



The Future Strategy of the Professional Sports Clubs Case Study: Sepahan Club

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of the present study was to determine the strategic future of the Sepahan sports club.

Methodology: In the present study, cross-effects analysis was used as one of the foresight methods. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including interviews and checklists, was used to collect data. The research was from interpretive philosophy, inductive approach; case study strategy; qualitative method; single-point time horizon; research contributors, strategists, experts in foresight, prominent managers, and the club's experts. Thirty individuals were selected through purposive sampling using the snowball method. The research tools were semi-structured and exploratory interviews. Data were analyzed using the Micmac and scenario wizard software.

Finding: The most important strategic factors include supporting public and private bodies, enhancing cultural and social responsibility, developing media awareness, managing systems and processes, developing appropriate infrastructure, improving financial and environmental impacts, and security was identified as being consistent with the club's sustainable development. Finally, two scenarios include scenario consisting of financial resources allocation, unit, and integrated management components; and the second is one the components of specialization and highlighting and modeling to chart the club's future.

Originality: In this article, we examine the modeling of the 8p marketing mix elements on the football industry using structural equation methods.

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1. Introduction

Strategic management is an essential and vital factor for organizations to create sustainable value and competitive advantage in today's complex environment (Lloréns Montes et al., 2004). What is certain is that one of the most critical and fundamental activities in the organization to positively synchronize with change and the ability of healthy competition in society is to use accountability improvement systems to achieve the desired and constructive goals of the organization (Nazari et al., 2014). It must be acknowledged that no economic and service enterprise operates in a vacuum. All organizations are like a dynamic and organic system within the environment that interact with other components of the environment and are influenced by each other (Marchiori & De Vecchi, 2020). Today, responsive organizations successfully interact with the conditions of the external environment and effectively guide the organization toward its main goals and objectives (Nazari et al., 2016).

The increasing speed of change in the first decade of the 21st century has led to the emergence of an age called uncertainty, and an environment full of opportunities and threats has advanced the current complex systems (Nazari et al., 2017). In this unstable and rapidly changing environment, traditional planning tools such as past trend extrapolation, forecasting, and foresight will not be responsible only for the medium and long term (Zali & Poursohrab, 2017). One of the present age characteristics is the speed of change in the organizational and extra-organizational environment. This high speed in environmental change requires organizations to build a bridge from the present to the future. By anticipating these changes, the organization can prepare them and make the right and efficient decisions. Strategic planning seems to be a good solution (Savio & Nikolopoulos, 2013). Understanding and predicting the future is a practical and necessary step in adapting organizations to their strategic environment, but it is inherently tricky. In recent years, the methods used to plan and evaluate the strategy have changed a lot, so the use of concepts and techniques to determine alternative futures with long-term perspectives (Nazari, 2016).

Therefore, accurate forecasting for strategic decisions has increased, so the demand for futuristic studies has also increased. Strategic decisions make structures for operational actions whose consequences are far-reaching and far-reaching in terms of time agreement. They are the function of complexity and uncertainty that are the main problems of decision makers (Ponomareva & Sokolova, 2015). More complex issues require coherent support and more accurate predictions, although the accuracy and reliability of quantitative patterns and predictions decrease with increasing complexity (Iden et al., 2017). Strategic foresight is an approach that considers uncertainties in the strategic decision-making process and helps reduce the unknown realm in the process. This approach creates creative planning by combining the analysis of internal and external trends with each other and facilitating the strategy adoption process, and supporting the decision maker of the strategy (Heger & Rohrbeck, 2012).

Foresight activities combine exploratory and normative approaches and design strategic options and blueprints for future action (Sarpong & Hartman, 2018). Foresight aims to imagine different futures and consequences and participate in informed

decision-making (Savio & Nikolopoulos, 2013). Rapid and far-reaching environmental changes have challenged traditional planning and management systems. Companies have increasingly welcomed strategic foresight because of its flexibility in changing future variables. Theoretical and managerial implications are that strategic foresight puts organizations in readiness and expands their vision for emerging social advancement (Shirvani et al., 2018).

Types of futures are considered in strategic foresight, including a) Possible futures, which include all possible situations that can be realized in the future. B) believable future; includes those futures that, according to current human knowledge, appear in the future. C) Possible futures are likely to be realized and are based on the continuation of current trends in the future. D) Favorable futures are a combination of possible, probable, and believable futures that determine the most optimal future event (Voros, 2008). Hence, the concept of strategic foresight is the ability of the roadmap to identify a superior course of action and predict its consequences for the realization of the preferred future (Gavetti & Menon, 2016).

Strategic foresight uses a variety of methods to evaluate future events. One of the most important of these tools is screenwriting (Sarpong & Hartman, 2018). Scenario writing describes the future that focuses on the cause-and-effect processes influencing decision-making (Dehghanian & Najafi Rastaghi, 2017). Accordingly, strategic foresight can be fundamentally different from the techniques, methods, and models usually associated with market forecasting and analysis (Duus, 2013). A story scenario describes justified alternatives that look to a specific part of the future. Scenarios are often used to describe the possibility of replacing future changes in the organization's external environment (Khazaei Sahneh & Aslaniyan, 2017). Scenario planning creates several informed, plausible, and imagined alternative settings in which decisions can be made to change current thinking, improve decision-making, enhance human and organizational learning, and improve performance for the future (Rahbar et al., 2018). Scenarios are the best language for strategic issues because, in addition to creating a shared understanding of the future, they show different futures and are helpful for people to make better decisions and deal with uncertainties (Ghazinoory et al., 2018).

Today, organizations and administrative institutions are so complex that it is impossible to survive without careful planning. Sports organizations are no exception. Like any other organization, planning in sports organizations is considered an essential management task. We are planning in a sports organization to determine the goals of all activities and group efforts and how to achieve those goals (Savadi et al., 2017). As the most prominent global social phenomenon, sport plays a crucial role in human life. Therefore, due to the environmental changes that are currently accelerating in sports organizations and the complexity of organizational decisions, the need to implement a comprehensive program to address such issues becomes more tangible. This plan is nothing but a strategic plan (Abdollahi & Sajjadi, 2016). According to many management experts, the ability to think strategically for the survival of organizations in today's highly complex business environment and increase flexibility and ability to cope with change is crucial before strategic planning. Hence, organizations need something to be equipped differently than other organizations. Strategic thinking provides organizations

with a weapon to stay in the current competitive and turbulent environment (Shabani Bahar et al., 2016).

In today's changing environment, constant and continuous changes, organizations' thinking and thinking have undergone a fundamental change characterized by attention to strategic thinking and related principles (Nazari, 2016). Professional sport, over time, has been able to transform itself from a mere event into a lucrative sport, so that in the developed countries of the world, due to growth in several dimensions, and especially in commercial and economic dimensions, it is referred to as industry (Moradi Chaleshtari et al., 2019). Hence, professional sports clubs, like most organizations and institutions in other fields, have become strategy-oriented organizations for survival and durability in global competition. Due to the rapid environmental changes and the resulting uncertainty, the need for strategic planning and future research to deal with possible future changes has become more apparent. In this regard, mastering strategic thinking is very important for leaders who want to change their future and environment (Rahimi et al., 2017).

In Iranian sports, professional sports are one of the most popular sports. As any professional club, they must generate income through revenue-generating channels such as ticket sales and sponsors. The greater the presence of fans, the higher club's income, and as a result, the higher the position and brand value of clubs. Among the various popular sports activities worldwide, football is undoubtedly the most participatory and most watched activity and sport. Football is the most popular sport globally, with over three billion fans, so professional clubs pay more attention to this sport (Marchiori & De Vecchi, 2020). Examining and recognizing the future of professional clubs is one of the basic needs of professional sports to survive in a highly competitive environment with unpredictable changes. The complexities in professional sports and the numerous problems that the managers of this sport are dealing with increase the need for futuristic research in this field day by day. However, research related to futurism in various sciences has been very significant for researchers and organizations in the last decade. Among them, it dealt with the future of Iranian sports by using interaction matrices. Findings showed that budget allocation, modeling from other countries, designing long-term plans, and creating process-oriented strategies are the most critical factors for the future of sports in Iran.

Sepahan Sports Club, a professional club in Isfahan with a history of 60 years, is one of the oldest sports clubs in Iran, which currently operates in professional sports for both men and women. The expansion of the club's sports activities at the national and international levels and the need for financial resources and sustainable income indicate the club's need for strategic plans—the increasing speed of organizational and environmental changes that can no longer cope with traditional planning tools. Stepping into the future requires managers to use foresight tools and build the future they expect and design.

Due to the importance of professional sports in Iran, Sepahan Club has a special place in professional sports. It seems necessary to study the future of this club. This club, one of the most important professional sports clubs in Iran, must adapt well to changes in the time and environment. Developing futurism in professional clubs can help club managers be useful for sports in Iran on a larger scale. Since Sepahan Club has a significant role in Iran's professional sports, it can formulate ideal goals and

prioritize appropriate activities, projects, and actions by taking advantage of the club's preferred future. After conducting this research, it's possible results will enable stakeholders to imagine the preferred future of professional sports, make informed decisions, and finally be able to. Evaluate the positive and negative aspects and create a hopeful future for Sepahan Club.

It can be acknowledged that many future events and happenings are predictable, and by intervening in this process, the desired changes can be made. Too often, dealing with the present and solving existing problems creates obstacles for managers and decision-makers to think about the future. In contrast, current problems are caused by not knowing the future. Everyday problems are the most valid reason to think about the future. Today's crisis results from not addressing the obstacles and problems before the crisis. Despite the profound changes in today's societies around life, organizations are increasingly looking for the desired future. By identifying the ambiguities and ambiguities of significant issues, they are looking for planning and decision-making for the desired end. It should be noted that a real presence in the process of future developments, reducing threats and increasing opportunities, requires a forward-looking strategic approach that allows action in future events. Strategic foresight in professional clubs enables the study of the past, present, and future by using new methods to determine critical influential and critical factors and scenario-building and prioritizing communities' scenarios for excellence and the future. The end of Sepahan Club facilitates the club's greatness to improve and identify the desired future with the help of senior managers, policymakers, and managers. Given the issue's importance, the present study intends to develop favorable and preferred future scenarios for Sepahan Club.

2. Methodology

Based on [Saunders et al. \(2009\)](#), the philosophy of this research was interpretive. The Research approach was inductive. The research Strategy was Case Study, and the research method was qualitative. Also, the Research time horizon was one section, and the data collection was an interview. The research method was a survey study with a developmental approach following the critical paradigm conducted in the field.

The present research combines documentary and survey methods in terms of research type. In terms of nature, it is based on new methods of futurism, analytical and exploratory, and has been done using a combination of quantitative and qualitative models. A sampling of this research following qualitative methods is purposive sampling. The research participants were experts in strategy, strategic foresight, and prominent managers and experts. A total of 30 people were selected through targeted snowball sampling. Based on the matrix, the opposite effect analysis coefficients were performed for classification to identify the key and strategic factors of Sepahan Sports Club in the future. The identified factors were entered into the interaction analysis matrix. They were distributed among the experts by a questionnaire, and the experts scored them from 0 to 3. The result of the questionnaire was analyzed by Mick Mac software. To develop the excellence and priority scenarios of Sepahan Sports Club, first, a quantitative approach and a descriptive strategy, survey, and field tactics were followed. Then the research was

carried out with a qualitative approach and analytical strategy. To formulate priority scenarios, we used a scenario script software; compatible plans are identified, then intuitively prioritized, described, and interpreted the desired future designs by the Strategic Research Council.

3. Results

To conduct semi-structured interviews and identify the drivers, researchers conducted interviews with two groups of academics and experimental individuals. The characteristics of the interviewees are given in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Details of research participants.

Title	Education	History
Managing Director	MA	30 years
High Advisor to the Club	Ph.D. (Associate Professor)	15 years
Club technical advisor	Ph.D. (Assistant Professor)	Ten years
Deputy of Resources and Human Capital	MA	20 years
Vice President of Sports	MA	19 years
Director of the Academy	Ph.D. student	15 years
Media Manager	Bachelor	23 years
Cultural Director	Ph.D. student	Ten years
Legal Manager	MA	Ten years

At first, the strategic elements of Sepahan Sports Club were formulated according to the strategic council of the club. Mission: Activity in competitive and professional sports and social and cultural role-playing in society under the auspices of Mobarakeh Steel Company of Isfahan as the strongest supporter of sports in Iran. Vision: The promotion of the Iran-Isfahan name at the national and international level and the promotion of national pride through the development of competitive and professional sports were considered. Grand policy: Promoting Iranian-Islamic values by emphasizing the four areas of thought, science, life, and spirituality in the path of comprehensive development of the cultural and sports club by implementing a program-oriented approach in the processes of competitive and professional sports of the club, maximum use of capacity "Actual and potential Mobarakeh Steel Factory to realize the vision of Sepahan Sports Club in Isfahan. Motto: "The better of the first" was approved. Mega Goals: The main goals of the club in the championship sports section of the Asian Clubs Cup, gaining top positions in other disciplines in national and international leagues, in the economic area to achieve an income of 100 billion Tomans, and in the socio-cultural section to continuously attend cultural events and earn an average of 25,000 spectators per game was considered a primary goal of the club. Core Values: The central values of the club were the observance of Iranian-Islamic values, attention to the heroic spirit, honesty and integrity, and emphasis on strategic thinking.

To identify the most critical drivers of Sepahan Club's futurism process, we used the essential factors of success in two categories of factors. They include privileging factors and distinguishing factors identified by the research team in [Table 2](#). is available.

Table 2. Critical success factors (CSF) of Sepahan cultural and sports club.

Effective factors identified			
Allocation of Mobarakeh Steel funds	Cyberspace	Safety & Security	Volunteering systems
Dynamics of sports economics	Technology and Communication	Evaluation of indicators and criteria	System approach
Economic sanctions	Unified and integrated management	Pragmatism of officials	Strategic planning
Media	Macro policymaking	Specialization in sports and clubs	Organizational Structure
Advanced and successful international models	Legal infrastructure	Studies and research	Incentive system
Highlighting and patterning	Women's sports position	Strengthen the quantity and quality of processes	Significant young population
Access to facilities	Patterning	Sports culture in the community	

According to the opinions gathered from the collected data, interviews, and intuitive judgments of the strategic council of the club, the most important critical factors of success were achieved. Based on [Table 2](#), the essential factors affecting the internal and external trends of Sepahan Club were identified in 27 elements, which were combined in the following phases. The research team finally selected the most important factors of success. It classified them into four categories: bedding factors, social coordination factors, management excellence factors, and institutionalization of cultural factors, in the form of a crossover effect matrix of impact scores. And effectiveness in [Table 3](#) Reported.

Table 3. Completed scenario matrix.

	Bedding factors		Social harmonizing factors		Management excellence factors		Institutionalizing cultural factors			
	Allocation of steel funding	Fair distribution of resources	Build a sports motivator	The arrival of popular sports	Social status of the club	Unified and integrated management	Specialization	Physical participation of the country's officials	Highlighting and patterning	Media
Bedding factors	Allocation of steel funding			2	1	2	2	2	2	2
	Fair distribution of resources			2	3	1	1	1	1	2
	Build a sports motivator			3	2	2	1	1	2	1
Social harmonizing factors	The arrival of popular sports	1	2	2		2	2	2	1	3
	Social status of the club	1	1	2		1	1	1	2	1
Management excellence factors	Unified and integrated management	3	3	2	3	1		3	2	3
	Specialization	2	2	1	1	2		1	2	1

		Bedding factors			Social harmonizing factors		Management excellence factors		Institutionalizing cultural factors		
		Allocation of steel funding	Fair distribution of resources	Build a sports motivator	The arrival of popular sports	Social status of the club	Unified and integrated management	Specialization	Physical participation of the country's officials	Highlighting and patterning	Media
Institutionalizing cultural factors	Physical participation of the country's officials	2	2	1	3	2	1	2			
	Highlighting and patterning	2	1	2	2	2	2	1			
	Media	2	3	2	3	3	3	2			

Based on the findings of Table 3, strategic indicators are controllable indicators and affect the dynamics and change of the system. In total, ten key and strategic indicators of Sepahan Sports Club obtained from the previous step were analyzed and divided into four general components and ten sub-components with the opinion of the Strategic Research Council. Equivalent to this segmentation has been entered and analyzed in Scenario Wizard software. The board of compatible scenarios was reviewed and analyzed in the meeting of the strategic council. In the future construction of Sepahan Mobarakeh Steel's preferred cultural and sports club, the priority should be given to the scenario with components of financial resources and integrated management, and the second priority to the plan with social status components. Specialization, highlighting, and modeling should be assigned, and finally, the third priority should be assigned to scenarios with media coverage components.

4. Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of this study was the strategic foresight of the Sepahan Club to determine the vital practical factors and scenario preparation for excellence. Developing the club's strategic foresight will help prioritize the club's priority scenarios and strategies with higher accessibility.

First, the strategic pillars of the strategic orientation of Sepahan Sports Club were formulated. The club's mission was to work in the field of competitive and professional sports and play a socio-cultural role in society. The vision of the Iran-Isfahan Name Club was considered at the national and international levels and the promotion of national pride through the development of competitive and professional sports. The macro policy of "promoting Iranian Islamic values with an emphasis on the four areas of thought, science, life, and spirituality in the comprehensive development of the club was considered. Maximizing the capacity of the actual and potential Mobarakeh Steel Factory of Isfahan to realize the club's vision with an emphasis on strategic thinking should be a priority. Important key and strategic factors of Sepahan Sports Club include the support of public and private bodies of the club (economic), excellence of cultural (social) responsibility of

the club (cultural), development of media (social) awareness, management of systems and processes in the club (managerial). Furthermore, results showed that the development of sports infrastructure under the needs of the club (environmental), the improvement of the financial situation of the club (economic), and the impact on environmental and security factors are in line with the sustainable development of the club (environmental) were the other factors. The overlap of the extracted key indicators, including the bedrock factors with components such as the allocation of financial resources from Mobarakeh Steel, the fair distribution of resources, and the construction of sports incentives, were considered. Social adaptation factors include factors, entering popular sports and the social status of the club among the people. Management excellence factors include Unified management and specialization were considered. Finally, standardized cultural factors such as accompaniment of political officials, highlighting and modeling, and media activities were evaluated.

According to the findings, the indicators of attention and implementation of economic sanctions have caused significant changes in professional sports and defensive strategies of economic sanctions. In other words, a resistance economy is a way to deal with sanctions to develop and excel in professional sports in terms of treatment costs and avoiding the costs of various cultural and social harms. At the same time, policymakers should take severe and strategic thinking ways to deal with these sanctions to improve the situation of professional clubs to improve the situation. Therefore, access to facilities is one of the indicators that the presence or absence of the club system is subject to change. In this regard, special attention should be paid to providing conditions for using all capacities and potentials in the geographical area to increase access to facilities. Unstable are bilateral indicators of advanced and successful international models, macro-policy-making, and strategic planning. Macro-policy is also unsafe due to the lack of a roadmap with an executive guarantee and will become stable when a specific roadmap with long-term horizons is developed by scientific experts considering all the conditions prevailing in the country and the executive guarantee of the original roadmap. The media and the ubiquity of the strata are of the same type as both seek to engage people in professional sports. With the involvement and inclusive entry of the strata into professional sports, the economics of professional sports will be active and dynamic. Realizing this, sports trends and approaches in the club will occur in a state of supply and demand, and in that situation, domestic investors and foreigners will be led to the club. Target indicators are allocating financial resources and specialization, achievement of changes, and system evolution. Allocating financial resources in the steel budget system to the category of sports, in line with the growth and excellence of the club and increasing the rich national, political, social, cultural, and economic functions with an intelligent system in line with the roadmap and with strategic and forward-thinking can evolve the club's vision of playing a role in Iranian professional sports, as well as social responsibilities towards society, will take a fundamental step. Because sport has deep historical roots and plays an essential role in developing past and present cultures, various sciences, including the social sciences, have studied it ([Andrews & Wilson, 2019](#)).

A specialized view of sports and the appointment of sports managers and officials from the body of sports with a scientific approach to step on the roadmap for the growth and excellence of professional sports in the country is vital. To determine the excellence-making and priority scenarios of Sepahan Sports Club, the Strategic Council present some compatible scenarios. The scenario should be assigned with social status, specialization, highlighting, and modeling components. Finally, the third priority should be given to the scenario with the components of media coverage. The first scenarios consist of the components of allocating financial resources and single and integrated management to Sepahan Sports Club. It must be acknowledged that sport is no longer a hobby but has become a thriving industry, especially in developed countries. The volume of investments made in the professional sector is very high. The material benefits of sport lead to immediate material benefits for industrial companies. In the long run, its intangible benefits increase the level of authority, national pride, better labor use, and increased employment in sports and other sports. Governments taking advantage of the long-term benefits of sports should be considered a capital good. The necessary attention should be paid to the development of professional sports. The idea of not trying to generate revenue in this area and the lack of economic and marketing thinking have led to financial crises. Therefore, the club should follow this approach well and be effective in the field of mission.

Integrated action in different parts of the club will eliminate the weakness in the unity of command between the sports activities in this field. Integrating and coordinating the performance of human resources with scientific competence and sufficient experience in the body of the club is always one of the important limitations and has led to more problems and crises in this area. According to the issues, the promising future of Sepahan Sports Club depends on providing solutions and strategies that establish links between the components of allocation of financial resources and unified management. In that context, Sepahan Sports Club will evolve and excel. It will achieve growth and prosperity.

The second scenario consists of components of specialization and highlighting and modeling athletes in Sepahan Sports Club. Since man is a social being, belonging to a group and being accepted by the group is one of his primary needs in the process of socialization. Man will try to establish meaningful relationships with other people, be able to become a member of groups, and finally accept group and community. Sports activities also affect the socialization process of people in different ways and cause fundamental changes in people's attitudes towards society. In this regard, the club academies can provide the conditions for the vast presence of the community in line with the club's social responsibilities by giving optimal services because sport is a small world that reflects particular social values. The manifestation of values through sport shows its essential role in society. Sport as a social institution is associated with many levels of social relations. It is deeply related to elements such as the presence and performance of mass media, ethnic and racial ties, clothing, language, culture, and social values of people and spectators (Hedlund et al., 2020).

One of the main priorities of professional sports is using specialized human resources to make the best use of financial and economic resources in the club. Many problems of

the club will be solved by using technical people. It seems that they should turn to the use of efficient, scientific, and passionate people in sports. Educational, heroic, and professional dimensions are developed with the tendency towards specialization.

Highlighting and modeling athletes is an institutionalizing cultural factor in the direction of professional sports. In fact, by using this process, there is more motivation for the presence of different individuals and groups in society. Have comprehensive and more accurate planning in this field with the entry of various institutions, especially radio and television, to provide the necessary incentives and incentives for public participation in professional sports by highlighting prominent sports figures. This seems to be the best opportunity to elevate the club's brand. In this scenario, it is observed that athletes will determine the desired future by connecting the circles of specialization and highlighting and modeling. Also, officials and policymakers, by taking advantage of practical solutions and strategies required by implementing this scenario, a helpful step toward the growth and excellence of the club: Sepahan Sports Club and the institutionalization of professional sports in society.

The scenario includes media coverage in Sepahan Sports Club. Scientific awareness of the media targeted awareness programs with specialized expertise and provided programs for all walks of life. The critical role of targeted advertising of sports science videos with a positive attitude, regardless of monetization on radio and television. It has a special place in institutionalization to support the club in the long run. In this regard, programs should be prepared, compiled, and displayed to improve the level of public information and knowledge about the mission and mission of the club. The media performs various functions in line with the general public's tendency towards professional sports. The media leads to social cohesion, institutionalization, and promotion of professional sports through education, information, and awareness. Also, with the entry of the media into professional sports, modernity and social marketing play a unique role, and environmental monitoring has increased. In general, in building a hopeful future for the Sepahan Sports Club, all efforts must follow the critical strategic indicators of the club.

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آینده پژوهی باشگاه‌های ورزشی حرفه‌ای

مطالعه موردی: باشگاه سپاهان

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کلیدواژه

آینده‌نگاری
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ورزش حرفه‌ای

نوع مقاله

پژوهشی اصیل

چکیده

هدف: هدف از پژوهش حاضر تدوین سناریوهای مؤثر بر آینده باشگاه فرهنگی ورزشی فولاد مبارکه سپاهان بود.

روش: در پژوهش حاضر از روش تحلیل اثرات متقاطع به‌عنوان یکی از روش‌های آینده‌نگاری استفاده شده است. پژوهش از منظر فلسفه تفسیری، رویکرد استقرایی، راهبرد مطالعه موردی، روش کیفی و شیوه گردآوری و تجزیه تحلیل داده‌ها مصاحبه بود. مشارکت‌کنندگان پژوهش، صاحب‌نظران و خبرگان حوزه راهبردی، آینده‌نگاری، مدیران و کارشناسان برجسته باشگاه بودند. در مجموع ۳۰ نفر از طریق روش نمونه‌گیری هدفمند به روش گلوله برفی انتخاب شدند. ابزار پژوهش حاضر، مصاحبه‌های نیمه ساختاریافته و اکتشافی و سؤالات مصاحبه‌ها از نوع باز پاسخ بود.

یافته‌ها: مهم‌ترین عوامل راهبردی شامل: شامل حمایت ارگان‌های دولتی و خصوصی، تعالی سازی مسئولیت فرهنگی - اجتماعی، توسعه آگاهی رسانه‌ای، مدیریت امور سیستم‌ها و فرآیندها، توسعه زیرساخت‌های ورزشی متناسب با نیاز، بهبود وضعیت مالی و مؤثر بر عوامل محیطی و امنیتی متناسب با توسعه پایدار باشگاه شناسایی شد. در نهایت دو سناریو شامل؛ سناریو اول متشکل از مؤلفه‌های تخصیص منابع مالی، مدیریت واحد و یکپارچه و سناریوی دوم متشکل از مؤلفه‌های تخصص‌گرایی و برجسته‌سازی و الگوسازی برای ترسیم آینده باشگاه در نظر گرفته شد. به‌طوری کلی می‌توان ادعان نمود در ساخت آینده مرجع باشگاه فرهنگی ورزشی فولاد مبارکه سپاهان سناریو با مؤلفه‌های تخصیص منابع مالی، مدیریت یکپارچه، جایگاه اجتماعی، تخصص‌گرایی و برجسته‌سازی و الگوسازی اختصاص یابد و در نهایت پرداختن رسانه‌ها در نظر گرفته شد.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله: در این پژوهش، برنامه راهبردی از دو روش کمی و کیفی استفاده شده است.

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