

<https://doi.org/10.52449/1857-4114.2020.36-2.01>

CZU: 339.1:796.01

SPORTS SERVICES, PRODUCT OF PHYSICAL CULTURE ACTIVITIES

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Abstract. *"Physical culture" and "sport" are considered, first and foremost, in social terms, as a specific sphere of society's life (physical culture and health), an educational sphere (training and development of specialists in the field), and a competitive one (generating income and competitive advantages). Secondly, from an economic point of view, as a branch of the non-productive sphere, this field is a type of activity, useful from a social point of view, because it offers the population various types of services. This activity is carried out by enterprises, institutions, organizations of various forms of ownership and departmental affiliation, including individuals. According to the classification of the branches of the national economy in the Republic of Moldova, physical culture and sports are an integral part of the industry "Art, recreation and leisure activities" [3]. However, there is every reason to believe that this sphere has now formed an independent branch of the national economy, whose main product is social and cultural services, offering organized forms of exercise and sport for various purposes, as well as activities to ensure for its beneficiaries, sports facilities, organization of services, provision of sports competitions and entertainment events, professional training, scientific research, trade, rental and maintenance of sports equipment and inventory, sports insurance services, etc. Also, individuals and sports entities are the most important subjects of market relations in this field. Experts define a service as a type of activity that aims to meet the needs of others, in the process of which does not create a new material product, previously non-existent, but changes the quality of an existing product, created, i.e. services are provided (these are benefits provided not in the form of things, but in the form of socially useful activities). Thus, the provision of services itself creates the desired result. In this context, we can mention that sports services can be defined as a set of forms of activity, socio-pedagogical developed to meet the needs of different socio-demographic groups of the population towards improving fitness or to make a sports show.*

Keywords: *sports services, product, health, quality, consumers.*

Introduction. Sports Federations and affiliated associations are interested to strengthen, perpetuate and develop jobs in the system of physical culture and sports, in particular to implement sports services, generating substantial financial resources and income. In addition, a number of local authorities and private operators carry out turnkey entertainment and agreement services, and users, as consumers, sports practitioners are also paying attention to the new sports and leisure products that have appeared and are

being provided on the competitive market [2, 3]. The services provided to the population, depending on their functional purpose, are divided into material and socio-cultural (immaterial). The material service is one that satisfies the material needs of the consumer and ensures the restoration (change, conservation) of the consumer properties of products or the manufacture of new products, according to the requirements of citizens, as well as the movement of goods, people, creating conditions of consumption. The socio-

cultural service ensures the maintenance and restoration of health, the spiritual and physical development of the individual and contributes to the improvement of his professional skills. These may include physical education and sports, tourism and educational services. In order to understand the essence of physical culture and sports services, their general characteristics as well as their specific properties should be taken into account [5].

Among the types of sports services, we can list [4]:

- ✓ organized forms of physical exercise and sports (lessons, sports and health improvement activities, carried out in teams or individually, sports clubs);

- ✓ sports performances:

- ✓ development of methods, methodological complexes of physical culture, health improvement courses, physical education programs and training systems for athletes.

Sports services have several common characteristics reflected in Figure 1:

- ✓ *intangibility of services* - one of the main properties of services is that they cannot be seen, touched, perceived before being purchased;

- ✓ *lack of ownership* - for most services, purchasing them does not involve ownership of the service. For example, if you buy a ticket for a sports match, you have the right to be among the spectators at a specific stadium, on a certain day and time. If you come to the stadium, use this right, but if, for example, you were late and missed the entire first half, then you will not be able to ask to be shown this period, because you are not entitled to own this show;

- ✓ *source inseparability* - sports services, like other types of services, are provided and consumed simultaneously. The inseparability of a sports service means that it cannot be separated from the source. For example, a client of a sports club who works with a

personal trainer, according to a certain schedule, in the absence of his coach, and even if he works with another coach who replaced him personally, will still receive a completely different service. The second form of source inseparability is the inseparability of the buyer of sports services and the process of providing them. For example, a student from a sports school cannot practice sports activities with partners in organized sports games without being present at the training session. The joint consumption of sports services is the third form of inseparability from the source. Some types of physical education and spectacular sports services are offered to a larger group of spectators and not to an individual fan;

- ✓ *the variability of the quality of service* consists in the fact that, de facto, its quality can vary greatly depending on the time and place of its provision, by whom and how it is provided. For example, each football team has its own level of game quality and its own rating provided by fans. One and the same footballer in one game can gain courage and play excellently, and in another - with his game characterized by a weak, boring will disappoint fans. The process of improving the quality of services includes three stages. The first of these is the selection of staff and their training, regardless of the initial qualifications of the organization's employees. The second stage is the standardization of the service delivery process and the elimination of blockages in working with customers. The third step is to control customer satisfaction with the system;

- ✓ *the lack of preservation of the service, its fragility* lies in the fact that the service cannot be stored for the purpose of sale or subsequent use. For example, a student of a sports school, who does not show up at the beginning of a sports competition, cannot participate in them at any other time. For him, this competition will not be repeated.

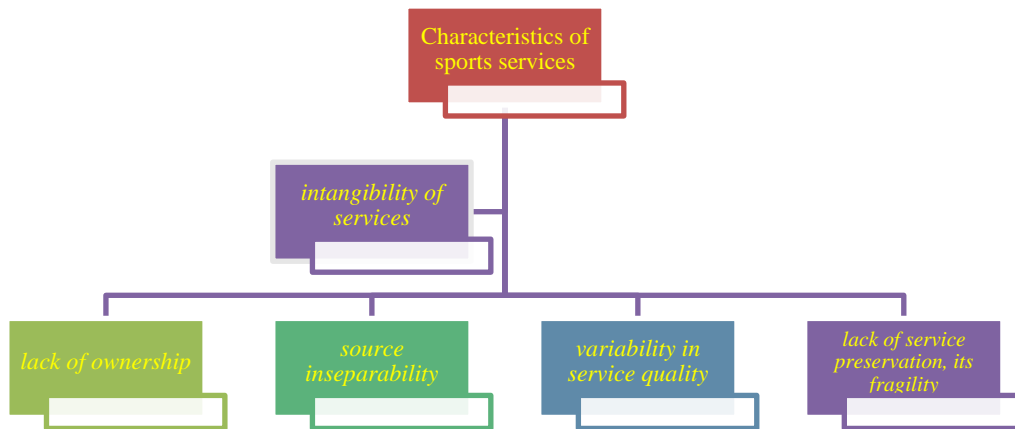


Fig. 1. Characteristics of sports services

The purpose of the research is to analyze the characteristics of sports services, as a product of physical culture.

Research methodology: analysis of the literature, sociological questionnaire, observation, data interpretation and graphic method.

Implementing and managing an offer of sports services requires knowledge and compliance with specific legal and regulatory conditions, often unknown to associative volunteers (for example: approval of tourism activities for sports camps, compliance with competition rules, taxation, labor procedural law, services tendering and public procurement or delegation of public services, etc.). The legal, economic, social and cooperation landmarks related to the establishment of a sports service were identified and analyzed in perspective with the realities in the field of physical culture and sports. They were discussed and gave rise to specific expertise when they were judicious, namely those related to: political and operational organization; private and public financing of sport (their management control) or service delivery approach (quality approach, customer satisfaction, etc.) [6].

The study was conducted in accordance with the organizational and ethical framework

of sports entities and by applying a sociological questionnaire to a group of sports managers and entrepreneurs (58 in number) in Chisinau and Iasi. The research was completed with the presentation of the results of this study and which includes all the elements studied, as well as the formulation of methodological conclusions and recommendations.

Results and interpretation of data obtained

To the question “Do you consider that the society of Entrepreneurs in the Republic of Moldova can be an instrument for the adapted management of sports organizations in order to implement and develop a more diverse range of sports services?”, the respondents gave affirmative answers in a percentage of about 67%, negative 18%, and 15% did not know how to answer this question (Figure 2).

The affirmative answers were noticed among the sports entrepreneurs through the arguments and reasons presented and which reflected: synergy of different components of the sports field (volunteers, users, public authorities, professionals, etc.); the possibility of public funding and even participation in the share capital of businesses by certain communities and sponsors; professionalization of sports activities management, both in terms

of directing human resources, volunteers and employees, as well as at the organizational level; the use of the commercial status, in order to comply with the legislation in force governing the field of physical culture and also the acquisition of the efficient management tool (accounting, marketing and market research, investments in the field, etc.); identifying the needs of different associations in the territory and ensuring the work of volunteers; capitalizing on resources and experiences, especially in terms of effective

communication; facilitating the process of agreement and collaboration, even delegating the public service; organizing subcontracting and implementing a quality approach. The purpose of sports services is the production or supply of goods and services of collective interest having a social utility character, and the pooling of means and resources will be carried out in accordance with their quality assurance and to increase the value of investments and equipment in the field of reference [4, 5].

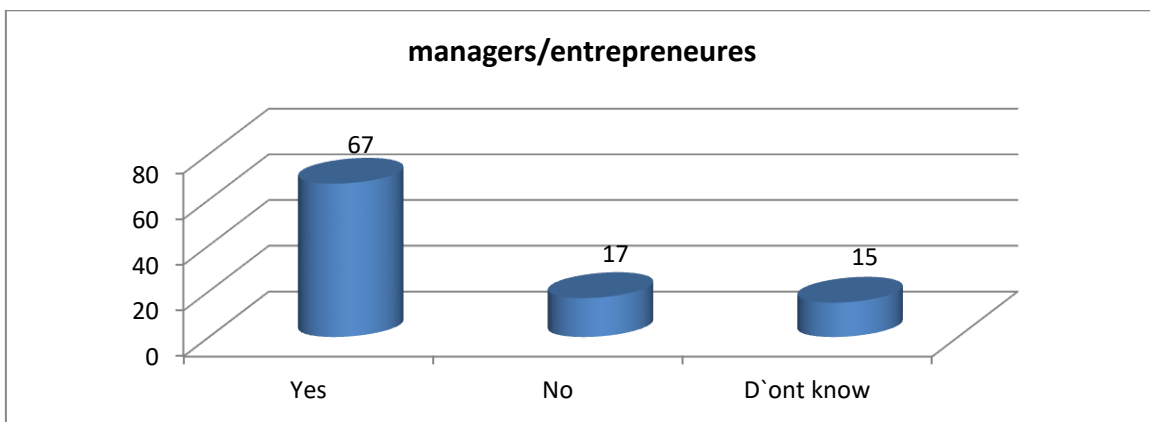


Fig. 2. Answers regarding the instruments for the adapted management of sports organizations

Regarding the answers to the question “Do you know what are the risks that can be generated from the provision of sports services?” “We can see from Figure 3 that most referred to the efficient management of the business (37%), to the taxation established according to

the legislation in force (39%) or to the distribution of powers in ensuring the efficient management (24%). Moreover, conducting a business in the field of sports services requires a diagnosis, general interest objectives and a specification.

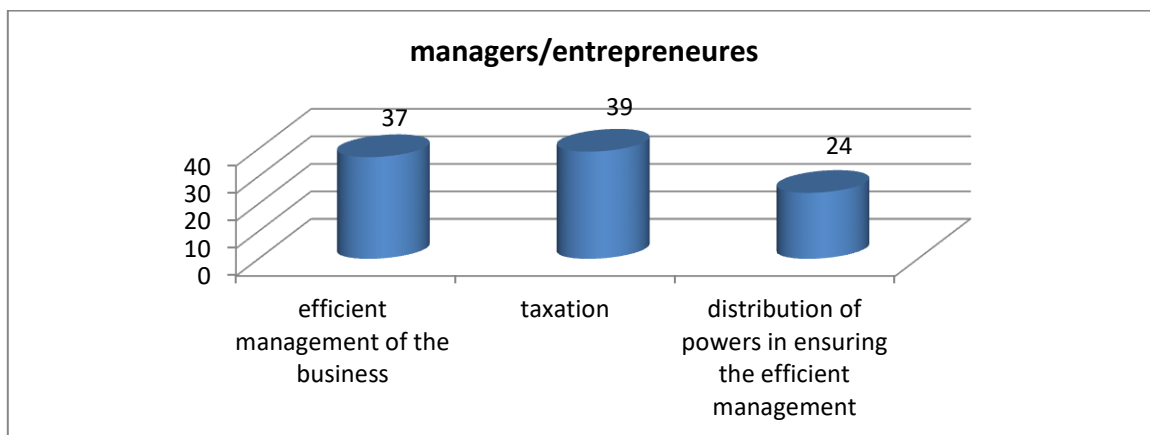


Fig. 3. Answers on the risks from the provision of sports services

In Table 1 we present some advantages and disadvantages identified by respondents

from the provision of sports services in the field of physical culture.

Table 1. Advantages and disadvantages identified by respondents in the provision of sports services in the field of physical culture

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Salary motivation of those who become partners	Reluctance of partners in certain actions
Analysis of operational situations of sports services	Lack of vision and global action
Sharing services and insurance permanent management costs	Selection of a preferable economic management
Reorientation of managers in accordance with the initial diagnosis	

Regarding the question “Do you consider that the market has an essential role in the provision of sports services? “Most

respondents gave affirmative answers (87%) and 13% negative (Figure 4).

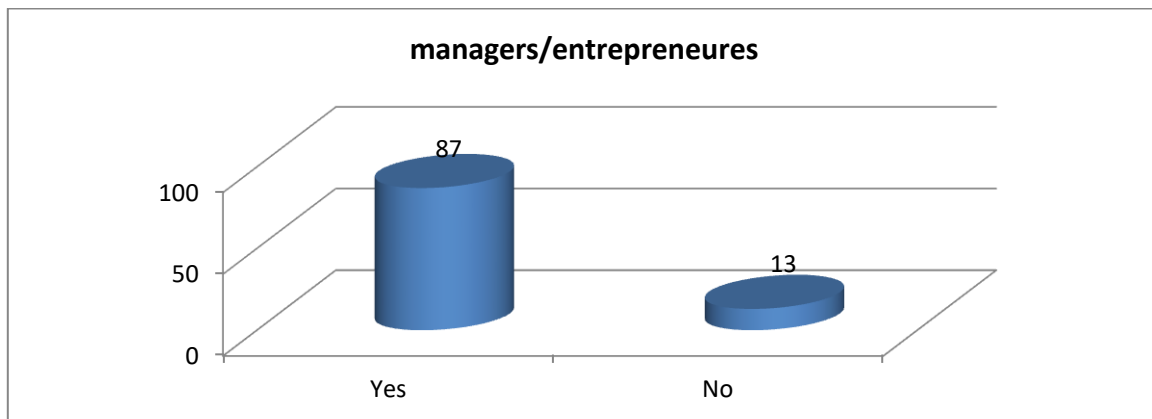


Fig. 4. Answers on the role of the market in the provision of sports services

From the point of view of economic theory, the market is a system of economic relations with reference to the purchase and sale of goods and services, where their demand, supply and prices are established. The market is a global value, and is also the result of the progress of all human civilization. Market relations have an extraordinary impact on all aspects of the life of modern society, fulfilling a number of essential functions (Figure 5):

✓ *the intermediate function* - the market directly connects producers (sellers) and consumers of goods (services), giving them the opportunity to communicate between them in the language of supply and demand, buying and selling;

✓ *pricing function on market* - occurs due to the collision of supply and demand, as well as the effect of competition, and as a result of the free play of these market forces, prices for goods and services are added;

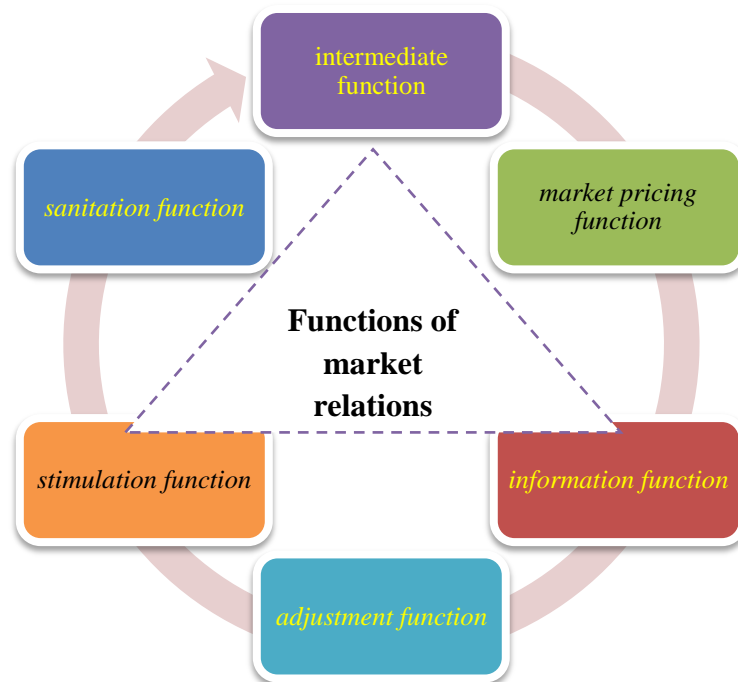


Figure 5. Functions of market relations

✓ *information function* - predominant prices "inform" businessmen about the state of the economy. In particular, by falling or rising, business people learn about the size of production, the saturation of the market for goods and the needs of consumers;

✓ *adjustment function* - the specificity of this function is that from less profitable industries, with lower prices (overproduction), capital flows into more profitable industries, with higher prices (underproduction). Thus, production in the first sectors is declining and in the second, it is increasing;

✓ *incentive function* - is also done using market prices. In this case, through them, the

efficiency of the economy is stimulated. Prices "reward" those who produce the most necessary goods for consumers, which improve production, increase productivity and reduce costs with additional profits;

✓ *sanitation function* (improving health) - the market, such as, "cleans" the economy of unnecessary and inefficient economic activity. The market is a system of self-regulation.

The market self-regulation mechanism includes three main interdependent factors: market prices; demand and supply of goods and services; competition (Figure 6).

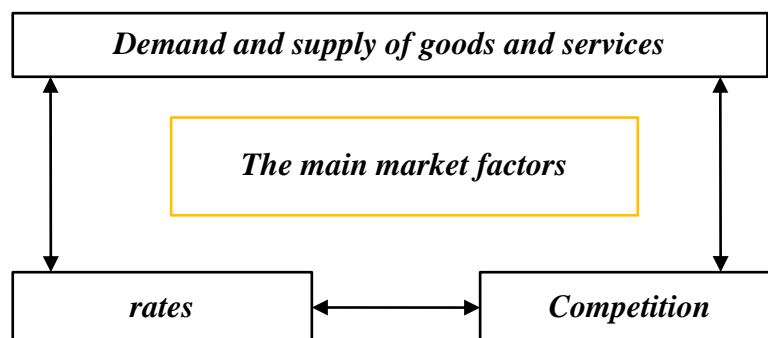


Fig. 6. The market as a self-regulation system

Prices are real if they are available for free on the market according to the demand and supply of goods. Demand is measured by the quantity of a product that consumers are willing and able to buy at a certain price for a certain period. An offer is the quantity of a product that is offered for sale at a specified price in a certain period of time. Competition

in the economy is a rivalry between market participants for the best conditions for the production, sale and purchase of goods. There are two forms of competition: price and non-price.

There are several types of market that we present in Figure 7.



Fig. 7. Physical culture and sport in the market structure

Sport generates its own specific market, and not one, but several. Firstly, this is the market for sports products and, secondly, the market for shows that it can present to a large audience. The market for sports goods / products depends on the number of people involved in a particular sport. The sports entertainment market is associated with the interest that ensures the flow of spectators to the stadiums and the appropriate coverage of events in the media. Physical education and sports services in a market economy are becoming the object of buying and selling. In this sense, fitness producers and sports service providers act as sellers and consumers as buyers. The providers of physical culture and

sports services are coaches, teachers, instructors, athletes, entrepreneurs, sports managers. The products of their activity are organized forms of sports activities; sports performances; software, methodical products, goods (sports facilities and equipment). The consumers of this sphere are the people involved in sports; spectators, fans and sponsors of the sport, as well as coaches, teachers, physical education and sports instructors, independent professionals. The specificity of the market for the sports industry is largely due to the particularities of intangible production, which has a certain place in this field. The main participants in

market relations in the field of physical culture and sports are:

- ✓ consumers of physical culture and sports services;
- ✓ producers of services in the field of physical culture and sports;

✓ intermediate structures: the state represented by the organs of central and local power.

Figure 8 shows the functioning of the physical culture and sports services market.

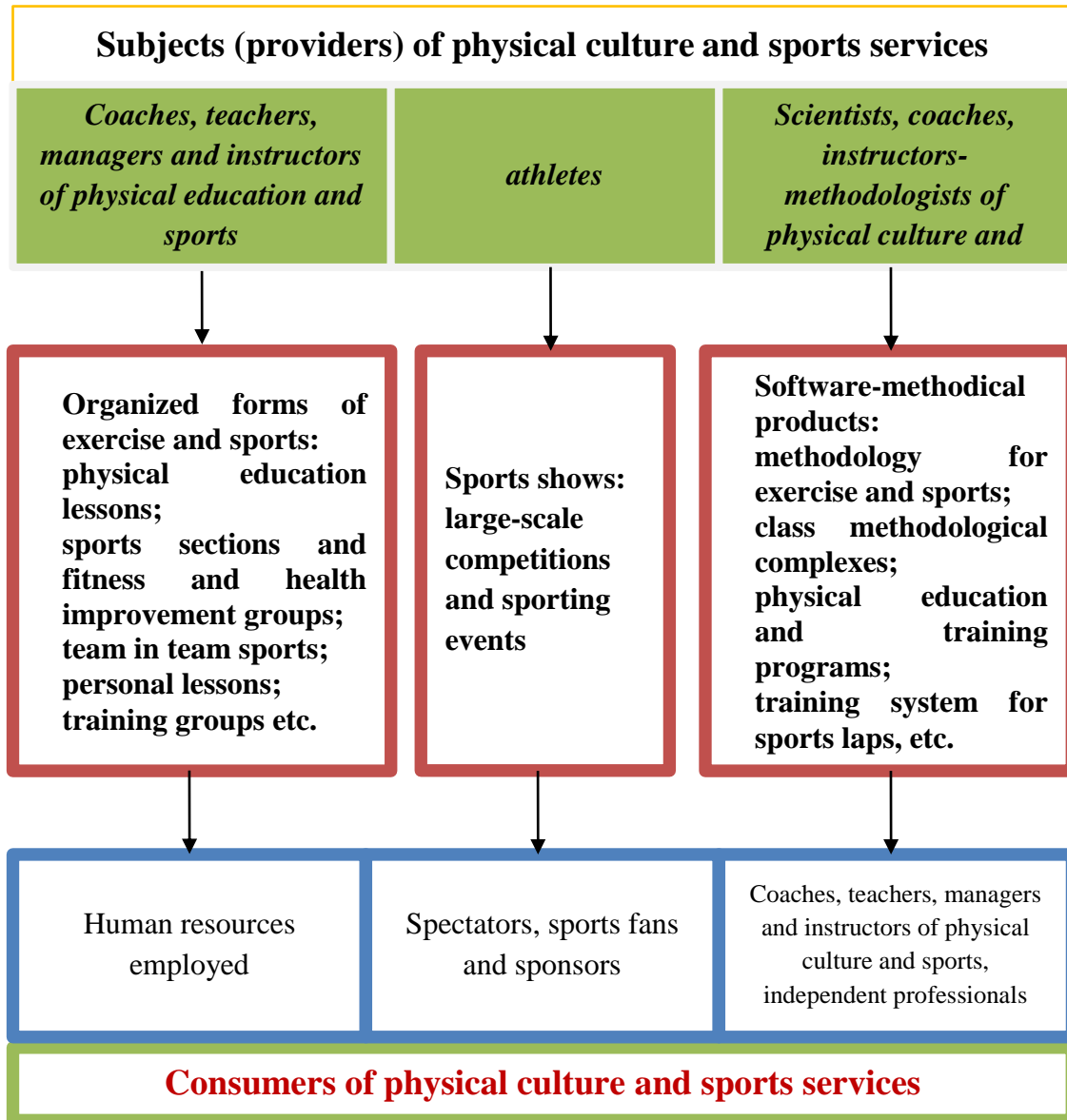


Fig. 8. Scheme of functioning of the market of physical culture and sports services

The consumption of sports services is largely due to the demands of fashion, as well as changing and dynamic ideas on how to approach a modern and prestigious lifestyle. This circumstance creates certain difficulties in production and entrepreneurial activity, as it imposes high requirements on the accuracy of

the analysis and forecast of market factors and the demand for services, stimulating the increase of the risk arising from their unpredictable changes.

In **conclusion**, we can mention that, in fact, the consumption of sports services contributes to the satisfaction, not so much of

the material needs, but of the spiritual, intellectual ones of the individual, and not least to maintaining a normal life. The central subject of market relations in the field of physical culture and sports is personality. The main difference between a person and other consumers is that they are involved in such services not only to obtain certain benefits, but mainly for themselves, to meet their own needs. In addition, a person is a personified material carrier of physical culture and sports services, having (as a result of their consumption) a certain volume of special knowledge, motor skills and having a certain level of physical fitness. Depending on the degree of conformity of the assortment to the needs of consumers, the provision of physical education and sports services is carried out in accordance with specific orders (including individual ones); development and provision of services for specialized programs, oriented and adapted to the requirements of specific

groups of consumers (customers); providing standard services. Sports services represent the main category of services, contributing to the physical, spiritual and social transformation of a person, as well as to the improvement of his physical, intellectual, moral, volitional level, to the development of other qualities. The category of sports services, which are not related to the implementation of physical exercises, includes related and additional services. Related services in the field of physical culture and sports include: improving health (use of baths, saunas, sports massage, etc.), intellectual (methodological, consulting, informational, etc.), social and household (trade and rental of items and sports equipment, recreational goods, etc.); rental services for sports facilities and sports infrastructure (gyms, grounds, swimming pools, etc.), sports facilities; entertainment services (organization of competitions and sports shows, etc.).

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