

Use of Mintzberg's Model of Managerial Roles to Evaluate Sports Federations Managers of Iran

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Abstract: Aim of this study was describing managerial roles managers in sports federations of Iran. This is a comparative-analytical study based on the data collected from field surveys. Questionnaires were distributed among 120 individuals holding managerial positions. Results showed that all ten identified managerial roles, are required by all sports managers but the role of the resource allocation is considered as the most important one. Moreover, those roles seemingly gained importance with managers' age, experiences and the level of education. The results of this study would form a framework for sports managers to evaluate their managerial practices and modify them as necessary.

Key words: Managerial Roles • Sports Managers • Sports Federations • Mintzberg Model • T-test

INTRODUCTION

Management is one of the important human activities and has critical impact on life, growth, development or destruction of an organization. In an organization, managers with any rank or status should understand their basic duties i.e. maintaining a sustainable conducive environment where people could fulfill their commitments and objectives through collaborative approach [1, 2]. An improper and incorrect perception on the nature of management could lead to a poor administration, lay-offs as well as loss of organizational resources. In addition, such performance might leave negative effects on job satisfactions and employees' performances. Indeed, managers would not be able to perform their duties unless they have already been aware of their managerial roles [3-6].

According to Mintzberg [7], a role is an organized set of behaviors identified with a specific management position and therefore, is measured by what individuals do in their day-to-day work [8-10]. Mintzberg identified 10 managerial roles that were classified into three areas:

- Interpersonal that includes figurehead, leader and liaison, 2. Informational that includes monitor, disseminator and spokesperson, 3. Decision-making that includes entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator and negotiator (Table1).

As Mintzberg has proposed, each managerial role is influenced by four variable-types: (1) environment (organization's characteristics), (2) job (its level and the functions supervised), (3) person (manager's characteristics) and (4) situation (temporal feature). In fact, all managers perform all roles but to some degree, the roles vary insignificantly as managers being specialized require performing a particular set of specialized roles [12, 13]. It must be remembered that the previous researches have mostly focused on corporate and academic setting [14-18].

In some ways, sports institutions can be compared to businesses and corporations, however; sports institutions are different from other types of organizations. According to Quarterman [19], Danylchuk *et al.* [4] and, Horch *et al.* [12], managers in different contexts have to perform different roles and business competencies are not sufficient for sports managers.

Table 1: Definitions pertaining to managerial roles as identified by Mintzberg [11]

Interpersonal Roles	
Figurehead:	Obligated to perform a number of routine duties of social nature.
Leader:	Responsible for the motivation and activation of subordinates; responsible for staffing, training and associated duties.
Liaison:	Maintains self-developed network of outside contacts that help provide information.
Informational Roles	
Monitor:	Seeks and receives a wide variety of special information (much of it current) to develop thorough understanding of organization and environment.
Disseminator:	Transmits information received from outsiders or from subordinates to members of organization.
Spokesperson:	Transmits information to outsiders on organization's plans, policies, actions results, deserves as an expert on organization's industry.
Decision-making Roles	
Entrepreneur:	Searches organization and its environment for opportunities and initiates improvement projects to bring about changes.
Disturbance Handler:	Responsible for corrective action when organization faces unexpected disturbances.
Resource Allocator:	Responsible for the allocation of organizational resources— in effect, the making or approval of all significant organizational decisions.
Negotiator:	Responsible for representing the organization in major negotiations, a technical expert.

Sports federation is one of the organizations in which, knowing the role of managers is of great importance. The interaction and relationship of organizations with many other ingredients such as government, private sectors, financial sponsors, international sports federations and organizations; and the most important of all, the socio-economic, political and cultural factors place sports federations in the center of various demands and claims.

As a matter of fact, it is necessary for managers of the sports federations to improve their performance through scientific methods, in order to keep their position as well as becoming successful in fulfilling their organizational duties [4,12,19].

However, managers' roles in sports federations have hardly been researched upon hence; the current research tries to investigate, keeping in view, the priorities and relationships between the managerial roles and personal valuables (age, sex), situational valuables (years of managerial experience, years in position and years at institution). Mech [13] discovered a relationship with age and managerial roles and found that the situational variables were not significant predictors in emphasizing the managerial roles. Leonard [20] indicated that the management is more androgynous than the gender-specific.

The one reason this study seems necessary is because of understanding that the managerial roles details might help sports federations' managers know more about their positions and help them understand their job better.

Finally, for managers, the study may bring forth developmental programs, training as well as career planning. The main focus of the entire study is to highlight the lack of research on the managerial roles of Iran sports managers and their obvious impact.

Hence; the main questions of this research are:

What are the most important managerial roles of managers of Iranian Sports Federations using ten managerial roles of Mintzberg?

Which of the ten managerial roles does Iranian Sports Federations' manager emphasize most of the time?

Are there differences in the roles of Iranian Sports Federations managers emphasize because of personal characteristics (gender and age)?

Are there any differences in the roles of Iranian Sports Federations managers because of situational characteristics (i.e. years of managerial experience, years in position and years at institution)?

Research Methodology: In order to ascertain the aforementioned questions, the study has considered survey, causal-comparative and correlation methodologies. The survey method is a form of data collection, the causal-comparative method seeks to discover cause and affect relationships and, the correlation methodology tries to respond to the questions concerning relationships between different variables.

During the course of the research, a descriptive statistics were used to determine the managerial roles as well as personal and situational characteristics of managers linked to sports federations. And, a casual-competitive method was applied to describe different managerial roles vis-à-vis personal and situational variables. Finally, it took help of a unilateral analysis of variances and *T* test in order to compare the variables. In fact, these tests were to perform on one or two independent samples keeping in mind that if variances were the same, the LSD test would be utilized otherwise; the *T*-test would be an appropriate one.

Table 2: Frequency of participants

Statistical Society	Statistical society	Samples (person)	Number of Returned	Total
National Sports Federations	49	157	120	76.43%

Table 3: One way analysis of variance of Comparison of criteria related to "Leader role" with regard to "age"

Variable	Levels (ages)	Mean	S.D	F	Sig.
Leader	35-40	16.44	3.16	4.94	0.005
	41-45	18.75	7.09		
	46-50	20	3.38		
	51-55	25	0.01		

It is worth mentioning that the causal-comparative statistics used in this study was a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). This could reveal if there were statistical differences between two or more groups regarding two or more dependent variables. In other words, the MANOVA was utilized to compare: (1) the managerial roles between personal characteristics and (2) the managerial roles between situational characteristics. In all cases, the managerial roles are dependent variables whereas; personal and situational variables are independent ones.

Participants were 120 managers from 49 National Sports Federations. Here, no sampling method was used because of a relatively small sample size (Table 2). As mentioned, a descriptive statistics was used to determine the managerial roles as well as age and sex.

With regard to data collection, two sets of questionnaires, each with 50 items, were prepared: the first included personal information and the second included questions related to managerial roles. The questionnaires were prepared with the help of interviews with some of effective managers of related fields, literature reviews and standardized scoring was done with the value 5 of Lickert scale. To check the validity, 30 management experts verified the questionnaires and then it was distributed among 45 participants in order to check the reliability.

The reliability coefficient of the acquired data was measured through Cranach's alpha and for stability coefficient, the same participants were asked to fill the questionnaires again (test-retest) after an interval of one month. The two data were found to have relevant coefficient of 0.86 which was meaningful in $\alpha=0.05$ level. Furthermore, the alpha ratio was 88% while dividing the tests into two parts and the acquired value was equal to 93% under the Pierson modification method hence; this shows the stability of the test.

Data were analyzed using SPSS statistical package. In other words, this software was used for

descriptive, causal-comparative statistics and correlation statistics.

Findings: The study's demographics reveal that the majority of respondents were male (79.2%), with just 20.8% of them being female. The average age of respondents was 45 years with an average of 10 years of sports experience and 7 years of which in the current position.

Managers' education is one of the important factors in developmental process of an organization [21-24]. Among the proposed samples, 33.3 managers have bachelor degree, 46.6% post-graduate and 2.1% have doctorate degree. With respect to field of study, 50% of the managers graduated in Physical Education, 37.5% in management (sports or other) and 12.5% in other irrelevant majors. Due to the nature of sports organizations, for planning and management, presence of physical education specialists considered as one of the priorities of human resource sectors [4,12].

Statistically, the study could not find any significant difference between personal and gender characteristics. Both genders claimed that resource allocation, disseminating and disturbance handling were top three managerial roles they perform. The result supports the claim of Leonard (20) who called managerial roles as androgynous. Statistically, there were significant differences between the means of top three roles. As the data indicate, female managers of sports federations placed more emphasis on these three roles than their male colleagues.

To study the managerial roles based on age, sports federations' managers were placed into 4 categories i.e. (35 to 40), (41 to 45), (46 to 50) and (51 to 55). There found one significant difference between age categories for the leader role (Table3).

It was found that older sports managers gave more prominence to the leadership role than younger ones.

T-test related to Table 5. Comparison of criteria related to "leadership role".
Dif. Value

Sig.	35-40	41-45	46-50	51-55
35-40		2.30	3.55	8.55
41-45	0.856		1.25	6.25
46-50	0.105	0.990		5
51-55	0.001	0.018	0.001	

According to Wiedman (1978), the years of experience of an administrator could impact the roles they perform. The managers of sports federations were placed in five categories taking into account period of their managerial experiences: (1 to 5), (6 to 10), (11 to 15) and (16 to 20). ANOVA method, however, indicated a statistical difference with the figurehead role of managers. Sports managers with less than five years of experiences do not place importance on the figurehead role as much as the ones with above five years of experiences (Table 4). The aforementioned result indicates that the figurehead role is developed over time.

With respect to managers of sports federations being in the same institution for years, they were put into four categories i.e. (1 to 5), (6 to 10), (11 to 15) and (16 to 20). As mentioned before, the resource allocating, disseminating and disturbance handling were the most emphasized roles whereas the roles like negotiator and figurehead considered being the least emphasized ones. Statistically, though no significant differences could be ascertained.

With respect to their current positions, the managers linked to sports federations are placed into three

categories, age-wise: Level A (1 to 5), Level B (6 to 10) and Level C (11 to 15). The Level C managers considered liaison as the least emphasized role while Level A and Level B managers called monitoring and entrepreneur as the least emphasized roles, respectively. It seems that more years in managerial position have had positive effect on the importance of the liaison role (Table 5).

T-test related to Table 5 showing the comparison of criteria related to "liaison role".

Sig.	1-5	6-10	11-15
1-5		5.25	6.22
6-10	0.001		0.97
11-15	0.036	0.996	

It was observed that there were no numerous correlations. The two could found were a negative correlation between age and disseminator and a positive correlation between experience and entrepreneur. It seems that the growing age decreases the importance of disseminating role but increased the importance of entrepreneur role.

The current study shows that sports managers performed all ten roles propounded by Mintzberg (1973) and there are differences in the emphasized roles based on influencing variables. Managers rated the role of resource allocation as the most important one followed by disseminator, disturbance handler, leader, entrepreneur, monitor, figurehead, liaison, spokesperson and, negotiator (Table 6).

Table 4: One way analysis of variance of comparison of criteria related to "Figurehead role" with respect to "experience"

Variable	Levels	Mean	S.D	F	Sig.
Figurehead	1-5	15	0.01	4.21	0.011
	6-10	15.88	4.64		
	11-15	17.86	2.97		
	16-20	18	0.01		

Table 5: ANOVA comparison of criteria related to "liaison role" with attention to working experience in organization

Variable	Levels (ages)	Mean	S. D	F	Sig
Liaison	1-5	18.70	4.76	6.62	0.003
	6-10	19.83	3.31		
	11-15	23.46	2.02		

Table 6: Important managerial roles

Roles	Mean	S.D
Resource Allocator	11.29	0.39
Disseminator	11.00	0.46
Disturbance Handler	10.96	0.59
Leader	10.94	0.93
Liaison	10.41	0.74
Monitor	10.35	0.63
Figurehead	10.23	0.59
Entrepreneur	9.49	0.84
Spokesperson	9.35	0.83
Negotiator	9.29	0.64

Consequently, developing a goal-oriented plan with increasing capabilities of managers is not only a necessity rather could be considered an opportunity for the long-term investment [25, 26].

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall, findings support the Mintzberg theory i.e. managers on the job perform all the given ten roles. However, the results obtained in this study, differ from researches which conclude the variables like resource allocator, figurehead, leader or negotiator as important roles in higher level management [7, 10, 13, 17, 26].

One possible explanation for such differences is the type of organization. Lack of integrity, not in different countries rather in one organization, shows the impact of work fields of managers on their managerial roles. This Study confirms the effects of the type of organization on managers' behavior. Although managerial roles are more and less the same in organizations, in terms of value and importance, managers' performance believes to differ [27-31].

Since sports managers showed inclination towards all the ten managerial roles, the findings claim that knowledge and skills related to those roles must be developed and more emphasis must be put on those comparatively more important. As observed, the most emphasized role the managers of sports federations indicated is the resource allocation. In order to fulfill this role, sports managers require initiate, develop and maintain the operational budget within the academic division. The second most emphasized role they considered is disseminator for which; managers need to have access to information and transmit those to subordinates. Consequently, the managers linked to sports federations should make sure that they have effective communication skills: both verbal and written. The third most highlighted role is the disturbance handling. Here, sports managers require to make difficult decisions and must be able to gather information using network. However; before taking any decision, an effective sports manager should wait to find out as many facts as possible. In other words, they should be reflective in their behavior. All the three aforementioned roles have some internally focused aspects hence; managers need to be effective at internal-type of functions such as creating and communicating.

Knowing the roles of sports federations' managers as well as the roles they tend to emphasize the most may have implications for institutions. An increase in the

effectiveness of sports managers not only help institutions function better rather strengthen the movement by increasing morale and other important components associated with managers. They also know the differences of the emphasized managerial roles based on influencing variables.

In a way, results of the current study also fill a research gap. In other words, Mintzberg had developed a model based on the corporate setting but the current study could apply an athletic setting and compared their roles to the international data. The result gives an invaluable insight to the practicing managers of athletic programs and forms a basis for managers to evaluate their roles and modify them, if necessary. At the same time, results will possibly help current sports federations' managers to be more reflective about the position and roles they hold; and may help know how they develop policies and procedures.

Finally, the proposed study contributes the body of knowledge regarding the governance of managers at sports organizations. In other words, roles can be compared based on international data and influencing variables. Perhaps the results will persuade or dissuade individuals to assume a position because they received an accurate reflection of the position.

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