

Article

Directions for Improving the Effectiveness of the National Sports Management System in the Digitization of the Economy

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Abstract: Sports management experienced major changes from the economic digitization process forcing innovation to improve governance and increase efficiency and competitiveness. The introduction of recent reforms in Uzbekistan has not eliminated obstacles to incorporate digital tools into its nationwide sports administration framework. This research investigates digitalization effects on sports administration through policy recommendation development. This research used a mixed approach that examined sport passport issuance and international competition participation through quantitative analysis and historical and comparison methods. Research shows that digital updates have boosted international event hosting rates to 33.3% and national team participation rates to 8.7% above previous levels. The launch of sports passports has established a system to track athletes which elevated the number of professional athletes who registered to 75% during five years. Research data shows that digital implementation creates transparency while promoting development for athletes and leading to improved international competitiveness. Sports management sustainability demands improved digital infrastructure together with regional specialization and private sector involvement according to this study. The research results offer essential knowledge to decision makers and sports management leaders and stakeholders who want to achieve optimal digital sports governance practices.

Keywords: digital economy, sports management, management, sports events, physical education.

1. Introduction

The digitization of the economy has produced substantial effects on multiple sectors especially sports management during the past several years. A strategic focus on integrating digital technologies into sports governance belongs to the key priorities for modern economy development throughout nations. National sports management reforms in Uzbekistan follow a systemic process to adapt its system according to international best practices which increase efficiency and transparency and boost performance results.

Economic and social development depends on effective sports management systems to an essential degree. A well-managed sports sector promotes national recognition while encouraging physical activity among youth together with new professional positions in athletic fields. The proper organizing of sports management leads to better athletic results while providing the best practice of allocating resources together with expanding infrastructure capabilities and strengthening international sports standing. The sports ecosystem of Uzbekistan needs to overcome continued obstacles concerning digital transformation adoption along with financial stability and optimal structure maintenance. The shift toward digital sports management requires organizations to navigate multiple benefits together with many hurdles. Strategic direction is essential for successful implementation of digital technologies which include data analytics and AI systems with

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blockchain sports passports to track athlete performance and develop events and talent development. Sport analytics combined with digital coaching and artificial intelligence scouting of athletes leads countries to reach better international sports positions and develop more stable finances within the sports industry. The objective of this study is to examine the current state of Uzbekistan's national sports management system, assess the impact of digitalization on its effectiveness, and propose evidence-based recommendations for its improvement. Specifically, this research aims to:

1. Analyze the structural and functional aspects of sports management in Uzbekistan.
2. Evaluate the role of digital innovations in enhancing sports administration.
3. Identify key areas for policy intervention to improve efficiency and economic sustainability.

By addressing these research objectives, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on sports management in developing economies and provides practical insights for policymakers, sports administrators, and stakeholders engaged in the governance of national sports systems.

Literature Review

In the scientific works of foreign scholars such as R.K. Khayrullin, A.N. Popov, V. Pudich, G.R. Latfullin, the optimization of state participation in managing the sports management system, the creative use of foreign advanced practices in the country's practice, and the prioritization of specialization in certain sports areas based on a regional approach have been discussed.

Local economist M. Sharifkhodzhaev's definition of the term "management" in economic literature is also worth mentioning. According to him: "Management is the process of achieving and increasing high profit through the effective management of resources, including people. Moreover, management is a choice that requires a special art and skill, which involves making relevant decisions and controlling their implementation". This definition reflects the general characteristics of management.

Based on the analysis of general theoretical perspectives in the field of management, it can be concluded that "management is a system of any actions to achieve the priority goals set in the development strategy of the organization or system at any level, ensuring its position at both national and global levels, improving its status, and achieving high social and economic interests". At the same time, management varies across different fields, emerging as specialized directions aimed at solving existing problems and achieving high interest in the process of development.

Sports management, as a form of management in the field of management, combines characteristics of general management theories while also distinguishing itself through specific characteristics. In analyzing the unique features of sports management, it is essential to compare the views of various economists. For instance, according to S.S. Filippov, "sports management is the practice of managing interconnected processes and the socio-economic relationship system in the sports field, including the training of athletes, organizing, planning, monitoring sports events, and solving various tasks related to functional distribution to achieve high results". This definition shows that organizational issues hold priority in sports management. Similarly, G.R. Latfullin has also developed a scientific perspective on sports management, stating that: "The sports management system is a socio-economic system reflecting a set of measures such as preparing athletes for competitions, selecting them, constructing sports facilities, placing them, organizing sports events, arranging participants, financing, and motivating athletes to achieve high results".

2. Materials and Methods

The methodology for this study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research techniques to comprehensively examine the effectiveness of the national sports management system in the digital economy. The study utilizes comparative analysis to evaluate Uzbekistan's sports management strategies against international benchmarks, drawing on secondary sources such as government reports, scholarly literature, and statistical data from the Ministry of Sports of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The research also applies statistical grouping methods to assess key indicators, including the number of professional athletes holding sports passports, the frequency of international sports events hosted in Uzbekistan, and the participation levels of national teams in prestigious competitions. Additionally, a historical analysis of sports policy reforms in Uzbekistan is conducted to trace the evolution of management practices and the integration of digital tools in athlete development and event organization. The study also incorporates inductive and deductive reasoning to identify patterns and trends in the digitization of sports management, offering insights into policy effectiveness and areas for improvement. Logical analysis is employed to assess the economic sustainability of the sports management model, examining the shift toward a market-oriented system and the potential for private sector involvement. The findings are synthesized through a data triangulation approach, ensuring the reliability and validity of results. By employing these diverse research methods, the study provides a nuanced understanding of the structural and functional dynamics of Uzbekistan's sports management system, offering evidence-based recommendations for enhancing its digital transformation.

3. Results

In the last five years, significant reforms aimed at expanding the coverage of physical education and sports among the population, and providing sufficient conditions for various social groups, including professional athletes, to engage in sports, have played a crucial role in ensuring the effectiveness of national sports management. These reforms led to the development of sports infrastructure, which is vital for the country's sports management system. As a result, the number of international sports events held in the country has increased. According to the analysis, from 2019 to 2023, the number of prestigious international sports competitions, including Asian and World Championships and cups held in Uzbekistan, increased by 33.3%, from 24 to 32 events. In 2024, it is planned for Uzbekistan to host 34 such prestigious international sports events (see Figure 1).

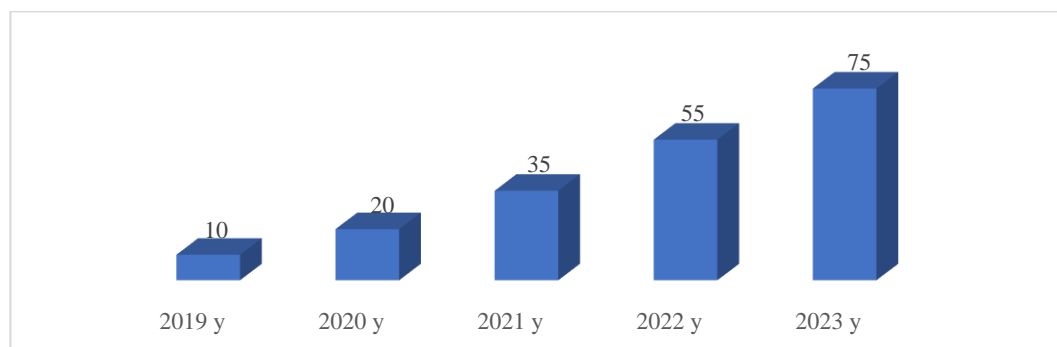


Figure 1. Indicators describing the international prestige of the New Uzbekistan National Sports Management System (in units)

At the same time, as a result of the systematic measures implemented in the New Uzbekistan sports management system to encourage various social groups of the population, especially professional athletes, to engage in sports regularly, the participation rate of the national sports teams in international sports competitions increased by 8.7%.

The number of prestigious international sports events in which the national teams participated increased from 230 to 250 between 2019 and 2023. In 2024, it is planned for the national sports teams to participate in 255 such events, having secured the necessary invitations and opportunities (see Figure 1).

Since 2019, based on the annual calendar plan for sports and mass physical education events, 530 sports competitions have been held regularly at the local level each year across various sports disciplines. The regular holding of these competitions has not only increased the interest of athletes but also raised the interest among various social groups of the population. As a result, with the expansion of the coverage of the national sports management system, the effectiveness of its operational mechanisms has been improving.

Figure 2. The number of professional athletes with a sports passport (as a percentage of the total number of professional athletes)

Another unique feature of the New Uzbekistan national sports management system is the issuance of sports passports to professional athletes who regularly engage in a specific sport and consistently participate in various prestigious national and international sports competitions, achieving positive results. This has led to the creation of a unified database of these athletes. According to the data, in the last five years, the number of professional athletes with a sports passport has increased from 10% to 75% of the total number of professional athletes in the country (see Figure 2).

The introduction of the sports passport in the development of the New Uzbekistan national sports management system, together with the specialization of sports areas in the republic's regions, including districts and cities, provides the opportunity to identify promising areas for development and potential for growth.

Based on the characteristics of the New Uzbekistan national sports management system mentioned above, we believe that in the coming years, priority should be given to regional approaches to improve the system's effectiveness. In this regard, increasing the integration of the sports passport system with the identification of the specialization of sports areas in the country's districts and cities and determining potential areas for development is necessary.

4. Discussion

To achieve this goal, an identification system should be introduced through identification cards (ID cards), valid for 5 years, to determine athletes' affiliation and qualifications for participation in official competitions, including the Uzbekistan Championship and Cup. Along with the proposed ID cards for professional athletes, any other type of sports passport, apart from those approved by international sports federations/associations, should be prohibited.

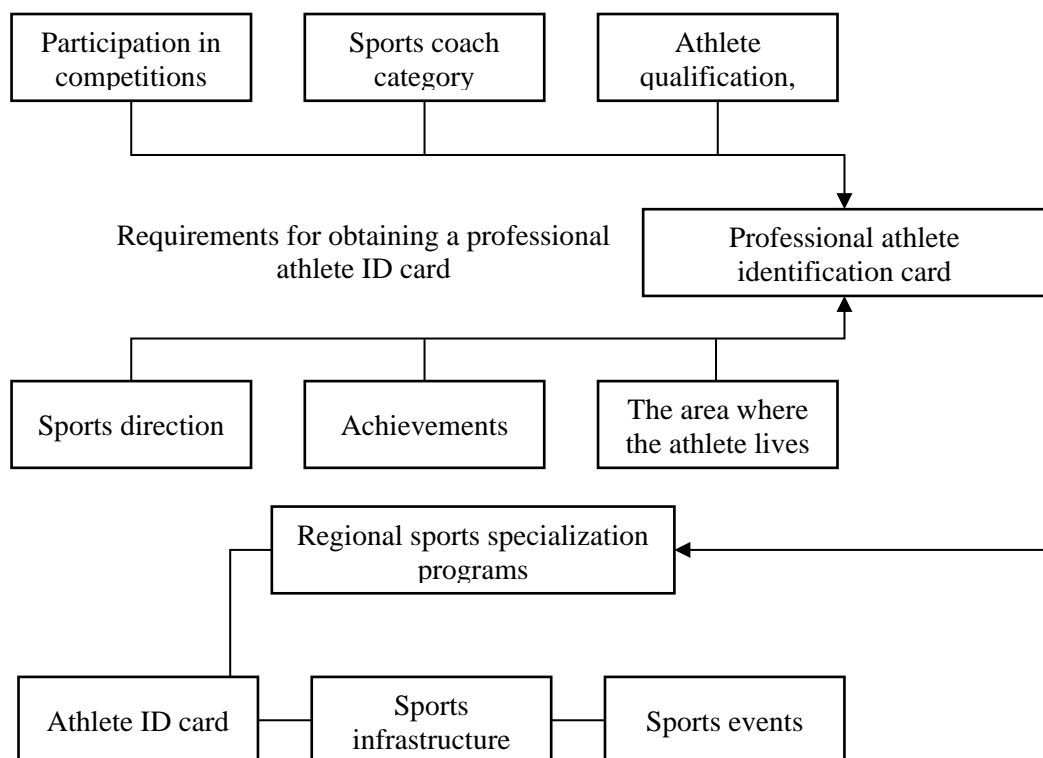


Figure 3. Mechanism for developing regional sports programs through the professional athlete ID card

The introduction of the identification system through ID cards (with a 5-year validity period) for the proposed sports competitions will help determine the specialization of regions in sports, assess the actual capabilities of professional athletes, and identify opportunities for the development of new types of sports.

The implementation of an identification system through ID cards, which defines athletes' affiliation and qualifications for participation in official competitions, including the Uzbekistan Championship and Cup, for a period of 5 years, will improve the quality of measures aimed at specialization in regional sports areas, similar to the practices of countries with developed sports management systems..

5. Conclusion

The following proposals and recommendations have been developed to improve the national sports management system of New Uzbekistan:

-based on the unique characteristics of the national sports management system of New Uzbekistan, we believe that in the coming years, priority should be given to a regional approach to enhance its effectiveness. In this case, increasing the integration of the sport passport system with the identification of specialized and potential areas of development for sports in the districts and cities of the republic is required.

-the introduction of an identification system through ID cards, valid for 5 years, for athletes' affiliation and qualifications in official competitions, including the Uzbekistan Championship and Cup, will help enhance the degree of specialization of regions in sports, based on the identification of professional athletes' real capabilities and potential, as well as to identify opportunities for the development of new types of sports.

-there is a need to saturate the economic mechanism of the national sports management system with market components. Since the financing of the costs associated

with the sports management system relies heavily on state budget funds, it is advisable to gradually transition to a self-financing system while effectively utilizing state budget resources in the coming years.

-the quality of the national sports management system should be enhanced. We believe that the proposed recommendations, if implemented, will contribute to the development of the national sports management system and improve its efficiency. This will increase the international prestige of the national sports teams. At the same time, it will reduce the state budget spending on sports financing and expand the involvement of the private sector. As a result, the centralized model of sports management currently in place in the country will gradually shift to a mixed model, which is considered effective in today's global practices.

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