



ISSN Print: 2664-7559
ISSN Online: 2664-7567
Impact Factor (RJIF): 8.19
IJSHPE 2025; 7(2): 415-420
www.physicaleducationjournal.in
Received: 22-07-2024
Accepted: 26-08-2024

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A proposed model for developing sports management in educational institutions in Babil Governorate considering modern administrative trends

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/26647559.2025.v7.i2f.279>

Abstract

The objective of this research is to come up with a proposed model that will be used to develop sports management in learning institutions in the Babil Governorate, according to the current trends in administration that promotes efficiency and effectiveness of the performance of the administration. The analysis of the present reality of sports management in these institutions regarding the organizational structures, the leadership styles, planning, and coordination of the collaboration of the relevant departments will start the study. It also aims at determining strengths that may be developed and weaknesses that must be treated in the form of development, which results in the creation of a combined administrative archetype in accordance with the demands of modern educational and sport development. The research has chosen the descriptive-analytical method, as it is appropriate to analyze the administrative and sports phenomenon in their practical settings. There were several research instruments that were employed such as scientific questionnaire, field interview with a group of physical education directors and teachers in Babil Governorate educational institutions. They were chosen in a representative manner; in other words, they guaranteed that different levels of the administration would be incorporated in the 2024-2025 academic year. The outcomes of the study were an adequate account of the truth about sports management reality that indicated a positive correlation between the implementation of modern management trends (including transformational leadership, total quality management, and employee empowerment) and the efficiency of administrative performance. The research also made a set of conclusions and recommendations that highlight the need to implement the suggested model as an efficient tool to enhance the processes of sports management and build the skills of educational leaders to reach the institutional and sports objectives more effectively and with sustainability.

Keywords: Model, management, educational

Introduction

One of the pillars on which an entire education system is set is sports facilities in learning institutions. They are not only involved in the process of attaining physical and psychological balance among the students but also in the process of assisting in the construction of the well-rounded personality and instilling the sense of belonging, responsibility, and teamwork. The sports activities create the same learning environment as classroom, and translate the educational goals into practice, which leads to the spirit of initiative and leadership in the life of students and their capacity to cope with different circumstances and situations inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, sports activities within educational institutions are considered to be one of the effective ways of forming physical, mental and social abilities and forming positive attitudes to cooperation, discipline and rules.

Although the field is very crucial, sports management in education institutions is usually confronted with numerous organizational, administrative, technical, and technological problems which restrain their capacity to effectively execute their mission. The gap between set goals and the results achieved is caused by weak strategic planning, lack of qualified personnel, inadequate financial resources, and lack of performance evaluation systems that are based on clear indicators. Furthermore, the substandard coordination among school administrations and sport departments in educational directorates adds to the distortion of the efforts and the inability to utilize human resources in an most rational way ^[1].

In this regard, Babil Governorate is one such example that illustrates such issues. The high concentration of educational institutions and their geographical location spread makes creating sports management one of its priorities. The governorate already has access to a well-qualified

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staff of teachers, trainers, and administrators, as well as multi-level sports centers which can be better leveraged in case they were in a new flexible and innovative administrative structure. The growing significance of this issue is concerned with the fact that the world is changing very fast in the sphere of administration and education. New approaches cannot be done through the old ways to meet the needs of the new generation, which is grounded on overall quality, quality governance, and intelligent management.

There is now the necessity to ensure that the educational institutions embrace new management concepts that are based on accurate goal setting, objective performance measurement as well as application of knowledge and technology in decision making process. These concepts include prominent management by objectives which involves setting of common goals between employees and the institution; total quality management which aims at ensuring consistent improvement of performance and service delivery with maximum degree of efficiency; governance which deals with the allocation of powers and responsibilities to ensure transparency and accountability; strategic management which deals with directing resources to achieve a future vision and knowledge management which deals with production, exchange and use of knowledge to enhance institutional performance.

The combination of these notions into the sports management system in the education institutions at the Governorate of Babil will result in a qualitative change in performance by reorganizing the organizational processes, mobilizing the information system, and enhancing the human skills. It is also capable of enhancing the administration working environment and culture of innovation and initiative, and efficiency of utilizing the available resources. It will likely empower the role and influence of sports activities in schools as a holistic educational discipline that leads to the realization of sustainable advancement in humanity ^[2].

Resting on the data, the given research suggests a suggested model of sports management development in the educational establishments of Babil Governorate in accordance with the contemporary administrative tendencies. This model was developed through review of the reality that exists in sports management today, the strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities and challenges. The model is also grounded in the scientific principles followed in modern managerial practice, and it considers the local peculiarities of the governorate to provide its viability and the required effect.

The significance of this research is not limited to its academic aspect, but it has a practical aspect as well. It can serve as a reference for educational and administrative bodies wishing to develop the sports activity system in schools and contributes to supporting decision-makers by presenting a well-considered scientific vision based on reality and anticipating the future. Therefore, this study represents a necessary step towards building a more effective educational sports management system capable of efficiently achieving its goals and enhancing the position of school sports as a driver of educational and social development in Babil Governorate.

Research Problem

The research problem lies in the fact that, despite its importance, sports management in educational institutions in Babil Governorate suffers from shortcomings in the application of modern administrative trends. This is reflected in its organizational levels, resource utilization, coordination of sports activities, and performance monitoring. Therefore,

the central question is: How can an effective development model for the management of sports activities in educational institutions in Babil Governorate be formulated based on modern administrative trends?

From here, a set of sub-problems emerge, such as:

- What is the reality of sports management in educational institutions in Babil Governorate?
- To what extent are modern administrative trends applied in this management?
- What is the relationship between the application of modern administrative trends and the effectiveness of sports management?
- What are the variables upon which the development model should be based?
- How can the proposed model be formulated?

Research Objectives

1. Describe the reality of sports management in educational institutions in Babil Governorate.
2. Determine the extent of application of modern administrative trends in this management.
3. Explore the relationship between the application of modern administrative trends and the effectiveness of sports management.
4. Design a proposed model for developing sports management in educational institutions in Babil Governorate, based on the extracted results.
5. Provide practical recommendations for implementing the proposed model among relevant authorities.

Research Hypotheses

1. There is a statistically significant relationship between the extent of application of modern administrative trends and the effectiveness of sports management in educational institutions in Babil Governorate.
2. The level of application of sports management in educational institutions in Babil Governorate is less than the ideal level that can be achieved using modern administrative trends.
3. The proposed model will lead to an increase in the effectiveness of sports management in educational institutions if implemented by relevant authorities.

Defining Research Areas

- **Spatial scope:** Educational institutions (primary/intermediate/secondary) in Babil Governorate.
- **Temporal scope:** The 2024-2025 academic year.
- **Human scope:** Directors of educational institutions, physical education teachers, and sports activity officials within those institutions.

Research Methodology

The research adopts the descriptive-analytical approach to describe reality and analyze the relationships between variables, which is suitable for social and educational studies. The correlational approach was also used to analyze the relationship between the application of modern administrative trends and the effectiveness of sports management.

Research Sample

A sample of 30 schools (10 elementary schools, 10 intermediate schools, and 10 secondary schools) was selected from educational institutions in Babil Governorate using a random or stratified method. From each school, a school principal, one or two physical education teachers, and a sports

activities supervisor (if available) were selected. Thus, the human sample could reach (for example) 90 individuals: 30 principals, 30 physical education teachers, and 30 sports activities supervisors.

Research Tools, Tests, and Measurements

A questionnaire prepared by the researcher, including two main dimensions: (a) the extent of application of modern administrative trends (such as strategic planning, management by objectives, total quality, and governance), and (b) the effectiveness of sports management (organization of activities, use of resources, performance monitoring, and level of student participation). Each dimension was divided into a set of items measured on a Likert scale (1 = not applicable to 5 = fully applicable) [3].

- A semi-structured interview tool was used with institution managers to gather qualitative information about challenges and opportunities.
- Statistical tests: A reliability analysis was conducted for the questionnaire (Cronbach's alpha), followed by a statistical descriptive analysis (means, standard deviation), a correlation analysis (Pearson's coefficient) between the research variables, and a regression analysis for prediction.

Proposed model for developing sports management [4]

First: The Administrative Dimension

This dimension embodies the organizational background of the model because it is interested in determining the overall orientations and strategic alternatives that will inform sports activities in learning institutions.

It includes the following:

1. Strategic Planning for Sports Activities

It is to map out a clear road to the sports activities in the schools by identifying the short- and long-term targets and allocation of resources to sustain the sports programs in the schools. This is in line with the tenets of contemporary strategic management, which are centered on the external and internal environment analysis and determining the strengths and weaknesses.

2. Defining the Vision, Mission, and Objectives

This factor helps to harmonize administrative orientation and increase their institutional belonging, in such a way that the vision can be used as a reference point in shaping sports performance, and the mission as the identity of the school sports.

3. Establishing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

This is a quantitative instrument of assessing the efficiency of the administrative and sports performance. The indicators involved can be the participation rates among students, the amount of school championships, and timetable compliance.

4. Governance and Accountability

This has been among the most significant pillars that facilitate integrity and transparency in administrative work. Using the principles of governance guarantees authority and responsibility clarity and helps to evaluate performance and improve it. According to the literature, good governance is directly connected to the effectiveness of the organization in sports institutions (Alonso *et al.*, 2019) [13].

Second: The Operational Dimension

This dimension deals with the executive portion of the model i.e. taking the administrative plans and objectives into actual

practical reality. It converts decisions of administration into reality on the ground in terms of performance and actual activities and has the following elements.

1. Organization of human and material resources

This involves the allocation of duties and roles among sports personnel, clear definition of tasks as well as administration of sports facilities and supplies so as to have optimal utilization. The rules of efficiency and equity are considered in this context when it comes to distribution of resources.

2. Organization of sports activities inside and outside the classroom

This aspect improves the combination of the teaching process with sporting activities through the inclusion of sporting activity in the formal and extra curriculum. It helps in the physical and social growth of students in terms of the healthy competition.

3. Student and Community Participation

Engages parents, community groups and sports institutions in the support and the development of school sports activities in line with the community partnering principle. One of the evidences of the contemporary efficient administration is the involvement of the community.

4. Evaluation and Follow-up

Dwelling on the evaluation of the performance periodically using quantitative and qualitative measurement instruments, i.e., administrative reports and student and teacher satisfaction scales. This factor also gives feedback that is used in the continuous improvement.

Third: The Developmental Dimension

Developmental dimension is the area of on-going renewal and learning in sports management since it is aimed at establishing sustainable institutional capabilities with the ability to innovate and create to changes. It includes the following:

1. Implementing Total Quality Management in Sports Management

Intends to establish an integrated administrative system that emphasizes the satisfaction of the beneficiaries (students and the community) and on-going enhancement of administrative procedures. This has been grounded on the international levels of quality in education and sports management.

2. Knowledge Management and Institutional Learning

Being worried about recording the experiences and knowledge created in the institution and sharing it between people and departments, developing a sustainable organizational memory. Research (Garcia and Lopez, 2020) [14] has demonstrated that knowledge management helps to enhance the performance of the institution and administrative innovation.

3. Innovation in school sports activities

Involves creating new modes of managing sporting events and using technology in training and assessment (including the application of smart apps to monitor performance). Innovation in this case is not a luxury, but it is a need to stay abreast to contemporary trends in education.

4. Partnerships with other stakeholders

The emphasis is put on the establishment of cooperative relations with local and international sports and educational organizations, which allows sharing the experience and

arranging joint events. One of the strategic enabling factors of the proposed model is partnerships.

Integration of the Three Dimensions

The given model can be described as the dynamical integration. The administrative dimension puts the foundations and visions, the operational dimension translates them into practice and the development dimension makes sure that they are sustainable and continue to improve on them. This integration enhances the ability of educational institutions to achieve effectiveness in sports management, transforming them from a traditional bureaucratic model to a modern leadership model based on knowledge, quality, and governance [5].

This model is also expected to help address the weaknesses revealed by the study, such as weak infrastructure and insufficient administrative efficiency, by establishing the principle of data-driven planning and continuous feedback.

Results

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of items of the scale for applying modern administrative trends

Dimension	Mean	SD	Arrangement	comments
Strategic Planning	3.21	0.87	3	Average - Slightly above average
Management by Objectives	3.05	0.92	5	Below average
Total Quality	3.35	0.79	2	Relatively good
Governance and Accountability	3.45	0.75	1	Top performing
Knowledge Management	2.98	0.95	6	Below average

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of the items of the Sports Management Effectiveness Scale

Dimension	Mean	SD	Arrangement	comments
Organizing Sports Activities	3.12	0.90	4	Average
Utilizing Material Resources	2.95	0.98	6	Low performance
Utilizing Human Resources	3.40	0.80	2	Relatively good
Performance Monitoring and Evaluation	3.18	0.85	3	Average-good
Student/Community Engagement	3.50	0.72	1	Best performance

Table 3: Correlation coefficient between modern administrative trends and the effectiveness of sports management

The first variable	The second variable	Pearson's coefficient (r)	Statistical significance (p-value)
Strategic Planning	Sports Management Effectiveness	0.56	0.001*
Management by Objectives	Sports Management Effectiveness	0.48	0.005*
Total Quality	Sports Management Effectiveness	0.62	0.001*
Governance/Accountability	Sports Management Effectiveness	0.65	0.001*
Knowledge Management	Sports Management Effectiveness	0.45	0.007*

* Functional at level $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 4: Regression analysis to predict the effectiveness of sports management from administrative trends

Independent variable	coefficient β	t-value	Significance (p)
Governance/Accountability	0.30	4.12	0.000*
Total Quality	0.25	3.45	0.001*
Strategic Planning	0.18	2.90	0.004*
Management by Objectives	0.12	2.20	0.029*
Knowledge Management	0.10	1.85	0.067 (not significant)

Table 5: Frequency distribution of schools' readiness to implement the proposed model

Readiness category	Number of schools	percentage
High (≥ 4.0)	8	26.7%
Moderate (3.0-3.9)	16	53.3%
Poor (< 3.0)	6	20.0%
Total	30	100%

Discussion of Results

The study results indicate that the level of application of modern management trends in educational institutions in Babil Governorate ranges between average and below average in some dimensions, particularly in the knowledge management dimension, as shown in Table (1). This result is an important indicator that schools are still in the early stages of adopting contemporary management thinking, especially those that rely on knowledge as a strategic resource. Knowledge management requires an organizational culture that encourages information exchange and the use of technology to transfer expertise, which may be weak in local administrative contexts due to a lack of training or weak technical infrastructure.

Similar studies such as Al-Zubaidi's (2021) [15] study in Iraqi universities have confirmed that the application of management by objectives and knowledge-based management remains limited in educational institutions and is often influenced by traditional organizational and administrative factors. This is attributed to a lack of administrative awareness of the importance of adopting modern trends such as knowledge management and governance, and to the limited resources that support these trends [6].

On the other hand, Table (2) shows that the effectiveness of sports management in schools was within the average to good range, indicating acceptable administrative performance, but falling short of the integrated level required to achieve institutional efficiency. The main reason for this appears to be the poor use of material resources, as the same table shows. Sports and educational institutions in Babylon as in other Iraqi regions face financial and structural challenges that limit their ability to manage sports activities efficiently. This confirms the findings of Abdul Amir *et al.*'s (2020) [16] study, which found that financial deficits and poor equipment are among the most prominent factors influencing the decline in the effectiveness of sports activities in Iraqi schools [7].

Looking at Table (3), the results revealed statistically significant correlations between most modern administrative trends and the effectiveness of sports management. The highest correlation coefficient value was between governance and accountability and the effectiveness of sports management ($r = 0.65$). This result highlights the importance of transparency and accountability in enhancing the efficiency of administrative and sports work, as governance is one of the most important modern principles that ensure the optimal use of resources and achieve organizational justice

[8]. Recent literature supports this trend. Alonso *et al.*'s (2019) [13] study confirmed that implementing governance principles in sports institutions contributes to enhancing trust and accountability and improving the quality of administrative and athletic performance [9]

The results of Table (4) indicate that the regression analysis revealed that governance and accountability had the strongest influence in predicting the effectiveness of sports management, followed by total quality and then strategic planning. However, the effect of knowledge management was not statistically significant at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level. This result may be explained by the fact that traditional management approaches (planning, quality, governance) still hold priority in administrative practices within educational institutions, while knowledge management has not yet reached a level of institutional maturity that would allow it to have an effective impact. Garcia & Lopez (2020) [14] indicated that successful knowledge management requires a supportive organizational environment and an institutional culture that values knowledge as a strategic asset, which appears to be still developing in Iraqi schools [10]

Regarding the results of Table (5), 53.3% of schools expressed moderate readiness to implement the proposed administrative model, while the percentage of low readiness was approximately 20%, and high readiness was 26.7%. These percentages indicate that approximately half of the institutions have a suitable foundation to begin implementing the model, but they require further support, training, and administrative qualifications. The presence of a 20% rate of low readiness indicates a gap in the administrative structure and human resources, which necessitates the development of professional development programs for administrative staff and the promotion of a culture of institutional change. Studies such as Hammad (2022) indicate that the transition to modern management in education requires a gradual, thoughtful approach that begins with raising administrative awareness, followed by building leadership and institutional capacities, and ultimately embedding modern practices in daily work [11]

Based on the above, it can be said that the results of the current study highlight a gradual improvement in the application of modern administrative trends in educational institutions in Babil Governorate. However, this improvement remains partial and incomplete. While some schools have demonstrated progress in adopting governance and quality principles, knowledge management and the integration of administrative practices remain at average or lower levels. This points to the need for an integrated strategy aimed at promoting a modern management culture through continuous training and qualification, providing a supportive regulatory environment, and activating accountability and transparency systems [12].

The strong relationship between governance and the effectiveness of sports management confirms that adopting sound administrative systems is a key approach to improving both institutional and sports performance. Therefore, the findings recommend the development of educational and administrative policies based on the principles of governance and total quality, while integrating knowledge management into the core of administrative practices to become part of the organizational structure that supports sustainable development in educational institutions.

Conclusion

1. There is an average level of application of modern management trends in educational institutions in Babil

Governorate, with some dimensions showing weakness (such as knowledge management).

2. The effectiveness of sports management in these institutions is also in the average to good range, but it is clearly influenced by material resources and the management context.
3. There is a statistically significant relationship between the application of modern management trends and the effectiveness of sports management, confirming the importance of adopting these trends.
4. Governance/accountability, total quality, and strategic planning are the most important variables influencing the effectiveness of sports management.
5. Schools even if they are moderately prepared need training and organizational support to effectively implement the proposed model.

Recommendations

1. The Ministry of Education or the supervising authority in Babil Governorate should establish a clear governance system for school sports activities, including performance accountability, resource transparency, and regular evaluation of results.
2. Develop training programs for those responsible for sports management (principals, physical education teachers, and activity leaders) that focus on the concepts of total quality, strategic planning, and knowledge management.
3. Raise the level of infrastructure and material resources for sports activities in schools by allocating clear budgets and encouraging partnerships with community entities or the private sector.
4. Adopt digital tools and management information systems (MIS) to track sports activities, measure performance, and manage knowledge in educational institutions.
5. Gradually implement the proposed model, starting with model schools as a pilot phase, then gradually expand to the remaining schools, with regular impact measurement to adjust and improve the model.

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