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THEORETICAL-CONCEPTUAL BOUNDARIES OF THE ACTIVITY OF SPORTS ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Abstract. *This article describes the theoretical and conceptual features of entrepreneurship in sports. Given that performance athletes, for the most part, after completing their careers in the competition do not prolong their activity in the field of sports, it becomes necessary to motivate them and state the instructional steps for a competent professional training to the entrepreneurial activity of such persons, who they will be able to effectively monitor all actions in the domestic sports industry.*

Keywords: *entrepreneurship, sports, management, business environment, perspective.*

The topicality of the approached problem. Entrepreneurial activity in the field of sports in the Republic of Moldova is a little capitalized phenomenon. As the concept of "entrepreneurship" is a key element of the managerial aspect, certainly, applicants for such a "title" must be prepared, trained and fully know the set of specific skills in order to successfully carry out all activities provided.

At the same time, the practice demonstrates that after finishing the sports career, the performers, for the most part, are not engaged in a professional entrepreneurial work, in order to provide services as continuity in / on the respective field. This, in most cases, may lack perspective or development of certain ideas, processes, techniques, etc. in the given field, only for the sake of abandonment or lack of interest of certain persons. It is certain that high-performance athletes may be able to promote a series of **exclusive** values that they have obtained during a multi-annual period of training for continuity, being specially prepared for it.

These arguments represent the basic reason for the study, which arouses special interest for the modernization and promotion

of entrepreneurship in the field of sports in the Republic of Moldova.

The **purpose** of the study lies in the theoretical-conceptual elucidation of the essence of the notion of entrepreneurship, the exposition of an algorithmic succession of actions that the respective information must contain.

In order to achieve the goal, the following **objectives** were set:

1. Study on the retrospective of the concept of entrepreneurship in the field of physical culture and sports.

2. Review of normative acts and documents attesting the forms of entrepreneurship in the field of sports in various tests practiced in the Republic of Moldova.

3. Elaboration and establishment of norms, requirements and conditions for informing performance athletes in order to develop and promote entrepreneurship in the field of national and world sports and how to fulfill them.

The methods of the study reveal: -the theoretical-conceptual analysis and the argumentation of the data exposed in the sources of the specialized literature on the approached subject; - analysis of the documentary spectrum regarding the

organization and development of entrepreneurial activities in the field of sports in the Republic of Moldova; - the heuristic method of elaborating the package of actions necessary for the efficient development of the entrepreneurial activities in the field of sports in the Republic of Moldova.

Thus, the preventive study provided ample information on the specifics of organizing and carrying out entrepreneurial activities in the field of sports in the Republic of Moldova, and it is found that such activities are a good opportunity to expose the performance achieved by athletes after the end of sports career but, little attention is paid to this subject (it is considered at the level of the sports event, club, department, federation, etc.). That is why it is necessary to intervene with new approaches to the problem, modernizing both the contents and the forms of elaboration of the documents necessary for a more efficient development of the entrepreneurial activities in the field of sports in our country.

Arguments

The retrospective sheet of the concept of "entrepreneurship" worldwide dates back to the mid-eighteenth century ("entrepreneur" being considered a person who works in risky conditions, who uses any opportunity to earn income, always seeks change, where everything must be based on knowledge, recommending innovation) [1, 3, 4]. Subsequently, this concept was modified and supplemented in the sense of its essence, obtaining other interpretations.

At the current stage, the phenomenon of entrepreneurship obtains a specificity of commercialization and is infiltrated in all spheres of activity, including sports.

According to the legislation of the Republic of Moldova "entrepreneurship is the activity of manufacturing production, execution of works and provision of services, carried out by citizens and their associations independently, on their own initiative, on their behalf, at their own risk and under their

patrimonial responsibility to ensure a permanent source of income" [1, 2, 5].

In our country, scientific-technological and innovative development involves the growth and efficiency of entrepreneurship, especially by creating and ensuring the sustainability of the business environment. Currently, the main role is played by IMM, which have the ability to use research results quickly, flexibly and efficiently. Currently, in the Republic of Moldova (according to the data of the National Bureau of Statistics for 2014), the IMM sector constitutes approximately 97.4% of the total number of enterprises, with a share of 3% of medium enterprises, 18.8% of small enterprises and 75.6% in micro enterprises. The category of small and medium enterprises includes all types of enterprises with the number of employees from 1 to 249 employees. The subjects of small entrepreneurship are active in practically all branches of the economy, exploring small market segments. The efficiency of using the potential of resources in small business, according to the basic indicators, is 1.5-2 times higher than in the economy of the country as a whole. About 291.7 people worked in small and medium enterprises, which represents 56.2% of the total number of employees in the national economy. Revenues from sales of small and medium enterprises reached 31.8% of revenues from sales of the total volume in the economy.

At present, no statistical indicators are defined for the last years regarding the activities of active innovation enterprises. However, it is well known that when developing a country with an innovation-based economy, the share of active innovation enterprises must correspond to 60-80% of the total number of enterprises in the economy. In this context, **entrepreneurship** must become an important sector and an innovative factor of the national economy.

In the field of sports, entrepreneurship provides the ability to put into practice the ideas, concepts, knowledge, innovative results

and sports performance achieved. Entrepreneurial skills can provide athletes with the tools they need to think creatively and be able to solve problems effectively. Entrepreneurship is included in school curricula for vocational education in most European countries, at least to some extent. Through its role in formal and non-formal education, sport contributes to the enrichment of capital at national, European / global level. The values transmitted through sport help to develop knowledge, motivation, skills and preparation for individual effort (independent professional activity). Sport is a dynamic sector, with rapid development and an underestimated macroeconomic impact, a sector that can contribute to achieving the objectives set in the state policy on economic growth and job creation. In this context, it is worth mentioning that entrepreneurship is a necessary component for everyone, helping young people to become more creative and confident in any activity they undertake.

Thus, the promotion of entrepreneurship education among students, performance athletes and specialists in the field is beneficial for training them all the skills

needed to develop the business environment in our country, and to ensure the reintegration of professional athletes on the labor market at the end of sports careers.

In this sense, an important role in the era of globalization is given to **professional retraining** for athletes, which offers (performance athletes, who retire from competitive activity), a safety and an extra chance for the successful extension of the professional activity they know to the smallest detail.

Also, the Law of the Republic of Moldova on physical culture and sports no. 330-XIV of 25.03.99 published in the *Official Monitor of the Republic of Moldova* no. 83-86 / 399 of 05.08.1999 speaks about the regulation of **entrepreneurial** activity in physical culture and sports. According to art.4 (1) physical person (citizens of the Republic of Moldova) and legal entities (associations, clubs and national federations) have the right to the entrepreneurial activity of providing services related to physical culture and sports, as well as to the production of goods for sports and tourism, based on the license issued by the specialized central authority.

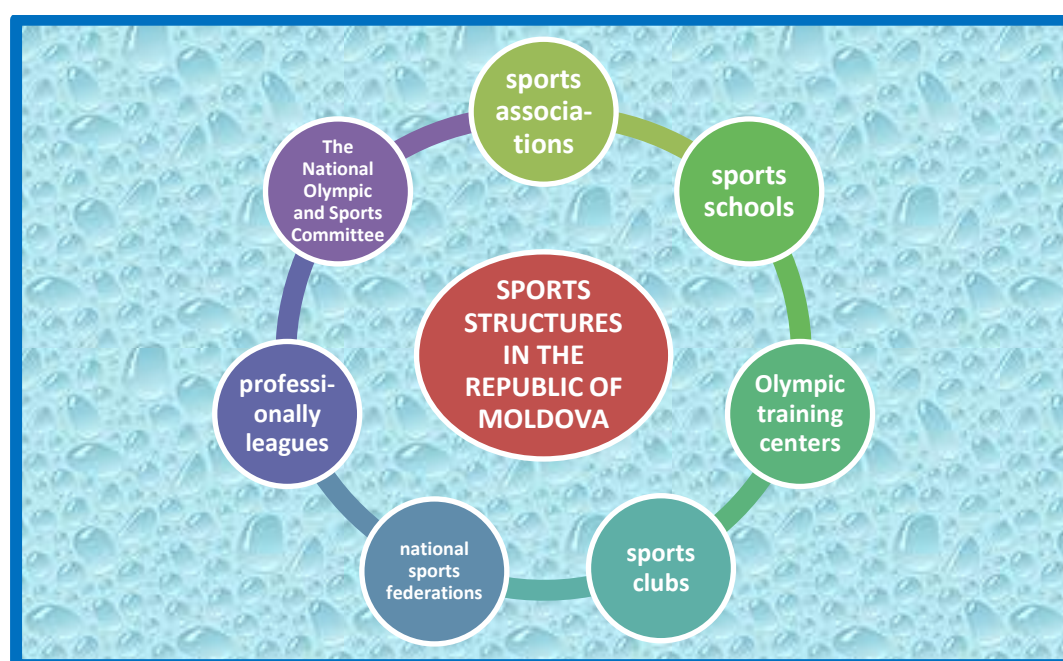


Fig. 1. Sports structures in the Republic of Moldova

It should be mentioned that the sports structures are specialized organizations, made up of natural or physical persons and legal entities for the purpose of organizing and administering certain activities and are divided into (Figure 1): a) sports associations; b) sports clubs; c) sports schools; d) Olympic training centers; e) national sports federations; f) professional leagues; g) The National Olympic and Sports Committee.

Today, sport is more than a physical activity and competition. It also became a spectacle and a business. Today's sport is specialized and performance-oriented, and sports activities have become profit-generating elements for a multitude of people and organizations. Through the companies that the future specialists can set up, they will be able to manage the sponsorship contracts of the athletes, being aware that the financial involvement of the business environment is essential for obtaining superior sports results. Certain sports, such as football, tennis, basketball, etc. they have become large-scale "businesses" in which athletes become truly active for the company, along with fixed assets. The main way to reach it is to conclude sponsorship contracts. Thus, the drafting of the sponsorship project is one of the essential moments of the process of finding and contacting sponsors. In addition to the sponsorship projects, the sports manager can establish, together with the athlete / team, the competition calendar for the current year, the participation conditions, the training opportunities, etc.

Knowledge of **entrepreneurial** practices is becoming increasingly important today for multiple categories of economic agents operating in the world of sports, thus contributing decisively to the country's economic growth process (micro- and macro-economic level). In the development of the entrepreneurial phenomenon an important place is occupied by the strategic vision, which is an important element, ensuring the

identification of the phenomena that take place in the competitive sports industry.

As a result of the development of commercial activities, the management, entrepreneurship and sport administration have become real professions in the national and international environment. In all respects, sports entrepreneurs and managers form an interesting category. Active sports primarily need entrepreneurs and managers of sports activities, as well as large sports clubs or non-profit organizations that offer sports equipment [1, 2, 5]. Secondly, as a spectacle, sport needs specialists in management, and thirdly, the management and administration of the sports infrastructure must be ensured (which must be constantly monitored by the sports coach, as the case may be, in his double capacity sports business owner and manager) [5, 8]. Thus, entrepreneurship complemented by sports management are processes that assume responsibility for planning and regulating within a sports organization, human resources in order to achieve the objectives. The main element in the formation of entrepreneurship and its management is the **process** which consists in transmitting to potential specialists that knowledge, which would allow them to become more efficient and competent [4, 7, 9].

At all levels, the sport needs well-motivated managers to exercise their authority in the spirit and respect of the new requirements.

Results. Analyzing the nature of entrepreneurial and managerial activities in the field of sports, and, taking into account the arguments set out above about what entrepreneurs, managers and sports managers need to know, four essential modules of skills can be formulated, namely:

➤ *entrepreneurial, managerial and sports management knowledge* (what the sports entrepreneur, the manager must to know about the organization, his function and the procedures used; skills related to solving problems; assuming responsibilities regarding

the planning and regulation of resources within the sports entity);

➤ *social skills or of another nature required in practice;*

➤ *managerial attitudes* (what a manager must accept in order to cope with stress, in order to take care of clients);

➤ *managerial style* (people's expectations regarding the way the manager leads).



Fig.2. Elements of the managerial development program according to Simmons and Brennan (1981), quoted by [2], adapted by us

And the managerial methods used in managerial development and sports management can be completed, as follows:

➤ *entrepreneurial, managerial and sports management education* (qualification courses held in universities or public faculties, for example sports entrepreneurship, diplomas in sports management and management, as well as various professional exams);

➤ *managerial training* (internal and external courses outside the workplace, focusing on acquiring knowledge and skills useful for that job; experimental learning through exercises in the course);

experiential learning or "learning from work"; work experience, usually under the guidance of a superior or colleagues; exchange of experience.

Entrepreneurial competence in sports includes various technical knowledge in many fields: sports, economics, accounting, sports law, psychology, public relations, sports journalism, sports management (leadership), marketing, business ethics, etc. For optimal performance, these skills also require a number of personal qualities and a

certain mental attitude that are often more important than technical knowledge.

Athletes who aim to have the general and specific skills needed in the profession of **entrepreneur**, must form knowledge in the field, being able to obtain higher personal incomes than those who do not have such knowledge or skills.

All these required the development and identification of skills specific to the sports entrepreneur, considered as necessary elements in achieving the objectives set for entrepreneurial activity.

With emphasis on the **investigative mechanisms**, it should be mentioned that in this study, the research team developed the necessary **algorithms** to effectively achieve the topics related to entrepreneurship in sports from the perspective of development in the Republic of Moldova. These algorithms refer to:

- after completing their sports career (participation in competitions), performance athletes **to know the steps** they should follow to find a job commensurate with extra-sports skills and abilities;

- The National Olympic Committee of the Republic of Moldova must identify performance athletes, and at the end of their sports career, together with the academic institutions, **to develop and approve** development and improvement programs, in order to include them in new learning programs;

- **identifying** organizations that can take over and hire former performance athletes to find the right job;

- **elaboration / establishment** of the tests for evaluating the capacities / aptitudes of the applicants, after the statistical processing of which the necessary steps can be made;

- **elaboration** of professional reconversion programs, which can be offered to former performance athletes for the option / possibility of selecting the right job depending on the degree of professional training of each at that time;

- **elaboration** of hierarchical steps and entrepreneurial positions, according to which the representatives should know from the very beginning the course of a subsequent career of professional entrepreneurial activity;

- **elaboration / establishment** of the content of the sociological questionnaire and of the interviewing of the performance athletes regarding the fact: what will happen at the moment when they will end their sports activity;

- **determining** the program of solutions in which the professional reconversion should be granted in such a way that the transition from sports life to the professional activity of entrepreneur is not sudden, with repercussions and, at the same time, to contain the necessary constructive beliefs and encouragements;

- **establishing** the optimal forms of information, which should generate the facilities that the representatives can benefit from through professional retraining programs, specially created and approved for entrepreneurial activities;

- **development** and implementation of forward-looking research projects that can have a significant impact on national and international sports forums;

- **highlighting** the skills that future entrepreneurs must acquire from the time they are in performance sports and participate in competitions;

- **establishing** collaboration plans with sports federations, clubs, associations, centers, etc., which train performance athletes to ensure that they, being informed well in advance, know the opportunities for employment in the entrepreneurship system in the field, the situation on the labor market, etc.;

- the **creation** of consultation networks and the staff of consultants in the field of entrepreneurship, who will deal with the counseling of athletes, but also with a career perspective plan. During group meetings, the candidates will be able to have it explained to them how the labor market works, and by organizing individual meetings, athletes will be advised how to prepare a correct CV, a letter of intent, how to appear at interviews and much more other subjects useful for such activities.

In **conclusion**, we can conclude that by identifying the activity of sports entrepreneurship in the Republic of Moldova it is possible to influence the increase of the work of entrepreneurs, and ways of efficiency to be directed towards the development of professional skills specific to this type of specialists. Also, the following aspects can be conditioned: raising the quality of decisions taken, improving management style and methods, improving their own work technique, implementing information technologies, management technology, implementing efficient technologies for planning and recording the managerial activity of the sports entrepreneur, etc., which, in accordance with the above developments, will be able to ensure the development and promotion of entrepreneurship at a high level of efficiency.

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