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### EXPRESSION OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN SPORTS ORGANIZATION

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#### Abstract

With the rapid expansion of the sports sector, the expression of social responsibility in various business structures is also high. Although social responsibility factors are increasingly being applied in Western organizations, this is not yet the case in Lithuania and in companies. (Gižienė, Palekienė, Simanavičienė 2011). The economically growing sports sector is becoming attractive not only to the public sector, which is pursuing national goals, but also to private business structures that see the potential for economic benefits from certain sports. In this way, leaders of sports organizations can use social responsibility initiatives as a tool to enable their organization to improve their strategic and financial position (Smith, Westerbeek, 2007). It is observed in the literature that not only the governing bodies but also the employees occupying another hierarchical position have an influence as a socially responsible organization (Sheth, Babiak, 2010). For organizations that want to succeed, the priority must be not only the financial situation, shareholders, sponsors, etc., but also the community, non-governmental organizations, because business must interact with its environment in order to be successful. (Juščius, Griauslytė, 2014). In order to be a socially responsible sports organization, it is necessary to understand in which areas of social responsibility the expression of the members belonging to the organization is most important. **The question is:** how do people, executives and athletes in sports organizations view the level of corporate social responsibility and what are their social responsibility priorities? **The aim of the research:** Determine the level of expression of social responsibility in terms of managers, athletes and employees. **Objectives of the research:** discuss the components of social responsibility in organizations; o analyze the theoretical aspects of the expression of social responsibility of organizations in sports organizations; to conduct a comparative analysis of the opinion of sports organization managers, employees and athletes on the level of expression of social responsibility in a sports organization. **Research methods:** Analysis of scientific literature sources, Quantitative study – Questionnaire. The questionnaire was based on an analysis of the scientific literature and studies by Smith and Westerbeek (2007), Camilleri, (2015), Zhou, Wang and Zhao (2020) et al.

**Results.** Factors promoting CSR According to the leaders of the organization, improved financial results of the organization, increased attractiveness of the organization to sponsors, greater employee loyalty and a better work atmosphere, athletes believe that CSR is most promoted by increased attractiveness of the organization to sponsors. In the segment of employees and athletes, respondents do not care what ecological or non-ecological technologies their organization uses and, in their opinion, environmental sustainability is not important to the organization. In the leadership segment, CSR has been found to be beneficial for the conservation of environmental resources, and eco-education is seen as a beneficial activity. The difference of opinion on the expression of social responsibility shows that the integration of social responsibility into the policy and strategy of sports organizations needs to be coordinated more effectively, as members of the sports organization community have different perceptions of social responsibility towards society, customers and environmental responsibility.

**Keywords:** social responsibility, expression, sports organizations.

#### Statement of the problem

According to Adams & Zutshi (2004), entrepreneurship, which fosters the principles of social sustainability, has become a particularly

important attraction for companies and their stakeholders around the world. A business-friendly concept of sustainability becomes a core business strategy. Companies are increasingly striving to be socially responsible for the good of society. According to Puauschunder (2016), economic crises have urged even former United States President Barack Hussein Obama to encourage the country's citizens to view

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their actions as a spirit of responsibility geared toward greater societal goals. Author McWilliams (2011) argues that corporate social responsibility actions include: recycling, sorting, reducing pollution, and other environmentally friendly modern practices. Social responsibility can also manifest itself through support, social campaigns, and other supported services (Popescu, 2018).

Corporate social responsibility is largely seen as a Western phenomenon characterized by strong companies, which are seen as a role model. Other authors point out (Font, Walmsley, Cogotti, Mc Combes, & Häusler, 2012) that corporate social responsibility as a concept or phenomenon is very widely understood and used in a variety of ways. Despite the fact that corporate social responsibility is one of the most important topics in the marketing literature, and corporate strategies, it is not easy to specify and provide accurate information on the use and definition of the term. According to Carroll (2015), the interest of the business community in the concept of social responsibility is not solely due to altruistic incentives. Corporate social responsibility has never been pure altruism, although some idealists would like it to be the driving force. In fact, business engages in social responsibility because it sees benefits in the system not only for them but also for society. It is by far the most widespread form of conscious capitalism, and as the global economy grows, so will the number of companies that will be socially responsible (Soundararajan, Jamali, & Spence, 2018).

Its global support is growing daily in both developed and emerging economies, and this trend guarantees that it will remain in its current or changed form for years to come. This is the philosophy that underpins all business functions. In recent years, corporate social responsibility has become an important business entity in the face of global challenges. Pollution, climate change, depletion and depletion of natural resources, economic crises, mobbing, etc. that is, corporate activities that seek to positively impact customers and stakeholders.

According to the authors (Park & Kim, 2019), social responsibility has become one of the most important issues in academia, industry, and society, as corporate activities have a significant impact on the growth of society and the development of customer awareness. The concept of corporate social responsibility encompasses various aspects, such as economic, philanthropic, ethical and legal factors, that are essential to today's success in the marketplace. The World Council for Sustainable

Business Development has proposed one of the most widely accepted definitions of corporate social responsibility (Benitez, Ruiz, Castillo, & Llorens, 2020).

This definition encompasses a broader meaning that goes beyond philanthropy. This definition states that "corporate social responsibility is a continuing commitment of a business to conduct ethically. It also contributes to economic development by improving jobs, the quality of life of the community and society as a whole" (Payne, 2006). The World Council for Sustainable Business Development has also stated that corporate social responsibility is an integral part of sustainable development and is divided into three categories.

These categories are considered to be key aspects of sustainable development. That would be the environment, the economy and society. corporate social responsibility is a complex term broadly defined as the active and (sometimes) voluntary contribution of a company to environmental, social and economic development. According to Wang (2017), the best way to demonstrate a high level of corporate social responsibility and increase customer satisfaction is to do everything possible to meet the expectations of stakeholders or groups of individuals and to simultaneously develop and implement their corporate social responsibility goals. According to the author of Welford (2008), social responsibility, when it is necessary to know how it is communicated, as well as what significant information is included, is known to the public and all members of the company.

According to the author Simanavičienė (2011), Lithuania, which is in a post-communist society where society is still reluctant to find its way to the aspect of corporate social responsibility. For these reasons, it is very important to encourage companies and organizations to implement various concepts of human resource ethics and social management models. In summary, the concept of corporate social responsibility is very diverse and examined in detail in various aspects. This gives rise to many different views of the authors on the definition of the concept, and the concept of the phenomenon itself as what it is. No matter how differently each researcher expresses the concept of corporate social responsibility, the overall conclusion is that corporate social responsibility is an activity related to the improvement of the environment and society and the creation of more harmonious interactions between these factors.

### Methodology

The object of the research is the expression of social responsibility. Contingent of subjects the survey involved 58 persons belonging to a sports organization: managers, employees, athletes. Of all the respondents, employees (54.3%), athletes (32.6%) and the rest (10.9%) were in management positions. The survey sample. A non-probabilistic random selection of a quantitative study sample was selected for the study. Convenient selection includes those units in the general set that are readily available. The non-probabilistic sample can be applied in quantitative exploratory research in order to approve the instrument and research procedures and can be applied for the purposes of study work.

**Research methods:** To find out the concept of social responsibility, its components and expression in sports organizations with the help of the analysis of scientific literature; Quantitative research – a questionnaire survey is conducted using a questionnaire to assess the company's social responsibility; statistical analysis.

**Nature of the study.** A quantitative study was selected for the study. A questionnaire survey was used to conduct the study. The research questionnaire was based on an analysis of the scientific literature and studies by Smith and Westerbeek (2007), Camilleri, (2015), Zhou, Wang and Zhao (2020) et al. The questions are adapted to the problem at hand. Structure of the questionnaire: the introductory part of the questionnaire describes the purpose of the survey, explains that the survey is conducted anonymously and the respondents' views are very important, then introduces the instructions for completing the survey. The questionnaire consists of 45 questions.

**Statistical methods of data processing.** The questionnaire used the ranking Likert scale method, where the respondents' answers were grouped, which means that all answers are presented in ascending order: starting with the answer in which the respondent completely disagrees with the given statement, and ending with the answer in which the respondent fully agrees with the given statement

(1 – strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 – neither agree nor disagree, 4 – agree, 5 – strongly agree) The likelihood scale was used to determine the overall assessment of the respondent's opinion. – extremely low level, 2 points – low level, 3 points – medium level, 4 points – high level, 5 points – extremely high level. The first aim was to assess whether the members of the Sports Center consider the company to be socially responsible. Respondents first had to answer the question whether they know enough about what a socially responsible company is (see Table 1).

Based on the results of the survey, it can be stated that the leaders of the organization are most familiar with the concept of CSR (4.4 points), while the athletes belonging to the organization (4.1 points) showed that they know the concept of social responsibility well (4.3 points). Both employees and managers of the organization indicate that the application of CSR creates extremely high added value for the organization (4.5 points), athletes (4.1 points).

Next, the respondents had to indicate what in their opinion the characteristics of social responsibility in Sports Center and at what level (see Table 2). According to the leaders of the organization, the organization is most responsible for supporting social projects (4.8 points) and participation in them, as well as respect for the community (4.8 points). From the employees' point of view, the factors for which Sports Center is most responsible are the transparency of activities (4.8 points), and in the opinion of athletes, respect for the community (4.9 points). According to all groups of respondents, the lowest scores were obtained from all the presented components: environmental protection, managers (4.4 points), employees and athletes (4.3 points).

Also, the aim was to clarify the expression of social responsibility through an approach to the environment (see Table 3). In the segment of managers, the highest score (4.7 points) was obtained by the statement: the organization is environmentally friendly (energy and water saving, waste reduction). In the segment of employees and athletes, the statement was the highest: I don't care what ecological or non-

Table 1

### The concept of corporate social responsibility and its benefits for managers, employees and athletes

Claims	Sum of points	Average of scores		
		Staff	Managers	Athletes
Have you heard and know the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR)?	217	4,4	4,3	4,1
Does the application of corporate social responsibility (CSR) add value to a company?	228	4,5	4,5	4,1
Question group average		4,5	4,4	4,1

Table 2

**Expression of organizational social responsibility from the point of view of respondents**

	Sum of points	Average of scores		
		Staff	managers	athletes
Compliance with public norms	221	4,7	4,6	4,6
Supporting and participating in social projects	212	4,8	4,6	4,4
Fair treatment of employees	213	4,7	4,7	4,5
Transparency of activities	230	4,7	4,8	4,8
Respect for the community	237	4,8	4,7	4,9
Compliance with the law	217	4,6	4,6	4,5
Environmental protection	207	4,4	4,3	4,3
Taking care of customers	206	4,3	4,3	4,5
Stakeholder communication	204	4,3	4,4	4,3
Enforcing the interests of stakeholders	207	4,4	4,5	4,3
Question group average		4,6	4,5	4,4

ecological technologies the organization uses (4.8 points) and the lowest (4.3 points) "Environmental sustainability is important for the organization".

In the segment of managers, the statements "I don't care what ecological or non-ecological technologies the organization uses" and "Ecological education of employees is a waste of time" (4.3 points) received the lowest score.

**Conclusions**

Social responsibility is multi-level, based on economic responsibility, which is identified as an essential function in the market of producers of goods and services, which allows to meet the expectations of buyers and make a profit. Legal responsibility is distinguished because the public expects companies not only to be profit-oriented, but also to comply with the law when pursuing economic goals. Although economic and legal responsibility governs ethical standards of fairness and justice, ethical responsibility includes those activities and practices that are expected of members of society or prohibited by society, even if those activities are

not specified in law. Ethical responsibilities include standards, norms, or expectations that reflect concerns about what consumers, employees, shareholders, and the community, and in this case, athletes, are doing. Philanthropic responsibility is the actions of an organization to maintain and enhance the well-being of society by voluntarily participating in the implementation of social programs.

There are various social health promotion practices and policies through which various socially responsible projects are implemented in sports organizations. Those projects include: the prevention of sports injuries, the spread of smoking harm, the responsible supply or consumption of alcohol, protection from environmental factors, ecology, healthy eating, the revelation of a welcoming environment and the reduction of consumption.

Social responsibility in sports organizations may also be more focused on governance itself. Through socially responsible governance, efforts should be made to involve as many different social groups as possible in the activities of organizations in order to

Table 3

**Expression of social responsibility in Sports Center in terms of environmental approach**

Attitudes towards the environment	Sum of points	Average of scores		
		Staff	Managers	Athletes
Environmental sustainability is important to the organization	207	4,4	4,3	4,3
It doesn't matter to me what ecological or non-ecological technologies an organization uses	223	4,3	4,8	4,8
Environmental initiatives only increase costs	207	4,4	4,3	4,3
The organization, not the employees, has to take care of the environment	212	4,4	4,5	4,5
Eco-education of employees is a waste of time	202	4,3	4,4	4,6
The organization protects the environment (energy and water saving, waste reduction)	227	4,7	4,6	4,5
Average of question group		4,5	4,5	4,6

reduce exclusion, as well as to develop opportunities for those who do not have them.

The expression of social responsibility is revealed through the following criteria: the behavior of managers, the behavior of employees and athletes, the responsibility of the organization in public relations, the attitude towards the environment and the responsibility towards the customer. The comparative analysis shows that there is a consensus between employees and the organization's management, as the application of corporate social responsibility provides significant added value to the sports organization. When evaluating other criteria, the opinions of managers and employees and athletes differ. The study found that the opinions of managers, athletes and employees of a sports organization differ about the responsibilities of the organization.

According to the leaders of the organization, the organization is most responsible for supporting and participating in social projects and respecting the community. From an employee perspective, the factors for which an organization is most responsible are transparency of operations, and athletes see respect for the community as important. Factors promoting CSR According to

the leaders of the organization, improved financial results of the organization, increased attractiveness of the organization to sponsors, greater employee loyalty and a better work atmosphere, athletes believe that CSR is most promoted by increased attractiveness of the organization to sponsors. In the segment of employees and athletes, respondents do not care what ecological or non-ecological technologies their organization uses and, in their opinion, environmental sustainability is not important to the organization. In the leadership segment, CSR has been found to be beneficial for the conservation of environmental resources, and eco-education is seen as a beneficial activity, although in the segment of employees and athletes the statement is highest: I don't care what ecological or non-ecological technologies the organization uses.

The difference of opinion on the expression of social responsibility shows that the integration of social responsibility into the policy and strategy of sports organizations needs to be coordinated more effectively, as members of the sports organization community have different perceptions of social responsibility towards society, customers and environmental responsibility.

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## ВИРАЖЕННЯ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ ВІДПОВІДАЛЬНОСТІ У СПОРТИВНІЙ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЇ

### Анотація

З швидким розширенням спортивного сектора проявляється також високий рівень прояву соціальної відповідальності у різних бізнес-структурах. Хоча фактори соціальної відповідальності все частіше застосовуються у західних організаціях, у Литві та на підприємствах цього поки що немає (Gižienė, V., Palekienė, O., Simanavičienė, Ž., 2011). Економічно зростаюча спортивна сфера стає привабливою не тільки для державного сектора, що має загальнодержавні цілі, але й для приватних бізнес-структур, які визнають потенціал економічної вигоди від окремих видів спорту. Таким чином, керівники спортивних організацій можуть використовувати ініціативи соціальної відповідальності як інструмент, що дозволяє їм організаціям покращити своє стратегічне та фінансове становище. (Smith, A., Westerbeek, H., 2007). У літературі наголошується, що не лише органи управління, а й співробітники, які займають іншу ієрархічну позицію, мають вплив як соціально відповідальна організація (Sheth, H., Babiak, K., 2010). Для організацій, які хочуть досягти успіху, у пріоритеті має бути не тільки фінансове становище, акціонери, спонсори тощо, але й спільнота, неурядові організації, адже бізнес має взаємодіяти зі своїм оточенням, щоб бути успішним (Juščius, V., Griauslytė, J., 2014). Щоб бути соціально відповідальною спортивною організацією, необхідно розуміти, в яких сферах соціальної відповідальності найважливіше самовираження членів, що належать до організації. Виникає питання: як люди, керівники та спортсмени у спортивних організаціях оцінюють рівень корпоративної соціальної відповідальності та які пріоритети їх соціальної відповідальності? Мета дослідження: визначити рівень виявлення соціальної відповідальності у керівників, спортсменів та співробітників. Завдання дослідження – обговорити компоненти соціальної відповідальності в організаціях; проаналізувати теоретичні аспекти прояву соціальної відповідальності організацій у спортивних організаціях; провести порівняльний аналіз думок керівників, працівників та спортсменів спортивних організацій про рівень прояву соціальної відповідальності у спортивній організації. Методи дослідження: аналіз джерел наукової літератури, кількісне дослідження – анкетування. Анкета була заснована на аналізі наукової літератури та досліджень Сміта та Вестербека (2007 р.), Бабіака та Шета (2010 р.), Каміллері (2015 р.), Чжоу, Вана та Чжао (2020 р.). Результати. Чинники, що сприяють вираженню соціальної відповідальності? На думку керівників організації, поліпшення фінансових результатів організації, підвищення привабливості організації для спонсорів, підвищення лояльності співробітників та поліпшення робочої атмосфери, виявлення соціальної відповідальності у спортивній організації найбільше сприяє підвищенню привабливості організації для спонсорів. У сегменті персоналу та спортсменів респондентам все одно, які екологічні чи неекологічні технології використовує їхня організація, і, на їхню думку, екологічна стійкість для організації не є важливою. У сегменті керівників було виявлено, що компоненти соціальної відповідальності корисні для збереження ресурсів довкілля, а екоутворення сприймаються як корисна діяльність. Відмінність думок про вираженню соціальної відповідальності свідчить, що інтеграція соціальної відповідальності у політику та стратегію спортивних організацій потребує більш ефективної координації, оскільки члени спільноти спортивної організації по-різному сприймають соціальну відповідальність перед суспільством, клієнтами та екологічною відповідальністю.

**Ключові слова:** соціальна відповідальність, об'єднання, спортивні організації.

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