



Formulating Strategic Directions for Developing the National Sports Federation in Modern Socio-Economic Conditions

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Abstract

Objectives. The study aimed to substantiate theoretical and methodological approaches to choosing a development strategy for the National Sports Federation based on a strategic analysis of its activities in the current socio-economic conditions.

Material and methods. The study involved an analysis of scientific and methodological literature, SWOT-analysis, methods of formalization and generalization, as well as mathematical statistics.

Results. A study was conducted on the activities of the public organization "Fencing Federation of Ukraine" ("FFU" PO) using SWOT analysis, considering the current socio-economic conditions. As a result, the following components of four possible directions of the organization's activities are determined: development strategy, limited-growth strategy, stabilization strategy, and protection strategy. After determining and quantitatively evaluating the factors and quality of the four directions in the "FFU" PO development, while taking into account the trend of world sports development, it can be concluded that the most promising direction for the "FFU" PO activities is a development strategy envisaging the use of the organization's strengths to realize the external environment opportunities.

Conclusions. It is proposed to use a development strategy in the activities of the "FFU" PO — diversification, which envisages innovations in management and marketing, ensuring the financial stability of the organization, improving the quality of athlete training through the introduction of new technologies, and consolidating the organization's positive image.

Keywords: diversification, national sports federation, development strategy, SWOT analysis.

Introduction

The socio-economic transformations in which relations in our society have been developing recently require the sphere of physical culture and sports to search for and substantiate the optimal ways to develop sports events, taking into account the capabilities and needs of society. National sports federations (NSFs) are the main entities in the field of physical culture and sports on which the development of sports events is based. The effectiveness of their activities determines the development of sports event in the country and the performance of athletes in the international arena.

The analysis of recent studies and publications has shown that the efficiency improvement of the activities of the NSF is reflected in the scientific works of national and foreign scientists.

In national science, some issues of statutory and regulatory support governing the activities of the NSF were considered in the works of Morhun (2017), Zozulia and Dovhan (2019). The issues of national NSFs' interaction with international organizations were studied by Kaminska and Paliukh (2018), Driukov, Panin and Driukov (2019). The foreign experience of organizational and managerial activities of the NSFs is described in the works of Bubka and Platonov (2017); Pavlenko (2017); Driukov and Driukov (2022). However, insufficient attention has been paid to the problem of using marketing, which is now becoming an

important element of the state market system and envisages the use of various marketing tools in the activities of the NSFs (Tanklevska & Vybranskyi, 2019).

In foreign science, the publications of Arnold, Fletcher and Hobson (2018); Schleicher, Bauniann and Levy (2018); Ferguson (2022), who studied the role of strategic management in managing sports organizations are of importance for our research. Studies by De Nisi and Murphy (2017); Armstrong (2019); Molan, Kelly, Arnold and Matthews (2019) were aimed at solving certain problems of improving the efficiency of the management system of sports organizations, including some issues of the organization's competitiveness in the international arena.

The analysis of national and foreign scientific and methodological literature on improving the efficiency of the NSFs' activities allowed to identify the problem of the lack of conceptual approaches to the development of strategies (programs) for the development of the NSFs in Ukraine.

Therefore, this insufficiently studied problem is relevant and requires further research.

Thus, in the current economic conditions, the search for ways to form and realize a strategy for the development of the NSFs in the context of modern theories of organizational development assumes great importance (Mintzberg, 2008; Bahorka, Kadyrus & Kravets, 2021; Filho, 2020, etc.)

It should be noted that a necessary element of research, a mandatory preliminary stage in the preparation of any level of strategic programs, according to national (Humeniuk, 2017; Malin, 2020; Halushka, Luste & Hruntovskyi, 2021, et al.) and foreign authors (Bradbury & Galloway, 2021; Wani & Faridi, 2021, et al.) is SWOT analysis.

There are all the necessary organizational and legal grounds for the development and implementation of the NSF development strategy. The "Strategy for the Development of Physical Culture and Sports until 2028" document approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on November 4, 2020, No. 1089, provides for increased autonomy of sports federations, subsidized funding and cooperation and partnership of state and public organizations and creates the basis for the formation of the strategic management process of the NSF and ensuring the unity of further processes to achieve the goals.

Hypothesis. It was assumed that the study and generalization of the main directions and mechanisms of the national sports federation's activities in the current socio-economic conditions using SWOT analysis will allow to substantiate the approach to choosing a strategy for the development of the national sports federation with due account of its socio-economic efficiency.

The objective of the study is to substantiate theoretical and methodological approaches to choosing a development strategy for the national sports federation based on a strategic analysis of its activities in the current socio-economic conditions.

Material and Methods

The study was conducted based on material of the "Fencing Federation of Ukraine" public organization ("FFU" PO). In the course of the study the analysis of scientific and methodological literature and the Internet was used which allowed to collect and systematize material characterizing

the main approaches to strategic analysis and planning of the NSF development; SWOT analysis – to identify strengths and weaknesses in the activities of the "FFU" PO, potential external threats and favorable opportunities and their assessment; methods of formalization and generalization – to systematize and draw conclusions; methods of mathematical and statistical analysis – to process and summarize the results.

Procedure

A SWOT analysis was conducted to determine the internal and external factors influencing the development of the "FFU" PO.

At the first stage of the study, 15 competent specialists were selected to conduct a SWOT analysis: employees of the "FFU" PO and the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, leading coaches, members of the interdisciplinary research group (IRG) of the Ukrainian national fencing team.

At the second stage, the experts compiled a list of the main factors that can be attributed to the strengths and weaknesses of the "FFU" PO, as well as opportunities and threats of the external environment. Each index had a quantitative evaluation depending on its impact on the organization on the following scale of influence: 3 – strong; 2 – moderate; 1 – weak. The experts' assessment of the ranking of strengths and weaknesses of the internal environment, opportunities, and threats of the external environment are consistent, the calculation of the Kendall's concordance coefficient constituted $W=0.87$, which indicates a fairly high degree of consistency of their opinions (Table 1).

A SWOT analysis matrix was built at the third stage (Fig. 1) in two vectors: the state of the external environment (horizontal axis) and the state of the internal environment (vertical axis). Each vector was divided into two levels – opportunities and threats identified in the external environment, strength and weakness of the potential of the "FFU" PO. Four fields (quadrants) are formed at the intersections of the individual components of the factor groups.

Each field of the matrix has certain designations:

- The "Strengths-Opportunities" (S/O) field envisages the development of a strategy to support and develop the organization's strengths to realize the opportunities of the external environment.
- The "Strengths-Threats" (S/T) field – focuses the strategy on fighting against threats by using internal reserves (strengths).
- The "Weaknesses-Opportunities" (W/O) field – directs the organization's actions to use opportunities to overcome the weaknesses of its internal potential.
- The "Weaknesses-Threats" (W/T) field – envisages the elaboration of a strategy that would allow the organization to change its potential and avert possible threats in the external environment.

In the fourth stage, based on the construction of the SWOT analysis matrix (Fig. 1), the paired combinations of the strengths and weaknesses of the "FFU" PO with the opportunities and threats in the external environment were considered, which should be taken into account when determining possible strategic measures for the development of the "FFU" PO.

The fifth stage envisaged the analysis of the findings and the formation of strategic directions for the development of the "FFU" PO.

Table 1. The main factors of the internal and external environment of the “FFU” PO

Internal strengths (S)		Estimation, point	Internal weaknesses (W)		Estimation, point
S1.	Image of the organization	3	W1.	Insufficient amount of financial resources	2
S2.	Established cooperation with representatives of state and public authorities in the field of physical culture and sports	3	W2.	Lack of a long-term strategy for the development of the organization	1
S3.	High level of sports achievements of Ukrainian athletes in the international arena	3	W3.	Low salaries and wages	1
S4.	Availability of skilled employees to substantiate and implement the directions of the organization's development strategy	3	W4.	Insufficient marketing activity	1
External favorable opportunities (O)			External threats (T)		
O1.	Socio-economic stability in the country	3	T1.	Unfavorable socio-economic situation in the country	2
O2.	Use of innovative technologies of organizational and managerial activity of the organization	3	T2.	Growth of expenses for material and technical support of training of athletes	2
O3.	Creation of a general strategy for the development of sports federations using the experience of the world's leading sports	3	T3.	Reduction of government funding	2
O4.	Bringing the current legal framework that regulates the activities of sports organizations in line with the requirements of the present and international standards	3	T4.	Lack of a state-level strategy for the development of sports organizations	1

		External environment			
		Opportunities	Estimation, point	Threats	Estimation, point
		1. 2. etc.		1. 2. etc.	
		S/O FIELD (combination of strengths and opportunities)		S/T FIELD (combination of strengths and threats)	
Internal environment	Strengths	Estimation, point			
	1. 2. etc.				
	Weaknesses	Estimation, point	W/O FIELD (combination of weaknesses and opportunities)		W/T FIELD (combination of weaknesses and threats)
	1. 2. etc.				

Fig. 1. Basic matrix of SWOT analysis (Based on the data of Halushka, Luste & Hruntovskyi, 2021)

Statistical Analysis

Using mathematical statistics methods, a generalized opinion of experts was obtained. The coherence of their opinions was measured by M. Kendall's concordance coefficient. Calculations of the concordance coefficient and verification of its significance are given in detail in the works of many authors (Hrinko, 2021; Yashkin, 2013; Haas & Mortensen, 2016).

The concordance coefficient varies in the range of $0 < W < 1$, with zero and one corresponding to inconsistency and absolute consistency, respectively. If the value of the

concordance coefficient exceeds 0.40-0.50, the quality of the assessment is considered satisfactory, if it is in the range of 0.70-0.80 and above, a high degree of consistency is indicated.

Results

As part of the formation of strategic directions for the development of the “FFU” PO, according to the recommendations of Halushko et al. (2021), a comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of the “FFU” PO with the opportunities and threats of the external environment was

made. The SWOT matrix was used to compare pairwise combinations between internal and external environmental factors and to establish the basis for elaborating possible strategic directions for the development of the "FFU" PO (see Fig. 1).

Let's consider the following combinations:

1. The "Strengths-Opportunities" (S/O) field:

- S1(3) – O1(3). The integral estimation is 6 points (3+3). The positive image of the organization along with the socio-economic stability of the country allows to improve the quality of management at all levels of management by recruiting skilled personnel capable of implementing the adopted development strategy of the "FFU" PO.
- S2(3) – O2(3). The integral estimation is 6 points (3+3). Established cooperation with representatives of state and public authorities in the field of sports management and the use of innovative technologies in the organizational and management activities of the organization provide a favorable field for the elaboration and implementation of the "FFU" PO development strategy.
- S3(3) – O3(3). The integral estimation is 6 points (3+3). The high level of sports achievements of Ukrainian athletes in the international arena and the focus on the general development strategy of sports federations leads to the effective activities of the "FFU" PO.
- S4(3) – O4(3). The integral estimation is 6 points (3+3). The interest of the "FFU" PO leaders in using innovative technologies on the basis of the legal framework that regulates the activities of sports organizations has a favorable field for substantiating and implementing the directions of the organization's development strategy.
- Therefore, the average estimation of the "FFU" PO paired combinations of the factors of the strengths and the opportunities of the external environment constitutes 6 points (3+3). The highest possible estimation forms a strategy that consists in using the strengths of the "FFU" PO to realize the opportunities of the external environment.

2. The "Strengths-Threats" (S/T) field:

- S1(3) – T1(2). The integral estimation is 5 points (3+2). The high reputation of the organization and its employees ensures the stable functioning of the "FFU" PO amid the unfavorable socio-economic situation in the country.
- S2(3) – T2(2). The integral estimation is 5 points (3+2). Close cooperation with representatives of state and public authorities in the field of sports management contributes to marketing activities in the activities of the "FFU" PO, which minimizes the growth of expenditures for material and technical support of athletes' training.
- S3(3) – T3(2). The integral estimation is 5 points (3+2). The high level of sports achievements of Ukrainian athletes in the international arena contributes to attracting additional investments from companies that can be applied to the activities of the "FFU" PO, despite the reduction in budget funding.
- S4(3) – T4(1). The integral estimation is 4 points (3+1). The availability of skilled staff, despite the

absence of a strategy for the development of sports organizations at the state level, ensures the stable functioning of the "FFU" PO.

Thus, the average estimation of the "FFU" PO paired combinations of the factors of strengths and external threats constitutes 4.75 points (3+1.75). This estimation suggests a strategy that consists in using the strengths of the "FFU" PO to neutralize external threats.

3. The "Weaknesses-Opportunities" (W/O) field:

- W1(2) – O1(3). The integral estimation is 5 points (2+3). The socio-economic stability in the country minimizes the lack of adequate funding and helps to find additional investors.
- W2(1) – O2(3). The integral estimation is 4 points (1+3). The lack of a long-term strategy for the development of the organization thwarts the progress of the "FFU" PO, despite the possibility of using innovative technologies in its organizational and managerial activities.
- W3(1) – O3(3). The integral estimation is 4 points (1+3). The low salaries of the organization's employees negatively affect the functioning of the "FFU" PO, despite the possibility of creating a general strategy for the development of sports federations, using the experience of the world's leading sports.
- W4(1) – O4(3). The integral estimation is 4 points (1+3). The insufficient marketing activity of the "FFU" PO, as a result of bringing the current legal framework in line with the requirements of today and international standards, may allow for the restructuring of business processes in the work of organizations that will help create favorable conditions for attracting investment resources to the activities of the "FFU" PO.

Therefore, the average estimation of the "FFU" PO pairwise combinations of the factors of weaknesses and opportunities of the external environment constitutes 4.25 points (1.25+3). This estimation envisages a strategy aimed at minimizing the weaknesses of the "FFU" PO through the use of external opportunities.

4. The "Weaknesses-Threats" (W/T) field:

- W1(2) – T1(2). The integral estimation is 4 points (2+2). Insufficient financial resources amid the unfavorable socio-economic situation in the country negatively affect the activities of the organization.
- W2(1) – T2(2). The integral estimation is 3 points (1+2). The lack of a long-term strategy for the development of the organization, as well as the constant increase in the cost of logistics for training athletes, hinder the development of the "FFU" PO.
- W3(1) – T3(2). The integral estimation is 3 points (1+2). Low salaries amid the reduced government funding threaten to lose qualified personnel in the "FFU" PO.
- W4(1) – T4(1). The integral estimation is 2 points (1+1). The activities of the "FFU" PO are limited by insufficient marketing activity of the organization and the absence of a strategy for the development of sports organizations at the state level.

Thus, the average estimation of the "FFU" PO paired combinations of the factors of weaknesses and external threats constitutes 3 points (1.25+1.75). This estimation

Table 2. Matrix of SWOT-analysis of the strategic alternative for the development of the “FFU” PO

Intern environment External environment		Opportunities (O) (estimation, point)	Threats (T) (estimation, point)
		O1. Socio-economic stability in the country (3) O2. Use of innovative technologies in organizational and management activities of the organization (3) Strategies for the development of sports federations using the experience of advanced world sports (3) O4. Bringing the current legal framework regulating the activities of sports organizations to the requirements of the present and international standards (3).	T1. Unfavorable socio-economic situation in the country (2) T2. Increased costs of material and technical support for athletes' training (2) T3. Reduction of government funding (2) T4. Lack of a strategy for the development of sports organizations at the state level (1)
Strengths (S) (estimation, point)			
S1. Image of the organization (3) S2. Established cooperation with representatives of state and public authorities in the field of sports management (3) S3. High level of sports achievements of Ukrainian athletes in the international arena (3) S4. Availability of skilled employees to substantiate and implement the directions of the organization's development strategy (3)		An estimation of 6 points (3+3) forms a development strategy that envisages the use of the organization's strengths to realize the opportunities of the external environment	An estimation of 4.75 points (3+1.75) predicts a limited-growth strategy, which is aimed at using the organization's strengths to counter and neutralize threats
Weaknesses (W) (estimation, point)			
W1. Insufficient financial resources (2) W2. Lack of a long-term strategy for the organization development (1) W3. Low salaries (1) W4. Insufficient marketing activity (1)		An estimation of 4.25 points (1.25+3) focuses on creating a stabilization strategy that aims to minimize the organization's weaknesses in order to take advantage of external opportunities	An estimation of 3 points (1.25+1.75) is considered a defense strategy that is associated with attempts to get rid of both the organization's weaknesses and external threats

envisages a strategy aimed at minimizing the weaknesses of the “FFU” PO and avoiding external threats.

The conducted SWOT analysis based on the comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of the “FFU” PO with external opportunities and threats allowed us to identify four possible directions for the organization's development (Table 2).

The determination and quantification of the factors and quality of the four directions for the development of the “FFU” PO with due account for the trend of world sports development, suggested that the most promising direction will be the development strategy to be realized in cooperation with the state authorities of physical culture and sports management and the establishment of partnerships with business. The development strategy is characterized by diversification (expansion of the organization's activities), which envisages innovations in management and marketing, ensuring the financial stability of the organization, improving the quality of athletes' training through the introduction of new technologies, and strengthening the positive image of the “FFU” PO.

Discussion

The conducted study allowed us to find out that in order to qualitatively prepare national teams for the Olympic Games, governments of many countries adopt state strategies (programs) for the development of elite sports, in which considerable attention is paid to improving the activities

of the NSFs (Australia's Winning Edge 2012-2022, 2012; 2019 Canadian High Performance sport Strategy, 2018; Olympiatoppens strategiske utviklings plan 2017-2022, 2017 (Norway) and other strategies (programs) in different countries aimed at systematically addressing the existing issues of the development of elite sports.

An analysis of foreign experience in organizational and legal regulation and management of the NSFs in different countries (Bubka & Platonov, 2017; Pavlenko, 2017; Driukov and Driukov, 2022) has shown that the search for solutions to improve this area is moving towards the use of mixed, flexible forms with the participation of the state, public structures, and private business. At the same time, the state budget retains the function of the main source of funding for the NSFs.

It should be noted that management, which is usually associated with a number of management aspects and features of administration is an effective tool for the development of the NSFs in many countries. For instance, sports management in the United States has fully absorbed the field of sports marketing, which plays a key role in the commercial activities of the NSFs (Driukov, 2020).

Studies have shown that the main differences between Ukrainian and foreign NSFs are the insufficient implementation of advanced marketing technologies, in particular, the use of various marketing tools in the commercial activities of NSFs.

One of the ways of the NSF socio-economic development is to elaborate a development strategy for the organization based on SWOT analysis, with the help of which we have

substantiated the diversification strategy as a strategy to improve the efficiency of the “FFU” PO not only today but also in the long term, with account for the trends in the world sports development, in particular the acceleration of sports commercialization development, as well as the strategic potential of the organization.

It should be noted that until recently, there has been no research in sports science on improving the activities of the NSF in modern socio-economic conditions.

Our research has supplemented and expanded the existing elaborations (Bahorka, et al., 2021; Halushka et al., 2021; Mintzberg, 2008) on strategic analysis and planning of the development of various subjects based on the SWOT analysis methodology to build an effective strategy for the development of the NSF.

These new results are as follows:

- a quantitative assessment of the activities of the NSF in the internal and external environment was obtained for the first time, which allowed to systematize the existing information and make an informed decision on the development of the NSFs in Ukraine under the current conditions;
- for the first time, the Strategy for the development of the NSFs in Ukraine under the current conditions was theoretically substantiated with account for the political, social, and economic effect.

In general, our findings will allow to solve an important state task – to elaborate strategic directions for the development of the NSFs, taking into account the trends in the development of world sports in modern socio-economic conditions.

Conclusions

1. National sports federations have a huge development potential and are not only strategically important subjects of the development of sports events, but also a body that reflects its global status. However, the development of market relations in the field of physical culture and sports has a significant impact on the conditions of the national sports federation's activities, which necessitate the elaboration of ways for the prospective development of the national sports federation with account for the political, social, and economic effect.

2. Based on the SWOT-analysis methodology, a qualitative and quantitative assessment of the activities of the “Fencing Federation of Ukraine” Public Organization (“FFU” PO) from the internal and external environment was obtained. This new knowledge allowed to form and scientifically substantiate a development strategy - diversification, which envisages innovations in management and marketing, ensuring the financial stability of the organization, improving the quality of athletes' preparation through the introduction of new technologies, and strengthening the positive reputation of the “FFU” PO.

Conflict of interest

The authors do not have any conflict of interest.

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Формування стратегічних напрямів розвитку національної спортивної федерації у сучасних соціально-економічних умовах

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Авторський вклад: А – дизайн дослідження; В – збір даних; С – статаналіз; D – підготовка рукопису; E – збір коштів

Реферат. Стаття: 8 с., 2 табл., 1 рис., 30 джерел.

Мета дослідження – обґрунтування теоретико-методологічних підходів до вибору стратегії розвитку Національної спортивної федерації на основі стратегічного аналізу її діяльності в сучасних соціально-економічних умовах.

Матеріал та методи. У ході дослідження зроблено аналіз науково-методичної літератури, SWOT-аналіз, методи формалізації та узагальнення, математична статистика.

Результати. Проведено дослідження діяльності громадської організації «Федерація фехтування України» (ГО «ФФУ»), яка працює у сучасних соціально-економічних умовах за допомогою SWOT-аналізу. У підсумку визначено складові чотирьох можливих напрямів сфери діяльності організації, а саме – стратегія розвитку, стратегія обмеженого зростання, стратегія стабілізації, стратегія захисту. Визначення та кількісна оцінка факторів та якості чотирьох напрямів розвитку ГО «ФФУ» з урахуванням тенденції розвитку світового спорту дало підставу, вважається що найбільш перспективним напрямом діяльності ГО «ФФУ» буде стратегія розвитку, яка передбачає використання сильних сторін організації для реалізації можливостей зовнішнього середовища.

Висновки. Запропоновано у діяльності ГО «ФФУ» використовувати стратегію розвитку – диверсифікацію, яка передбачає інновації в менеджменті та маркетингу, забезпечення фінансової стійкості організації, підвищення якості підготовки спортсменів внаслідок впровадження нових технологій, закріплення позитивної репутації організації.

Ключові слова: диверсифікація, національна спортивна федерація, стратегія розвитку, SWOT-аналіз.

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