



SMART ORGANIZERS AND THEIR ROLE IN MANAGING ATHLETIC TALENTS IN TEAMS OF PROFESSIONAL IRAQI BASKETBALL LEAGUE FROM PERSPECTIVE OF ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD MEMBERS AND TRAINING CREWS

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Received: February 23, 2026 **Accepted:** April 06, 2026

ABSTRACT

Background. Iraqi Professional Basketball League clubs face significant challenges in managing their athletic talents. These challenges include the lack of a clear vision for discovering and positively managing talents, providing their teams with distinguished athletic talents who can serve the clubs in various competitions. Many sports club administrations lack strategic planning to engage with these talents, developing them physically, skill-wise, and even psychologically, enabling them to build athletic personalities capable of handling athletic situations positively, free from stress and indiscipline. Furthermore, these clubs lack training programs and modern technologies that help hone these skills among many talented athletes, enabling them to identify strengths and weaknesses and address them quickly and effectively. **Objectives.** The purpose of this paper is to This research aims to identify the level of smart organizations and sports talent management within Iraqi professional basketball league clubs from the perspective of their administrative and technical staff. It also seeks to determine the extent to which smart organizations contribute to sports talent management within these clubs, again from the perspective of their administrative and technical staff. To achieve this primary objective, the researcher employed a descriptive methodology, deemed most suitable for the nature of this study. **Method.** The research sample comprised 57 members of the administrative and technical staff working in Iraqi sports clubs participating in the Iraqi professional basketball league for the 2024-2025 season. **Results.** The researcher utilized the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, percentage, and t-test. After statistically analyzing the data, the researcher concluded that Iraqi sports clubs participating in the Iraqi professional basketball league contribute to the management and development of sports talent, striving to achieve outstanding results and maintain a competitive edge. **Conclusion.** Iraqi sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League are considered smart organizations that seek to develop, modernize, and address issues and events according to unconventional administrative procedures. Iraqi sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League contribute to managing and nurturing sports talent to achieve outstanding results and maintain a competitive advantage.

Keywords; smart organizations, sports talents, basketball, administrative bodies.



A. INTRODUCTION

Modern sports are witnessing significant developments in the field of talent management, with smart organizations playing a pivotal role in enhancing the efficiency of sports clubs with modern technologies, big data, and advanced analytics. According to the challenges facing Iraqi Professional Basketball League clubs, the need to adopt smart management concepts to develop sports talent and ensure competitive results is highlighted (Abdelkarim & Al-Mousawi, 2025; Abd, 2025; Abdullah Mohsen et al., 2025). This research contributes to enriching the literature on sports talent management and the applications of smart organizations in the sports field, particularly in the Iraqi context, which suffers from a scarcity of studies in this area (Ardian et al., 2024; Sudirman et al., 2024; Yanti et al., 2024). The research results can help Iraqi clubs adopt modern talent management strategies, enhancing player performance and raising the level of competition in the league. It also supports professional sports through advanced scientific methods, which will positively affect the development of the sports movement in Iraq.

Hence, the importance of this research lies in examining the role of smart organizations in sports talent management from the perspective of members of the administrative bodies and technical staff in these clubs, to determine the extent to which Iraqi clubs benefit from these modern methodologies. Iraqi Professional Basketball League clubs face significant challenges in managing their athletic talents. These challenges include the lack of a clear vision for discovering and positively managing talents, providing their teams with distinguished athletic talents who can serve the clubs in various competitions. Furthermore, many sports club administrations lack strategic planning to engage with these talents, developing them physically, skill-wise, and even psychologically, enabling them to build athletic personalities capable of handling athletic situations positively, free from stress and indiscipline. Furthermore, these clubs lack training programs and modern technologies that help hone these skills among many talented athletes, enabling them to identify strengths and weaknesses and address them quickly and effectively. Therefore, this study aims to answer the main question: What is the role of smart organizations in managing athletic talents in Iraqi Professional Basketball League clubs, from the perspective of members of the administrative bodies and technical staff?

Research objective

1. To identify the level and dimensions of smart organizations within Iraqi Professional Basketball League clubs from the perspective of their administrative and technical staff.
2. To identify the level and dimensions of sports talent management within Iraqi Professional Basketball League clubs from the perspective of their administrative and technical staff.
3. To identify the percentage of contribution of smart organizations to sports talent management within Iraqi Professional Basketball League clubs from the perspective of their administrative and technical staff.

Terminology

Smart organizations: These organizations use digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and data analysis to improve decision-making processes and increase efficiency (Abdul Jabbar, 2022). Sports talent management: A systematic process that includes

identifying, developing, and retaining talent to achieve outstanding performance (Al-Dakhil, 2022).

B. METHOD

The researcher used the descriptive approach because it is appropriate for the nature of the current research.

Research fields

1. Human field: Members of the administrative and technical bodies of the Iraqi Professional Basketball League clubs.
2. Time field: (12/1/2025) to (1/6/2025)
3. Spatial field: The headquarters of the sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League.

Community and sample research

The research community included (180) administrative and technical staff members of the Iraqi Professional Basketball League clubs for the 2024-2025 sports season, comprising (110) administrative staff members distributed across (11) sports clubs representing the sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League, and (70) administrative and technical staff members representing (coach, assistant coach, administrator, translator, fitness trainer, doctor, and statistician). The researcher divided the research community into:

1. Construction Sample

The construction sample for the smart organizations and sports talent management scales represented the members of the administrative and technical staff working in the administrations of the sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League, totaling (110) administrative and technical staff members distributed across (11) sports clubs participating in the league (2024-2025). The researcher was able to obtain (104) valid questionnaires, representing (57.7%) of the total research community.

2. Application and Experimental Samples

The final application sample for the Smart Organizations and Sports Talent Management scales included (64) members working in the administrations of Iraqi sports clubs, as (administrative body members, technicians) participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League for the 2024-2025 sports season. The final application sample numbered (64) members, distributed across (11) sports clubs. The researcher was able to obtain (57) valid questionnaires, representing (31.6%) of the total population. The pilot sample included (6) members working in sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League, comprising (3) administrative members and (3) members representing the administrative and technical staff. The pilot sample represented (3.3%) of the total population.

Table 1. Shows details of the construction, application, and pilot samples for the Smart Organizations and Sports Talent Management scales

Scales	Exploratory Sample	Construction Sample	Final Application Sample	Excluded	Total
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Smart Organizations And Talent Management Scale	6	104	57	13	167
Percentage Of Total	3,3 %	57,7 %	31,6 %	7,2 %	92,7 %

Table (1) shows the details of the research community and its samples, which included the exploratory experiment sample, the construction sample, and the final application sample (the main experiment), and the number of excluded forms, as the final number reached (167) forms valid for statistical analysis.

Research Tools

1. Smart Organizations Questionnaire

Given the lack of a tool to measure smart organizations in the sports field, and in order to achieve the research objectives, the researcher distributed an open-ended questionnaire to a number of specialists in the field of sports management to identify the main dimensions of smart organizations. This questionnaire served as the initial foundation for designing an appropriate tool.

a. Defining the Dimensions of the Smart Organizations Scale

To determine the dimensions of the smart organizations scale, the researcher presented an open-ended questionnaire to a group of sports management experts to determine the dimensions of the smart sports organizations scale. A minimum acceptance rate of 50% was set for the dimension. After analyzing the results of the experts' opinions, the researcher identified (technological, administrative, human, legal, and contractual) as the main dimensions of the smart organizations scale in the sports field.

b. Formulating the Smart Organizations Scale Paragraphs

After determining the dimensions of the Smart Organizations Scale, the researcher, using scientific sources and personal experience, formulated the scale's paragraphs according to the approved dimensions. The total number of paragraphs for the scale reached (29) paragraphs, distributed among the dimensions (7-7-8-7) for each dimension, respectively. The researcher proposed five alternatives for answering the paragraphs (always, often, sometimes, rarely, never).

c. Apparent Validity

Defines apparent validity as "a type of validity found in the external appearance of a scale, i.e., it appears that the scale measures the characteristic or trait for which it was designed" (Al-Janabi, 2019). Also, state that to verify the apparent validity of the questionnaire and its validity in measuring what it was designed for, and to demonstrate the ability of the statements to cover the topic under investigation, the study instrument is presented to a number of referees and specialists in the field of the research title and specialization (Alawi, & Radwan, 2008; Al-Jubouri, 2020; Al-Kazemi, 2018). Therefore, the researcher presented the initial version of the scale to a number of referees in the field of sports management, after collecting and analyzing the opinions of the specialists, it was found that the percentage of experts' agreement on the validity of the scale's statements

ranged between 81.8% and 100%. They also agreed on the validity of the response alternatives model the pentagon and its weights.

d. Exploratory Experiment

In order to form a comprehensive picture of the scale, the researcher resorted to implementing an exploratory experiment on a sample of (6) members of the administrative and technical staff working in sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League. Through this procedure, the researcher found the clarity of the statements and the method of answering them. The average response time was also calculated, which amounted to (12) minutes.

e. Description of the Smart Organizations Scale in its Final Form

After completing the procedures for constructing the Smart Organizations Scale for sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League, its final form was formed, comprising (28) statements distributed across four dimensions (technological, administrative, human, legal, and contractual), with (7) statements for each dimension. The appropriate weight was determined for each response, ranging from (1-5) points in descending order on the five-point Likert scale (always, often, sometimes, rarely, never). Thus, the total represents the respondent's total score on the scale, which ranges from (28-140).

2. Talent Management Scale

Given the lack of a tool to measure talent management in Iraqi sports clubs, and to achieve the research objectives, the researcher adopted the Talent Management Scale prepared by (Al-Mawla, 2020). This scale included (28) statements distributed across dimensions (exploration, consisting of (7) statements; development and improvement, consisting of (7) statements; (6) statements were retained; and infrastructure, consisting of (8) statements).

a. Formulating the Talent Management Scale Paragraphs

After identifying the dimensions of the Talent Management Scale, the researcher, using scientific sources and personal experience, formulated the scale paragraphs according to the approved dimensions. The total number of paragraphs for the scale reached (28) items distributed across dimensions, with (7, 7, 6, and 8) for each dimension, respectively. The researcher proposed five alternatives for answering the paragraphs (always, often, sometimes, rarely, never).

b. Apparent Validity

State that to verify the apparent validity of the questionnaire and its validity in measuring its intended purpose, and to demonstrate the ability of the statements to cover the topic under investigation, the study instrument was presented to a number of referees and specialists in the field and specialization of the research title (Al-Nedaw & Saeed Al-Mousawi, 2022). Therefore, the researcher presented the initial version of the scale, consisting of (28) statements, to a number of referees specializing in sports management after collecting and analyzing the opinions of the specialists, it was found that the percentage of agreement on the validity of the scale statements ranged between (90.9% and 100%). They also unanimously agreed on the validity of the five-point response alternatives model and its weights.

c. Description of the Talent Management Scale in its Final Form

After completing the procedures for constructing the Talent Management Scale for sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League, its final form was

formed, comprising (24) statements distributed across four dimensions (exploration, development and improvement, retention, infrastructure), with (6) statements for each dimension. The appropriate weight was determined for each response, ranging from (1-5) points in descending order on a five-point Likert scale (always, often, sometimes, rarely, never). Thus, the respondent's total score on the scale ranged from (24-120).

3. Main Experiment

The main experiment of the two research tools was applied to a sample of (64) administrative and technical members working in Iraqi sports clubs participating in the Professional Basketball League. The researcher obtained (57) valid questionnaires, noting that the experiment was implemented between February 1, 2025 and March 1, 2025.

Statistical Methods

1. Arithmetic Mean
2. Standard Deviation
3. Pearson Correlation Coefficient
4. Spearman-Brown Correlation Coefficient
5. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
6. T-Test

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In order to find the percentages of the tools of the current study, the researcher used the studies of (Al-Saqi, 2015; Al-Tai, et al., 2023).

1. Identifying the level and dimensions of smart organizations in Iraqi Professional Basketball League clubs from the perspective of members of the administrative bodies and technical staff.

Table 2. shows the arithmetic means, standard deviations, percentages, and levels for the dimensions of the smart organizations scale

Dimensions	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage	Level	Serial
Technological	30,02	3,51	85.77%	Very high	First
Administrative	29,98	3,64	85.66%	Very high	Second
Human	29,20	3,08	83.43%	Very high	Third
Legal	28,44	3,39	81.26%	Very high	Fourth
Smart Organizations Scale	117.64	9.32	84.03%	Very high	

Table (2) shows that the technology dimension's first ranking within the dimensions of the Smart Organizations Scale reflects the orientation of the managements of sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League toward employing modern technology and harnessing it to build sports organizations that rely on modern administrative processes, utilizing artificial intelligence programs to improve the sports services provided to athletes.

Table (2) also shows that the administrative dimension ranked second within the dimensions of the Smart Organizations Scale. This result reflects the managements of these clubs' interest in adopting sound administrative principles, such as planning, organization,

guidance, and other administrative principles that will enhance the sports institution and its organizational reputation.

Table (2) also shows that the human dimension ranked third within the dimensions of the Smart Organizations Scale. The researcher believes that human resources are the most important resource for a sports institution. Successful administrators, distinguished players, and intelligent coaches represent an integrated administrative system that must be nurtured, cared for, and provided with the necessary resources to ensure the continuity of work and its development for the better. As shown in Table (2), the legal dimension ranked fourth among the dimensions of the Smart Organizations Scale, with an arithmetic mean of (28.44) and a percentage of (81.26%). The researcher attributes this high result to the commitment of the managements of the sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League to legal aspects and the importance they deserve to guarantee the rights of the sports club, as well as the rights of the individuals working within the club (administrators and technicians). Adherence to regulations and instructions creates a sense of trust and stability within the sports institution. Table (2) also shows that the Smart Organizations Scale scored an arithmetic mean of (117.64) and a percentage of (84.03%), representing a very high level. The researcher believes that the Iraqi sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League have begun to move towards building sports institutions that adopt unconventional administrative procedures and act intelligently regarding the future policy of the sports club. Dealing with resources and events in a manner that ensures the growth and development of the club's diverse capabilities assert that a smart organization uses long-term strategies to achieve sustainable gains in the long term at the expense of sacrificing short-term gains (Badwi Shbeeb et al., 2023; Bharadwaj et al., 2013).

To identify the level and dimensions of sports talent management in Iraqi Professional Basketball League clubs from the perspective of members of the administrative bodies and technical staff.

These results were consistent with the results of the study which confirmed that all levels of the dimensions were between high and very high, and this reflects the organization's desire to change in order to keep pace with the requirements of the changing work environment (David & James 1998).

Table 3. Shows the means, standard deviations, percentages, and levels for the dimensions of the talent management scale

Dimensions	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage	Level	Serial
Exploration	25.99	3.43	86.63%	Very high	First
Development	24.82	3.87	82.73%	Very high	Second
Retention	25.45	3.41	84.83%	Very high	Third
Infrastructure	24.15	3.89	80.5%	Very high	Fourth
Talent Management Scale	100.41	7.32	83.67%	Very high	

Table (3) shows that the researcher believes that identifying competencies and human resources in the sports field is an important and not easy process. The person responsible for this process must be familiar with the scientific and practical aspects to be able to identify the physical and psychological characteristics, as well as the physiological

aspects of the athlete. Sports clubs are vital organizations that contribute to the development of sports cadres through sound planning for their present and future, to advance the sports reality through the plans and programs they provide that support human energies and capabilities and harness them for the sake of achieving distinguished sports achievements. Table (3) also shows that the retention rate achieved second place within the dimensions of the sports talent management scale, achieving a high percentage of (84.83%). This positive result, in the researcher's opinion, reflects the commitment of the administrations responsible for Iraqi sports clubs to talent, whether athletic or administrative. Talent is an important resource for the club that must be preserved and maintained (Almusawi, 2019; Jaafar, 2017; Melhem, 2000). Confirm that employee retention has become a primary concern for organizations, as human capital remains an important resource that can provide a sustainable competitive advantage. To help and support organizations retain and retain their employees, current research seeks to develop a theoretical framework for the relationship between human resource management practices and employee retention. It is evident that there is a correlation between human resource management practices and organizations' retention of employees for the longest possible period. As shown in Table (3), the development and advancement dimension ranked third among the dimensions of the talent management scale, achieving a percentage of 82.73%. The researcher believes that the development and modernization process is a healthy process resorted to by sports club administrations to keep pace with the rapid developments witnessed by the global sports movement. The process of retaining sports talent has prompted these clubs to review their approved programs and policies and work to modify them to align with the requirements of modern sports work, by employing modern techniques and technologies to advance the sports club and its distinguished human resources.

As shown in Table (3), the infrastructure dimension ranked fourth and last, with a percentage of (80.5%). The researcher believes that the issue of infrastructure is one of the important factors that has a direct impact on sports talents, as it represents the group of services provided by sports club administrations, such as sports fields, physical training halls, and equipment and tools used in training. A sports club that possesses distinguished infrastructure will represent an attractive environment for many of these talents to grow and develop, as sports talent needs care, support, and the provision of all the requirements for its development and the sustainability of its performance. As shown in Table (3), the sports talent management scale achieved a (very high) level, as it obtained a percentage of (83.67%), which is a high percentage that reflects a state of work and high concern by the administrations of sports clubs in Iraq to provide all the requirements in order to preserve human talents, both sports and non-sports, by adopting new strategies that take into account the requirements of the modern era. Therefore, the process of sports talent management requires administrations to restructure their administrative work and adopt an administrative culture that supports the processes of attracting human competencies (sports and technical) and providing important attraction factors to achieve an administrative and sports renaissance that is in line with the requirements of the modern era and contributes to achieving distinguished results that benefit the reputation and position of the sports club, as these clubs began to attract players and coaches from Arab and international clubs in an effort to develop the capabilities and experiences of the Iraqi player.

Identifying the contribution of smart organizations to the management of sports talent in Iraqi Professional Basketball League clubs, from the perspective of members of the administrative bodies and technical staff.

The findings of Mohamed, (2021). study indicated that private colleges of physical education and sports science lack a clear talent management strategy, aside from some positive practices by certain faculty members aimed at nurturing and encouraging talent. This finding contradicts the results of the current study, which emphasized the important role of sports clubs in developing and retaining talent.

Table 4. Shows the relationship and contribution percentage between smart organizations and talent management

Variable	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Correlation coefficient	Sig	Type sig
Smart Organizations	117,64	9,32	0,724	0,002	sig
Talent Management	100,41	7,32			

Table (4) shows that the researcher attributes the significant affect of Iraqi sports clubs (smart organizations) on managing sports talent. The researcher believes that this result reflects the evolving vision of these sports clubs to transition from traditional administrative work to one that relies on modernity and the use of modern technology and techniques. This is in addition to attracting international expertise, including coaches and players, to benefit from their diverse capabilities and experiences in discovering local sports talent and managing them in a way that positively reflects the level of performance and experience of Iraqi athletes (Samara, et al. 1989; Shahab & Saeed Al-Mousawi, 2025; Smith & Johnson, 2019; Suleiman & Abdul Latif, 2021), of procedures, activities, and tasks related to employees, implementation, and oversight of all the organization's various activities, and the nature of the procedures followed to complete work.

This result is consistent with the study by Williams & Reilly (2000)., which indicated a significant correlation between coaches in the sports and scouting department and the management of athletic talent. Furthermore, the findings of this study align, which indicated that the determinants of recruitment are the ability to identify physical, physiological, and skill-related characteristics, while the methods for developing and nurturing talented players involve the ability to enhance their skills. Good healthcare and the provision of financial rewards and incentives are also essential for retaining athletic talent (Adriani et al., 2025; Chafidz et al., 2023; Haidar et al., 2024; Suniga et al., 2025).

D. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Iraqi sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League are considered smart organizations that seek to develop, modernize, and address issues and events according to unconventional administrative procedures. Iraqi sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League seek to develop sports human resources, provide the necessary support to nurture sports talent, and provide all necessary resources for its development. Iraqi sports clubs participating in the Iraqi Professional Basketball League contribute to managing and nurturing sports talent to achieve

outstanding results and maintain a competitive advantage. Review the adopted management methods and organizational culture to ensure their continuity and maintain their competitive advantage. Highlight age groups in various sporting events, work to attract them, and provide the necessary resources to develop them, making them a resource for the sports club.

E. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author extends sincere appreciation to all those who contributed to the success of this research.

F. AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Ahmed Raad Ibrahim Alsaqi is responsible for the manuscript in this study.

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