

# STUDY ON THE ETHICS OF THE COACHES OF PUBLIC SPORTS CLUBS IN ROMANIA

Associate professor PhD Mihai Constantin Razvan BARBU

University of Craiova

Email: mihai\_rc@yahoo.co.uk

## *Abstract:*

*In this paper I identified and presented the role of ethics in the activity of the coaches. I highlighted the main issues the coaches confront in relationship with themselves or with the other participants. The morality of the coaches is important since they have an important influence on the players they train, acting, the same as the managers, as an ethic catalyst within the sport club. In this paper I presented the ethical level of the coaches from the municipal clubs of Romania, based on a sample of 40 coaches acting in 20 public sport clubs from Romania. The main finding of the paper is that the coaches demonstrated a good level of ethics in their activity.*

*Keywords: ethics of coaches, public sport clubs, ethical level*

## **1. The organization of sports clubs**

In many regions of Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, India or Latin America, sports clubs with several branches and with multilateral character are very popular. On the other hand, in the United States of America or in the United Kingdom of Great Britain, the particularity of the sports clubs is that they address a single sport, on which they focus.

The European model of clubs with more branches encourages young people to try more branches, facilitating the discovery of one's skills. Clubs focused on one sport present the advantage of specialization, but also of overstraining the athletes who practice the same physical activity (Robinson, 2010).

In Romania, sports activity is governed by Law 69/2000 on Physical Education and Sports. According to this law, sports structures are considered the following: a) sports associations; b) sports clubs, including those organized as commercial companies; c) county and Bucharest municipality associations, on sports branches; d)

professional leagues; e) national sports federations; f) the Romanian Olympic and Sports Committee.

According to Mihailescu (2008), sports clubs in Romania may have legal personality under private law (the majority) or public law (departmental clubs and clubs attached to local councils) or established as a joint stock companies. Sports clubs have their own system of administration and management of the budget and assets, approved by their general assemblies. The purpose of a sports club is the conduct of sports activities in one or more branches, the selection and preparation of athletes in this area, and the participation in national and international sports competitions.

According to articles 29 and 30 of Law 69/2000, mono-sport or poli-sport sports clubs governed by public law are organized and operate according to their own regulations. They enjoy the rights conferred by law, with the exception of patrimonial involvement of the public authority whom they are subject to.

Sports clubs governed by public law may receive in administration or for

free use buildings serving the sports activity, and sports facilities. Therefore, the act of establishment is the provision of the central or local public administration, respectively the order of the Minister, order or decision of the President, decision of the County Council or Local Council. Municipal sports clubs, which are the subject of this research, run within the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports and are set up as public institutions.

The standard structure of a municipal sports club encompasses the management component and the execution component. The main compartments which operate within a municipal sports club are: the sport compartment responsible for the activity of the departments on the sports branch, the financial accounting compartment, the secretarial, information and public relations compartment, the administrative and procurement compartment, the human resources compartment and the legal and public internal audit compartment.

All these compartments are subordinated directly to the director of the sports club, and the sports departments are managed by the sports compartment. These departments can be created or dissolved only by Order of the Minister of education, research, youth and sport. Usually, the activity of the club is run by a coordinating director and a deputy coordinating director. They operate under a management contract concluded for a period of four years. Along the coordinator director there is also the Council of the club as advisory body.

## **2. The role of ethics in the activity of coaches**

Ethical issues arise in the lives of all participants in the sports activity, be it managers, athletes or coaches. Some of the ethical dilemmas faced by the manager appear also in the case of the coach, although there are a number of

peculiarities arising from the specific of their activity.

The role of ethics for coaches is all the more important as they have a role of modeler, of teacher for the athletes they train. The moral duty of the coach is *the safety of the athletes*, and, in particular, of the very young, by providing a workout appropriate to their age, by following the doctors' indications, and by a good communication with the athletes, in order to understand the problems they face and to be able to solve them together.

Coaches should not ignore the technical aspects of training, and the age-appropriate methods or fail to implement the necessary safety measures in physical and mental preparation of athletes (*Thornton, Champion and Ruddell, 2011, p. 129*).

Unfortunately, sports casuistry is rich in numerous examples of coaches who abuse their athletes by violence (physical or verbal), sexual harassment, pressure to achieve performance at any cost (including through the use of prohibited substances), strenuous and oversteering workouts, inappropriate with age or medical condition.

One of the most serious ethical misconduct of coach is linked to sexual abuse or sexual harassment. This transgression must be reported as soon as it is discovered to the authorities to solve the problem. One of the most recent cases of this kind was broadcast by CNN and presents the story of five gymnasts who reveal the abuse to which they were subjected to by their coach Doug Bogner in the '80s.

Sporting practice has also revealed examples of coaches who ask athletes to do unethical things in exchange of being elected in the competition teams. Underage athletes are the most vulnerable, as they don't have the maturity to understand the rights they have and the limits of the coaches in the relationship with them. Children cannot distinguish between

right and wrong. Coaches can use this to manipulate them and to convince them that what is bad, incorrect and non-ethical (or even illegal) is in fact right and normal.

The coach meets the role of model of ethics and conduct for the athletes they train. Thus, he/she must promote among athletes respect, trust, fair play, sportsmanship, honor, fairness. In this sense, within sports organizations, there is a code of conduct for coaches, which works as a guideline that directs them in their work and in the relationship with athletes, with colleagues and superiors.

The ethical issues that arise in the coach's relationship with his/her athletes are not always clear and can turn into a real dilemma. For example, is it moral or immoral for a coach to have a love relationship with an athlete in his/her sports team? To solve these dilemmas, the coach must comply with the provisions of the code of ethics and, in case there are no provisions in this regard, he/she must consult an expert on ethical issues or a neutral honorable and trustworthy person.

Ethical principles included in the codes of conduct of the coaches refer to the *respect for the rights* of others, to a *personal and professional responsibility* as well as to a *relationship based on openness, trust, honesty, respect and fairness*.

According to *Robinson (2009)*, the coach's philosophy is a set of moral beliefs that determine his/her behavior in various situations. Every coach has his/her own motivations for pursuing such an activity. Even the unscrupulous coaches have the philosophy of bypassing the rules or even their infringement, to get success.

The coach's role is to create a philosophy common to the team or group, in order to ensure cohesion and coordination of the athletes. The author presents a model of the factors that influence and determine this philosophy of the coach, a predominantly affective

model. These factors may be: the current beliefs, the past experience, the influence from colleagues, family or friends, the coach's knowledge, as well as the emotions felt in the past or current experiences.

One of the most popular ethics models applied to coaches belongs to *Passmore (2011)* and it is called *the action model*. It consists of six stages: awareness, classification, time for reflection, support and counseling, initiation, evaluation of options and integration of new.

*Awareness* – the coach must understand his/her position and the provisions of the code of professional conduct, as well as his/her own values and beliefs.

*Classification* – the coach must identify all the potential ethical issues and to classify them into the category of dilemmas, if they meet the conditions.

*Time for reflection, support and advice* – the coach must discuss with people with expertise in ethics the ethical dilemmas they face, to be able to choose what is right in terms of morale.

*Initiation - subsequent to the previous stage of analysis, the initiates a process of establishing the alternatives to resolve the ethical problem arisen.*

*Evaluation of options* – at this stage, the coach addresses all the alternatives from the previous stage in the light of the provisions of the code of ethics and of personal values (the first step).

*Integration of new* – as soon as the coach has chosen a specific alternative in response to an ethical dilemma, he/she must integrate it into his/her code of ethical values, and in the whole of past experiences.

### **3. The purpose and the objectives of the research**

*The main purpose* of the research on the ethics level of coaches is to

*establish the way coaches from municipal sports clubs in Romania act, take decisions or relate* in their work of preparing athletes. The research highlights *the main specific ethical issues of and the way coaches manage to find solutions* in accordance with their system of values and beliefs, with the provisions of the code of ethics and professional conduct.

The coach also has the responsibility of ethical training of the athletes he/she prepares, having, as Manager of the organization, the role of ethical model and catalyst for the organizational ethos. He is able to instill to the athletes the ethical principles (trust, respect, fair play, sportsmanship, honor, etc.) and the importance of their work.

In order to achieve this goal, we have established the following objectives of the research, which contribute to outline a moral profile of the coach from the municipal sports clubs in our country:

- *identification of the major ethical issues* facing the coach of sports clubs;
- *determination of the impact* of the morality/immorality of a coach on the athletes and the general ethical climate;
- *evaluation of decisions and resolutions adopted* by coaches in case of ethical dilemmas or for their prevention.

#### 4. Research methodology

In order to realize a study that is relevant for the ethics of coaches of municipal sports clubs in Romania, we used the following methods of research, that lead logically and coherently to the achievement of the purpose and objectives of this research:

- *study of specialty literature* in the field of ethics of coaches, as well as the thoroughgoing study of international casuistry, which gives examples of immoral coaches and even outside of

legality. The main works considered are up-to-date and belong to some well-known names in the field: Thornton, Champion and Ruddell (2011), *Sports Ethics for Sports Management Professionals*; Robinson (2009), *Foundations of Sports Coaching*; Passmore (2011), *Supervision in Coaching: Supervision, Ethics and Continuous Professional Development*.

This method allowed for a better understanding of the role of the coach in his/her activity within the Club, for the preparation of athletes not only in terms of performance, but also from the point of view of the development of an ethical spirit.

- *survey of opinion*, as the main method of quantitative research. To do this, we used the *questionnaire*, which includes a variety of questions (open, closed, the Likert scale), which bring to light the ethical issues that coaches may face in their work. **The questionnaire** was distributed to a sample of **40 coaches** from within the country's municipal sports clubs (20 of them expressed their willingness to respond). The distribution and the data collection took place both in physical form (by courier services), as well as in electronic form, depending on the availability of the coaches. The period on which the opinion survey was conducted is 1 to 20 April 2012, and the term was shortened by the openness and promptness shown by the coaches in their responses. The sampling method used was a probabilistic one, based on random selection of subjects.

- *statistical processing methods* using the SPSS v.16.0 statistic program. It allows to create correlations with the aid of the *Pearson coefficient*, the calculation of *statistical indicators*, such as average, frequency and standard deviation, but also graphical and tabular representations, which facilitate the understanding of the information of mathematical-statistical nature.

All of these methods of research, analysis and processing contributed to the achievement of the purpose of the research and to the scientific and rigorous substantiation of the study results regarding the ethics of the coaches from municipal sports clubs in our country.

### **5. Research hypotheses**

Following the process of documenting and contouring a general ethical picture related to the activity of coaches, we have established the following assumptions, which will or won't be validated, according to the responses collected through the questionnaire from coaches from municipal sports club in our country:

**Hypothesis 1:** If the coaches adopt a series of measures to prevent and combat cases of harassment and discrimination among the athletes, we will see increased efficiency in avoiding them.

**Hypothesis 2:** By complying the ethical principles of sportsmanship, the role of the coach in the development of the athletes' ethos gets major.

**Hypothesis 3:** If workouts have a high degree of complexity, they will affect the social area of the athletes: family life, school performance, the athlete's health, etc.

**Hypothesis 4:** The priority objectives of the coaches being of financial nature and to obtain notable sporting results, the ethical management or the direct interest of the athletes will be in the second plan.

**Hypothesis 5:** If coaches want to increase the income of the club, then they will pressure the athletes and that sometimes affect the athletes' performances.

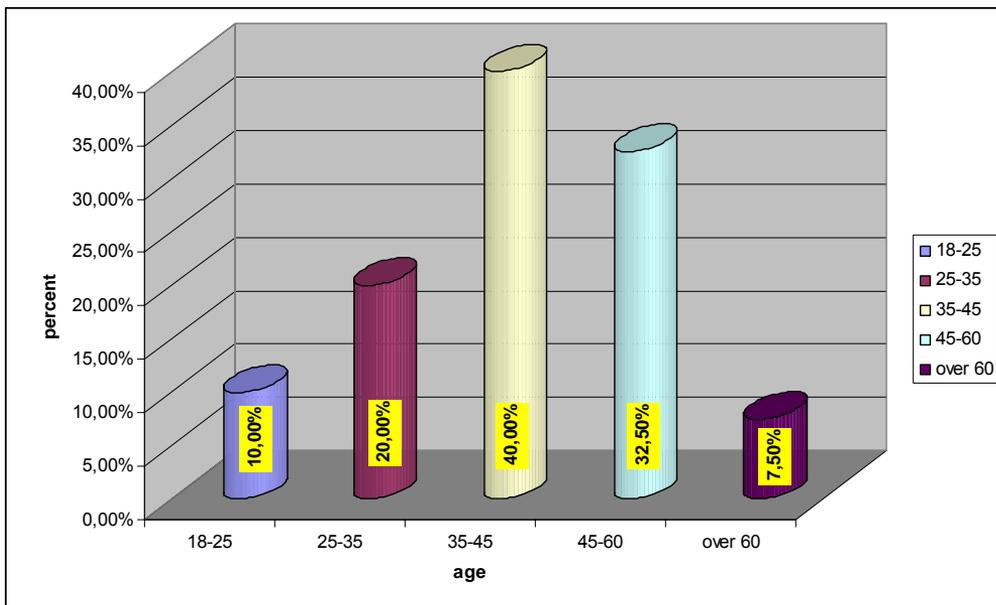
The analysis of the data collected shall be carried out with the SPSS program, which allows to validate or invalidate the assumptions, according to the results of the Pearson coefficient (which measures the causality relationship between the variables), as well as the statistical indicators obtained (average, standard deviation, percentage distribution of frequencies).

### **6. Interpretation of data**

The questionnaire consists of questions that outline the profile of the coach, the familiarization of coaches with the ethics management tools existing at the level of sport club, as well as the ethical issues approach by the coach and of the measures taken by him/her.

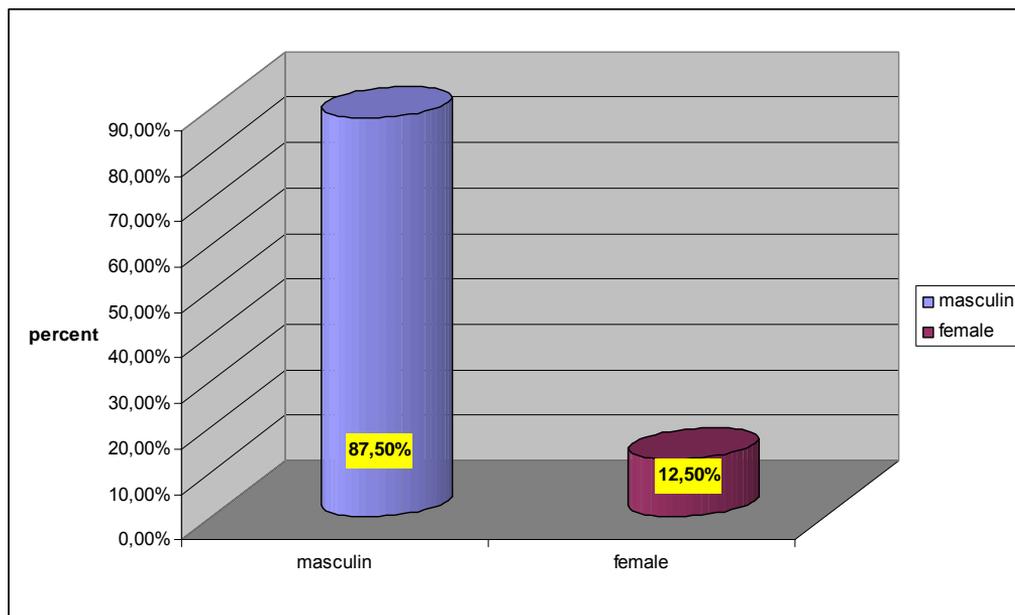
#### ***Profile of the coach from municipal sports clubs***

For a clearer picture on the coach in the municipal sports clubs in our country, we used the criteria of sex and age. Thus, according to the age criterion (Figure 1), it appears that coaches aged 35 to 45 (40%) prevail, followed by those aged 45 to 60 (32.5%). We appreciate that the coaches are relatively young, as the percentage of those aged 25 to 35 are also quite high – 20%.



**Figure 1. Distribution of coaches by age**

The sex criterion shows a distribution in detriment of female coaches, who have a quite low ratio – only 12.5%, while there are 87.5% male coaches (Figure 2).



**Figure 2. Distribution of coaches by sex**

There is not enough data to explain this distribution in the sense of any manifested discrimination against

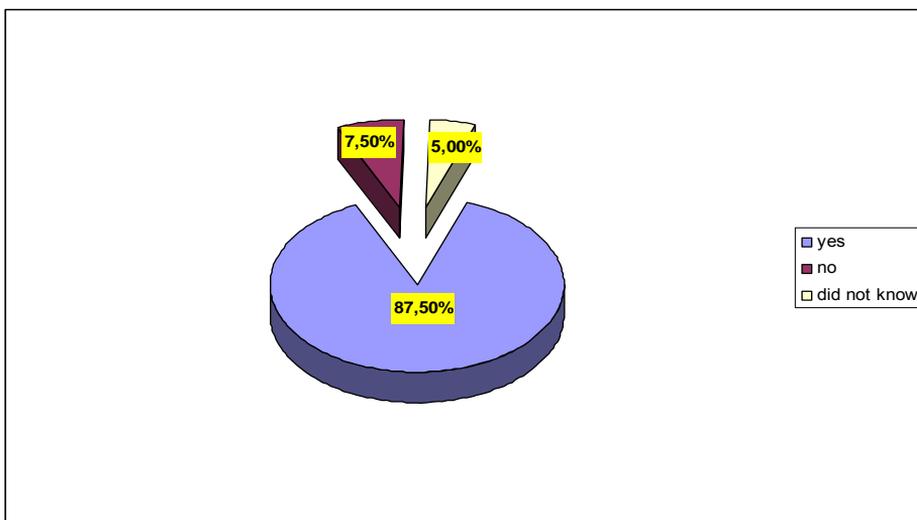
female coaches, as it can be just a preference to male persons to this type of activity.

**Familiarization of the coaches with the existence and usefulness of ethics management tools**

The questionnaire included questions relating to the existence and necessity of the code of ethics and the Ethics Commission, as well as the use of ethical training sessions or other means of communication of ethical issues in the municipal sports clubs in our country.

With regard to the code of ethics,

87.5% of the coaches in the sample know of its existence in the club in which they work (Figure 3). It is an encouraging percentage, although 7.5% of them have stated that there isn't such a code within the sports organization, and 5% did not know of its existence. There is a warning signal that these tools aren't well implemented, and it is often only a managerial and institutional formality.

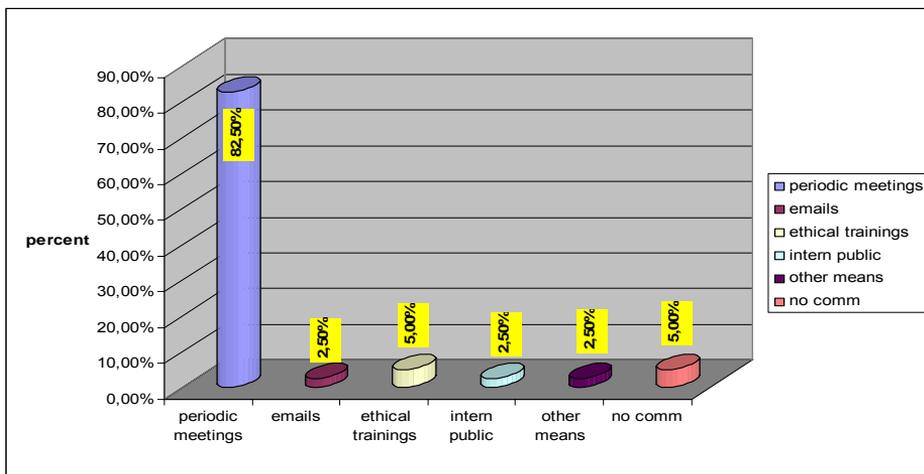


**Figure 3. Existence of code of ethics in sports clubs, according to coaches**

The question concerning the necessity of the existence of the code of ethics was unanimously answered affirmatively by the coaches. Even if there are coaches who do not know of its existence, they see the code of ethics and conduct as necessary, which proves that there is the potential for a better implementation and

dissemination of this tool by the managers of the clubs.

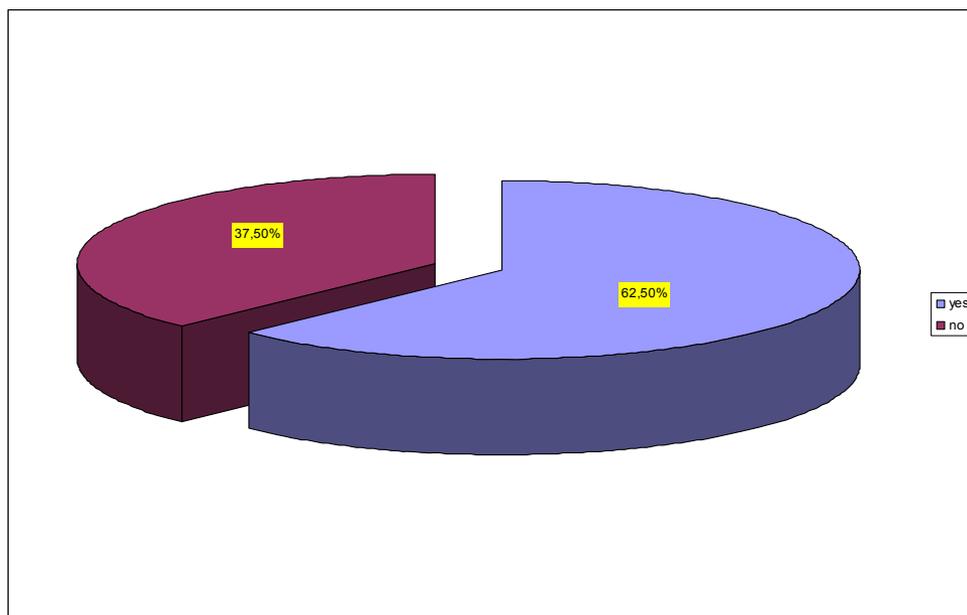
In terms of how the principles of the code of ethics are communicated, the coaches mentioned the periodic meetings (82.5%), while the other forms (emails, ethical trainings, intern publications, other means) had each a maximum of 5% (Figure 4).



**Figure 4. Ways of communicating the code of ethics among coaches**

The percentage of 5% of the coaches who believe that there isn't a communication to this effect it is quite high, requiring the adoption of more rigorous measures from the managers of sports clubs. In terms of information

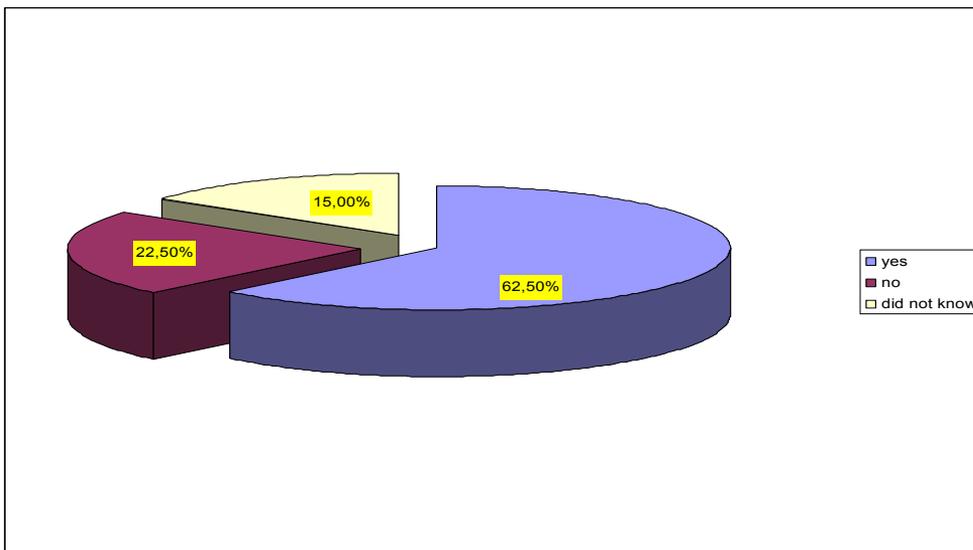
sessions on ethical issues, 62.5% of coaches (Figure 5) participated in these, which can be a starting point for creating an ethical climate among coaches and, indirectly, among the athletes they train.



**Figure 5. Participation of coaches at information sessions on ethical issues**

62,5% of coaches know (Figure 6) about the existence of an Ethics Committee within the club, 22,5%

consider that it does not exist, and 15% did not know whether there is one or not.



**Figure 6. Perception of the existence of Ethics Committee within the club**

This fairly large percentage of coaches who don't know whether there is an Ethics Committee can be justified in part by the fact that none of the coaches had not been a subject of debates in this Committee.

**Ethical issues that coaches face in their work**

The main ethical issues contained in the questionnaire refer to harassment, violence, doping, exploitation of athletes, pressures on them, tricking the results, etc. The research aims to study the way in which coaches react while faced with these problems, and the measures that they take, and thus to shape up a moral

profile of the coaches.

One of the important ethical issues is related to the harassment (verbal or physical), whether it occurs between athletes or between an athlete and a coach. In his capacity as a trainer, the coach must take appropriate measures to avoid or to counter these cases. The descriptive statistics on harassment (Table 1) show that coaches disagree with the assertion that at the club level there could exist cases of harassment of any kind. For this question, there was done a codification from 1 to 5, where 1 is the total disagreement, and 5 – the total agreement.

**Table 1**

**Descriptive statistics of cases of harassment at the club level**

Statements	Average	Standard deviation
<i>There are/there have been cases of harassment between athletes</i>	2.12	1.488
<i>There are/there have been cases of harassment between athletes and coaches</i>	1.80	1.305

The averages of 2.12 and 1.8 respectively, reflect the disagreement of

the coaches on the issue of harassment, fact also reinforced by the percentage distribution of their opinions (Table 2).

**Table 2****Percentage distribution of opinions of coaches on cases of harassment**

<i>There are/there have been cases of harassment between athletes</i>	<b>Percentage</b>	<i>There are/there have been cases of harassment between athletes and coaches</i>	<b>Percentage</b>
Total disagreement	52.5	Total disagreement	70
Disagreement	20	Disagreement	2.5
Undecided	2.5	Undecided	7.5
Agreement	12.5	Agreement	17.5
Total agreement	12.5	Total agreement	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

We notice that the percentage of those who are in disagreement (partially or completely) with the existence of cases of harassment is over 70%, proving the morality of the participants to sports activity, at least from this point of view. Good relationships between athletes and coaches contribute to maintain a relaxing atmosphere in training and competitions, which leads to increased performance.

*Discrimination is another ethical issue that we had in the drafting of the questionnaire.* The responses of the coaches are around 2 (average),

corresponding to a disagreement to the assertion that discrimination of women, either as athletes or coaches, is a reality in the club in which they work.

Most coaches, 82.5%, are in total disagreement with the idea of discrimination of women (Table 3). But there also is a cumulated percentage of 10% for agreement and total agreement, which suggests the idea of a certain discrimination, even if at perceptive level. The results might be subjective, if we take into account the fact that most coaches are male.

**Table 3****Percentage distribution of coaches' perception on discrimination**

<b>Opinions</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Total disagreement	<b>82.5</b>
Undecided	7.5
Agreement	2.5
Total agreement	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

To the question on measures to prevent and combat cases of discrimination and harassment seen in club, coaches responded in proportion

of 97.5% that they are in total agreement with this statement, while the remaining 2.5 percent are undecided and not in disagreement (Table 4).

**Table 4**

**Statistical indicators on measures taken by coaches against discrimination/harassment**

Statement	Percent- age <i>Undecided</i>	Percent- age <i>Total agreement</i>	Min value	Max value	Average	Standard deviation
<i>The coaches take steps to prevent/combat discrimination/harassment</i>	2.5%	<b>97.5%</b>	3	5	<b>4.95</b>	<b>0.316</b>

The average of 4.95 corresponds to total agreement to measures taken by the coaches, and the standard deviation of 0.316 shows the homogeneity of their responses. Statistically, we may say that Hypothesis 1 — If the coaches adopt a series of measures to prevent and combat cases of harassment and discrimination among the athletes, we will see increased efficiency in avoiding them - is validated, as the measures adopted by the coaches in their work have resulted in the absence of cases of discrimination and harassment, as shown in Tables 1 to 3.

The validation of the hypothesis is reinforced also by the Pearson coefficient, which measures the intensity of the correlation between the variables harassment and discrimination, and respectively the measures taken by the coaches (Table 5). The negative coefficients show the reverse relationship existing between the measures taken by coaches and the existence of cases of discrimination or harassment. In other words, the taken measures are proving effective, as there are no cases of harassment or discrimination in the club, at least in the opinion of the coaches.

**Table 5**

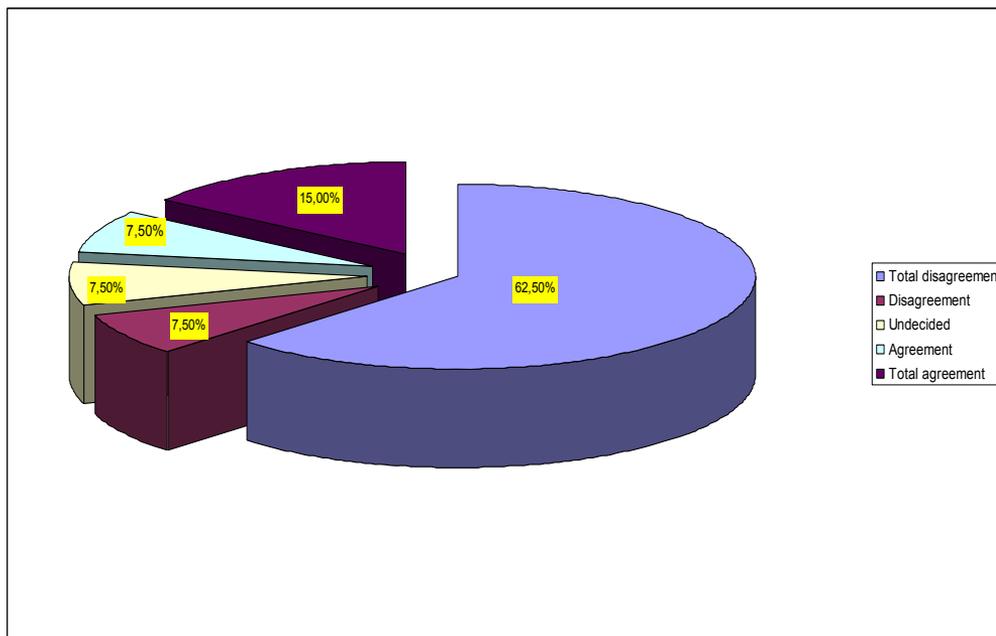
**Pearson coefficient of correlation of the variables of Hypothesis 1**

Pearson coefficient	There are/there have been cases of harassment between athletes	There are/there have been cases of harassment between athletes and coaches	Discrimination against women (such as athletes or coaches) is a reality in the club
The coaches take steps to prevent/combat discrimination/harassment	<b>-0.313*</b>	-0.273	-0.196

The strongest correlation between variables is given by the 0.313 value, which indicates the impact of the measures taken by coaches, in particular on the cases of harassment of athletes they train.

*Doping is another delicate issue in the sporting activity, affecting the lives of many athletes who use banned substances to enhance performance, sometimes under pressure from coaches.* The average of the answers

given by coaches to the question concerning the cases of doping in their sports clubs is 2.05, corresponding to disagreement. Although most of the coaches are disagreeing (total and partial) – 70% (Figure 7) with the existence of cases of doping, there is a percentage of 22.5% of coaches who recognize that there have been cases of doping in sports clubs to which they belong.

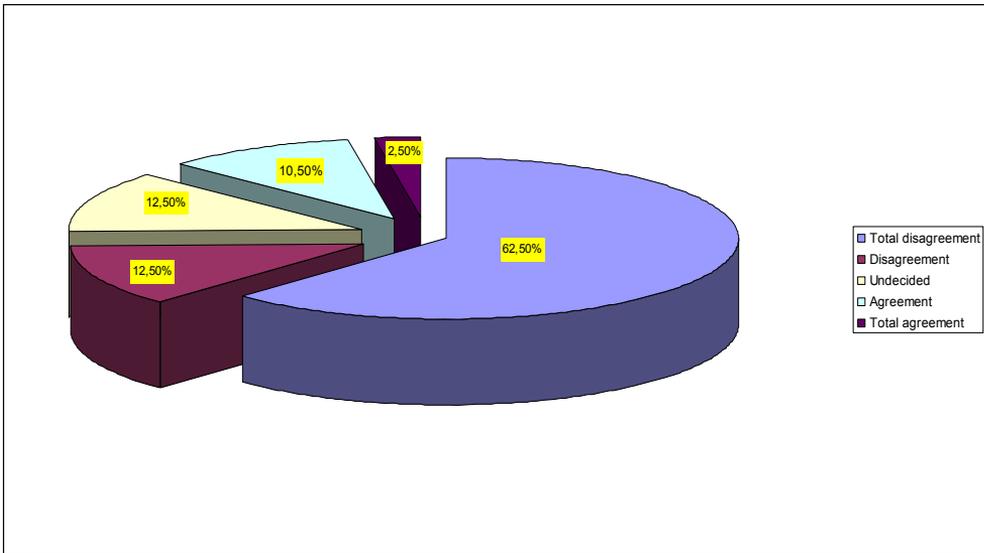


**Figure 7. Existence of doping in football, according to coaches**

According to the report of the National Anti-Doping Agency in 2011, there have been three doping cases in three of the municipal sports clubs under study: MSC Oradea, MSC Baia Mare and MSC Cluj. To the question related to the provision of information on the negative effects and ethical implications of doping in athletes, coaches unanimously responded that they discuss these issues with the young people they are training (92.5% total agreement and 7.5% agreement), what proves the moral responsibility of

these trainers.

Alarming from the point of view of ethics is the answer of the coaches to what they would do in a situation where it would emerge new substances, not prohibited yet, that can increase the performance of the athletes. Although the majority (75%) are in total/partial disagreement with the idea of encouraging athletes in this sense, there is a percentage of 12.5% (cumulated, agreement and total agreement) who would do this - Figure 8.



**Figure 8. Encouraging athletes by coaches to use new substances, not prohibited yet, to increase performance**

**Hypothesis 2: By complying with the ethical principles of sportsmanship, the role of the coach in the development of the athletes' ethos gets major– is also validated.** For this purpose, we used descriptive

statistics and frequency distribution, with the help of the SPSS program, illustrating the convergence of opinions of coaches concerning their role of ethical model for athletes (Table 6).

**Table 6**

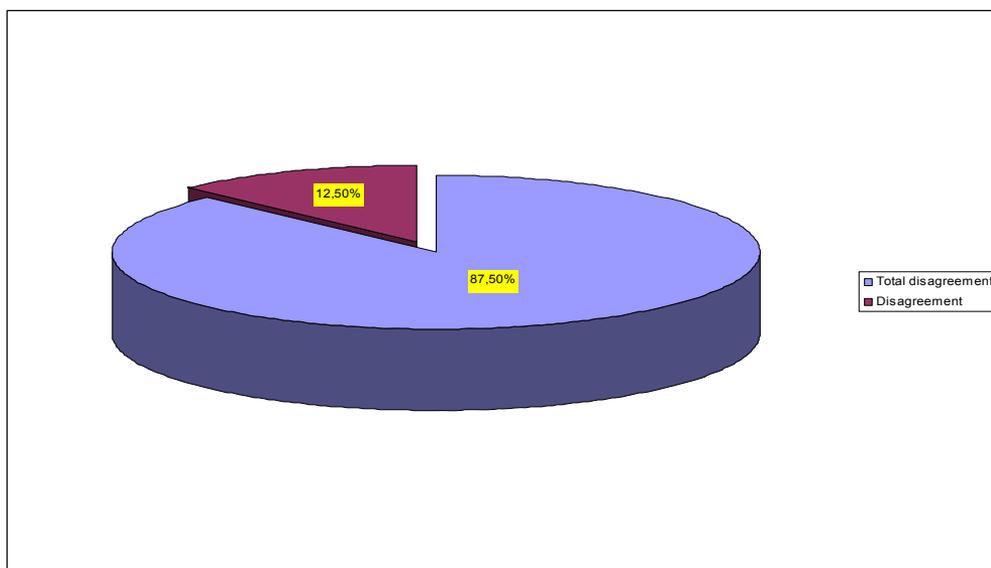
**Descriptive statistics of the variables of Hypothesis 2**

Statement	Percentage Agreement	Percentage Total agreement	Minimum value	Maximum value	Average	Standard deviation
<i>The coach plays an important role in the development of athletes' ethics</i>	2.5%	97.5%	4	5	4.98	4.95
<i>The coaches train the athletes towards respecting principles of ethics and sportsmanship</i>	5%	95%	4	5	4.95	0.221

The answers reflect the unanimity of the coaches concerning their role of ethical catalysts, the cumulative percentage for agreement (partial and total) being 100% if both variables of the hypothesis. Not even a single coach did mention disagreement or indecision.

To the question regarding the

importance of the role of the manager of the sports club for the ethical climate of the club (Figure 9), the coaches have responded 100% (cumulated agreement and total agreement) that they agree with this statement, which is an element of objectivity.



**Figure 9. Ethical role of the managers of sports clubs from the perspective of coaches**

Another sensitive issue concerns the exploitation of athletes through strenuous and oversteering workouts. From the perspective of the coaches, the allegations concerning the

strenuous workouts and their impact on family life and the health of athletes have an average of 1.75 and 2.22 respectively (Table 7), corresponding to disagreement.

**Table 7**

**Statistical indicators of variables of Hypothesis 3**

<b>Statistical indicators</b>	<i>Athletes' workouts are strenuous and oversteering</i>	<i>Strenuous workouts affect athletes' family life, school performance and health</i>
<b>Average</b>	<b>1.75</b>	<b>2.22</b>
<b>Standard deviation</b>	1.006	1.441

Most coaches (62.5%) appreciate that training do not affect family life, sports performance and health of

athletes, although there is a substantial proportion of coaches (27.5%), who are aware of this issue (Table 8).

**Table 8**

**Distribution of frequencies for variables of Hypothesis 3**

<b>Strenuous workouts affect athletes' family life, school performance and health</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Cumulated total disagreement/disagreement	62.5%
Cumulated total agreement/agreement	27.5%
Undecided	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

In conclusion, we can say that Hypothesis 3: If workouts have a high degree of complexity, they will affect the social area of the athletes: family life, school performance, the athlete's health, etc. – is not validated.

The statistical indicators in Table 9 reinforce the invalidation of Hypothesis 3 and reflect the coaches'

care to respect the indications of physicians in case of the athletes with health problems (an average of 3.70 - agreement), the planning of the training by age groups (4.92 - total agreement), and the coaches' knowledge of the objectives and strategy of the preparation of youth teams (4.77 – total agreement).

**Table 9. Statistical indicators of the strategy of training athletes**

<b>Statistical indicators</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Minimum value</b>	<b>Maximum value</b>
Objectives and strategy of the youth team are known to coaches	<b>4.77</b>	0.577	2	5
The workouts are planned by age groups	<b>4.92</b>	0.35	3	5
Athletes are pressured to work even if they don't feel well or have sores	<b>1.2</b>	0.405	1	2
Athletes with health problems have no workouts until recovery	<b>3.7</b>	1.556	1	5

Hypothesis 4: The priority objectives of the coaches being of financial nature and to obtain notable sporting results, the ethical management or the direct interest of the

athletes will be in the second plan is also invalidated by the answers provided by coaches, statistically expressed through descriptive analysis (Tables 10 and 11).

**Table 10**

**Statistical indicators for variables of Hypothesis 4**

<b>Statistical indicators</b>	<i>Ethical choices lead to loss of income</i>	<i>Financial interests are more important than athletes or respect of ethical principles</i>
<b>Average</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>1.25</b>
<b>Standard deviation</b>	1.067	0.543

The average of 1.7 reflects the coaches' disagreement with the assertion that ethical choices would lead to financial losses, and the average of 1.25 reflects their total disagreement with the statement on the importance of financial interests, compared to the importance given to athletes or to

compliance with ethical principles. The standard deviation of 1.067 shows a greater heterogeneity of the coaches' responses to the first statement compared to the second, where the deviation of the 0.543 reflects an increased homogeneity of opinions.

Table 11

**Percentage distribution of frequencies for variables of Hypothesis 4**

<i>Ethical choices lead to loss of income</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Financial interests are more important than athletes or respect of ethical principles</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Total disagreement	65%	Total disagreement	80%
Disagreement	10%	Disagreement	15%
Undecided	15%	Undecided	5%
Agreement	10%	Agreement	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Most of the coaches disagree with the assertion that ethical choices lead to loss of income (75% cumulated disagreement and total disagreement), although there is a 10% of coaches that agree with this, while 15 percent are undecided. It appears, therefore, a significant percentage of 25% of coaches who connect the concept of ethics to that of losses, representing a potential risk for the degradation of the ethical climate.

To the question regarding the higher importance of the financial aspects compared to that given to athletes and to compliance with ethical principles, 95% of coaches said they disagree (cumulated, totally and partially) with this statement. None of the respondents agree with this

superiority of financial interests over moral norms, fact that invalidates Hypothesis 4, proving the moral profile of coaches.

Hypothesis 5: If coaches want to increase the income of the club, then they will pressure the athletes and that sometimes affects the athletes' performances – is invalidated, fact demonstrated by use of the descriptive analysis and of Pearson coefficient of correlation of the variables (Tables 12 – 13).

The Pearson coefficient can be calculated for the potential correlation between the variables of coaches' pressure on athletes, coaches' objective - performance at any, and managers' pressures on coaches to perform.

**Table 12**  
**Descriptive statistics for validation of Hypothesis 5**

<b>Statistical indicators</b>	<i>On the athletes there is a great pressure from coaches to perform, so the club revenues grow</i>	<i>The goal of coaches is performance at any cost</i>	<i>There is pressure from managers on coaches and athletes to perform at any cost</i>
<b>Average</b>	1.82	2.75	2.15
<b>Standard deviation</b>	1.196	1.446	1.272
<b>Minimum value</b>	1	1	1
<b>Maximum value</b>	5	5	5

The average of 1.82 reflects disagreement coaches on exercising pressure on athletes to perform and to increase revenues of the club. Also in the case of manager’s pressures on coaches and, indirectly, on athletes, respondents mostly mentioned the

disagreement, corresponding to an average of 2.15. The invalidation of the hypothesis is also reinforced by Pearson coefficient, which measures the correlation existent between the three variables.

**Table 13**  
**Pearson coefficient on correlation between variables of Hypothesis 5**

<b>Pearson coefficient</b>	<i>The goal of the coaches is performance at any cost (variable 2)</i>	<i>There is pressure from managers on coaches and athletes to perform at all costs (variable 3)</i>
<i>On the athletes there is a great pressure from coaches to perform, so the club revenues grow (variable 1)</i>	<b>0.434**</b>	0.254

The correlation with significant intensity is given by the value of 0.434 of Pearson coefficient for variables 1 and 2, which shows the coaches’ direction. The information should be linked to the one in Table 11, on the averages of the two variables. Disagreement to variable 1, expressed by an average of 1.82, reinforces the coaches’ opposition to variables 2 and 3.

As a conclusion, since the coaches’ objective is not performance at any cost and no managers put pressure on them in this regard, the coaches from sports clubs do not pressure

athletes in order to increase the income of the organization, Hypothesis 5 being invalidated.

According to coaches, not only they’re not putting pressure on the athletes, but they says that those trained by them trust them and ask for advice if faced with an ethical dilemma or observe a violation of ethics on the part of other participants in sports activities (Table 14). The averages reflect the total agreement on the two statements, and the slight deviations reflect the homogeneity of opinions with regard to the relationship between the coach and his/her athletes.

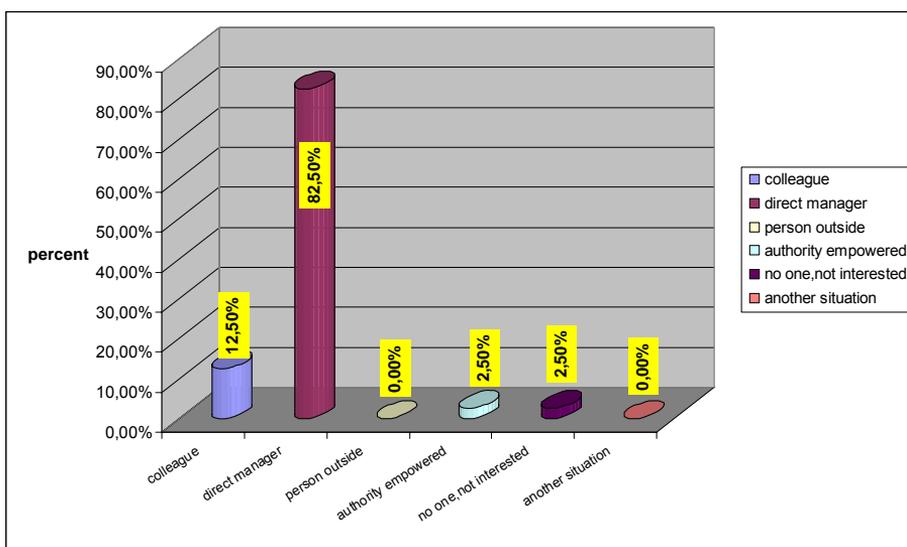
**Table 14**

**Statistical on the coach-athlete relationship (privacy, trust)**

Statistical indicators	Confidentiality is assured in the coach-athlete relationship	Athletes have the confidence to ask coach for advice (ethical dilemmas or report of ethical violations)
Average	4.78	4.85
Standard deviation	0.48	0.362

To the question concerning the person whom coaches would inform in the case of some ethical issues (Figure

10), the majority of respondents (82.5%) mentioned the direct manager, followed by a workmate (12.5%).



**Figure 10. The person informed by the coach in the case of ethical problem**

Note that there is also a percentage of 2.5% of coaches who wouldn't announce anyone, considering that it is not their problem, which reinforces the belief that moral education is required through ethical briefings or other training meetings on the subject.

Thus, hypotheses 1 and 2 are validated, and Hypothesis 3, 4 and 5 are invalidated, this proving the coaches' morality and, implicitly, an ethical climate among the athletes they train and in compliance with the principles of morality and sportsmanship.

**Conclusions**

The role of ethics is very important in coaches' activity and in their relationship with the athletes they train, but also with their colleagues. The main problems that a coach can face in his career refer to: child abuse, physical and verbal violence, harassment, discrimination, use of drugs by athletes in order to increase performance in competitions, violation of athletes' rights, pressures on them to achieve victory at any cost, involvement in an emotional relationship with athletes, etc.

To be able to take the correct

decisions when an ethical dilemma arises, the coach must have ethical training or to turn to a specialist advisor. In addition to the direct role that ethics plays for coach, there is also an indirect role as the coach can influence to a pretty high degree the ethical climate in the organization, having also the possibility to train the athletes in the direction of compliance to moral principles and development of sportsmanship.

The study validated the assumptions concerning the efficiency of the measures taken by coaches to prevent and combat cases of harassment and discrimination among the athletes of the club, as well as the assumption concerning their role in the development of the ethical climate and

in the training of athletes in compliance with ethical principles. At the same time, there have been invalidated the assumptions concerning the training of athletes, considered strenuous and affecting family life, school performance and health, as well as the assumptions concerning the pressures put on athletes by coaches or prioritizing financial interests over athletes.

Scientific study on coaches contribute to moral profile of municipal sports clubs trainers, helping researchers and other people interested in the world of sport to understand the role especially important that the coach has it in the club, for the maintenance and development of the ethics of athletes he prepares.

## REFERENCES

- Barbu, M., (2012), *Studiu privind evaluarea nivelului etic al managementului în cluburile sportive municipale din România*, Editura Sitech Craiova.
- Bodin, D. si Sempe, G. (2011), *Ethics and Sport in Europe*, Council of Europe.
- Boxill, J. (2003), *The Moral Significance of Sport. Sport Ethics, An Anthology*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.
- Hoye, R., Smith, A., Westerbeek, H., Stewart, B. și Nicholson, M. (2006), *Sport Management: Principle and Application*, Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.
- Lumpkin, A., Stoll, S.K. si Beller, J.M. (2011), *Practical Ethics in Sport Management*, McFarland.
- Melé, D. (2011), *Management Ethics: Placing Ethics at the Core of Good Management*, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mihăilescu, N. (2008), *Organizare si conducere în structurile sportului*, Editura Universității din Pitesti.
- Moilanen, T. si Salminen, A. (2006), *Comparative Study on the Public-service Ethics of the EU Member States*, Human Resources Working Group.
- Passmore, J. (2011), *Supervision in Coaching: Supervision, Ethics and Continuous Professional Development*, Kogan Page Publishers.
- Robinson, P. (2009), *Foundations of Sports Coaching*, Taylor & Francis.
- Robinson, M.J. (2010), *Sport Club Management*, Human Kinetics.
- Schlabach, G.A. si Peer, K.S. (2007), *Professional Ethics in Athletic Training*, Elsevier Health Sciences.

Thornton, P., Champion, W.T. & Ruddell, L.S (2011), *Sports Ethics for Sports Management Professionals*, Jones & Bartlett Publishers.

UNICEF INNOCENT RESEARCH CENTRE, *Protecting Children from Violence in Sport, A Review with a Focus on Industrialized Countries*, July 2010.

\*\*\**Code of Sports Ethics*, Committee of Ministers of European Council, 1992 (revizuit în 2001).

\*\*\*Editorial „Finding the right balance for sport”, *SporTVision*, no. 121/1998.

\*\*\*Legea educației fizice și a sportului 69/2000.

\*\*\**Regulamentul de punere în aplicare a legii educației fizice și sportului*, nr.69/2000, „Monitorul Oficial al României”, nr. 578, 2001.

\*\*\**Statutul Antrenorului. H.G. nr. 225/4 martie 2003*, „Monitorul Oficial al României”, partea I, nr. 191/26.03.2003.