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INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN THE STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL

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Abstract: *The improvement of business efficiency is directly dependent on the quality of management of information and knowledge. Adequate knowledge management should help ensure that all available and relevant professional and scientific achievements regarding a particular problem are successfully collected, processed and distributed. The paper Information and knowledge management in the strategy for the development of school sports, examines the relationship between the current state of the functions of the sports system and the education system. A comparative analysis covering strategic and legal documents, documents on school sports and actual practices has been performed to review the application of modern information and knowledge in the field of school sports. There is significant knowledge, as well as research results that have not been exploited so far, which may serve as a basis for the implementation of new ways of managing sports, as well as novelties in the application of innovative knowledge and adequate information management in the field school sports. Based on this study, a proposal has been formulated to involve more actively highly-qualified professionals in the domain of education and sports, so that their knowledge may contribute to the improvement in the management and advancement of school sports in Serbia.*

Keywords: *knowledge management, strategy, school sports*

1. INTRODUCTION

Knowledge and flow of information have always been the basis for the advancement of society. Today however, the accumulated knowledge, which continues to grow, and the flow of information that is constantly gaining speed, are greatly helping experts and scientists in their work, as well as confronting them with increasing demands. In all types of activities, including sports, school sports and physical education, work processes impose the need to

go from daily practices towards academic knowledge, which subsequently serves as a basis for the transfer of information and knowledge and the improvement of work processes.

“What is knowledge” is one of the fundamental questions that Man has posed, and that scientists and philosophers have wrestled with over the centuries, just as they do today. According to Castels (2000), knowledge which is increasingly embodied by technology, rather than physical work, has become the decisive force in economic development.

Stefanović (2010) indicates that in modern society, knowledge constitutes the most important form of capital. Nonaka (1994) has identified four levels of knowledge: individual, group, organizational and inter-organizational. If we consider knowledge from the aspect of its potential codification and transposition, the classification of knowledge can be derived in a slightly broader way. Newman (2000) has identified three types of knowledge:

1. explicit knowledge, which can be completely transferred from person to person in a direct way. This implies that they are codified in such a way that they can be heard, seen or touched (books or audio, video cassettes, reports, computer stored data);
2. Implicit knowledge - a knowledge group comprising knowledge whose meaning is not explicitly expressed, but can still be interpreted. The corresponding codification process has not yet been completed. We can elaborate on this type of knowledge relying on the knowledge we already possess, and
3. Tacit knowledge representing the knowledge that is extremely difficult to codify. It is the case of a person knowing more than he/she can verbally express, or the situation when knowledge just can't be conveyed with words.

The advantage of explicit versus tacit knowledge is obvious, and thus the knowledge sharing model endorses an objective perspective focused almost exclusively on explicit knowledge. From an objective viewpoint, the easy transfer of explicit knowledge is one of its most important features. Everyone understands the need for knowledge management in order to improve business efficiency. Managing knowledge is a new management paradigm. Malhotra (2000) proposed the following definition: *“Knowledge management caters to the critical issues of organizational adaptation, survival, and competence in face of increasingly discontinuous environmental change. Essentially, it embodies organizational processes that seek synergistic combination of data and information processing capacity of information technologies, and the creative and innovative capacity of human beings.”*

Adequate knowledge management should contribute to the creation of an environment in which all available and relevant knowledge is successfully collected, arranged and distributed.

The basic model of knowledge management according to Newman (2000) consists of four mutually connected phases:

1. Creation of knowledge
2. Preservation of knowledge
3. Transfer of knowledge
4. Usage of knowledge

A holistic systematic approach in the use of knowledge requires an outstanding effort of all system stakeholders, both in planning during the learning process, and concerning the knowledge exploitation methods. Once stored, the information and the organizational knowledge system, transform individual behaviors into permanent knowledge that the or-

ganization possesses. Baldanza, Stankosky (1999) point out the benefits of knowledge management in key management areas. They call these advantages pillars or cornerstones of knowledge. Leadership, organization, technology and learning are the knowledge pillars.

- **Leadership** - Leaders play a key role in developing a company's business strategy, that the survival, the positioning and the success of the company ultimately depend. The success of a specific process or system depends on the implementation of the available knowledge, on its active interaction ability and on its competitiveness within the operating environment;

- **Organization** - The organizational structure supports the company's strategy. Business processes and activities must be sufficiently strong as well as flexible to handle all turbulent situations faced by a modern enterprise;

- **Technology** - Technology must support the business strategy and represents an essential factor that greatly influences management decisions, knowledge storage, modeling processes, management tools, as well as good external and internal communication. Technology must be measurable and supportive towards the business strategy;

- **Learning** - Learning must be built on information management in order to generate organizational knowledge. The positive impact of learning implies organizational the management of knowledge, of the organization that is learning and of the organization that is changing.

According to Stojanović (2007), in modern life, the holistic - systemic concept of research in knowledge management contributes to higher speed and flexibility in acquiring, applying and transferring knowledge. The minimal reliability of classical methods of research is made evident by the fact that a single concept of organization and management can not be used as the base for modeling the concept and organizational arrangement of other organizations. Every system in the natural and social environment is variable and undergoes a process of constant modification. No system is universal - each being specific and unrepeatable.

Recent scientific studies have revealed that every organized structure invariably establishes relationships and ties with the environment it is an integral element of. Accordingly, no organization can function in isolation or on its own. Furthermore, the introduction of information as a quintessential factor in modern dealings, together with the efforts to ensure that it is timely and reliable, induce a new element of quality in expressing the level of organization of social systems. This is why it's extremely important for every system operating in the contemporary environment, to adequately use information, as well as manage and present knowledge in line with the current conditions of functioning of the society.

This imposes the necessity to differentiate these two concepts. Knowledge and information overlap and often used as synonyms. However, Alberthal (1995), points out a clear distinction between them:

- information applies to the description, definitions and perspectives and
- knowledge comprises strategy, ongoing practices, methods and approaches.

Sports and school sports can not be viewed outside other systems in which they operate. Conversely, the general situation reflects upon the situation in sports. Thereby, the management of information and knowledge in the domain of school sports, discussed here, can be of great importance for its development.

Sports represent an activity of special importance for the Republic of Serbia as defined by the Law on Sports (2016). According to Sotiriadou (2005), the development of different national sports systems indicates the fact that each particular political orientation implies a different attitude towards sports and the physical activity of the citizens. Physical education and sports constitute fundamental human rights and an essential element of the life long learning education within the overall educational system. (Physical Education and Health, Global Perspectives and Best Practice (2014)).

Article 4 of the national Law on Sports specifies that everyone has the right to engage in sports and that sports activities must be humane, free and voluntary, healthy and safe, in harmony with the natural environment and the social environment. Such activities must be fair, tolerant, ethically acceptable, responsible, resilient to abuses and goals that are contrary to the sports' spirit and available to everyone regardless of age, level of physical ability, degree of potential disability, gender or some other personal quality.

Engaging in sports can empower young people, not only in the sense of improved physical health, but also from the aspect of social development, self-esteem, tolerance and responsibility. It should also be stressed that engaging actively in sports can help prevent alcoholism, smoking, drugs abuse and delinquent behavior in young people, stemming from the lack of self-discipline, of positive role models and a sense of boredom.

In every country, sports activities perform a large number of educational, cultural and social functions, defined as sports values in modern sports' theory (philosophy). In fact, the UN Millennium Document (2003) specifies that sports are a "school of life". Also, the UN Millennium Development Goals define physical education as a key factor in the comprehensive shaping of a child's personality.

Good governance and network planning can emphasize the correlation between physical education, school sports and sports. Thereby, the responsibility for the development of school sports is equally shared by the educational system and the sports system, although the important role of the healthcare system should not be neglected. Along with these, other segments of social life are also involved, and this makes it clear that failing to integrate existing knowledge from social-humanistic, bio-medical and sports sciences and a to ensure a good flow of information, would impede any progress in the organization and articulation of school sports. Prior to the implementation of the complex matter related to school sports, the necessary footing must be ensured in the form of approved documents, which, in turn, must be based on the awareness of numerous factors influencing the successful organization of the school sports system.

Therefore, the **subject** of the strategy must be the legislation and the documents regulating school sports in Serbia, as well as the management of information and knowledge underlying the strategy for the development of school sports in Serbia.

The **objective** of this paper is affirm the fact that adequate management of information and knowledge related to school sports can have a major impact on its improvement.

The objective was realized using theoretical analysis, descriptive methods and classification and comparative analysis of documents.

Numerous studies have dealt with school sports, and a significant number of conferences have been dedicated to this topic. Furthermore, at scientific and expert meetings papers have been presented by authors that tackled the issue of school sports. Among other things, these have revealed a higher academic success among individuals engaging in sports

in their extracurricular activities. Following their study covering pupils from two grades and from the same city, with similar physical abilities and having between 7 and 9 years of age, Matvejeva-Stančeva have come to the conclusion (according to Stojanović, 1986), that pupils who attended regular and good quality physical education classes, showed a more positive flow of developmental characteristics, fewer health problems and better success in school. Over the past two decades, a growing number scientific studies and research projects have confirmed these conclusions. According to Marsh & Kleitman (2003); Broh (2002); Frejgin (1994); Marsh (1993); Landers, Feltz, Obermeier & Brouse (1978); engaging in sports positively influences one's success at school, the subsequent enrollment in college, the completion of secondary education, the achievement of educational aspirations, self-esteem and work ethics. Exercising changes energy levels of all tissues, increases oxygen supply to all cells, enhances the supply of ATP and glycogen to the cells, and consequently improves their overall functioning. It is precisely because of the fact that physical activity is necessary for the normal growth and development of a human being, that this paper underscores the significance of expanding the involvement in sports activities of the school-age population by engaging knowledge and information management to this end.

It should be pointed out that school age children gladly accept various forms of competition, which are in line with the physical education curriculum which gives particular importance to the usage of games as one of the methods in teaching physical education. The modern physical education curriculum is based on the integration of P.E. classes and extra-curricular activities of students. Considering the fact that an increase of the number of P.E. classes is quite uncertain, and that these classes are often omitted in lower grades - primarily because of economic reasons, extra-curricular activities acquire even greater importance. Being highly qualified staff, physical education teachers are crucial to the realization of such P.E. classes and of sports activities. Among other things, according to Grbović (2014) they play an important role in orienting pupils towards school sports, and encouraging the talented ones to engage more seriously in sports. In the educational process, they are the staff trained in the use of information and the latest knowledge in the field of school sports.

2. STRATEGIC AND LEGAL DOCUMENTS

Sports related documents

The First Strategy for the Development of Sports in the Republic of Serbia was adopted for the 2009-2013 quinquennial and it identified the development of three basic priorities. The development of sports among children and youth, the development of sports infrastructure and the development of top-level sports. These three systems are closely linked and mutually dependent. It should be noted that in the Strategy for the Development of Sports in Serbia (2014-2018) adopted in December 2014. the same priorities have been cited along with the Mission : "...the creation of a sports system in the Republic of Serbia which will give everyone the right to engage in sports, with the aim of developing his/her personality, maintaining good health, improving physical abilities, better and more purposeful usage of leisure time, improvement of the quality of life and achieving top sports results. Public authorities of all levels in the Republic of Serbia take measures to ensure, among other things: the foundations of the sports system: sports in schools and all forms of involvement

of children in sports activities; and one of the outcomes: By 2018, the implementation of this strategy is expected to ensure that more children and school-age youth shall partake in physical exercise and organized sports activities within school sports;

Specific objectives are also indicated :

- improved professional work in sports,
- improved scientific-research work in sports,
- building the capacities of the Institute of Sports and Sports Medicine of the Republic of Serbia and of the Provincial Institute for Sports, with the establishment of links to higher education institutions and
- improved information systems in sports.

The strategy for the development of school sports of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina refers to the 2013 - 2017 five-year period, and specific activities defined by the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for the Development of Sports represents its integral part. The Strategy concerns the development of school sports in primary schools. School sports are intended as extra-curricular freely chosen physical-sports activities of pupils. Their relative schools are responsible for the choice and the quality of such activities. Some of the measures proposed by the Strategy refer to the improvement of physical education in schools, since it represents the basis for the development of school sports and is quintessential in shaping an active lifestyle of the pupils. In many ways, school sports have the characteristics of sports for all (pupils).

The development of sports in Serbia should also rely on the selection of talents through a system of school sports competitions, ensuring their orientation towards top level sports and top sports achievements.

Successful school sports models in the world are based on clearly defined goals and strategies, containing elements based on information and knowledge of sports and school sports. The necessary support network must include a whole range of vertically and horizontally linked institutions and organizations from the public and private sectors, with clear projects and actions, as well as local and national initiatives and enthusiasm. The key factor involved is the connection between the school and a specific partnership with parents, the local community, sports clubs and federations. Based on the research of Serbian umbrella legislation and documents, according to Grbović (2014), (the Law on Sports, the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for the Development of School Sports in the Republic of Serbia, the Strategy for Development of School sports in AP Vojvodina, etc.) the existence of planned development of school sports in all of the above mentioned official documents.

Article 143 of the current Law on Sports (2016), offers the following definition of school sports: "...within the scope of this Law, school sports refers to organized teaching and extra-curricular activities in the field of physical education in schools, including the school sports competitions organized within the school system in accordance with the curriculum defined in accordance with the Law."

"Local self-government units represent one of the most important and indispensable resources in regulating the functioning and implementation of strategic goals and principles of the sports system in the Republic of Serbia, including the system of school sports." Law on Sports (2016, Article 142).

Based on the legislation and documents taken into consideration, the conclusion can be

drawn that there are indications of management systems and activities. However, it seems that there is insufficient coordination between the different bodies involved in the organization of school sports.

3.DOCUMENTS ON SCHOOL SPORTS

The activity of the Serbian School Sport Federation is regulated in detail by numerous rules and regulations. The Serbian School Sport Federation is a non-profit non-governmental organization that directs its ongoing activities on raising the awareness of the importance of children being involved in sports activities.

Serbian School Sport Federation programs include: 1) School sports competitions; 2) Olympic sports games of pupils of the Republic of Serbia; 3) Small Olympics; 4) The "Sports in Schools" Project.

The system of school competitions has a 40-year-long tradition. Presently, they are organized in 9 sports: handball, basketball, volleyball, small football, swimming, athletics, shooting, gymnastics, table tennis. Competitions are managed and organized by the Serbian School Sport Federation as a full member of the Sports Association of Serbia. The management of the competitions is articulated through the Association branches in municipalities and districts. The number of participants on competition levels is well over 350,000 in a single school year.

The competitions system comprises 5 levels: school, municipal, inter-municipal, inter-district and national.

The objectives of the Strategy for the Development of School Sports in Vojvodina have been defined in a similar way. In fact, one of the goals of the Strategy for the Development of School Sports in AP Vojvodina is to promote physical activity by launching an initiative entitled "Active Schools" which aims at a specific improvement of the functioning of schools through better quality physical education, a richer offer of extracurricular activities in this domain, a stronger cooperation with parents and the local community, an improvement of material resources for physical education and sports in schools and support for the professional development of physical education teachers. Among the policies, actions and measures for achieving the projected vision of the education system, the necessity of organizing a comprehensive sports life of the school is stressed (in addition to physical education classes) involving all students in accordance with their abilities and preferences. The Development Strategy of Serbia until 2020, also provides for a different time schedule for the working week. In line with this, students shall have their daily activities from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. - encompassing regular learning activities, consultations with teachers, and compulsory sports and recreational activities.

4.PRACTICES

Particularly important for the development of school sports is the interaction between the School Sport Federation with the schools and the various sports associations. However, studies on the involvement of the youngest students in the system of school competitions, which determines the students' future inclination to engage in sports, have shown that there

is a weak territorial coverage of children of the youngest age, as well as their concentration in a limited number of communities. The professionals from the physical education and sports community have abundant information on the problems related to the implementation of school sports programs, on P.E. activities focusing on the youngest age groups, and on the link between education and sports. In fact, they voice questions about the errors that were made, and whether better organizational and better management methods might achieve better results and greater popularity of school sports. The solutions they have suggested concern improvement of the infrastructure and broader engagement of professional staff.

Analyses of children's participation in sports activities show that along with the organized system of school sports within the framework of the School Sport Federation, there are numerous activities, actions and sports events organized by various stakeholders. Some are organized by governmental, and some by non-governmental institutions. One of the activities promoted jointly by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Sports Association of Serbia and the Institute of Sports and Sports Medicine is the campaign called "What are you training in?", intended to promote sports and a healthy lifestyle, structured as a one-day promotional activity. There are numerous tournaments in team sports, as well as athletic cross-country and marathon races. Particularly important are the "School Without Violence" project, implemented by UNICEF in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, and the still ongoing project "We Create Athletes" organized by the Youth Sports Foundation. However, there are also forms of activities with children handled through some other, loosely defined structures and competences, which do contribute to the quality and spreading of children's sports. These include the ever more present sports schools that recruit a significant number of school children, but their work is not organized nor coordinated by the sports and education institutions. Presently there is no database covering the numerous different forms of organizing sports activities of the youngest. Consequently there is no insight into the spatial and staffing aspect of such activities. The problem is compounded by the fact that the inspection and supervision activities envisaged by the applicable Law cannot take place due to financial and organizational problems.

5. DOCUMENTS, PRACTICE AND MANAGEMENT

A common interest in involving children and youth in sports activities and school sports exists and it is defined and stressed by numerous documents related to education and sports, by appeals launched by the health workers, and by a growing number of institutions that deal with deviations in the behavior of young people.

The professional educational and sports community in our country possesses significant knowledge and information about the problems related to the sports system, the physical education system, the activities and work with the youngest age groups, the implementation of school sports programs, the connection between the sports system and the education system. Authors that have dealt with these matters have voiced their concern regarding issues constituting a direct consequence of the inadequate approach in solving problems in organization, management, staffing and supervision. A large number of highly educated "sports managers" or "managers for sports" should be involved in solving the problems of managing school sports. However, it seems that this is not something they can influence. Apparently there is a lack of organization at higher levels of system management.

Experience accumulated by developed countries in the domain of organizing school sports can be of great benefit. The United Kingdom has a long tradition in school, volunteer and professional sports. One of the most important foundations of modern UK sports is the educational system, which is the basis of youth sports, both inside and outside the school system. Private, elite schools serve as an example to other schools regarding the organization of high-quality teaching of physical education, and on the possibility children engaging in sports on the at their “doorstep”. In the UK, sports are an integral part of the free activities taking place after school and during the weekend. In 2002 nearly 42% of all students in the United Kingdom took part in extra-curricular sports activities. Such a high percentage is the result of the government’s involvement in financing the sports’ partnerships between teachers and trainers, i.e. in supporting a specific merger of educational and sports systems that produces results, not only in terms of increasing the popularity of sports, but also in the creation of a healthy nation.

In our country, such a partnership between physical education teachers (that play a key role in this sphere) and trainers would be possible, pending support by the Ministry of Education of Education, Science and Technological Development and the Ministry of Sports, which implies the creation of permanent and active communication between all stakeholders. Permanent active communication between physical education teachers and trainers in various clubs would ensure the identification of talented individuals that would, in theory, be even more fruitful if the sports population were greater.

In recent years, ever greater importance is being attributed to strategies for the development of sports, with increasing acceptance and application of scientific methods, and the usage of strategic management methods to this end.

According to Malacko (2008), unlike the empirical-intuitive management approach, the information-managerial method offers far more objective and more convincing possibilities for shaping management actions, not only in the usual thought-logical and qualitatively-philosophical framework but also in the form of appropriate strategic management models.

Bearing in mind the many challenges that exist in the global market, according to Begley & Boyd (2003), modern managers have to do much more than setting up long-term strategies in the hope that everything will turn out right. Continuous supervision and commitment is required in the management and control of the organization of school sports in order to constantly have insight into the adequate implementation of the set goals, whilst systematically oriented action and interaction among all the above mentioned systems must continually prompt further progress.

CONCLUSION

Everyone realizes the need for knowledge management in order to improve business efficiency. Adequate knowledge management should help attain a situation in which all available and relevant knowledge is successfully collected, arranged and distributed. The paper “Information and knowledge management in the strategy for the development of school sports” reviews the relationship between the current state of the functions of the sports system and of the education system, i.e. the role of the school in the further development of school sports. It identifies the many forms of organization and work that might be classi-

fied under the following terms: school sports, sport in schools, sports schools, albeit there is no single database. In addition to the organized system of school sports within the Serbian School Sport Federation, there are numerous activities, actions and sports events organized by governmental and non-governmental institutions. Many forms of organizing activities and work with children are handled through some other, loosely defined structures and competences, but they do contribute to the quality and spreading of children's sports. These include the ever more present sports schools that recruit a significant number of school children, but their work is neither organized nor coordinated by the sports institutions. Presently there is no database covering the numerous different forms of organizing sports activities of the youngest. Consequently, there is no insight into the spatial and staffing aspect of such activities. The problem is compounded by the fact that the inspection and supervision activities envisaged by the applicable Law cannot take place due to financial and organizational problems. There is abundant experience and lots of written materials offering solutions that have not been exploited so far, but could serve as a basis for the implementation of new ways of managing school sports. Also, there are novelties in the application of innovative knowledge and adequate information management in the field of school sports. Authors that have dealt with these matters have voiced their concern regarding issues constituting a direct consequence of the inadequate approach in solving problems in organization, management, staffing and supervision, and regarding the insufficient coordination of existing bodies dealing with the organization of sports. Based on the research, a more active involvement specialized and well trained sports professionals is proposed, since their knowledge would improve the management and the advancement of school sports in Serbia.

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