, and in a word, no fundamental work has been done in this area. In the current research, clear and supportive laws in the field of branding, creating tax exemptions and key incentives, drafting supportive laws for financial sponsors, removing legal obstacles to support financial sponsors and legal facilities and incentives in the field of advertisements in women's professional sports sector were introduced as the most important legal factors affecting the development of women's professional sports income generation. In this regard, the results of [Rezaei's research \(2018\)](#) in the design of the income generation model of Iranian football clubs showed that effective legal-legal mechanisms are considered as one of the effective mechanisms in the direction of income generation of football clubs; Also, in the research of [Jesmani et al. \(2019\)](#), the lack or non-use of the benefits of financial exemptions resulting from the financial support of sports was identified as the most important economic obstacle to the financial support of championship sports in Zanjan province. The results of [Salimi et al.'s research \(2014\)](#) showed the lack of protective laws for the companies sponsoring championship sports, the lack of information or incomplete information about the law on spending taxes on sports and the existence of major problems in the field of intellectual property rights and copyright law. One of the most important obstacles to the development of the financial support of private companies for championship sports is considered. [Coors \(2015\)](#) stated in his research that in England, although the public right to protect the face or personality of famous people has not been recognized by the courts, it seems that from a commercial point of view, the sports industry has image rights as an asset. It encounters the invisible. The basic functions of management include specific steps that are followed to achieve specific goals in a logical flow. The most important tasks mentioned include planning, organizing, directing, controlling, monitoring, measuring and evaluating in specific phenomena (for example, sports) ([Triantafyllidis, 2021](#)).

In the current research, management factors were identified as one of the most important factors affecting the development of income generation in women's professional sports, which ranked second after media-advertising factors in the prioritization of factors using the process of hierarchical analysis. Formulation of short-term and long-term plans, specifically in the field of income generation of women's professional sports, the use of monitoring indicators for the need for support, modeling the management of successful countries in the field of marketing and income generation of women's professional sports, allocation of financial resources to sports organizations in a segregated form and employing capable female managers in high-level management positions of sports organizations are among the components of management factors identified in the present research. In the research of [Shomali & Keshkar \(2022\)](#), managerial-legal challenges were introduced as one of the causal conditions of obstacles to the financial support of Iranian women's championship sports. The results of [Bahmani et al.'s research \(2020\)](#) in the design of the marketing model of women's professional leagues in Iran showed that strategic planning, leadership and team building are among the core codes of comprehensive quality management in the marketing of women's professional leagues. Based on the results of [Rezaei's research \(2018\)](#) in the design of the income generation model of Iranian football clubs, he showed that effective management mechanisms are one of the effective mechanisms for the income generation of football clubs.

The lack of use of managers with commercial thinking and income generation in sports and the absence of marketing specialists in companies were introduced as obstacles in this sector. The use of marketing specialists in the human resources structure of women's professional sports is one of the other components of management factors in the present research. [Lobpries et al. \(2018\)](#), in a research on the obstacles of women's branding in professional sports, showed that women have not received the necessary training to manage their

brand, and for this they imitate others, which is necessary. It shows marketing professionals to plan and guide female athletes in order to promote their personal brand.

The importance of the mutual influence of sports and various dimensions of social and cultural life is so great that it has attracted the attention of the first sociologists and pioneers of the sociology of sports. Sports is a socio-cultural phenomenon that has an organic connection with the set of institutions and numerous social structures of societies ([Gholampourgaleshkolami et al., 2020](#)). Cultural trends are one of the cultural and social obstacles for women in the professional sports community of Iran. In the current research, cultural factors were identified as effective factors on the development of income generation in women's professional sports, which was ranked fifth and last in the prioritization of factors using the hierarchical analysis process. The globalization of the Iranian-Islamic model in the field of female professional athletes was brought up as one of the most important components in the cultural factors section; This is despite the fact that based on the results of [Khatibi et al.'s research \(2020\)](#), socio-cultural obstacles were identified as one of the obstacles to the development of financial resources for women's sports in Iran. In the research of [Shomali & Keshkar \(2022\)](#), cultural challenges were introduced as one of the causal conditions of financial support for women's championship sports in Iran. In the current research, Iranian-Islamic modeling in the field of female professional athletes and promotion of positive social attitude towards women's sports in general and women's professional sports in particular through educational platforms and media are the desired components in the section of cultural factors. are; While [Khatibi et al.'s research \(2020\)](#) cultural restrictions related to women's specific physical activities and the existence of populist culture in the sports community were mentioned as other components of cultural obstacles to the development of financial resources for women's sports. In the research of [Salimi et al. \(2014\)](#), the lack of a suitable social position for championship sports in the society was raised as one of the socio-cultural obstacles to the development of financial support of private companies for championship sports, and this factor is more significant in the women's section. Aligning the conditions of media presentation of women's sports events with the values and norms of the society is one of the other desired components in the cultural factors section. In a research by [Basabain et al. \(2021\)](#), he investigated the challenges of branding Muslim women in Saudi Arabia on Instagram, and the results showed that due to the cultural-religious limitations, it is necessary to align strategies and conditions. Including an attractive appearance in introducing yourself as a Muslim female athlete cannot be used in your business brand strategies; therefore, other methods such as presenting body composition before and after sports test results and testimonials for customers were used.

In the current research, a series of index components related to performance that can play a role in the development of income generation of women's professional sports were considered as index performance factors in a group. These factors are mainly related to the audience and the holding of women's sports events at a professional level. Using motivators to watch women's sports events, using appropriate measures to strengthen the audience's relationship with women's sports teams and events, and using the market according to women's spirit to earn match day income and commercial income are among the desired components. In this regard, in the research of [Najafzadeh et al. \(2012\)](#), motivational factors, the expectations of spectators and fans, the selection of sponsors whose products and services are more compatible with the team or the desired sport in the competition are among the factors influencing the development of sports marketing. The women of West Azerbaijan province were identified, which are common with the executive factors identified in the present study. According to [Rajabi et al.'s research results \(2012\)](#), the role of sports spectators is effective in attracting private companies to invest in the private sector. According to the findings of this research, from the point of view of company managers, the amount and type of attitude of spectators towards financial sponsors is effective in the investment of companies in championship sports; therefore, creating a safe and enjoyable environment for sports spectators will attract more spectators and as a result, it will generate income. Holding international events with Islamic countries for the possibility of media coverage and attractiveness with maximum attendance and holding women's national sports events as much as possible with Islamic coverage for the possibility of maximum media coverage are other executive measures in this department. In [Khatibi et al.'s research \(2020\)](#), restrictions on the entry of male spectators and filming by men were introduced as one of the structural obstacles to the development of financial resources for women's sports in Iran.

Therefore, the profits from these hosting belong to these countries. [Szymanski \(2010\)](#), collected information from the top 20 economic countries in the world based on their GDP in the last 30 years, and by analyzing

them, he concluded that most of them had at least one experience of hosting the World Cup or have had the Olympic Games.

### Conclusion

In the present study, the factors affecting the development of women's professional sports income generation were divided into five factors, including media-advertising, legal, managerial, cultural and executive factors, and a total of 27 components. Each of the aforementioned factors can somehow play a role in the development of income generation of women's professional sports, which was analyzed separately for each section according to the results of other researches; this is despite the fact that there are many commonalities between the mentioned factors, including correct management in this sector can affect other factors; Media-propaganda factors have a direct role in creating culture in this field and can ultimately facilitate executive actions; On the other hand, cultural factors can have a direct effect on the availability of media for women's sports events and personal branding of women athletes; Therefore, the implementation of actions in this field with a comprehensive and all-round view will lead to more effective results, although considering the priority level of each sector, which was done in the current research in the prioritization of factors through a hierarchical process, achieving valuable results in this It makes the field more easy.

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### Conflicts of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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