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Sports Organizations – Management and Science

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Abstract

Latest research has outlined the connection between management and sports, giving a new meaning to the field of sports management, which can enrich the scientific content of sports. Based on particular concepts and research methods, along with a specific scientific typology, management defines the sports phenomenon as a systemic activity oriented on achieving some social-professional objectives in the sports area. The management of sports studies the management processes and relationships within them, aiming to discover the laws and principles that govern them and to develop new systems, methods, techniques and management methods to obtain, maintain and increase competitiveness. Thus, the importance of management science is given by the study of management relationships and processes.

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1. Introduction

The emergence of the first modern forms of sports activity organization has entailed, as a necessity, the creation of an appropriate frame for developing these types of activities.

One can say that the way sports organizations are being managed represents a science and the performances have the ability to convert science into leadership art.

The organizational theories advance the notion of management. Since the beginning of the last century, F. Taylor (1911) claimed that management is a science, the science of an efficient leadership. The performance and its consistency are not random; they are the result of the management science.

Using specific investigation methods and concepts and presenting a characteristic scientific typology, the management defines the sports phenomenon as a systemic activity oriented towards the achievement of certain socio-professional objectives in sports area (Cristea, 2000).

From the management perspective, sport represents an evolutionary component of modern social life, with own national and international structure, a specific material base and a large group of specialized technical staff, with organizational structures based on systems, laws, theoretical principles and on national and international

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institutions and authorities aiming to create and improve the biological, material and emotional aspects of the sports activity` practitioners and participants.

Sports management is a separate branch in the science of sports, because it meets the basic requirement, which is to have an own research field and uses scientific methods in organizing its object of activity.

The novelty of the paper consists into the fact that it brings into the attention of the Romanian researchers the issue of sports` organization modern management. Although, in the contemporary society this issue is a topical one, the sports organizations in Romania hardly associate sports management with science. Romanian researchers in this area are very few, the subject did not represent a theme of major importance and the activity of the sport organizations has been developed within overcome parameters and stereotypes.

2. Strategies regarding the scientific analysis in performance management

2.1. Management strategies

The approach of the management strategies through organizational efficiency implies the performance aspect. Thus, one can define performance strategies. These are divided in:

- Efficiency strategy
- Quality strategy
- Innovation strategy

2.2. Strategies of the management process

- The basic structure of the management process

Strategic management is a complex process, which is projected and realized according to the organizational specificity. Independently of the way in which is accomplished, strategic management process has the same structure. Brătianu (2004) synthesizes the management process as showed in figure 1:



Fig.1. The management process (after Brătianu, 2004)

The basic components of the management process are synthetized by the same author, according to figure 2.

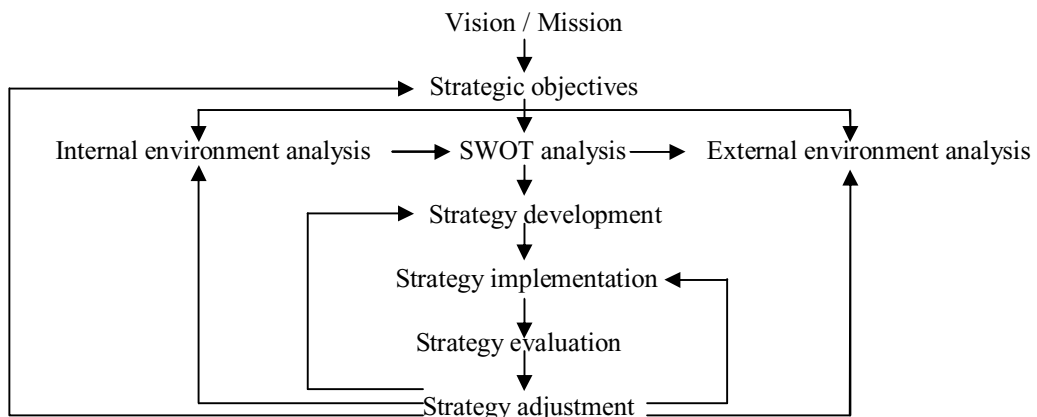


Fig.2. The management process (after Brătianu, 2004)

The starting point of the process is the vision that founders have regarding the organization they want to project, in order to satisfy through the value created, the consumer demands.

Although vision is a virtual projection into the future, must present satisfactory chances of success, thus it has to be realistic. The same approach is to be found within the opinion of other experts in the branch (Cowley & Dom, 1997). Once created, the organization assumes a certain mission in relation to the vision of the founders and consumer demands and to the social requirements regarding sports organizations. The mission can be considered as a system law or an existential law aiming to make sense of all the activities to be performed by the organization. The vision and mission are considered for the entire existence of an organization. Their materialization on 4 - 5 years is done by setting strategic objectives. The achievement of these objectives generates the driving forces of the organization and the motivation for the development, implementation and evaluation of the strategies. But before proceeding to the development of the strategies, a realistic cognition of the existing competitive environment and of its dynamics in the fields of interest to the organization is necessary.

External environment analysis provides a picture of the maximum possibilities for the field of activity. Knowing its potential under various forms is important for the future projection of the organizational development. Marketing has an important role in this process of external environment analysis. This aspect is synthesized in M. Porter's theories (Porter, 2001).

The internal environment analysis completes the external environment analysis and should lead to understanding the organization's capacity of development in the future. This analysis will imply a picture of the organization's tangible and intangible resources, capabilities and core competencies. This opinion is shared also by Rosen (1995). At the collision between the internal and external environment a SWOT analysis will be conducted. It allows balancing the strengths and weaknesses of the organization with the opportunities and threats coming from the external environment.

Following all these management and marketing analyses, development strategies of the organization should be developed in order to accomplish the strategic objectives in time. But, the success of strategies depends upon their practical methods of implementation and evaluation. Strategies are built to be flexible, able to adapt to the new demands of the external environment, while benefiting from the new resources and capabilities of the organization. The basic structure of the strategic management process differs fundamentally from that of the scheduled planning. Strategic management process will be analyzed according to its specific components and dimensions.

2.3. Policies and strategies regarding sports organizations

- Managerial policies

Within an organization, the management policy carried out renders a generic option, difficult to explain and argue by those who decide at senior management level. This policy reflects the motivational area of the important decisions, corresponding to a system of values that includes more philosophical elements than performance indicators. Management policy reflects one hard thing to explain, that managers acquire through education, culture and talent. It is dependent on the past and guides the decision-making activity more by keeping certain organizational values than by producing others. Management policy is not expected to meet a strategic objective within a certain period of time or to encompass organizational resources with its capabilities in order to achieve a competitive advantage.

Organization policy and in particular the policy of quality is intrinsically linked to the institutional culture of the organization, while the strategy is linked to strategic management. This nuance is very important for those organizations that are characterized by strong organizational cultures. The policy of an organization plays very important role in promoting patterns of thinking and in generating attitudes capable to provide appropriate motivational support for the development and implementation of a particular strategy.

Creating new policies is not only a requirement but a necessity. The highlight put upon the process of renewal should be expressed simultaneously with the change of bureaucratic management, based on static, linear and

deterministic principles of thinking and with the strategic management based on dynamic, nonlinear, random and creative models of thinking.

- Management strategies

Strategies are complex decision-making and sequential processes, aiming to accomplish strategic objectives. Therefore, strategies are decision making processes directed towards future, but are incipient in the present work. These decision-making processes are based on strategic thinking and they exhibit the organizational important options for strategic competitiveness` development and accomplishment. Decisions can materialize in terms of smart plans informing on the accomplishment of strategic objectives and on the way the organization will meet the assumed mission. These plans shall be drawn on a time interval between 4 - 5 years and are known as strategic plans.

Regardless of the organization, the development of strategies represents a priority. The important thing is not the number of built strategies, but the way in which strategies that can meet a certain strategic competitiveness are being selected from the existing ones. The difference between strategies is major and it may oscillate between success and failure. Therefore, in order to develop optimal strategies, top management must perceive very well the internal context of the organization, its external situation, and especially, the dynamics of the external forces, in order to be able to achieve a stable dynamic equilibrium between internal and external forces, with a minimum price paid by the organization.

The strategic objectives are achieved by fulfilling the organization's mission, involving three phases characteristic for any strategy:

- the development stage
- the implementation stage
- the evaluation stage

Considering all these aspects, a successful strategy implies an optimal creative thinking, an organization that accepts change and contributes to an effective implementation of the strategy and an appropriate evaluation that can weigh the costs and gains. This conclusion is valid for any type of organization. The investigations accomplished by Burnes (1996) emphasize this aspect.

2.4. The place and the role of research in enhancing the quality of performance management

The management of sports organizations, operating in the matrix of a strategic thinking is therefore, a strategic management. Strategy, in its intrinsic meaning, represents the science of using political, economic and psychological weapons of an organization, in order to form the optimal frame for the adjustment of the used policies. Strategies are tools used for achieving the objectives, and these objectives are the targets of the organization. Strategies represent directions and decisions, adopted in order to achieve successful standards or quotas by the organization.

Strategic management is by definition a managerial process by which strategies are expressed and implemented. From this perspective, an organization:

- decides its role, its fundamental objectives and their fulfillment degree
- decides regarding the operations needed in order to achieve the objectives in a certain period of time and within an external dynamic environment
- decides regarding the implementation of actions and guarantees the mandatory conditions in order to change these actions if necessary
- appreciates the accomplished progress and success

The strategic dimension of management is mainly determined by the presence of strategic thinking and organizational culture in behalf of change and performance in a competitive external environment. In a

competitive context, strategic management is the managerial process through which an organization obtains a strategic competitiveness. Strategic management can be applied and used in any organization. The achievement of strategic objectives and implicitly the accomplishment of the organization's mission consist of three well defined stages, regardless of the strategy: development, implementation and evaluation.

There can be always some resistances that appear when implementing a strategy. The identification of these resistances is very important in order to overcome them with a minimal consumption of energy and time. An extremely powerful resistance is mentality. The estimation of a strategy is made within a matrix and a reference system accepted and recognized from the strategy development stage. The development is done in a rigorous way throughout the entire period of strategy implementation, in order to be able to intervene, when necessary, to correct and adapt it to new conditions and requirements of a competitive external environment. Adopting and implementing a strategy presumes a multitude of changes both in the external or internal environment. Changes in the external environment cannot be undertaken unless changes in the internal environment have been generated.

The implementation of a strategy is made through the projection of organization's functional and control structures that enables the fulfillment of the proposed objectives and the achievement of the competitive advantage in the external environment. Therefore, the organizational structure is the mechanism by which the management staff coordinates the entire activity within an organization and employees perform various activities that integrate and materialize in the form of consumer services. Integration is the process of coordinating both people and functions within an organization in order to achieve the assumed objectives. Integration mechanisms are used in control and cooperation systems of various departments, divisions and decisions of the organization. The strategic control is the process by which managers monitor all activities of an organization and evaluate them in order to observe if they are carried out efficiently and effectively and, if necessary, corrective action is imposed for providing the required performance.

3. Conclusions

Nowadays, sport is at the base of a source generating economic profit, that has to be well managed and of which people in the sports should benefit through clear and consensual contracts, led by sports managers.

Management science defines sport as a phenomenon of major social and economic importance.

In synthesis, "organizational management lies in the study of management processes and relationships among them, in order to discover regularities and principles that govern them and in the design of new systems, methods, techniques and ways of managing, in order to ensure the attainment, maintenance and growth of competitiveness." Therefore, "the essence of management science is the study of relations and management processes." (Nicolescu and Verboncu, 2008).

The present paper represents a contributive work in line with other studies published in this branch, and aims to open new horizons regarding the modern approach of the organizational management. Theoretically speaking, the paper contributes to the scientific research of the organizational management phenomenon and provides a global perspective on the implementation of management.

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