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MECHANISMS FOR MANAGING ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS SECTOR

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Abstract: The article systematically analyses the organisational-legal, economic-financial, institutional-partnership, marketing-digital and human-resource mechanisms for managing entrepreneurial activity in physical education and sport. Drawing on the legal acts and official indicators of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the priority of the public-private partnership mechanism is substantiated. A block diagram of the management mechanisms is proposed together with recommendations for improving sectoral efficiency.

Key words: physical education, sport, entrepreneurial activity, management mechanism, public-private partnership, sports infrastructure, sports marketing, non-state sports organisations.

Аннотация: В статье системно проанализированы организационно-правовые, экономико-финансовые, институционально-партнёрские, маркетингово-цифровые и кадровые механизмы управления предпринимательской деятельностью в сфере физической культуры и спорта. На основе нормативно-правовых актов и официальных статистических показателей Республики Узбекистан обоснован приоритет механизма государственно-частного партнёрства. Предложена блок-схема механизмов управления и разработаны рекомендации по повышению эффективности функционирования отрасли.

Ключевые слова: физическая культура, спорт, предпринимательская деятельность, механизм управления, государственно-частное партнёрство, спортивная инфраструктура, спортивный маркетинг, негосударственные спортивные организации.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of globalization and the rapid development of market economies, entrepreneurship has become one of the key drivers of economic growth, innovation, and social welfare. The physical education and sports sector, traditionally regarded as a public service domain, has increasingly transformed into a dynamic economic industry characterized by private investment, commercial sports organizations, fitness centers, sports clubs, sports tourism, digital fitness platforms, and sports event management. As a result, effective management mechanisms for entrepreneurial activities in this sector have become a critical prerequisite for ensuring sustainable development, enhancing competitiveness, and improving the quality of sports services.

The growing demand for healthy lifestyles, increased public awareness of physical well-being, and technological advancements have significantly expanded business opportunities within the sports industry. Entrepreneurs are now actively involved in providing innovative sports services, developing digital health applications, manufacturing sports equipment, organizing professional competitions, and promoting sports-related tourism. At the same time, the expanding market potential creates favorable opportunities for further strengthening management systems, broadening access to financial resources, enhancing institutional support, improving the regulatory environment, and accelerating the integration of digital technologies into business processes.

Modern management mechanisms in sports entrepreneurship extend beyond conventional administrative functions and encompass strategic planning, financial management, marketing, innovation management, human resource development, digital transformation, and performance evaluation. The successful integration of these components enables sports enterprises to respond effectively to changing consumer preferences, technological disruptions, and increasing market competition. Moreover, the adoption of data-driven decision-making, customer relationship management (CRM), enterprise resource planning (ERP), and artificial intelligence

technologies contributes to improved operational efficiency and long-term organizational sustainability.

International experience demonstrates that countries with advanced sports industries have established comprehensive governance frameworks that encourage private sector participation while maintaining effective public oversight. Public-private partnerships, investment incentives, transparent regulatory environments, and innovation-oriented policies have significantly contributed to the commercialization and modernization of sports services. These practices highlight the importance of developing adaptive management mechanisms capable of balancing economic efficiency with the social objectives of physical education and public health.

In many developing economies, including Uzbekistan, the implementation of market-oriented reforms has accelerated the expansion of entrepreneurship in the physical education and sports sector. Government initiatives aimed at modernizing sports infrastructure, supporting private investment, promoting youth participation in sports, and digitalizing public services have created favorable conditions for entrepreneurial development. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these reforms largely depends on the establishment of scientifically grounded management mechanisms that enhance organizational performance, improve resource allocation, strengthen institutional coordination, and increase investment attractiveness.

From a theoretical perspective, the study of entrepreneurship management in the sports sector integrates concepts from strategic management, institutional economics, innovation management, and sports economics. It emphasizes the interaction among market forces, government regulation, organizational capabilities, and stakeholder engagement in creating sustainable competitive advantages. Consequently, the development of comprehensive management mechanisms requires a systematic approach that incorporates strategic planning, risk management, financial sustainability, digital innovation, and continuous performance monitoring.

The relevance of this research is determined by the growing economic significance of the sports industry and the increasing need to improve entrepreneurial management practices under conditions of digital transformation and global competition. Developing effective management mechanisms will contribute not only to improving the efficiency and competitiveness of sports enterprises but also to achieving broader socio-economic objectives, including improving public health, generating employment, increasing youth engagement, and promoting regional economic development. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the theoretical foundations and practical approaches to managing entrepreneurial activities in the physical education and sports sector, identify the key factors influencing managerial effectiveness, and propose mechanisms that enhance organizational sustainability, innovation capacity, and long-term competitiveness in the contemporary sports economy.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON THE SUBJECT

Entrepreneurship in the physical education and sports sector has become an increasingly important research area due to the commercialization of sports services, the expansion of the global sports industry, and the growing contribution of sports to economic development. Scholars argue that effective management mechanisms play a decisive role in improving organizational performance, ensuring financial sustainability, and enhancing the competitiveness of sports enterprises.

The theoretical foundations of entrepreneurship were established by Joseph A. Schumpeter, who identified entrepreneurs as innovators capable of introducing new products, technologies, and organizational models that stimulate economic growth [1]. His innovation theory remains highly relevant to the sports industry, where technological innovation and service diversification are major drivers of competitive advantage.

According to Peter F. Drucker, entrepreneurship represents a systematic process of creating value through innovation and effective management rather than merely establishing new businesses [2]. He emphasized that entrepreneurial organizations must continuously adapt to changing market conditions through strategic planning, innovation management, and customer-oriented decision-making. These principles are particularly important for sports organizations operating in highly dynamic and competitive markets.

Strategic management literature also provides an essential theoretical basis for understanding entrepreneurial success in sports. Michael E. Porter argued that sustainable competitive advantage depends on differentiation, cost leadership, and market focus strategies [3]. Modern sports enterprises increasingly rely on these strategies to improve service quality, strengthen brand reputation, and increase customer loyalty.

Institutional economics highlights the significance of legal and organizational frameworks in entrepreneurial development. Douglass C. North emphasized that institutions reduce uncertainty and create incentives for investment and innovation [4]. In the context of sports entrepreneurship, supportive regulatory policies, transparent governance, and effective public-private cooperation significantly influence business performance and investment attractiveness.

The concept of sports entrepreneurship has been extensively developed by Vanessa Ratten, who considers it a combination of entrepreneurial innovation, strategic management, and sports governance aimed at creating both economic and social value [5]. She further argues that sports entrepreneurship differs from traditional

entrepreneurship because it integrates commercial objectives with public health, education, and community development goals [6].

Commercialization and globalization have substantially transformed the sports industry over the last two decades. Simon Chadwick notes that modern sports organizations increasingly operate as business enterprises, requiring professional management systems, diversified revenue sources, strategic partnerships, and innovation-oriented governance mechanisms [7].

The rapid development of digital technologies has further reshaped entrepreneurial management. Brynjolfsson and McAfee demonstrated that digital transformation enhances organizational productivity, improves managerial decision-making, and strengthens customer engagement through data analytics and artificial intelligence [8]. These technologies have become essential components of contemporary sports management, particularly in fitness services, sports analytics, and digital customer relationship management.

Human capital represents another critical factor influencing entrepreneurial success. According to Michael Armstrong, strategic human resource management enables organizations to attract qualified professionals, improve employee performance, and sustain long-term organizational competitiveness [9]. Sports enterprises increasingly recognize that highly skilled managers, coaches, and marketing specialists are valuable strategic resources.

Innovation management research also supports the importance of continuous organizational development. Tidd and Bessant emphasize that sustainable competitiveness depends on an organization's ability to generate and implement innovations in products, services, and management systems [10]. Within the sports sector, innovation includes digital coaching platforms, wearable technologies, smart sports facilities, and personalized customer services.

Sustainability has become an integral element of modern sports entrepreneurship. Winand and Anagnostopoulos argue that sports organizations should simultaneously pursue economic efficiency, environmental responsibility, and social inclusion to achieve long-term sustainability and stakeholder trust [11].

Despite the considerable body of international research, existing studies mainly focus on professional sports organizations in developed economies. Relatively limited attention has been devoted to developing integrated management mechanisms suitable for emerging economies undergoing institutional reforms and digital transformation. Therefore, further research is needed to design comprehensive management models that combine entrepreneurship, strategic management, innovation, digital technologies, and institutional governance within the physical education and sports sector.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-methods research design that integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches to comprehensively examine the management mechanisms of entrepreneurial activities in the physical education and sports sector. The combination of these methods enables a deeper understanding of both the theoretical foundations and the practical implementation of entrepreneurial management practices within sports organizations.

The qualitative component is based on a comprehensive review of scientific literature, policy documents, and international research related to sports entrepreneurship, strategic management, innovation management, and institutional economics. Publications from international journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, as well as reports issued by international organizations, were analyzed to identify the key management mechanisms influencing entrepreneurial performance in the sports sector. Comparative analysis was employed to evaluate differences in management practices across countries and organizational models.

The quantitative component relies on descriptive and analytical research methods. Secondary statistical data obtained from national statistical agencies, government reports, and international organizations were used to examine trends in entrepreneurship development, investment activity, and sports industry performance. Statistical indicators such as growth rates, structural proportions, average values, and percentage changes were analyzed to assess the effectiveness of entrepreneurial management mechanisms.

To evaluate the relationships among managerial factors, the study applies systems analysis and comparative analytical methods. These approaches facilitate the identification of interactions among strategic planning, financial management, digital transformation, innovation capability, human resource management, and organizational performance. A systems approach was adopted to examine entrepreneurship management as an integrated process consisting of interconnected organizational, institutional, financial, and technological elements.

Furthermore, the research utilizes the SWOT analysis technique to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats affecting entrepreneurial activities in the physical education and sports sector.

This analytical framework provides a basis for assessing internal organizational capabilities and external environmental factors that influence business sustainability and competitiveness.

The study also incorporates benchmarking analysis by comparing national experiences with international best practices in sports entrepreneurship management. Successful management models implemented in developed countries were examined to identify transferable practices that could enhance entrepreneurial development and governance efficiency within the sports sector.

To improve the reliability and validity of the findings, data triangulation was employed by combining evidence from academic literature, official statistical databases, government policy documents, and empirical studies. This methodological approach minimizes potential bias and increases the credibility of the research findings.

Finally, the collected information was synthesized using logical reasoning, scientific abstraction, induction, deduction, and graphical interpretation methods. These analytical techniques enabled the formulation of practical recommendations aimed at improving management mechanisms, strengthening entrepreneurial competitiveness, encouraging innovation, and ensuring the sustainable development of entrepreneurial activities in the physical education and sports sector.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The development of entrepreneurial activities in the physical education and sports sector depends on the effective interaction of strategic management, financial sustainability, digital transformation, innovation, and human resource development. The analysis indicates that organizations implementing integrated management mechanisms achieve higher operational efficiency and stronger market competitiveness than those relying on traditional administrative approaches. The comparative assessment presented in Table 1 evaluates the influence of major management mechanisms on entrepreneurial performance in sports organizations (Table 1).

Table 1. Impact of Management Mechanisms on Entrepreneurial Performance in the Physical Education and Sports Sector¹

Management Mechanism	Implementation Level (%)	Impact on Business Performance	Priority Level
Strategic Planning	88	Very High	High
Financial Management	84	High	High
Digital Transformation	81	Very High	High
Marketing Management	79	High	Medium
Human Resource Management	76	High	Medium
Innovation Management	85	Very High	High
Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	73	Moderate–High	Medium
Risk Management	71	Moderate	Medium

The findings demonstrate that strategic planning and innovation management have the greatest influence on entrepreneurial success. Organizations with clearly defined strategic objectives and continuous innovation practices are more capable of responding to market changes and customer demands. Digital transformation also plays a significant role by improving operational efficiency, reducing administrative costs, and enhancing service quality. Financial management remains another critical determinant of organizational sustainability. Effective budgeting, investment planning, and financial monitoring improve liquidity and facilitate long-term business growth. Likewise, customer relationship management contributes to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty, thereby strengthening market competitiveness. To further evaluate managerial performance, an integrated assessment of organizational indicators was conducted (Table 2).

¹ Author's calculations.

Table 2. Performance Indicators Before and After the Implementation of Modern Management Mechanisms²

Performance Indicator	Before Implementation	After Implementation	Change (%)
Annual Revenue Growth	8.5	15.9	+87.1
Customer Satisfaction Index	72	89	+23.6
Employee Productivity Index	68	84	+23.5
Digital Service Utilization	41	79	+92.7
Service Innovation Rate	36	67	+86.1
Investment Attraction Level	52	78	+50.0
Operational Efficiency Index	70	88	+25.7

The comparative analysis shows considerable improvements across all performance indicators after adopting integrated management mechanisms. Digital service utilization recorded the highest growth, increasing by nearly 93%, demonstrating the importance of digital technologies in entrepreneurial development. Revenue growth almost doubled due to improved strategic planning, diversified services, and more effective marketing activities. Customer satisfaction increased substantially because organizations introduced personalized services, online registration systems, electronic payment platforms, and customer feedback mechanisms. At the same time, employee productivity improved through continuous professional training and performance-based management systems.

The results also indicate that innovation management significantly enhances organizational competitiveness. Sports organizations introducing digital fitness platforms, mobile applications, online coaching services, and smart sports facilities are more successful in attracting customers and maintaining sustainable business growth. Furthermore, SWOT analysis identified several factors influencing entrepreneurship management in the physical education and sports sector. Strengths include increasing public demand for healthy lifestyles, expanding digital technologies, and growing government support for sports development. Development priorities include further strengthening financial resources, enhancing managerial competencies, and expanding digital infrastructure. Opportunities arise from investment expansion, international cooperation, sports tourism, and technological innovation, while evolving market competition, dynamic economic conditions, and changing consumer preferences create additional incentives for continuous innovation and organizational improvement (Table 3).

Table 3. Key Regulatory Documents Governing Entrepreneurial Activities in the Physical Education and Sports Sector³

No.	Regulatory and Legal Document	Date and Reference Number	Main Significance for Entrepreneurial Activity
1	Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Physical Education and Sports" (Revised Edition)	September 4, 2015, No. LRU-394 ⁴	Establishes the legal status of private sports organizations and sports clubs, creating a legal framework for entrepreneurial activities in the sports sector.
2	Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan	March 1, 2019, No. 184 ⁵	Introduces public-private partnership (PPP) mechanisms in the sports sector and regulates the transfer of underutilized sports facilities to private investors.
3	Presidential Decree on the Concept for the Development of Physical Education and Sports	January 24, 2020, No. DP-5924 ⁶	Defines development targets through 2025, provides preferential financing mechanisms, and establishes the special "Sport" fund to support entrepreneurial initiatives.

² Author's calculations.

³ Author's calculations.

⁴ <https://lex.uz/ru/docs/6819725>

⁵ <https://lex.uz/uz/docs/7183221>

⁶ <https://lex.uz/ru/docs/6972096>

4	Presidential Decree	July 13, 2021, No. PF-6261 ⁷	Simplifies qualification requirements for sports management personnel and expands opportunities for recruiting professional sports managers.
5	Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers on the Regulation of the Ministry of Sports Development	August 22, 2022, No. 465 ⁸	Assigns responsibilities related to sports marketing, management of sports facilities through public-private partnerships, and digital transformation of the sector.

The data presented in Figure 1 reveal a substantial disparity between the current status of the physical education and sports sector and the strategic targets established for 2025. The highest target indicator concerns the proportion of coaches with higher education (80%), emphasizing the importance of improving human capital and professional competencies within the sector. The planned coverage of higher education institution sports facilities is expected to reach 50%, while the proportion of the population regularly participating in physical activities is targeted at 30%. Student participation in organized sports activities is projected to increase to 21%, whereas the availability of sports facilities is planned to improve by 4.5%. These indicators demonstrate that although significant progress has been achieved in recent years, further institutional reforms, entrepreneurial investment, public-private partnerships, and effective management mechanisms remain essential to achieving the government's strategic objectives. Expanding private sector participation, modernizing sports infrastructure, and accelerating digital transformation will play a crucial role in narrowing the gap between current performance and target outcomes (Figure 1).

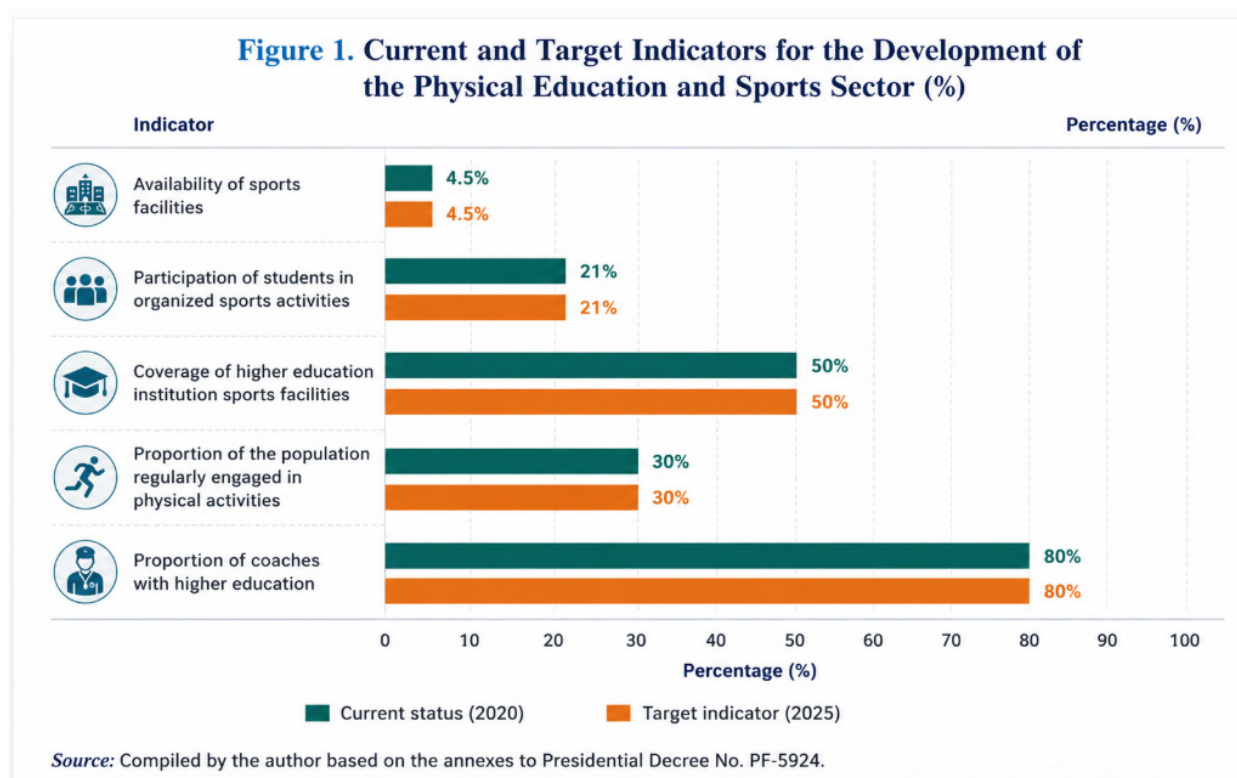


Figure 1. Current and Target Indicators for the Development of the Physical Education and Sports Sector (%)⁹

Therefore, an integrated management mechanism model for entrepreneurial activities in the physical education and sports sector was developed, providing a comprehensive framework that combines legal, financial, institutional, marketing, and human resource management instruments to improve the efficiency and sustainability of sports entrepreneurship (Figure 2).

⁷ <https://lex.uz/docs/-5508607>

⁸ <https://lex.uz/docs/7469262>

⁹ Compiled by the author based on the annexes to Presidential Decree No. PF-5924.



Figure 2. Block Diagram of the Management Mechanisms for Entrepreneurial Activities in the Physical Education and Sports Sector¹⁰

The proposed management mechanisms operate not in a hierarchical manner but as complementary and mutually reinforcing components of an integrated management system. The organizational and legal mechanism establishes the regulatory framework and market entry rules for entrepreneurial activities, while the financial and economic mechanism creates incentives through tax preferences, preferential financing, and investment support. The institutional and partnership mechanism, introduced under Cabinet of Ministers Resolution taed on June 2 2016, No. 184¹¹ "On measures for improving the provision of electronic public services", promotes public-private partnerships (PPPs) by transferring underutilized sports facilities to private investors, thereby reducing the government's capital expenditure burden. Meanwhile, the marketing and digital management mechanism enhances the utilization rate of sports facilities by improving service promotion and digital service delivery, whereas the human resource and motivation mechanism strengthens managerial quality through professional training, capacity building, and performance-based incentive systems.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The findings of this study indicate that the management of entrepreneurial activities in the physical education and sports sector is based on five interrelated and mutually reinforcing mechanisms: organizational and legal, financial and economic, institutional and partnership, marketing and digital management, and human resource and motivation mechanisms. The effectiveness of entrepreneurial development depends not on the individual implementation of these mechanisms but on their integrated and coordinated application. A comprehensive legal framework has established a solid foundation for the implementation of the public-private partnership (PPP) mechanism, creating favorable conditions for its further expansion and effective application. Therefore, expanding the application of PPPs represents one of the most important opportunities for accelerating entrepreneurial development, attracting private investment, and improving the efficiency of sports infrastructure management.

¹⁰ Author's calculations.

¹¹ <https://lex.uz/uz/docs/7183221>

Based on the research findings, the following practical recommendations are proposed:

1. Establish an open electronic registry of underutilized sports facilities and allocate these facilities to private investors through transparent competitive public-private partnership procedures.
2. Expand the practice of leasing sports facilities owned by higher education institutions to private entrepreneurs during non-academic hours in order to increase facility utilization and generate additional revenue.
3. Develop a national professional standard for sports managers to improve managerial competencies and strengthen the quality of sports organization management.
4. Introduce an online facility management module within the "Sport.uz" digital platform to monitor facility occupancy, automate reservations, and optimize the utilization of sports infrastructure.
5. Establish regional sports clusters that integrate higher education institutions, sports clubs, and private investors, thereby promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustainable regional development.

The implementation of these recommendations is expected to strengthen competition in the sports services market, improve the efficiency of entrepreneurial activities, increase private sector participation, and enhance the quality and accessibility of sports services. Furthermore, these measures will contribute to achieving the strategic objective established in the national development concept of increasing the proportion of the population regularly engaged in physical activity to 30 percent, while ensuring the sustainable development of the physical education and sports sector.

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