

SPORTS MANAGEMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN GEORGIA - ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES (EMPIRICAL RESEARCH)

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RESUME

The work discusses the problems of sports management of persons with disabilities in Georgia and the role of the Paralympic Committee of Georgia in the issues of integration of persons with disabilities into society through the management of sports activities of persons with disabilities. For this purpose, a reliable and valid empirical study of Georgian Para-athletes and Para-sport-related professionals was conducted through an unstructured open questionnaire. As a result of the research, it has been identified the strengths and weaknesses of Para-athletes, their efforts to develop their strong sides and overcome weaknesses, motivation factors, expected difficulties in the path of their future spiritual and physical development; It has been evaluated the role of sports and the Paralympic Committee of Georgia in the life of Para-athletes, the specific problems of Para-sport management, existing gaps and directions for improvement.

Keywords: Disabled person, Para-athlete, Para-sport management, Paralympic Committee of Georgia, reliable and valid research, unstructured open questionnaire, strong and weak sides of Para-athlete, motivation of Para-athlete, National Anthem of Georgia.

INTRODUCTION

Relevance of research. Among the fundamental values of the civilized world, one of the most important is the care of persons with disabilities. Sports activities of disabled people can play one of the serious roles in the way of full integration of disabled people in the society. Accordingly, special importance is given to sports organizations of Georgia, including sports management of disabled people. In Georgia, many organizations deal with sports management issues: the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth of Georgia, numerous sports federations, but none of them directly cares about the sports activities of disabled people. On the other hand, there are also many non-governmental organizations in Georgia that take care of disabled people, although this care is mainly of a social nature. At the same time, as numerous studies confirm, sports management of disabled people plays a special role in the full integration of disabled people into society. [1,2,3]. Participation of persons with disabilities in physical education and sports is not only a means of treatment and rehabilitation, but also a necessary condition for raising self-esteem of persons with disabilities, forming themselves as potentially useful members of society. The only organization in Georgia that organizes and manages the sports activities of disabled people is the Paralympic Committee of Georgia [4], which is directly involved in the sports management of disabled people and achieves significant results in this direction. But challenges still abound. Thus, discussion of issues of sports management of disabled people is very relevant.

Research news. The issue of the effectiveness of disabled people's sports management should first of all be considered from the point of view of those who are directly involved in Para-sports. These are Paralympic athletes and Para-sports related professionals. They should determine what achievements and shortcomings Georgia's Paralympic movement has. Empirical research is conducted in the work - a survey of Para-athletes and professionals related to Para-sport. As a result of analyzing their opinions, the necessary directions for the development of Para-sport in Georgia, the ways of

eliminating existing shortcomings and the possibilities of improving the management of Para-sport have been established.

Objectives of research. Identifying the challenges facing the management of Para-sports in Georgia and developing an appropriate strategy in order to increase the effectiveness of the management of sports activities of persons with disabilities.

DATA COLLECTION

145 Para-athletes are registered in Georgia, but from different kinds of Para-sports 127 Para-athletes were interviewed. Among the 44 professional respondents of different Para-sports (Sitting Volleyball, Para-Skiing, Para -Table Tennis, Para-Archery, Para-Athletics, Para-Olympic Shooting, Para-Taekwondo, Para-Swimming, Para-Judo, Para-Diving, Wheelchair Fencing, Bocce) there are the head coaches, trainers, assistants of athletes, instructors, medical personnel (including physiotherapists), as well as the leadership and managers of the Paralympic Committee.

Based on the objectives of the research, an unstructured open questionnaire was made for both Para-athletes and professionals in accordance with modern recommendations of business research methods [5]. Together with the questionnaire data, we tried to determine the positive achievements and existing difficulties of **Para-sport management** carried out by the Paralympic committee, the role of the Paralympic committee in developing strengths and overcoming weaknesses by Para-athletes, the ways of their spiritual and physical development and their motivation factors (the obtained information is stored in the author's "primary data" file).

The questions are formulated as follows:

- How do you think: What are your strengths?
- What are you doing to develop your strengths?
- What is the role of the Paralympic Committee in developing your strengths?
- How do you think: What are your weaknesses?
- What do you do to overcome your weaknesses?

- What is the role of the Paralympic Committee in helping you overcome your weaknesses?
- In general, what opportunities do you see for your spiritual and physical development?
- How does sports activity help you in your spiritual and physical development?
- What is the role of the Paralympic Committee in your spiritual and physical development?
- What difficulties do you see in the way of your future development?
- How does sports activity help you overcome your possible difficulties?
- What is the role of the Paralympic Committee in overcoming your possible difficulties? Overcoming your personal and/or family problems?
- How would you evaluate the work of the Paralympic Committee for the development of sports activities of people with disabilities in Georgia?
- In your opinion, what are the shortcomings in the activities of the Paralympic Committee?
- What aspects of the activities of the Paralympic Committee would you like to improve?
- What factors of motivation are important for you?
- What is the role of the Paralympic Committee in motivating you?

Note that some personal questions (what are your strengths and weaknesses, etc.) do not seem to be directly related to the topic of sports management, but when the respondent indicates his own characteristics and the problems he faces, and in other answers he evaluates the role of the Paralympic Committee, it becomes clear what is the **quality of managing** the sports activities of disabled people, what achievements and what gaps exist in the activities of the Paralympic Committee from the point of view of sports management.

Finally, we found out the achievements and shortcomings of the

work of the Paralympic Committee in order to **better manage** the sports activities of disabled people in Georgia. The mentioned information will help the Paralympic Committee of Georgia to improve the **management** of sports activities of people with disabilities

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The vast majority of Para-athletes believe that their **strengths** are: purposefulness, the desire to seek new things, the drive to achieve success, determination and the ability to set a goal, spiritual fortitude, a sense of responsibility and hard work. To develop their strengths, Para-athletes note that they work on themselves, often daily, never giving up on difficulties. The role of the Paralympic Committee is very important in developing the strengths of Para-athletes. According to Para-athletes, the Paralympic Committee empowers them, gives them incentives, helps them develop their physical skills and gives them the opportunity to be more integrated into society.

Para-athletes correctly assess their **weak sides**, among which are excessive emotionality, physical weakness of some of them, sedentary lifestyle, impaired reaction and physical abilities, etc. In order to overcome the problems, Para-athletes try to get involved in sports and cultural activities as much as possible; they work on themselves every day, both physically and psychologically. From this point of view, the role of the Paralympic Committee is also important and positive, which, with the support of coaches and the help of psychologists, allows Para-athletes to get to know their abilities better and does not allow them to be depressed.

According to Para-athletes, an active and healthy lifestyle, news, motivation to achieve success and intensive training are necessary for their **spiritual and physical development**. An active sports life raises the mood and helps to establish a healthy lifestyle, which also affects their spiritual state.

Despite the serious and impressive results, the Paralympic movement is accompanied **by difficulties**, most of which are mainly re-

lated to the financial situation. As a result of financial problems, the motivation of Para-athletes decreases.

Para-athletes unanimously note that **sports activities help them as much as possible**, moreover, they believe that sports are the best way to overcome various difficulties.

According to the actual data, the Paralympic Committee of Georgia has achieved **impressive success**, which is the **merit of the committee's good management**. Since the establishment of the Paralympic Committee (2003) until now, the types of Paralympic sports have developed in Georgia, the Paralympic movement is becoming more and more popular, the accessibility of participation in sports for people with disabilities has increased, and their full integration into society has been strengthened through sports activity. Listening to the Georgian national anthem at international competitions, unity and equality in the team is a special factor motivating Para-athletes.

As it can be seen from the survey of **professional respondents**, the Paralympic Committee of Georgia correctly implements the sports management of disabled people and is focused on using the latest methods of sports management in our country, for developing both Para-sports and existing personnel, for establishing a healthy lifestyle among disabled people and a harmonious spiritual and physical existence for them. The Paralympic Committee of Georgia ensures the physical activity of Para-athletes, participation in local and international tournaments, which increases the motivation of both Para-athletes and the staff as a whole to work better and with more effort to achieve common goals.

At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the challenges and shortcomings that exist in the activities of the committee, and which need to be corrected. Certain **shortcomings** in the activities of the Paralympic Committee are mainly manifested by small funding, lack of individual coaches and personal assistants, obstacles in organizing tournaments. It is noted that there is a need for more tournaments, more activities, more PR and regional development.

Therefore, it is necessary to further improve the activities of the

Paralympic Committee: first of all, it is a question of financial provision, better management of holding more tournaments and participation in international events. It is also necessary to develop more kinds of sports, more communication with Para-athletes.

CONCLUSION

A reliable and valid empirical study of Para-athletes and sports management professionals has shown that the sports management of disabled people is effective, the Paralympic Committee is doing a great job of getting people with disabilities interested in sports and, through their involvement in sports activities, promotes the full integration of disabled people into society.

First of all, it is necessary to find the possibility of increasing funding not only from the state, but also through the sponsorship of businesses and charitable foundations. For this, it should be strengthened the PR of the Paralympic movement and its achievements; should be developed the regions, more kinds of sports, more tournaments, more activities and participation in tournaments, more communication with Para-athletes, better understanding and promotion of individual needs; should be organized demonstrative games.

There are shortcomings in terms of training infrastructure for Para-athletes. More efforts are needed to develop proper gyms and training spaces. The personnel policy also needs to be adjusted, individual coaches, including foreigners, should be attracted more intensively. All types of Para-sport should be given equal attention, no Para-athlete should be left without any attention, which can be achieved by raising the professional level of management of the Paralympic Committee

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შპს პირთა სპორტმენეჯმენტი საქართველოში - მიღწევები და გამოწვევები. (ემპირიული კვლევა)

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რეზიუმე

პარასპორტსმენთა და სპორტმენეჯმენტის პროფესიონა-
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