

Modeling the Institutional Factors Affecting the Utilization of Entrepreneurial Capacities (EC) in Sports Tourism in Iran

Received: 2023-04-22

Accepted: 2023-12-26

Vol. 6, No.1. Winter .2025, 12 -26

Reza Heydari¹ Ahmad Mahmoudi^{2*} Bahador Azizi³ Sahar Pirjamadi⁴ Saman Mehri⁵ 

1. Assistant Professor of Sport Management, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

2. Assistant Professor of Sport Management, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

3. Ph.D. of Sport Management, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran

4. Ph.D. of Sport Management, Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iran

5. Ph.D. Student of Sport Management, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

*Correspondence:

Ahmad Mahmoudi,

Assistant Professor of Sport Management, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

Email: ah.mahmoudi@ut.ac.ir

Orcid: [0000-0001-7579-2274](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7579-2274)

Abstract

Purpose: This study aimed to modeling the institutional factors affecting the utilization of entrepreneurial capacities in sports tourism in Iran.

Method: The research was applied in terms of purpose and analytical in terms of type, which was conducted as a survey. The statistical population included all entrepreneurs in the field of sports tourism in the country, of which 384 people were randomly selected as a sample, and finally 367 questionnaires could be examined. To collect data, a researcher-made questionnaire taken from the research of Heydari et al. (2021), was used. To confirm the validity of the questionnaire, the opinions of 11 sports management experts were used. Cronbach's alpha test was used to determine the reliability of the tool, and its value was 0.92.

Results: Findings revealed that the necessary institutional factors in the legal-administrative, normative-cultural, cognitive-educational, and guiding-supportive dimensions can increase entrepreneurial behavior in this field by increasing the ability and willingness of entrepreneurs to utilization entrepreneurial capacities in sports tourism.

Conclusion: Results suggest that to grow the sports tourism industry in developing countries like Iran, many factors with greater convergence should be involved. In this regard, the existence of a suitable legal, normative, supportive and educational environment will affect the ability and willingness of market leaders to identify and utilization the entrepreneurial opportunities of this emerging industry in the country.

Keywords: Sports tourism, entrepreneurship, employment institutional, human resources.

COPYRIGHTS

©2025 by the authors. Published by the University of Mohaghegh Ardabili. This article is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>



Introduction

The dependence of Iran's economy on oil products is one of the crucial problems of the country, which has always been considered in the country's development plans to get rid of or reduce this dependence through various solutions such as the tourism industry (Darabi et al, 2020).

In recent decades, with the development of technology, information technologies, and transportation, the tourism industry has become one of the strongest and largest industries in the world (Hwang & Lee, 2018). A little reflection on tourism globally makes it possible to imagine the tourism industry as equal to oil, food products, and even cars (UNWTO, 2017).

Also, according to the World Tourism Organization's forecast, the number of tourists is predicted to increase to 1.8 billion tourists in 2030 (Pratt & Tolkach, 2018) and based on studies and forecasts made by the World Travel and Tourism Council, it is expected that in 2027, the tourism industry supports more than 380 million jobs globally and exceeds the scope of other sectors of the global economy.

Meanwhile, various types of tourism are also of great interest to those involved in employment and entrepreneurship, and each region in some way and according to their existing conditions, tries to benefit from different types of tourism such as historical, cultural, medical, and sports tourism. One of these important sectors that can become a trans-sectoral issue in the tourism industry is the sports industry, which is called sports tourism (Darbellay et al, 2012). In this regard, sports have become one of the most common motivational factors for tourists around the world and countries have become inclined to earn more money in new ways and provide innovation in this industry (Pereira et al, 2015).

Sports and tourism are inextricably linked. Most countries, that have natural destinations and rich cultural heritage, use sports tourism as

a strategic tool for employment and economic development (Brown et al, 2016). Sports tourism is more than an industry, as a socio-economic phenomenon at the global level, so many countries and cities of the world, by planning and investing in this industry, have provided platforms to improve the economic, social, and political situation, increase the reputation and branding of the destination and increase employment, income, and development of their infrastructure. This is why economists focus their attention on sports tourism because they believe that sports tourism is an industry generating employment and entrepreneurship. The development of sports tourism activities can provide grounds to create employment, which is useful for developing countries such as Iran faced with a young population and job seekers (Heydari et al, 2020). Given that, it should be mentioned that the new era is the arena of competition for resources and capital so big industrial countries which are the conquerors of this field have made the use of resources and capital their top priority. Also, by training experts and specialists in various fields of the tourism industry, they have turned the wheels of growth and development in this way and achieved new achievements. It is worth mentioning that any access to these innovations that have revived the economy of developed countries depends on entrepreneurship (Shane et al, 2003).

Entrepreneurship is considered important because it leads society towards technical and innovative changes and causes economic growth and also turns new knowledge into new products. From the Schumpeterian perspective, entrepreneurship is a process that generates economic growth by creating new combinations of factors (Almodovar-Gonzalez, Fernandez-Portillo & Díaz-Casero, 2020; Content, Bosma, Jordaan & Sanders, 2020). Under this view, entrepreneurship is considered one of the driving forces of economic development (ACS & Audretsch, 2005; Schumpeter, 2017). The agent-opportunity link theory in

entrepreneurship suggests that entrepreneurship is the result of the link between agents (entrepreneurs and organizations) and the environment or opportunity (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Opportunity refers to a set of conditions that make entrepreneurial ideas desirable and possible to provide a new product or service (Davidsson, 2009). This set of environmental factors affects the cost, time, and type of entrepreneurial activity so that if these conditions do not exist optimally, entrepreneurial activities will take place with more cost and time, and the type of activities may also change from productive to non-productive, formal to informal, innovative to imitative, and opportunistic to forced (Sobel, 2008). One of the important environmental factors that have influenced entrepreneurial processes is institutional factors meaning frameworks set by humans that guide their behavior (Peng et al, 2009). Thus, a country's institutional framework is decisive in promoting conditions that provide a minimum level of certainty that encourage risk taking (Sendra-Pons et al. 2022).

Institutional factors correspond to the formal structure and the norms derived from the regulatory framework, government agencies, and prevailing cultural and social practices. These factors have proven fundamental in promoting entrepreneurial activity (Akoum, 2009; Bianchi, Borini & Ogasavara, 2015; Boudreaux, Nikolaev & Klein, 2019; Bylund & McCaffrey, 2017; Churchill, 2017; Dilli & Westerhuis, 2018). It is therefore of interest to

analyze entrepreneurship from the point of view of institutional theory, given the influence that the context created by these institutions exerts on entrepreneurial activity (Bruton, Ahlstrom & Li, 2010; DiMaggio, Powell, Powell & DiMaggio, 1991; Singh, Sinha, Das & Sharma, 2019).

The sports tourism industry is entrepreneurial and job-creating, and one of the most effective ways to overcome the unemployment problem in countries is the development of this industry. The importance of sports tourism, in addition to economic prosperity, is the creation of employment in the provision of its services. Most of these services require direct human resources, which will create employment in the region. Considering the sizable chunk of potential in the sports tourism area, it seems that there are many entrepreneurial opportunities in this field in Iran, and the utilization of these opportunities requires the creation of necessary institutional arrangements to increase the desirability and feasibility of entrepreneurial activities in this field, especially in Iran which has a different institutional context.

Next, the theoretical framework of the research is presented in Figure 1.

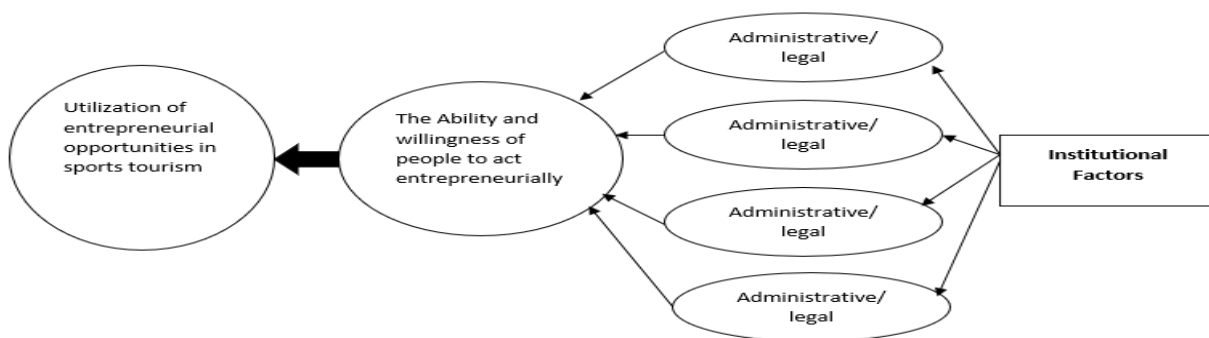


Figure 1. Conceptual model of the research

Materials and Methods

The research was applied in terms of purpose and analytical in terms of type, which was conducted as a survey. Also, the approach of the research was quantitative, which was done using structural equation modeling (SEM). Thematic and spatial scope includes the institutional factors affecting the utilization of entrepreneurial capacities in sports tourism in Iran and the time scope of the research begins from June to the end of December 2022.

The statistical population includes all entrepreneurs in the field of sports tourism in the country. Due to the uncertainty of their exact number, Morgan's table was used to determine the sample size. Given that, 384 people were randomly selected as the research sample. After distributing and collecting the questionnaires and removing the distorted questionnaires, 367 questionnaires were selected and entered into the software for statistical analysis.

To collect data, a researcher-made questionnaire was used, taken from the research of Heydari et al, (2021). Given that, 74 items and 4 dimensions were identified as follows:

administrative and legal, normative and cultural, cognitive and educational, and guiding and supportive.

It should be noted that the participation of people in this research was completely voluntary and people participated in this research consistently. In addition, the questionnaires were distributed both in person and online.

To verify the content validity of the research tool, 11 sports management experts who had an experience of the activity or doing research work in the field of sports tourism were used. Also, to determine the reliability of the tool, Cronbach's alpha test was used, and its value was obtained at 0.92.

Finally, to analyze the data, descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, and inferential statistics including skewness and kurtosis tests, one-sample t-test, exploratory factor analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis were used. Furthermore, SPSS version 26 and SMART PLS version 3 were used to analyze the data.

Result

First, the demographic characteristics of the sample are presented (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the participants

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	65%
	Female	35%
Education	Diploma	9%
	Associate and Bachelor	55%
	Masters	22%
	Ph.D.	14%
Experience (Years)	Less than 5	27%
	5 to 10	29%
	11 to 15	24%
	More than 15	20%

According to Table 1, most of the participants in this research were men (65%). Also, most of the people who participated in the research had

associate and bachelor's degree (203 people), in total 91% of the people had a university education, and among the participants, 29% had

5-10 years of experience in the field of sports tourism.

Next, the chi-square value obtained for this model was equal to 982.687, which confirms the dimensions of the model (Table 2). The

results showed that the four factors in total explained 70.87% of the variance of the institutional factors affecting the utilization of the entrepreneurial capacities of Iran's sports tourism industry (Table 3).

Table 2. KMO and Bartlett's test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.823
Bartlett's test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-square	982.687
	df	190
	Sig.	0.001

Table 3 shows the eigenvalues, the variance of the factors, and their cumulative percentage. As it shows, the percentage of variance for factor 1 is 29.24, factor 2 is 15.02, factor 3 is 13.72, and

factor 4 is 12.89. So, the predictive power of this model based on the total variance of the four factors was equal to 70.87%, which is considered a good value.

Table 3. The variance share of each factor in the 4-factor model of institutional factors affecting the utilization of the entrepreneurial capacities of Iran's sports tourism industry

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
Factor 1 (legal/administrative)	5.89	29.24	29.24
Factor 2 (normative/cultural)	4.23	15.02	44.26
Factor 3 (cognitive/educational)	3.74	13.72	57.98
Factor 4 (directive/supportive)	3.39	12.89	70.87

The results of the factor analysis presented in Table 4 show that the items of institutional factors include 70.87% of the total variance.

Also, the results of the factor load of the items show that the factor load of all the items is acceptable (above 0.4).

Table 4. Rotated Component Matrix

	Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
1	Developing an effective law for the presence of intermediaries and entrepreneurs in the virtual world	0.63			
2	Developing sufficient, necessary, and specific legislation for sports tourism businesses	0.72			
3	Developing supporting laws to protect entrepreneurs in this area (spiritual support of entrepreneurs)	0.46			
4	Creating a safe and legal platform for the public to enter the sports tourism industry	0.59			
5	Harmonizing the laws of sports tourism-related bodies	0.64			
6	Establishing stability and clarity in the laws	0.66			
7	Changing the governmental policy approaches toward sports businesses	0.58			
8	Reducing tension, and national and regional political crises and reducing sanctions	0.55			
9	Giving enough authority and freedom to business owners in this area	0.63			
10	Removing obstacles and speeding up the process of	0.41			

	Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
	obtaining employment creation permits				
11	Accelerating the implementation of sports tourism industry expansion plans	0.48			
12	Identification and organization of intermediaries	0.51			
13	Increasing the performance guarantee of contracts between entrepreneurs and relevant organizations	0.69			
14	Recognizing active companies and agencies in the field of tourism and sports tourism	0.72			
15	Determining the trustee of the unit and providing the supervised authority to the said institution for legislation in this area	0.77			
16	Dealing with complaints of sports tourists based on the law of the country	0.74			
17	Developing security policies related to special sports tourism regions such as beaches	0.66			
18	The dynamic growth of the economic environment of the sports tourism industry through the serious modification and revision of banking laws and regulations, such as reducing the requirements and legal procedures to provide banking facilities with suitable bank interest rates to new and start-up companies	0.65			
19	Removing cultural and social restrictions regarding the spread of sports tourism		0.51		
20	Considering the public welfare of society		0.50		
21	Boosting the social and cultural capacities of the sports tourism environment		0.46		
22	Enhancing citizens' awareness of the benefits of sports tourism		0.48		
23	Annual national and international gatherings and conferences		0.42		
24	Managing cultural developments and social participation through the strategy of healthy and cultural development in the sports entertainment space		0.78		
25	Institutionalizing the culture of sports entertainment among different strata of society		0.63		
26	Improving the understanding of opportunities and capabilities in the sports tourism industry to create a suitable attitude to the category of wealth and capital among beneficiaries, activists, and applicants.		0.68		
27	Encouraging entrepreneurs and top organizations in the field of sports tourism who have the most satisfaction from customers		0.54		
28	Financial incentives and tax exemptions for top entrepreneurs		0.81		
29	Introducing the best entrepreneurs and organizations active in the field of sports tourism		0.72		
30	Improving the spirit of hospitality in the Islamic and Iranian culture of the residents		0.45		
31	Establishing consulting and training service centers to develop the social and cultural capital of sports tourism entrepreneurship events and centers		0.58		
32	Promoting the culture of organizational entrepreneurship in sports tourism by creating the appropriate structure and culture for organizations		0.66		
33	Promotion of economic security for risk-taking and investment in the sports tourism industry to promote the		0.71		

	Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
	culture of risk aversion in the environment				
34	Promotion of entrepreneurial intention and tendency in the sports tourism industry with the support of social and cultural norms of entrepreneurship		0.43		
35	Improving the culture of creativity and ideation in the sports tourism industry by modifying the structure and repressive culture prevailing in the country		0.59		
36	Cultivation through promotional teasers		0.49		
37	Promoting organizational entrepreneurship in sports tourism centers through creating job incentives		0.62		
38	Increasing trained people in the country to familiarize people with the benefits of sports tourism			0.73	
39	Creating appropriate scientific and technological support for the development of sports tourism by developing relations between the university and the sports tourism industry			0.66	
40	Improving knowledge and technology in the sports tourism industry through higher education in the field of entrepreneurship and sports tourism			0.53	
41	Creating academic discipline in the field of sports tourism in universities			0.54	
42	Marketing, management, and entrepreneurship training for intermediary companies in the field of sports tourism			0.59	
43	Teaching foreign languages, especially the language of target countries			0.41	
44	A condition to use the experiences of other countries in the field of entrepreneurship in sports tourism			0.43	
45	Providing a scientific and technological atmosphere for sports tourism			0.72	
46	Teaching entrepreneurial skills to the family			0.75	
47	Training on risk-taking and investing in the sports tourism industry through mechanisms that reduce uncertainty in the sports tourism market			0.79	
48	Increasing the entrepreneurial intention and tendency in the sports tourism industry through entrepreneurship education in the educational field related to sports and tourism sciences			0.80	
49	Promoting creativity and ideas in the sports tourism industry through training, documenting, and publishing the experiences of tourism entrepreneurs			0.65	
50	Providing economic infrastructure needed for sports tourism businesses				0.50
51	Supporting the country's banking systems to sports tourism entrepreneurs				0.53
52	Reducing the expenses of purchasing and maintaining equipment and facilities in various sports tourism sectors				0.48
53	Increasing the governmental investment in sports tourism				0.76
54	Appropriate use of all kinds of advertisements in sports tourism				0.62
55	Governmental efforts to introduce sports tourism attractions to tourists				0.47
56	Making sports tourism entrepreneurship processes more efficient using systematic management				0.51
57	Promoting political and legal support for the sports tourism industry by making the structure of the organization non-bureaucratic, and strengthening intra-sector links				0.59
58	The attention of the trustees to the geographical and local				0.66

	Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
	basis of the development of sports tourism and the elimination of the weaknesses in the technical management and engineering of sports and tourism				
59	Establishing intermediary institutions which facilitate information				0.69
60	Facilities and financial assistance to entrepreneurs in the field of sports tourism				0.81
61	Revision and redesign of entrepreneurial processes in the sports tourism industry through structure and program modification				0.75
62	The ability to understand opportunities and capabilities in the sports tourism industry through informational and legal support				0.69
63	Developing the resources and financial capital in the sports tourism industry through loans, facilities, and credits, and forming an independent investment fund				0.47
64	Developing the physical capital and facilities in the sports tourism industry through increasing private sector participation and investment				0.43
65	Economic growth and employment in the sports tourism industry through the support of small and medium industries				0.52
66	Establishing financial facilitation intermediary institutions				0.47
67	Expanding biodiversity and environmental health through the strategy of expanding the geographic and native base of the regional scope of entrepreneurship in the tourism industry				0.78
68	Consulting institutions to lunch sports tourism businesses				0.83
69	Physical infrastructure (transportation, etc.)				0.66
70	Promotion of welfare services and development of sports infrastructures through strengthening the strategy of developing sports tourism entrepreneurial resources with a diversity approach				0.63
71	Developing resources and human capital in the sports tourism industry through establishing a database of stakeholders				0.47
72	Developing the chain of innovation in sports tourism products and services through establishing national and regional information networks				0.61
73	Infrastructures based on information technology				0.70
74	Developing sports communications and exchanges through a strategy of redesigning the structure and managing the development of sports tourism entrepreneurship with a flexible approach				0.55

In the following, by using the skewness and kurtosis tests, since all the indices were in the range of +2 to -2, it can be said that the data has a normal distribution, therefore, parametric tests can be used to measure the hypotheses. In this regard, at first, one sample T-test was taken to determine the importance of the research components by comparing their mean with the hypothetical mean (score 3 considering that the questionnaire is based on a 5-point Likert scale) from the point of view of sports tourism entrepreneurs. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. One sample t-test to determine the role of the score of institutional factors

Variable	Mean	T	Sig.
Administrative and legal	4.25	15.029	0.001
Normative and cultural	4.15	18.916	0.001
Cognitive and educational	4.63	12.461	0.001
Guidance and supportive	4.38	11.143	0.001
Institutional factors	4.52	13.678	0.001

As can be seen in Table 5, the mean score of institutional factors and all its components indicates a favorable situation, so that their mean score was reported to be more than 3. Also, according to the significance levels, all of which are less than 0.01, it can be said that there is a significant difference between the

mean of institutional factors and all its components with the hypothetical mean.

In the following, using structural equation modeling, the conceptual model of the research was fitted in two standard and T modes, the results of which can be seen in Figures 2 and 3.

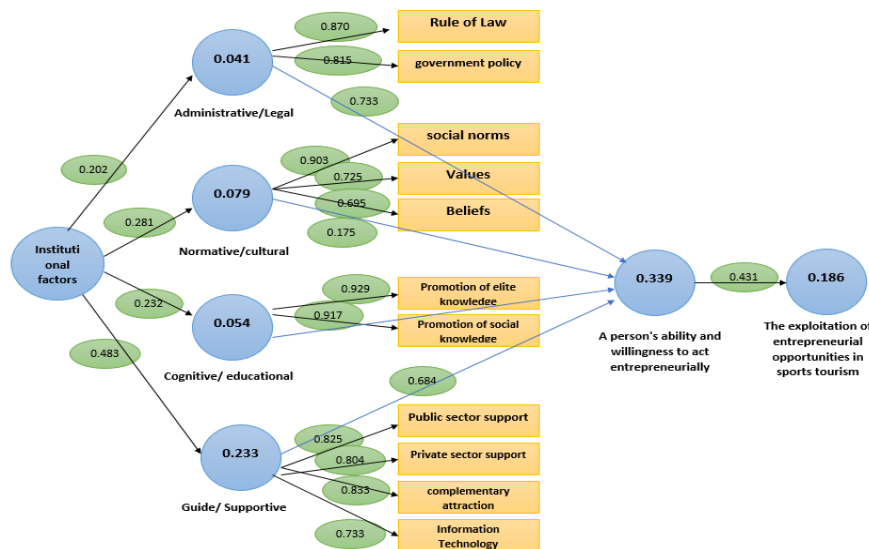


Figure 2. Structural model of research in standard mode

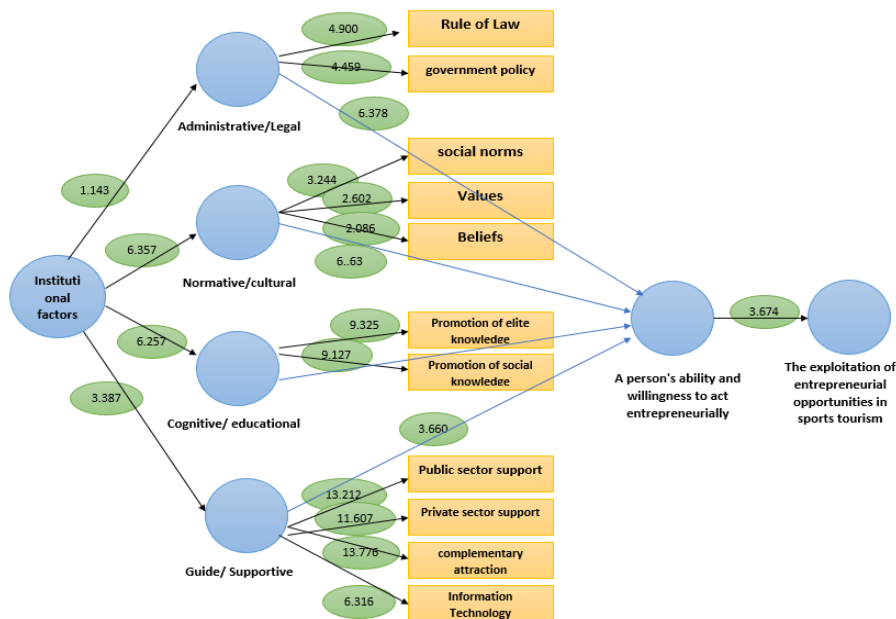


Figure 3. Structural model of the research in T mode

To fit the research model, the root mean square index of the standard residual was used, and the value of this index is considered to be less than 0.08, and the model

has a good fit. Therefore, according to the results of Table 6, it can be said that the research model has a good fit. Other model fit indices have also been calculated.

Table 6. Standardized regression weights

Variables	β	Critical ratio	Sig.
Institutional factors \rightarrow Legal/administrative dimension	0.202	1.143	0.001
Institutional factors \rightarrow Normative/cultural dimension	0.281	6.357	0.023
Institutional factors \rightarrow Cognitive/educational dimension	0.232	6.257	0.006
Institutional factors \rightarrow Guiding/supportive dimension	0.483	3.387	0.001
Institutional factors \rightarrow Utilization of entrepreneurial capacities in sports tourism	0.431	3.674	0.001

The results of Table 6 show the standardized regression weights of the model. According to the regression coefficient of 0.20 and the critical ratio of 1.14 and the significance level

is less than 0.05, institutional factors have a positive and significant effect on the legal/administrative dimension.

Discussion

Findings indicate that the necessary institutional factors in the legal-administrative, normative-cultural, cognitive-educational, and guiding-supportive dimensions can expand entrepreneurial behavior by enhancing the ability and willingness of entrepreneurs to exploit entrepreneurial capacities in sports tourism (Figures 2 & 3). Thus, cognitive-educational factors with a coefficient of 0.48 have the greatest impact on the ability and willingness of people to take entrepreneurial actions to utilization the capacities of sports tourism, then normative-cultural factors with a coefficient of 0.28, cognitive-educational factors with a coefficient of 0.23 and legal-administrative factors with a coefficient of 0.20 are ranked next in importance. The research results of North (1990), Scott (1995), Stenholm et al. (2013), Kaynak & Kuan (1993), Heydari et al (2021), Sendra-Pons et al. (2021, 2022) also confirm the results of this research.

Based on the results, the participants assigned the highest level of importance to the cognitive-educational dimension with an average of 4.63. The participants declare the following suggestions to enhance the willingness for entrepreneurial behavior to utilize the opportunities in sports tourism:

- Increasing the number of trained people in line with the development and promotion of sports tourism,
- Increasing the existing interactions between the university and the sports tourism industry,
- Improving knowledge and technology in the sports tourism industry by providing higher education in the field of entrepreneurship and sports tourism,
- Launching scientific courses disciplines in the field of sports tourism,
- Teaching marketing, management, and entrepreneurship for companies and intermediary organizations in the field of sports tourism,
- Teaching foreign languages, especially the languages of the target countries,
- Creating suitable platforms for using experiences of leading countries in the field of entrepreneurship in sports tourism,
- Providing a scientific and technological atmosphere for sports tourism,
- Teaching entrepreneurial skills to families,
- Training and developing risk-taking and investing in the sports tourism industry through mechanisms that reduce uncertainty in the

sports tourism market,

- Increasing intention and willingness towards entrepreneurship in the sports tourism industry through the provision of entrepreneurship training in the field of education related to sports science and tourism,
- And the development and promotion of creativity and ideas in the sports tourism industry through training, documenting, and publishing the experiences of tourism entrepreneurs.

Following the results, the second dimension influencing the utilization of entrepreneurial capacities in sports tourism in Iran in terms of importance was the guiding-supportive dimension with an average of 4.38. This dimension can expand the utilization of entrepreneurial capacities in sports tourism through the followings:

- Designing and creating economic infrastructures for sports tourism businesses,
- Supporting the country's banking system for entrepreneurs interested in this field by providing suitable loans with low interest,
- Reducing expenses related to the purchase and maintenance of equipment and facilities in various sports tourism sectors,
- Governmental investment in this area,
- Increasing advertising,
- Introducing sports tourism attractions to tourists by governmental organizations,
- Improving political-legal support for the sports tourism industry,
- Reforming the structure and programs related to entrepreneurial processes in the tourism industry,
- Improving information and legal support through increasing the ability to understand

opportunities in the sports tourism industry,

- Supporting small and medium businesses to increase economic growth and employment in the sports tourism industry,
- Developing welfare services and sports infrastructure through strengthening the strategy of developing entrepreneurial resources,
- Establishing infrastructure based on information technology, etc.

Following this point, Kanwal et al (2020), in a research concluded that people's understanding of road infrastructure and transportation is directly related to society's support for tourism, and this causes society's satisfaction with tourism. Also, Khodabakhshzadeh et al (2020), consider the economic, political, communication, infrastructural, and management axes to be influential on the development of tourism. In another research, Heydari et al (2021), examined the issue of support from two points of view "public sector support and private sector support" and they stated that the public sector can provide more growth by creating facilitation mechanisms for entrepreneurs in this field while the private sector can also make it more prosperous by investing people and entrepreneurs interested in this industry.

In this regard, the third dimension influencing the exploitation of entrepreneurial capacities in sports tourism in Iran from the perspective of the participants is the legal-administrative dimension with an average of 4.25. Here are suggestions towards this:

- Regulating effective laws for the presence of intermediaries and entrepreneurs in the virtual world,
- Formulating specific and codified laws for sports tourism businesses,
- Providing legal platforms for the public to enter the sports tourism industry,

- Integrating the laws and regulations of organizations related to sports tourism,
- Clarifying and creating stability in the laws and regulations of this field,
- Reducing sanctions along with political and national crises,
- Delegating sufficient authority to business owners in the field of sports tourism,
- Eliminating and speeding up the processes of obtaining employment creation permits in this field,
- Increasing executive guarantee of contracts between entrepreneurs and relevant organizations,
- Identifying the companies and agencies in the field of sports tourism,
- Investigating and handling criticisms and complaints of sports tourists based on the laws and regulations of the country,
- Formulating security policies related to sports tourism areas, especially beaches,
- And the dynamic growth of the economic environment of the sports tourism industry through serious revision of banking laws and regulations.

In this regard, Heydari et al (2021), considers the role of governments in this field to be much more prominent than other factors and state that the formulation of laws that reduce severe administrative bureaucracies and make it easier for entrepreneurs to start a business is one of the important duties of governments in this field that Rodrik, et al. (2004) also confirmed this issue, but Kaynak & Kuan (1993) considered this effect to be limited.

Finally, the fourth dimension influencing the utilization of entrepreneurial capacities in sports tourism was the normative-cultural dimension with an average of 4.15. Towards

this dimension suggestions are as follows:

- Removing cultural and social limitations in relation to the spread of sports tourism,
- Taking into account the public well-being,
- Developing the cultural and social capabilities and capacities of sports tourism,
- Increasing citizens' awareness towards the benefits of sports tourism,
- Managing cultural developments and social participation through strategy sanitation and cultivation in the sports recreation space,
- Institutionalization of sports recreation culture among different strata of society,
- Increasing and improving the understanding of opportunities and capabilities in the sports tourism industry to create a suitable attitude towards the category of wealth and capital among the beneficiaries, activists, and applicants of this field,
- Providing incentives for financial and tax exemptions for the top entrepreneurs in the field of sports tourism,
- Increasing the spirit of hospitality in the Islamic and Iranian culture of the people of the country,
- Creating a suitable structure and culture in organizations to increase the culture of organizational entrepreneurship in sports tourism,
- Providing the necessary platform to improve economic security to take risks and invest in the sports tourism industry,
- Developing of entrepreneurial intention and desire in the sports tourism industry with the support of social and cultural norms of entrepreneurship,
- Developing of a culture of creativity and idea cultivation in the sports tourism industry by reforming the repressive structure and culture

prevailing in the country,

- Cultivation in this area through the use of promotional teasers,
- And promoting and developing organizational entrepreneurship in sports tourism centers through creating job incentives.

In this regard, Peng (2013), considered cultural elements to be effective in the development of the tourism industry, and Heydari et al (2021), also introduced the normative-cultural factor as influential in this context. Also, in research by Nilsson (2019), he consider culture as an important factor in the growth of urban tourism by bicycling and believe that to the sustainable growth of tourism to use the tools such as bicycles for urban tourism, it is necessary to create a cycling culture among people.

Conclusion

Entrepreneurship has taken a centre staged in the global economic activities. The global crisis has led to the phenomenon where individuals have decided to take their destinies into their own hands by pursuing opportunities in the global space. As way of lessening the burden on governments, various initiatives are kept in place to ensure that entrepreneurs succeed. Key among the initiatives is putting in place appropriate institutional frameworks to ensuring that entrepreneurs succeed (Udimal et al. 2020). So, based on the results, the followings are suggested on behalf of the government to develop the sports tourism industry and attract investors and entrepreneurs interested in this era:

- Providing the necessary and appropriate platforms such as formulating specific and codified laws and regulations and facilitating administrative processes,
- Developing desirable social norms regarding sports tourism,
- Providing necessary training through the existing fields to create a culture of sports

tourism,

- Helping to better understand of this area,
- Carrying out extensive and targeted advertising to better introduce and develop the sports tourism industry,
- And finally providing material and spiritual support for the development of this industry for the expansion and development of the sports tourism industry, which is an emerging industry with high economic potential.

In general, this research provides new insights regarding the institutional factors affecting the utilization of entrepreneurial capacities in the field of sports tourism, and it is hoped that these results will be used by researchers, managers, and policymakers.

Acknowledgement

The authors are grateful to all participants of this research.

References

1. Almodovar-Gonzalez, M., Fernandez-Portillo, A., & Díaz-Casero, J. C. (2020). Entrepreneurial activity and economic growth. A multi-country analysis. *European Research on Management and Business Economics*, 26(1), 9–17.
2. Acs, Z. J., & Audretsch, D. B. (2005). Entrepreneurship and innovation. Max Planck institute of economics, group for entrepreneurship. *Growth and Public Policy Working Paper N° No.* 2005-21.
3. Ball, S. (2005). The importance of entrepreneurship to hospitality, leisure, sport, and tourism. *Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Network*, 1(1), 1-14.
4. Booth, P., Chaperon, S. A., Kennell, J. S., & Morrison, A. M. (2020). Entrepreneurship in island contexts: A systematic review of the tourism and hospitality literature. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 85,

- 102438.
5. Brandão, F., Costa, C., Breda, Z., & Costa, R. (2020). Knowledge creation and transfer in tourism innovation networks. In *Advances in Tourism, Technology and Smart Systems Springer*, Singapore, 275-287.
 6. Brown, G., Smith, A., & Assaker, G. (2016). Revisiting the host city: An empirical examination of sport involvement, place attachment, event satisfaction and spectator intentions at the London Olympics. *Tourism management*, 55, 160-172.
 7. Content, J., Bosma, N., Jordaan, J., & Sanders, M. (2020). Entrepreneurial ecosystems, entrepreneurial activity and economic growth: New evidence from European regions. *Regional Studies*, 54(8), 1007–1019.
 8. Darabi, M., Keshtidar, M., Alizaiy_Yousef_Abadi, O., Heydari, R., & Nazari-Torshizi, A. (2020). Scenario planning of the future of sports tourism industry in Mashhad. *Annals of Applied Sport Science*, 8(4), 0-0.
 9. Darbellay, F. Stock, M. (2012), Tourism as Complex interdict plenary research, *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 39, No. 1 pp: 441–458.
 10. Davidsson, P. (2009). The entrepreneurship research challenge. *Edward Elgar Publishing*.
 11. Dubreuil. M. 2009. Human resource module to Canadian TSA: Role as information source and as instrument for training adjustment. *5th UNWTO International Conference on tourism statistical*. 24.
 12. Funk, D. C., & Bruun, T. J. (2007). The role of socio-psychological and culture-education motives in marketing international sport tourism: A cross-cultural perspective. *Tourism management*, 28(3), 806-819.
 13. Gibson, H. J., Kaplanidou, K., & Kang, S. J. (2013). Small-scale event sport tourism: A case study in sustainable tourism. *Sport management review*, 15(2), 160-170.
 14. Heydari, R., Keshtiar, M., Asadollahi, E., Esfahani, M., Gologli, M. (2021). Identifying institutional factors affecting the exploitation of entrepreneurship opportunities in the tourism industry with a focus on sports tourism in Iran. *Journal of Tourism Planning and Development*, 10(38), 87-102.
 15. Heydari, R., talebpour, M., nazari torshizi, A., shajie, K., Jaberi, S. (2020). Codification of Strategies for Competitiveness and Sports Tourism Development in Cities by using of Meta SWOT Technique (Case Study: Mashhad Metropolis). *Urban tourism*, 7(1), 143-159.
 16. Hinch, T., & Ito, E. (2018). Sustainable sport tourism in Japan. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 15(1), 96-101.
 17. Hwang, J., & Lee, K. W. (2018). The antecedents and consequences of golf tournament spectators' memorable brand experiences. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 9, 1-11.
 18. Kanwal, S., Rasheed, M. I., Pitafi, A. H., Pitafi, A., & Ren, M. (2020). Road and transport infrastructure development and community support for tourism: The role of perceived benefits, and community satisfaction. *Tourism Management*, 77, 104014.
 19. Kaynak, E., & Kuan, W. K. Y. (1993). Environment, strategy, structure, and performance in the context of export activity: an empirical study of Taiwanese manufacturing firms. *Journal of Business Research*, 27(1), 33-49.
 20. Khodabakhshzadeh, Amin, Ghahraman Tabrizi, Kouros, Sharifian, Ismail. (2020).The effect of knowledge management in the development of sports tourism in Kerman province. *Journal of Sports Management*, 12 (1): 241-257.
 21. Nilsson, J. H. (2019). Urban bicycle tourism: path dependencies and innovation in Greater Copenhagen. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 27(11), 1648-1662.
 22. North, D. C. (1990). Institutions, institutional change and economic performance. Cambridge, MA: *Cambridge*

- University Press.
23. Nová, J. (2015). Developing the entrepreneurial competencies of sport management students. *Procedia-Social and behavioral sciences*, 174, 3916-3924.
 24. Peng, M. W. (2013). Global strategy. *Cengage learning*.
 25. Peng, M. W., Sun, S. L., Pinkham, B., & Chen, H. (2009). The institution-based view as a third leg for a strategy tripod. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 23(3), 63-81.
 26. Pereira, E., Mascarenhas, M., & Pires, G. (2015). Sport event potentiation process at portimao tourism resort. *Sport Tourism: New Challenges in a Globalized World*. 95.
 27. Pratt, S., & Tolkach, D. (2018). The politics of tourism statistics. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 20(3), 299-307.
 28. Raisi, H., Baggio, R., Barratt-Pugh, L., & Willson, G. (2020). A network perspective of knowledge transfer in tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 80, 102817.
 29. Roche, S., Spake, D. F., & Joseph, M. (2013). A model of sporting event tourism as economic development. *Sport, Business and Management: An International Journal*.
 30. Rodrik, D., Subramanian, A., & Trebbi, F. (2004). Institutions rule: the primacy of institutions over geography and integration in economic development. *Journal of economic growth*, 9(2), 131-165.
 31. Scott, W. R. (1995). Institutions and organizations. Foundations for organizational science. *London: A Sage Publication Series*.
 32. Schumpeter, J. A. (2017). *Essays: On entrepreneurs, innovations, business cycles and the evolution of capitalism*. Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.
 33. Sendra-Pons, P., Belarbi-Munoz, S., Garzon, D., & Mas-Tur, A. (2021). Cross-country differences in drivers of female necessity entrepreneurship. *Service Business*, 1-19.
 34. Sendra-Pons, P., Comeig, I., & Mas-Tur, A. (2022). Institutional factors affecting entrepreneurship: A QCA analysis. *European Research on Management and Business Economics*, 28, 100187.
 35. Shane, S., & Venkataraman, S. (2000). The promise of entrepreneurship as a field of research. *Academy of management review*, 25(1), 217-226.
 36. Shane, S., Locke, E. A., & Collins, C. J. (2003). Entrepreneurial motivation. *Human resource management review*, 13(2), 257-279.
 37. Sobel, R. S. (2008). Testing Baumol: Institutional quality and the productivity of entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 23(6), 641-655.
 38. Stenholm, P., ACS, Z. J., & Wuebker, R. (2013). Exploring country-level institutional arrangements on the rate and type of entrepreneurial activity. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 28(1), 176-193.
 39. Udimal, T. B., Luo, M., LiuE. & Mensah, N. O. (2020). How has formal institutions influenced opportunity and necessity entrepreneurship? The case of brics economies. *Heliyon*, 6, e04931.
 40. UNWTO. (2017) Tourism Highlights.
 41. Van der Zee, E. L. (2011). Image improvement as a tangible legacy of Hallmark Events; the case of the 2010 World Cup in South Africa (*Master's thesis*).
 42. Watanabe, Y., Gilbert, C., Aman, M. S., & Zhang, J. J. (2018). Attracting international spectators to a sport event held in Asia. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*.
 43. World Travel and Tourism Council. (2017) Travel & Tourism Global Economic Impact & Issues 2017.