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Compiling a Strategy for Development of Iranian Diving & Life Saving Federation.

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ABSTRACT

This research aims at compiling a strategy for developing Iranian Diving & Life Saving Federation. The research is an applied one concerning its goal & nature and descriptive – analytical one concerning its implementation strategy. To implement the research, first, current data of Diving & Life Saving Federation were collected from Library and World Wide Web through forms designed for this purpose. Then a Researcher Made Questionnaire was prepared with the assistance of elites and 12 experts & university professors confirmed its validity & credibility. Credibility of the questionnaire was calculated through Cronbach's Alpha as 0.79. After that the questionnaire was distributed among the sample society consisting of 120 persons (Instructors, Path Designers, Referees, National Athletes and Directors related to Iranian Diving & Life Saving Federation). Then the data were gathered and analyzed on the basis of the descriptive statistics rules including central mean and sprawling indexes. The Friedman Test was used through SPSS Software in the area of Deductive Statistics. Status of the Iranian Diving & Life Saving Federation was determined as so, on the basis of the Internal & External Factors' Matrix.

Keywords: Diving & Life Saving Federation, Strategy, External Factors, Internal Factors

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, organizations are obliged to monitor internal & external affairs constantly; so that they could keep with the changes as required in proper time. Organizations should identify the changes and act accordingly. In today's world which is changing rapidly, nobody can rely on sudden & experienced based judgments. Nowadays, those organizations are successful which are able to benefit from Strategic Management & Science (Roofing & Astamf, 2008). Tendency toward evolution, betterment in all areas of life, and social systems, including sports organizations, has led people toward management & planning in their activities. In current era, complicated nature of organizations has multiplied importance of planning for continuation of life & keeping their dynamism, more than ever. Planning is based on information about future opportunities, threats and the way of benefiting from the opportunities & avoiding the threats (Edward & McDonnell, 2005, Stephen et al., 2007 & Authority, 2009). Planning is a process for equipping organization's resources and unifying their efforts for achieving long term goals and visions, concerning internal & external limitations & facilities of each organization. In the process, external strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the organization are identified through SWOT Analysis, and long term goals of the organization and its missions are determined. To achieve these goals, the strategies which rely on strengths, benefiting from opportunities and avoiding from threats should be selected among strategic choices. In such a case the strategies will guarantee success of the organization (Alvan, 2010, Badri, 2011 & Taqibeiglu, 2012). Planning in sport organizations, just like every other organization, is considered as main duty of the management. In fact, in a sport organization, planning results in defining goals of all activities & team efforts, as well as finding a method for achieving those goals.

In Diving & Life Saving field (just as other sport fields) strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats should be determined and main goals, strategies and operational plans should be identified. So that the path for successful future will be enlightened and wasting financial, humanitarian, physical and informational resources could be avoided (Badri, 2007 & Shorthand & Ghasemi, 2009).

Many of the world's states that are successful in sport areas, including Australia, Canada, Japan, United States of America and Britain have used strategic planning for determining their goals and achieving them. However, they have concentrated on studying strengths & weaknesses as well as opportunities & threats of their organization for this purpose. In Iran also some research has been conducted in the area of determining a comprehensive system for development of championship sports and compiling public sports' strategy at some provinces, via preparing state's comprehensive sport system. So, it can be claimed that benefiting from this efficient method has been started in Iran for achieving success and more profitability, though such researches have been concluded in some special fields, such as Taekwondo & Gymnastic. The researcher has not been succeeded in finding even one record in the area of identifying internal & external factors of Iranian Diving & Life Saving Federation yet.

Seyed Karimi (2010) in his thesis entitled "Studying Status of Iranian Sport Schools" has used view points of 520 persons on internal & external factors through a researcher made questionnaire. In addition to Descriptive Indexes & Freidman Test, he has also used internal & external assessment matrixes. Findings of the research showed that sport schools in current situation are facing with 10 strengths & 13 weaknesses as well as 13 opportunities & 13 threats. And it is situated in WT strategic status. (Jassbi, 2010).

Firoozian (2012) in his MA Thesis entitled "Evaluation of Public Sport Status at Eastern Azerbaijan Province" uses SWOT model and offers development guidelines benefiting from a researcher made questionnaire distributed among 384 persons of the sample society. Finally he has determined 23 strengths & weaknesses as well as 33 opportunities & Treats for public sports of the province (Javadipoor, 2013).

Mozaffari & Elahi (2009) in a survey entitled "Compiling a Strategic Plan for Championship Sports of the Islamic Republic of Iran" have studied current situation of the championship sports in Iran and the strategic plans for championship sports in some sample countries benefiting from viewpoints of 52 members of the sample society. They have arranged questions in four categories. The derived results show that 5 strengths, 10 weaknesses, 12 opportunities and 8 threats are meaningful [Hosseini & Commercial, 2011 & Hamidi, 2010].

Daorong, Zhang et al., (2012) in their research entitled "Analysis of Investing at Sport Industry in China" has used SWOT methodology and concluded that; investing in sport industry of china must aim at

improving weaknesses and benefiting from opportunities. Moreover the capital management team and the authorities receiving capital from institutes, organizations and so on have significant role on improvement of investing in sport Industry of China, concerning Long Term Financial Resources, and related laws & by-laws (Jennings & John, 2013).

Australian Sports Commission (2011) in its strategic plan for the years 2011-2012 to 2014-2015, has interviewed more than 650 persons & related organizations & experts and finally concluded that;

- Australia should continue with its triumphs & successes at sport elite's level.
- All people of Australia must have the opportunity to benefit from sports in general or in some definite sport fields upon their wishes.
- Health and good standing status of the society must keep improving (Khosravi & Esfandiari, 2012 & Hangr & Thomas, 2013).

This research tries to identify and determine weaknesses, strengths, opportunities and threats of the Diving & Life Saving Federation in Iran, benefiting from scientific methods and scientific & experimental experiences of the experts in this regard. We hope that the results could be used by related authorities, including Provinces' Sport Boards, Diving & Life Saving Federation, and IR Iran Ministry of Sports & Youth. We also hope to witness growth, blossoming, development & success of the Iranian Diving & Life Saving Federation in Asia & worldwide, concerning existing potential of the country and prevailing future of the sport field.

METHODOLOGY

The study is an applied one, concerning its goal & nature. However it is a survey conducted in a specific time period, and benefiting from questionnaire data. It is also considered as an analytical – Descriptive Research concerning the strategy. This research intends to focus on identifying internal and external factors of Diving & Life Saving Federation. In addition, the research is regarded as an Analytical – Descriptive Study as far as data gathering methodology is concerned. The research is a cross-sectional one concerning time period and it is concluded in the year 2013. Also the research is considered as a strategic study and studies current situation of the Diving & Life Saving Federation as well as identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in this regard. Statistical society of the research includes Instructors, Referees, Planners, National Athletes and Directors of the State's Diving & Life Saving Federation, which are 120 persons according to the estimation made by the related federation. The sample society was selected from the statistical society and it is considered as identical to the statistical society.

To collect data, questionnaire, interview and library study (documents & reports of the Diving & Life Saving Federation, as well as special forms designed for this purpose) were used. For collecting data & statistical information of the current situation, firstly, reports of the Federation's Committees, Interviews with some experts & authorities and the Official Web Site of the federation were taken to consideration and the designed forms were used. To identify strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats of the Diving & Life Saving Federation, the current situation was studied and the researcher made questionnaire (consisting of 26 questions in the area of strengths, 19 questions in the area of weaknesses, 15 questions in the area of opportunities and 14 questions in the area of threats) was prepared on the basis of the gathered data and view points of the experts. In order to certify validity of the questionnaire, viewpoints of more than 12 elites, experts and university professors in physical education universities of Alloorz & Tehran Provinces were received. In the next stage, the questionnaire was organized in 5 degree Likert Scale (Very Much= 5, Much= 4, So So = 3, A Little = 2, Little= 1) as a primary questionnaire. Then the questionnaire was distributed among 30 persons of the sample society who were somehow experts. The results were gathered after the questionnaires were completed. The Cronbach's Alpha was used for testing credibility of the questionnaire. The Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for the questionnaire was determined as 0.952. The Friedman Variance Analysis was used for determining weight of each question and ranking.

In the stage of assessing internal & external factors (using specially designed forms), the testees were requested to attach importance coefficient (weight) for each question of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Later on, by computing total grade resulting from multiplication of the importance

coefficient at the factors' density, status of the Diving & Life Saving Federation was determined concerning internal & external factors.

RESULTS

The samples were selected among Instructors, Path Planners, National Team Athletes and Directors of Diving & Life Saving Federation. Sample group of the research is shown in Table 1 concerning their gender.

Table 1

Gender	Abundance	Percent
Female	15	12.50
Male	105	87.50
Total	120	100

Ages of the sample society were as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

		20-30 Years	31-40 Years	41-50 Years	50 Years and More
Ages of the Sample Society	Abundance	39	13	33	35
	Percent	32.5	10.8	27.50	29.2

Table 3. Matrix of Assessing Internal Factors of Diving & Life Saving Federation

Table 3

Strength	Weight	Rank	Weight × Rank
Number of Grade 2 life savors of the country	0.07	3	0.21
Number of Grade 1 life savors of the country	0.06	3	0.18
Development of Diving & Life Saving Federation's Sport fields throughout the country	0.08	3	0.24
Status of Asian positions of the Iranian Diving & Life Saving Federation members	0.06	4	0.24
Number of official referees of the state's Diving & Life Saving Federation	0.06	4	0.24
Level of long term planning in Diving & Life Saving Federation	0.08	4	0.32
short term planning in Diving & Life Saving Federation	0.07	4	0.28
Weakness			
Employing expert forces in the federation	0.05	2	0.10
Number of Instructor Training classes held by the federation throughout the country	0.06	1	0.06
Attention of the Diving & Life Saving Federation's authorities to sport in schools, as base of the championship sport	0.07	2	0.14
Number of Instructorship classes held by the federation nationwide	0.06	1	0.06
Status of the Diving & Life Saving Federation's financial support from champions and instructors of the field.	0.06	2	0.12
Talent finding procedure in Diving & Life Saving Federation.	0.05	2	0.10
Activeness of the Diving & Life Saving Federation's championship sports base throughout the country	0.05	2	0.10
Status of rescue equipments of the State's Diving & Life Saving Federation	0.05	1	0.05
Number of the classes held by the Diving & Life Saving Federation for training referees throughout the country.	0.07	1	0.07
Total	1		2.51

Table 4. Matrix of Assessing External Factors of Diving & Life Saving Federation

Table 4

Opportunity	Weight	Rank	Weight × Rank
Tendency & desire of the youth toward Diving & Life Saving Sport	0.09	4	0.36
Ability of attracting experienced and elite athletes to Diving & Life Saving Federation throughout the country	0.05	3	0.15
Higher education of the champions in the field of Diving & Life Saving throughout the country	0.07	4	0.28
Ability of attracting experienced & elite instructors to diving & life saving federation throughout the country	0.06	4	0.24
Setting rules & regulations for supporting physical education and sport in the field of diving & life saving by higher authorities of sport in the country	0.08	3	0.24
Number of graduates in the field of physical education and attracting them by diving & life saving federation	0.08	4	0.32
Emphasis of the educations on paying attention to sport	0.07	3	0.21
Threat	0.06	2	0.12
Knowledge of the state's diving & life saving instructors			
Entrance of political persons to the area of sport throughout the country	0.08	1	0.08
Non-tendency of charitable persons for developing sport spaces of Diving & Life Saving Federation	0.06	1	0.06
Attention of the sport authorities to Diving & Life Saving Federation in comparison with other federations.	0.07	2	0.14
Rate of sport credits allocated for Diving & Life Saving Federation	0.05	2	0.10
Tendency of the youth & athletes to other professions in order to satisfy their financial needs and non-concentration on this field of sport.	0.09	2	0.18
Changes of management staff at Diving & Life Saving Federation	0.04	2	0.08
Charges of equipments & sport gears required for Diving & Life Saving Federation and ability of the federation in providing the equipments	0.05	1	0.05
Total	1		2.61

Final grade of the internal & external factors assessment matrix determined that strategic status of the diving & life saving federation is located at **so** zone (table 2-4). Concerning that the status is very close to other zones of the matrix, it could be concluded that the strategic status of the Iranian Diving & Life Saving Federation is located at a proper zone of the matrix. Comparing SWOT Matrix with David's Model (Table 3-4), it could be understood even better.

The David's model divides SWOT matrix into 9 more detailed zones. According to the model, strategic status of the Diving & Life Saving Federation is located at the 5th zone, which has a middle position in the matrix. David places zones Number 3, 5 & 7 at one category and suggests that, the organization should be preserved if located at these zones. At these zones, the organization shall be able to eliminate external threats, benefiting its internal strengths, or decrease internal weaknesses resorting to external opportunities. Nine strategies out of 12 strategies compiled for the Diving & Life Saving Federation are related to OW and ST zones, the zones in which Diving & Life Saving Federation could eliminate or decrease weaknesses & threats benefiting from its strengths & opportunities.

Table 5. Matrix of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the Diving & Life Saving Federation

Table 5

<p>Internal Factors</p>	<p>Strengths (S) S1: Number of Grade 2 life savers of the country S2: Number of Grade 1 life savers of the country S3: Development of Diving & Life Saving Federation's Sport fields throughout the country S4: Status of Asian positions of the Iranian Diving & Life Saving Federation members S5: Number of official referees of the state's Diving & Life Saving Federation S6: Level of long term planning in Diving & Life Saving Federation S7: short term planning in Diving & Life Saving Federation</p>	<p>Weaknesses (W) W1: Employing expert forces in the federation W2: Number of Instructor Training classes held by the federation throughout the country W3: Attention of the Diving & Life Saving Federation's authorities to sport in schools, as base of the championship sport W4: Number of Instructorship classes held by the federation nationwide W5: Status of the Diving & Life Saving Federation's financial support from champions and instructors of the field. W6: Talent finding procedure in Diving & Life Saving Federation. W7: Activeness of the Diving & Life Saving Federation's championship sports base throughout the country W8: Status of rescue equipments of the State's Diving & Life Saving Federation W9: Number of the classes held by the Diving & Life Saving Federation for training referees throughout the country.</p>
<p>External Factors</p> <p>Opportunities (O) O1: Tendency & desire of the youth toward Diving & Life Saving Sport O2: Ability of attracting experienced and elite athletes to Diving & Life Saving Federation throughout the country O3: Higher education of the champions in the field of Diving & Life Saving throughout the country O4: Ability of attracting experienced & elite instructors to diving & life saving federation throughout the country O5: Setting rules & regulations for supporting physical education and sport in the field of diving & life saving by higher authorities of sport in the country O6: Number of graduates in the field of physical education and attracting them by diving & life saving federation O7: Emphasis of the educations on paying attention to sport</p>	<p>SO Strategies 1. Trying & planning for attracting graduates of sport educational fields, and experienced athletes who are specialized and elites in the area of championship sport (o2, o3, o4, o6, s1, s2) 2. promotion of sport by the federation, concerning religious instructions in this regard for attracting those who are interested and training them under a comprehensive plan (o1, o7, s6, s7)</p>	<p>WO Strategies 1- Trying for attracting specialized & educated people for being employed at the federation (w1, o4, o6) 2. Compiling a comprehensive system for identifying and talent finding at school and related bases (w3, o1, w6, w7) 3. Regular planning for holding classes to train referees & instructors at different provinces of the country (w2, Ws, W9, O5) 4. compiling a proper model for supporting athletes of the federation and related personnel (o5, w5)</p>
<p>Threats (T) T1: Knowledge of the state's diving & life saving instructors</p>	<p>ST Strategies 1. Employing graduates of the physical Education field of study at</p>	<p>WT Strategies 1. Expanding life saving equipments (and credits) at whole places related</p>

<p>T2: Entrance of political persons to the area of sport throughout the country T3: T4: Attention of the sport authorities to Diving & Life Saving Federation in comparison with other federations. T5: Rate of sport credits allocated for Diving & Life Saving Federation T6: Tendency of the youth & athletes to other professions in order to satisfy their financial needs and non-concentration on this field of sport. T7: Changes of management staff at Diving & Life Saving Federation T8: Charges of equipments & sport gears required for Diving & Life Saving Federation and ability of the federation in providing the equipments</p>	<p>life saving federation (T1, T2, T7, S5, S2, S1) 2. DEVELOPING ACTIVITIES OF THE LIFE SAVING FEDERATION THROUGH ACHIEVING agreement of related authorities (t4, s3) 3. Using proper plans for development of the federation (s6, s7) 4. Attracting governmental sector's and financial (sector's financial supports for the life saving federation (t6, t5, t3, t8)</p>	<p>to life savers, instructors, teachers and athletes</p>
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DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Determining a proper strategy and, consequently, honest analysis of internal & external factors, as well as predicting external factors shall guarantee success & more profitability of each organization. Therefore, correct analysis of the existing internal resources (strengths & weaknesses) and studying external factors (opportunities & threats) could be considered as secrets of success in organizations & management projects. Comparing main internal & external factors is the most complicated stage of preparing SWOT Matrix, which requires a good judgment. It is worthy of mentioning that there is nothing to be mentioned as the best set of factors for being compared. In implementation of SO Strategies, the organization tries to benefit external opportunities using internal strengths. In general, organizations use WO, ST and WT strategies to achieve such status, and keep them up to the stage that they are able to benefit from SO strategies.

Process of exploring interests as well as attracting & educating talents is a scientific matter and requires introductive measures among which the most important one is establishment of a proper communication between educational centers and research centers apparently between universities and executive centers, also strengthening and establishing public sport bases. Likewise, two main systems in the country which lead physical education affairs i.e., Ministry of Sport & Ministry of Education have not established proper communication with each other unfortunately, while they could play an effective role in this regard. Lack of official & systematic communication between Ministry of Sports and Ministry of Education and other sport pillars in the country has made these strengths & opportunities ineffective and useless. Nasirzadeh (2008) believes that main strategies comprise from strengthening financial capacity of athletes, creating coordination between General Department of Physical Education and Physical Education Departments or Institutes and other Governmental Departments in order to better use of sport facilities and scientification of physical education activities & sports, which are in line with strategies leading to development of Diving & Life Saving Federation (Nasirzadeh, 2008). The strategy also is in line with the Boyd's Strategy (2005) which is the Strategy of University Sport. The other WT strategy is to increase credits, equipments and proper places of the federation. It is obvious that development and growth of any sport requires human resources, financial resources, equipments and so on (Boyd, 2005).

Materialization of the strategy and development of specialized & standard sport saloons, at least, every province capital will have one standard sport saloon equipped with required specialized equipments. In such a case internal, provincial and state-run Competitions as well as Training Courses, Research Activities and Bilateral or even Multilateral Interactions with other Organizations & Countries could be held at those saloons. Consequently, many problems of the athletes, instructors and so on which refer to sufficient spaces & facilities shall be solved and the sport shall grow & develop with more quality and speed. Implementation of this strategy requires paying attention to some of the above mentioned strategies and it is obvious that they could not be materialized with little budget of the federation & boards located at provinces & counties (Rezayian,

2007 & Razavi, 2008). It is hoped that designing proper guidelines for benefiting from governmental financial resources and encouraging private sector for financial participation through bilateral cooperation and justifying the projects to be useful for this purpose.

Though this strategy is in line with strategies offered by other researches, such as "A Comprehensive System for Developing Championship Sports of Islamic Republic of Iran (Seifpanahi et al., 2010). Compiling Strategic Guidelines for Taekwondo Sport (Ghofrani, (2011). and "Designing a Comprehensive System for Wrestling Sport in Iran (Goudarzi, 2007 & Sport Council Wales, 2009).

The other strategy is that, representatives of this field of sport at international bodies and training courses are strongly recommended to increase capabilities of the executive personnel; so that, they will be able to achieve required standards and sufficient capabilities for attending international training courses, administrative and executive bodies and global competitions and succeeding in the arenas.

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