



## The Value of Human Resource Management in Enhancing Sport Clubs' Operational Efficiency

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*Case Studies of 80 Sport Club Board Members in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.*

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### Abstract

This study aims to examine the importance of implementing necessary strategies and core functions of human resources management within sport clubs in the in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq to improve their working. In order to comprehend variables, this study uses a quantitative approach and a descriptive research style. A purposive sampling method was used to establish the sample size, which was 80 participants. The researcher developed the questionnaire for data collection, then edited, compiled, and tabulated it using Excel 2010 and SPSS statistical software, version 22. The focus of this study is to determine how the sport clubs in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq can take advantage of strategy and key functions of human resource management. The findings of this study showed that the human resources department is vital for the management of sport clubs and can choose the right people in the right place, as well as have influence on all these staff who are working in the club. It also demonstrated that through an operative HR sector, sport clubs can obtain a competitive advantage over their rivals. The last outcome of this study revealed that the primary responsibilities of human resources (planning, recruitment, training, and development) play a crucial role in attracting and retaining competent workers and raising clubs' standards.

**Keywords:** Importance Human Resource, Functions of Human Resource Management, Implementing Necessary Strategy, (Planning, Recruitment, Training & Development), Sport Clubs, Kurdistan Region of Iraq.



## **1 – Introduction**

The key resource in sports clubs is human resource management (HRM). It is crucial to recognize the value of those who define and manage material and financial resources in a society where technology plays a big role in issue solutions (Mihaela et al., 2014). Managers, coaches, and other staff members determine an organization's mission and play a decisive role in how it is carried out (Hanlon & Cuskelly, 2002). Therefore, the wellbeing of the entire sports organization depends equally on staff growth, goal achievement, and employee reward systems.

The collection of interconnected tasks and procedures designed to recruit, engage, inspire, and keep personnel in an organization are also important components of HRM. This is one of the most significant expenditures in a business, and its rewards are starting to show over time (Manolescu, 2001). The managerial decisions, which are in addition to the processes and functions that HRM focuses on, are among the most challenging because they connect various requirements with individual, organizational, and situational factors that may change over time depending on the changes of the aforementioned factors (Manolescu, 2001). Along with financial, material, and information resources, human resources (HR) play a momentous role in any business since they enable the achievement of the firm's objectives and goals, which in turn enables growth, development, and financial success (Chelladurai & Hyung Kim, 2022). The manager is the most vigorous individual in the HR department because they oversee the entire management process (director, president, etc.) The duties of a manager include organizing, making decisions, hiring employees, supervising, explaining, coordinating, persuading, intriguing, categorizing, approving, and developing (Armstrong, 2004). Sport managers can serve as the senior management for sports organizations as well as the

head of several departments or teams (KHasawneh, 2011). They belong to the middle management group, the second level of management, where management is given more weight. The team manager or athlete is important to a team's success since they organize the group of professionals who support the sports team (Santa et.al., 2008). The manager's responsibility is to coordinate and guide to performance along with the team coaches, physical coach, physical therapist, doctor, IT specialist, and psychologist (Santa et.al., 2008). Sport managers need to have the specialized training needed for athletic success since they cannot comprehend the needs and demands of the other team members without it (Taylor et al., 2015).

In order to build, train, and retain a high-performance team at a highly competitive level, all necessary management areas must be available. These include training from highly qualified technicians, financial, material, human, and information resources, administrative services, medico-psychological services, research, development, public relations, and marketing, all of which are aimed at energizing the team and ensuring its successful participation in major competitions (Colibaba-Evulet and Bota 1998). So, HRM is a process of frequent planning and evaluation and is finest viewed as part of cycle in which an organization aims to meet its strategic goals or is a comprehensive management function, because it might be “both person-centered and goal-directed” (Smith & Stewart 1999).

Concerning Kareem et al. (2021), there are 115 sport clubs in the Kurdistan region of Iraq (KRI), all funded by the government. Kurdistan clubs will participate in a variety of sports leagues according to their levels. However, most sport clubs have a formal organizational structure and have a number of employees, managers, coaches, and sport games (Kareem et al., 2021). Due to the lack of an effective portion of human resources within Kurdistan's sports

clubs, they have not been able to be good planners for their clubs, even in terms of their employee or all staff recruitment and training methods. Therefore, it is vital for sport clubs to understand the strength of the functions of human resources (FHR) or the need for implementing HRM strategy so that they can improve the level and sporting activities of the clubs by having good employees, managers, coaches, and all other staff.

The purpose of this research was to understand the importance of managing human resources for sport clubs. So, this study is planned to find out how sport clubs can plan and improve the level and performance of their workers, along with the recruitment and training system through HR staff, while there is a lack of understanding about the implementation of the necessary functions of human resources management (FHRM) within sports clubs. The main research question of this study was to ask about the importance of implementing necessary strategies and core functions of human resources to advance the works of the clubs.

## **2– Literature Review**

### **2.1– The Need of Implementing a Human Resources Strategy to Sport Clubs.**

Organizational executives frequently support the opinion that “our employees are our most important asset” (Guest, 2001). All workers in a company are one of an organization’s most valuable assets or resources because they help it develop and succeed (Selemani et al., 2014). An organization must empower humans to fulfill its goals, but doing so will not guarantee its long-term success (Tohidi & Jabbari, 2012). Employees are unaware of the organization’s overall objectives and goals. Therefore, HR managers oversee employees to ensure efficient and effective performance in order to accomplish the aims and

objectives of the firm. Sport clubs today embrace a strategic approach to HR as a vigorous strategy for managing their human resources in order to run effectively and resourcefully (Chelladurai & Hyung Kim, 2022).

For a deeper understanding of the significance of strategic human resources (SHR), experts in the field of HRM will be explored who present a definition of SHR. As Armstrong & Taylor (2014:16) explained, "strategic human resource management (SHRM) is an approach to the development and implementation of HR strategies that are integrated with business strategies and support their achievement." The core principle of SHRM is also to view volunteers and workers as investment assets who, via a variety of organizational activities, build a strong psychological bond with the company and discover innovative methods to collaborate that result in higher performance levels (Taylor et al., 2015). According to this viewpoint, sport teams might gain a competitive advantage over their rivals since, in contrast to other resources like technology, human resources are irreplaceable in the near term (Sreih, 2018).

In other words, a sport club's ability to promptly and effectively implement its strategy, not merely the articulation of its strategic position within the sports business, sets it apart from its rivals. Customer interactions are vital in defining the "worth" of the transaction for the customer, especially in service industries like sports (as opposed to just the price of a particular service) (Taylor et al., 2015). Bányai (2019) added that SHRM is crucial for avoiding organizational inefficiency and for recruiting the appropriate individuals at the right time and for the right position. However, SHRM is planned HR deployment, and its operations aid the firm in achieving its goals (Lepak et al., 2006). Planning for human resources is therefore significant if an organization or sport team is to succeed in a challenging climate.

## **2.2– The Key Functions of Human Resources Management are Crucial Tactics for Sport Clubs.**

The key resource in the sports sector is human capital, and cultures that emphasize this resource are best suited for HRM. Sport is, after all, fundamentally the creation and consumption of human (sporting) performance, and the success of an organization depends heavily on the efficient administration of this resource (Walton & Tiell, 2017). According to research, implementing sound HRM procedures can improve a sports club's performance. The functions related to human resources generally include HR planning, recruitment and selection, induction, training and development, employee relations, health and safety, compensations and benefits, performance management, and career and exit. Below, some of them will be thoroughly addressed.

### **2.2.1– Planning**

Planning for human resources entails evaluating the organization's current situation, desired future state, and proposed path to get there. An HR planning process develops scenarios, anticipates future requirements, and chooses the sequence of activities that will give the organization the necessary human resources to meet its strategy objectives (William, Rothwell, & Kazanas, 2003). A SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) is frequently used to examine the organization's internal and external environments at the start of the planning cycle. In order to determine the organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, SWOT analyses are conducted at the beginning of planning (Taylor et al., 2015). A SWOT begins with an external analysis of the internal strengths and weaknesses of the sport clubs in relation to elements like past performance. The analysis is then combined to look at the

chances and risks the sport club faces, and plans are then developed to take advantage of the opportunities and combat the threats (Watt, 2004).

Concerning Robert, Lussier, and Kimball (2019), general managers (GMs) of professional sport clubs must be included in the planning process for strategic HRM. A professional team's director of player development often spends their time planning for contract talks, hiring employees for each part of the club's department, finding substitutes for injured players, and resolving issues with the coaching staff. The GMs assist in making decisions about whether to release aging players, when a player is no longer deserving of a long-term contract, and which free agents are valuable in terms of cap space. The general manager of a football team is involved in all matters pertaining to the team. This includes the playing surface, coaches, trainers, video, players, doctors, and logistics (Robert, Lussier, and Kimball, 2019).

### **2.2.2– Recruitment**

As explained by Samanta et al. (2022), the recruitment method is the process of locating multiple qualified candidates for the position and motivating them to submit an application. The qualified candidate may be chosen from either internal or external sources. Internet, newspaper, and journal advertisements are examples of external resources. This approach has the benefit of making it simple to communicate with lots of individuals (Samanta et al., 2022).

The aim of recruitment is to create a pool of qualified candidates in the appropriate fields, enough to enable the sport clubs to achieve their strategic objectives. The objectives of recruitment more specifically, are to: Together with the job analysis and HR planning processes, ascertain the organization's current and future recruitment, final pool of candidates for jobs that are suitably competent at the lowest possible cost and who would likely stay with the

company if employed, satisfy the organization's hiring requirements in accordance with legal and societal commitments, such as avoiding discriminating against specific ethnic minorities or attempting to recruit more women and families, being selecting and preparing prospective employees who will be qualified candidates, and evaluate the efficiency of various recruitment strategies and methods of recruitment (Samanta et al., 2022).

A sports club that wants to be successful in all of the aforementioned activities must be knowledgeable about upcoming internal demand and supply for new employees, external labor market conditions for various staff groups, efficient channels and materials for recruiting staff, appropriate techniques for evaluating the efficacy of various recruitment methods, and pertinent legal obligations (Aisbett et al., 2015). According to Breuer & Wicker (2009), a significant issue for sports clubs in many nations is recruiting and retention. Concerning data on Scottish sports clubs, 68% of them failed to draw in new junior members, 55% failed to draw in seniors, 41% failed to draw in female members, and 25% failed to draw in other family members (Allison, 2001). Hence, more than half of Scotland's sports clubs stated that 54% of their current members decided to stick with them. Similar circumstances exist in Switzerland, where 34% of sports groups there reported considerable difficulties finding new members (Allison, 2001; Wicker & Breuer, 2013).

Additionally, Aisbett and Hoyer (2015) noted that a significant number of paid and volunteer employees are required to run community sporting activities. according to the Australian Bureau of Statics, in 2005, there were 1.5 million volunteers working in the sports industry, putting in more than 165 million hours annually to manage clubs for sports and recreation (Taylor and McGraw, 2006). However, this evidence demonstrates that the sports industry still has substantial issues with regard to recruiting and retention. These issues have a



direct impact on how sports clubs operate because they are unable to conduct regular operations due to a staffing shortage (Akingbola, 2013).

### **2.2.3– Training & Development**

The goal of training and development is to make sure that workers have the chance to acquire new abilities, perspectives, and dispositions that will enable them to meet the demands of the sporting clubs where they are employed (Sánchez et al., 2021). Naturally, training refers to the acquisition and improvement of professional, technical skills and competencies of employees, whether on- or off-the-job. Development focuses more on modifying attitudes and behaviors than it does on developing skills and enhancing a person's interpersonal talents (Sánchez et al., 2021). Regarding Meyer et al. (1965), sport clubs with well-managed training and development initiatives can more easily retain staff, make sure that their human resources are capable of executing the organization's plan, and produce future leaders.

Higher levels of employee loyalty and a sense of commitment to contribute to the company have both been positively correlated with organizational investment in personal (Mowday, 1999). Additionally, research has shown that training and development can have a favorable effect on an organization's overall performance, product quality, market share, workplace relationships, and profits (Boselie, Paauwe, & Jansen, 2001).

According to Boselie et al. (2001), the sport teams should prioritize strategic training and development because it causes increased staff morale and job satisfaction, increased employee motivation, process and procedure efficiency improvements, and increased ability to accept new techniques and technology. As explained by Taylor (2015), paid employees are equally eligible for training and development. Many sport clubs depend on producing and maintaining such

employees to provide their core services; therefore, effective training and development are essential to their continued existence (Taylor, 2015).

In a study of fitness center employees, Makover (2003: 91) noticed that "specific training and mentoring programs can help elevate employees' awareness, efficacy, commitment, and satisfaction, and as a result, improve the quality of the service that they provide to customers." For example, a sport club that wants to best provide services to its fans and customers might create a special training program that focuses on relationship management and customer care issues to make sure that its employees are aware of how to provide customer satisfaction, ensure customer retention, and foster customer loyalty. So, a direct correlation exists between employee satisfaction and performance, which is influenced by training. Employees' training should therefore be carried out responsibly; otherwise, their discontents with their training may result in their leaving, and the companies or sport teams will be deprived of producing good employees.

### **3. Methodology**

The study used a descriptive research approach inside a quantitative framework to comprehend variables. The focus of this research is on several sport club board members in KRI provinces (Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok) (see Table 1). The sample size of 80 people was chosen using the purposive sampling approach since the potential reach was considerable. The researcher chooses from the population individuals he thinks would be able to provide the necessary or accurate information using a non-probability method called purposive sampling (Etikan & Bala, 2017). The technique is also usually recognized as being bias-free and having a high level of validity and reliability. The researcher designed a questionnaire to gather data.

The fundamental advantage of using a questionnaire to gather data is that it is less expensive, takes less time, and allows respondents to answer truthfully and anonymously, making it easier to gather the essential facts or data and information. In order to account for any potential questionnaire errors and estimate the time needed to complete it, the researcher used a pretest. Pre-testing comprises assessing the questionnaire to determine the applicability of the questions. To eliminate pointless items from the questionnaire, a small group of respondent's pre-tests it. As explained by Roberts-Lombard (2002), surveys should be examined from all sides, including the wording, sequencing, and design of the questions.

The questionnaire was designed as a closed-end questionnaire. Part 1 of the questionnaire was devoted to the number of workforces in sport clubs, especially in terms of statistical issues, and part 2 consisted of two sections that dealt with study-related queries. The Google Forms Survey application was used to collect the study's data, which was then edited, collated, and

tabulated using SPSS statistical software version 22 and Excel 2010. Lastly, various flaws and anomalies were corrected in order to improve dependability and validity.

**Table 1: Research Participants**

<b>N</b>	<b>Name of the Sports Club</b>	<b>Address of the participant in the club</b>	<b>Sport Clubs' Location</b>
1-	Erbil Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
2-	Akad Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
3-	Ararat Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
4-	Sabes Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
5-	Afratany Hawler Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
6-	Brayate Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
7-	Handren Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
8-	Qalay Turkman Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
9-	Jehan Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
10-	Peshmargay Hawler Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
11-	Hersh Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
12-	Brusk Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
13-	Koye Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
14-	Aso Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
15-	Peshkawtn Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
16-	Alla Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province

17-	Peshasazy Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
18-	Zankoy jehan Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
19-	Neshtman Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
20-	Xabat Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Erbil Province
21-	Peshmargay slemany Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
22-	Slemany Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
23-	Serwany New Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
24-	Nawroz Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
25-	Bazyan Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
26-	Darbandexan Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
27-	Afrodet Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
28-	Ashte Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
29-	Chamchamal Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
30-	Peramagrun Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
31-	Xurmal Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
32-	Cheya Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
33-	Sayd Sadq Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
34-	Zankoy slemany Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
35-	Dukan Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
36-	Qaradax Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province

37-	Halabjay Shahed Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
38-	Baxteyare Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
39-	Penjwen Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
40-	Serwany halabja Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
41-	Kldan Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
42-	Baban Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
43-	Zarayan Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
44-	Payam Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
45-	Sarchnar Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
46-	Xalate Penjwen Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
47-	Sharazur Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Sulaymania Province
48-	Duhok Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
49-	Zaxo Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
50-	Akre Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
51-	Sanhareb Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
52-	Afratany Dhok Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
53-	Semel Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
54-	Gara Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
55-	Shexan Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
56-	Bjel Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
57-	Amedy Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
58-	Denarta Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
59-	Pers Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province

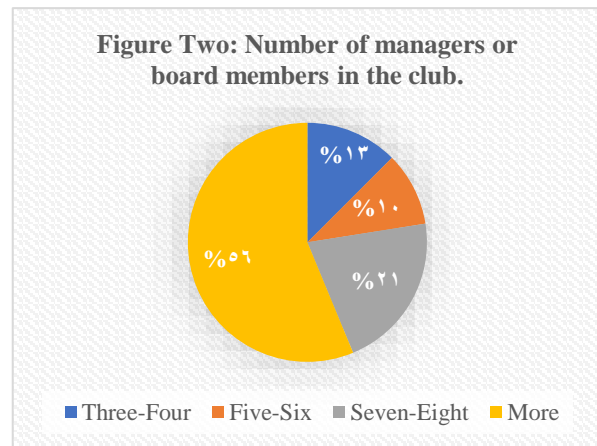
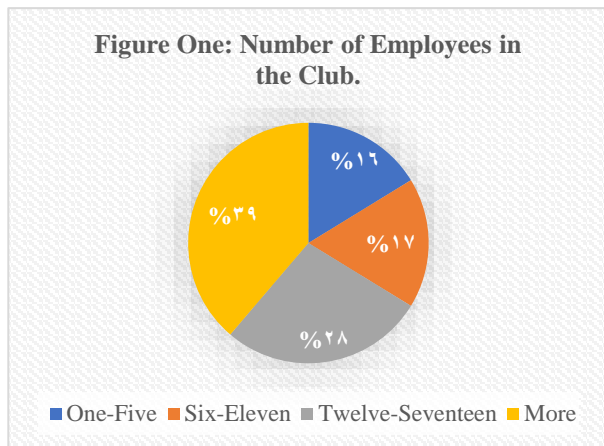
60-	Barda Rash Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
61-	Tanahe Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
62-	Zankoy Pole Taknek Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Duhok Province
63-	Sawra Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Kirkuk Province
64-	Solave New Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Kirkuk Province
65-	Xak Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Kirkuk Province
66-	Altun Kopre Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Kirkuk Province
67-	Baba Gur Gur Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Kirkuk Province
68-	Afratany Krkuk Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Kirkuk Province
69-	Shoreja Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Kirkuk Province
70-	Solav Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Kirkuk Province
71-	Karkuk Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Kirkuk Province
72-	Kaywan Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Kirkuk Province
73-	Laylan Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Kirkuk Province
74-	Chawarqurna Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Administration of Rapareen
75-	Ranya Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Administration of Rapareen
76-	Qladze Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Administration of Rapareen
77-	Sherwana Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Administration of

			Garmeyan
78–	Ruwandz Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Administration of Soran
79–	Soran Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Administration of Soran
80–	Afratany Soran Sports Club	sport clubs board members	Administration of Soran
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Total = Eighty Sport Clubs in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq</b></p>			



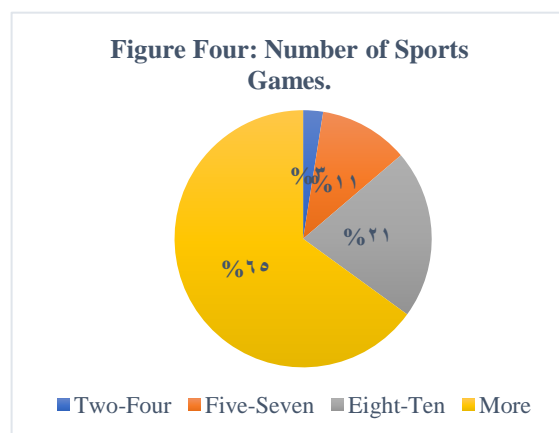
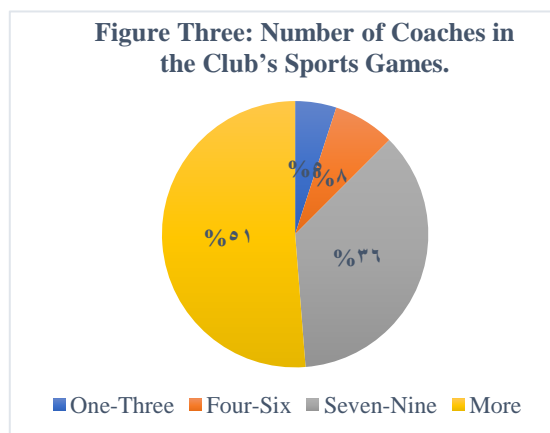
## 4– Results and Discussions

### 4.1– Part One (Number of Workforce)



This part will focus on the total number of people working in different positions and levels within the region's sports clubs. This further puts our research into trust, particularly as we investigate the management of human resources that deal directly with the workforce.

Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4 display that a large number of people work at different levels in sport clubs in KRI. Figure 1 demonstrates that 39% of participants have more than seventeen employees. Figure 2 shows that 56% of participants have more than eight managers or board members. Figure 3 shows that 51% of participants have more than nine sports coaches, and figure 4 demonstrates that 65% of participants have more than ten sports games. Having all these people within clubs reaffirms that human resource staff can invest in people's potential in the most excellent way possible.

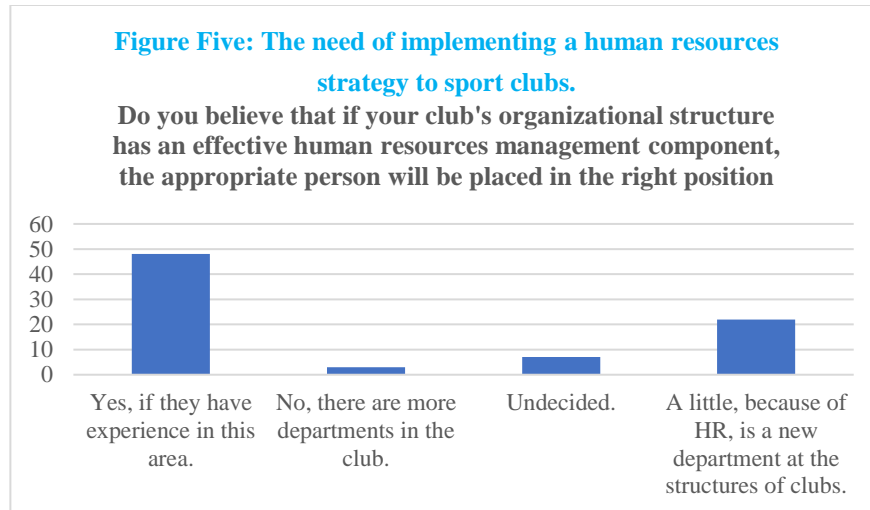


## **4.2– Research Findings**

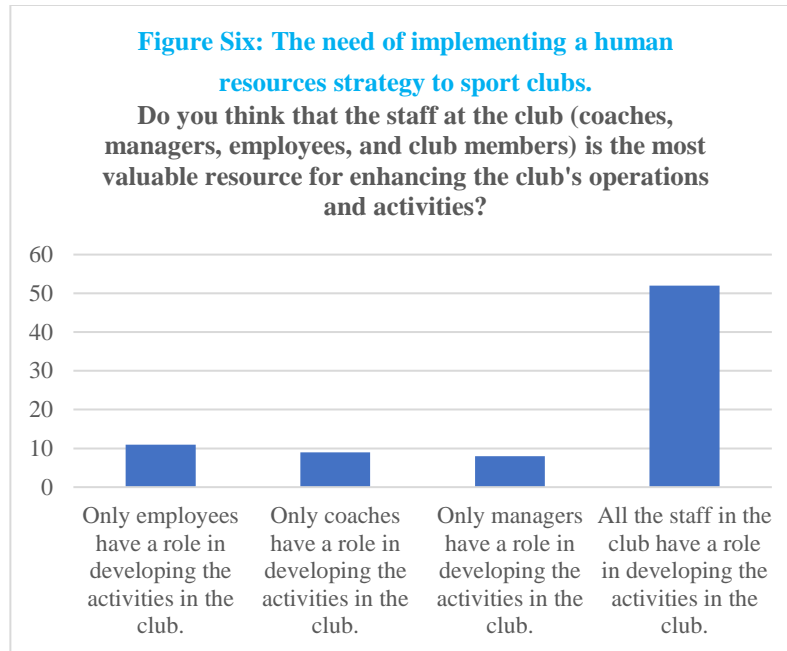
The following parts show the results of research questions that give respondents' opinions, especially consists of two sections. The first section is the need of implementing a human resources strategy to ensure effective and efficient performance within sport clubs, and the second section embraces the key functions of human resources as crucial tactics for the accomplishment of the initiatives of the sports club. These results will benefit Kurdistan Regional Sport Clubs if they can put important human resource strategies into action and establish an effective department by deploying experienced people who will have an impact on driving business growth. In addition, they can gain a competitive advantage due to human resource activation. More importantly, demonstrate that the core HR functions (planning, recruitment, training, and development) are real tactics for finding creative people and achieving more for the club.

### **4.2.1– First Section**

Respondents answer researchers' questions about the human resources department's strategy and the importance of people working according to their address differences, as well as how to achieve competitive advantage and provide the best services to customers.



As explained by Chelladurai & Hyung Kim (2022), along with financial, material, and information resources, human resources play a vital role in any business since they enable the achievement of the firm's objectives and goals, which in turn enables growth, development, and financial success (Chelladurai & Hyung Kim, 2022). As well, Bányai (2019) added that SHRM is crucial for avoiding organizational inefficiency and for recruiting the appropriate individuals at the right time and for the right position. For this reason, Chelladurai & Hyung Kim (2022) have noted that sport clubs today embrace a strategic approach to HR as a crucial strategy for managing their HR in order to run effectively and resourcefully. In figure fifth, most respondents state: yes, the human resource department is important for the management of sports clubs and can appoint the right person in the right place if they have experience in this area.



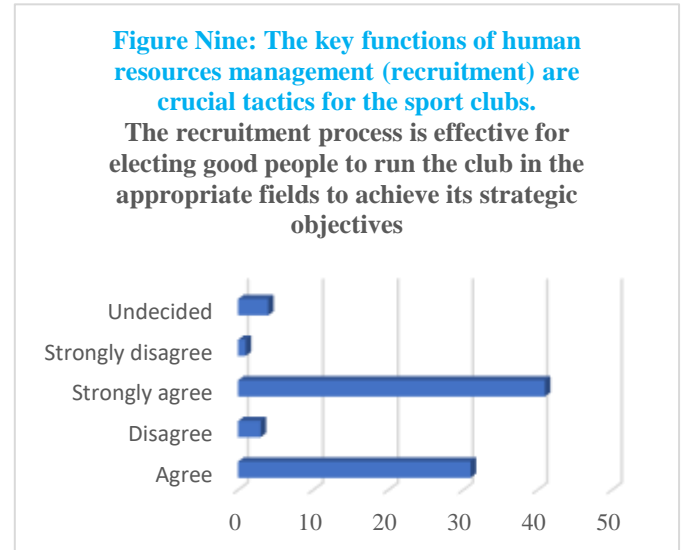
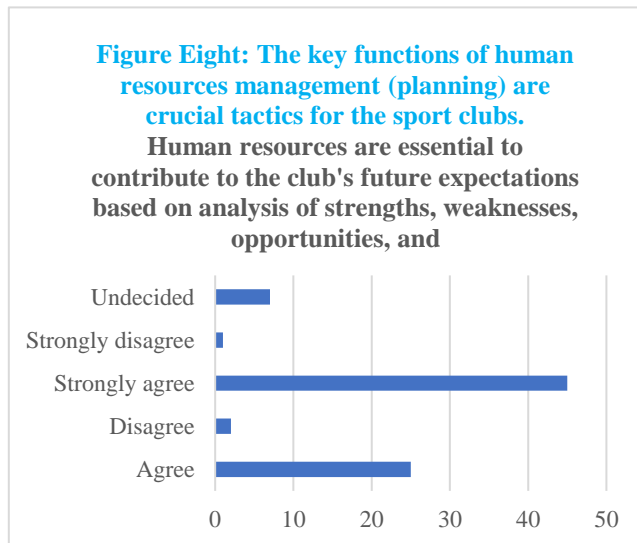
According to Mihaela et al. (2014), the key resource in sports clubs is human resource management. It is important to recognize the value of those who define and manage material and financial resources. As mentioned by Tohidi & Jabbari (2012), all workers in a company are one of an organization's most valuable assets or resources because they help it develop and succeed. Organizations must empower humans to fulfill their goals (Selemani et al., 2014). Hanlon & Cuskelly (2002) have explained that managers, coaches, and other staff members determine an organization's mission and play a crucial role in how it is carried out. Therefore, the wellbeing of the entire sports organization depends equally on staff growth, goal achievement, and employee reward systems (Hanlon & Cuskelly, 2002). Most of the respondents in figure 6, i.e., fifty-two out of eighty participants, indicated that all club staff have a role in developing the activities in the club.



As Armstrong & Taylor (2014:16) explained, "strategic human resource management is an approach to the development and implementation of HR strategies that are integrated with business strategies and support their achievement." The core principle of SHRM is also to view volunteers and workers as investment assets who, via a variety of organizational activities, build a strong psychological bond with the company and discover innovative methods to collaborate that result in higher performance levels (Taylor et al., 2015). According to this viewpoint, sport teams might gain a competitive advantage over their rivals since, in contrast to other resources like technology, human resources are irreplaceable in the near term (Sreih, 2018). In figure seven, the majority of the respondents say: yes, the human resources management strategy allows the clubs to gain a competitive edge, but by establishing and having experienced and effective staff.

#### 4.2.2– Second Section

The respondents, by agree and disagree, answer all the phrases about the key functions of managing human resources, above all planning, recruitment, and training & development.



As mentioned by Williams, Rothwell, & Kazanas (2003), planning for human resources entails evaluating the organization's current situation, desired future state, and proposed path to get there. An HR planning process develops scenarios, anticipates future requirements, and chooses the sequence of activities that will give the organization the necessary human resources to meet its strategy objectives. A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis is frequently used to examine the organization's internal and external environments at the start of the planning cycle.

In order to determine the SWOT, as well as SWOT analysis are conducted at the beginning of planning (Taylor et al., 2015). Therefore, A SWOT begins with an external analysis of the internal strengths and weaknesses of the sport clubs

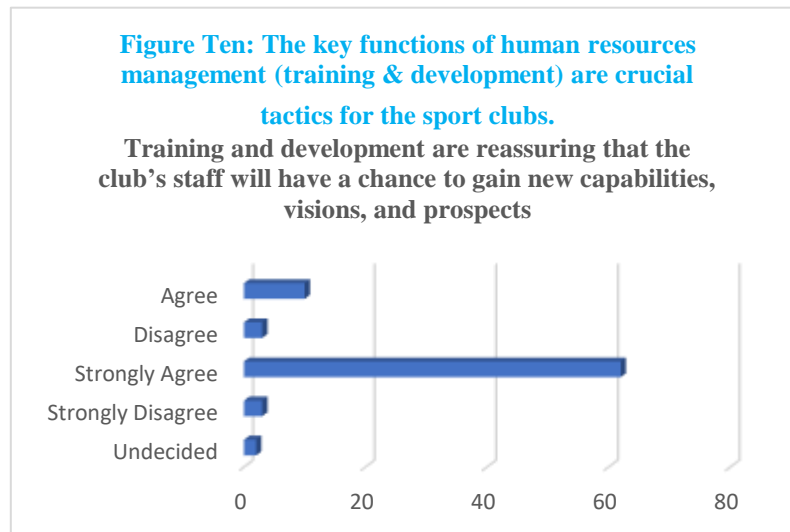
in relation to elements like past performance. The analysis is then combined to look at the chances and risks the sport club faces, and plans are then developed to take advantage of the opportunities and combat the threats (Watt, 2004). In figure eight, most respondents strongly agree that planning for human resources is extremely important, especially involves determining the future state of the club by examining its internal and external strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

As elucidated by Samanta et al. (2022), the recruitment method is the process of locating multiple qualified candidates for the position and motivating them to submit an application. The qualified candidate may be chosen from either internal or external sources. Internet, newspaper, and journal advertisements are examples of external resources. This approach has the benefit of making it simple to communicate with lots of individuals (Samanta et al., 2022).

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Aisbett et al. (2015) clarify that any sport clubs that want to be successful in all of the aforementioned activities must be knowledgeable about upcoming internal demand and supply for new employees, external labor market conditions for various staff groups, efficient channels and materials for recruiting staff, appropriate techniques for evaluating the efficacy of various recruitment methods, and pertinent legal obligations. In figure nine, many of the respondents strongly agree that the recruitment process is effective for electing

good people to run the club in the appropriate fields to achieve its strategic objectives, especially when it comes to bringing in knowledgeable persons.



As clarified by Sánchez et al. (2021), training refers to the acquisition and improvement of professional, technical skills and competencies of employees, whether on- or off-the-job. Development focuses more on modifying attitudes and behaviors than it does on developing skills and enhancing a person's interpersonal talents (Sánchez et al., 2021). Concerning Meyer et al. (1965), sport clubs with well-managed training and development initiatives can more easily retain staff, make sure that their human resources are capable of executing the organization's plan, and produce future leaders.

Furthermore, according to Boselie et al. (2001), the sport teams should prioritize strategic training and development because it causes increased staff morale and job satisfaction, increased employee motivation, process and procedure efficiency improvements, and increased ability to accept new techniques and technology. In figure ten, the majority of the respondents strongly agree that training and development are reassuring that the club's staff



will have a chance to gain new capabilities, visions, and perspectives that will produce future leaders in all sectors.

## **5. Conclusion, Implications and Limitations**

The aim of this study is to assess how sports clubs can benefit from the core functions of human resources to further support club operations in an excellent and attractive manner. Based on the study's findings, a conclusion that could add to the overall conversation on SHRM and FHRM can be made.

There is a vital theme that links with the need to implement a human resources strategy for sport clubs. Results showed that ensuing a HR strategy is a strong contributor to further improving the performance of sports clubs. Therefore, having an effective part in the structure of the clubs and with the presence of experienced staff, the performance of the club can be improved at the level of managing the affairs of the club and sports tournaments. In addition, within sport clubs, all staff have a role in decision-making, i.e., department managers and employees, club members, sports coaches, and all other groups, have an impact on cultivating the work process. On the other hand, human resources create a strong and active wall to gain competitive advantage, making it easier for clubs to attract fans to participate in products and services. Sport clubs in KRI have not currently focused on the human resource needs strategy, so they need to embrace the human resource strategy from the beginning of the establishment of their clubs, which will be a robust starting point for further control and performance. As mentioned by Hanlon & Cuskelly (2002), managers, coaches, and other staff members determine an organization's mission and play a crucial role in how it is carried out. Therefore, Mihaela et al. (2014) state that the key resource in sport clubs is HRM. It is vital to

recognize the value of those who define and manage material and financial resources in a society.

Another theme relates to the key functions of human resources management (planning), which are crucial tactics for the sport clubs. Results showed that planning is considered one of the main functions of human resources, and it is a strong point for analyzing the club's situation of failure. In particular, assessing the points (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) at the beginning of the club's operations will ensure future success. Sports clubs in the Kurdistan Region (KR) have not been able to implement the main human resource task of planning to improve their activities. Therefore, they should include SWOT points to advance the overall operation of the club.

A crucial theme connected to the key functions of human resources management (recruitment) are crucial tactics for the sports clubs. Results showed that recruitment is considered one of the main functions of human resources, and it is an extremely significant process for job descriptions and selecting qualified people within the club. Implementing the recruitment task will enable the sport clubs to find and support talented people in different fields. In this way, clubs will be productive in achieving more. Sport clubs in KR have neglected the recruitment process academically, so they must pay attention to this duty in order to make more use of the ability of people and take their clubs to the peak of success. As clarified by Samanta et al. (2022), the aim of recruitment is to create a pool of qualified candidates in the appropriate fields, enough to enable the sport clubs to achieve their strategic objectives.

A last theme related to the key functions of human resources management (training & development) are crucial tactics for the sport clubs. Results showed that training and development are considered one of the other main functions of

human resources, and it is a crucial topic for the promotion and purpose of the club. Training the entire club staff on time will improve people's abilities and lead to more achievements. Due to the lack of strong financial resources, sport clubs in KR have not been able to develop their training and development. Therefore, they have to conduct the training process to accommodate all the people in the club in all departments, and then automatically happens a development to the sport clubs. Concerning Meyer et al. (1965), sport clubs with well-managed training and development initiatives can more easily retain staff, make sure that their human resources are capable of executing the organization's plan, and produce future leaders.

In conclusion, this study found that human resource strategy is a key requirement to better manage the work and activities of sport clubs; however, the implementation of the main functions of human resources (planning, recruitment, training, and development) is a key character in investing talented and effective people and improving the level of clubs. In particular, the management of sport clubs in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq requires a vigorous HR department to reorganize their performance in a striking manner. This study limited the sport club board members' participation.

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