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The Journal of Research on Trade, Management and Economic Development (JRTMED) focuses on theoretical, applied, interdisciplinary and methodological researches in all areas of economics, trade, management and, more significantly, on various interrelationships between trade and economic development at national and international levels.

JRTMED was set out to promote research and to publish information on the achievements in all areas mentioned above and to provide a way for researchers, academics, policy makers, business practitioners and representatives of co-operatives to exchange views and share information and new ideas.

The goal of JRTMED is to disseminate knowledge, to promote innovative thinking, intellectual discussions, research analyses and pragmatic studies including critiques regarding a wide area of economic sciences, as well as to facilitate communication between academics, research experts, policy makers, business practitioners, members of co-operatives, government agencies and executive decision makers.

JRTMED Editorial Board is inviting researchers, doctoral students, teaching staff and professionals from the real sector of economy to collaboration, exchange of experience and dissemination of the achieved research results.

Editorial Board

More information about the Journal of Research on Trade, Management and Economic Development can be found on the journal's homepage <http://jrtmed.uccm.md/index.php/en>.

Contents

CONSUMER CO-OPERATIVES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: TRENDS, CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIC GUIDELINES OF DEVELOPMENT	Page 7
COOPERAȚIA DE CONSUM DIN REPUBLICA MOLDOVA: TENDINȚE EVOLUTIVE, PROVOCĂRI, ORIENTĂRI STRATEGICE DE DEZVOLTARE	
Larisa SAVGA Viorica SITNICENCO Ghenadie SAVGA	
SOCIAL ROLE OF COOPERATIVES	31
СОЦИАЛЬНАЯ РОЛЬ КООПЕРАТИВОВ	
E. E. TARASOVA E. V. ISAENKO I. I. VOKATCH-BOLDYREV N. V. TIKHONOVICH	
CONTENT OF SPECIAL STANDARDIZING AND PLANNING FUNCTIONS OF GOODS ASSORTMENT MANAGEMENT	51
CONȚINUTUL FUNCȚIILOR SPECIALE DE NORMARE – PLANIFICARE ALE MANAGEMENTULUI SORTIMENTULUI MĂRFURILOR	
Tudor MALECA	
SYNERGETIC APPROACH AS A METHODOLOGICAL BASIS OF RESEARCH ON THE ECONOMIC SUBSTANCE OF FIXED ASSETS DEPRECIATION	69
Sofia KAFKA	
INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF FOOD SECURITY AND ITS MANAGEMENT ISSUES	78
Simion MORARU Victoria TROFIMOV Oxana LIVITCHI	

Journal of Research on Trade, Management and Economic Development
VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1(5)/2016

STUDY ON MICROENCAPSULATED FOOD FOR HUMAN NUTRITION	Page 87
Mihaela VALSAME Maricica STOICA Petru ALEXE	
METHODICAL APPROACH OF ASSESSING COMPETITIVENESS IN DOMESTIC TRADE AND IN CONSUMER COOPERATION	96
Sergiu PETROVICI Svetlana MUSTUC	
THEORIES REGARDING THE IMPACT OF COMPETITION ON FINANCIAL STABILITY	105
Elena FUIOR Natalia BEJENAR Ion MAXIM	
IMPLEMENTATION OF E-LEARNING WITHIN THE TRADE CO-OPERATIVE UNIVERSITY OF MOLDOVA	116
Simion MUSTEATA	
REVIEWERS	124
NOTES FOR AUTHORS	125

**CONSUMER CO-OPERATIVES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA:
TRENDS, CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIC GUIDELINES OF
DEVELOPMENT**

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Abstract

Co-operatives play an increasingly important role in the society, due to the diversity of their activities and their profound social character. The co-operative sector in the Republic of Moldova is represented in various forms: consumer, production, entrepreneurial, housing, agricultural co-operatives and others, but the largest is the consumer co-operative system.

Co-operative business model develops slower than other forms of economic activity in the country. The internal need for change and nowadays challenges and require rethinking the co-operatives' organization and management, their domains of economic activity, their relationship with members, ownership relations and the motivational system.

By signing the Republic of Moldova–European Union Association Agreement, Moldova has expressed its adherence to the European values and focuses toward its integration into the European Economic Area. This requires the adoption of new visions in the co-operatives development and in the implementation of European co-operatives' good practices.

The goal of this research consists in the analysis of the consumer co-operative system from the Republic of Moldova, evaluation of challenges it meets and identification of the strategic directions for sustainable development and strengthening the position on the domestic and foreign market. The research results were used in the elaboration of the Strategy of Consumer Co-operatives' Development for 2016-2019. Its implementation would boost the consumer co-operatives' development in the country.

Keywords: *consumer co-operatives, strategic development modernization, optimization, economic efficiency.*

1. Introduction

Consumer cooperatives, according to their mission and objectives, play an important economic and social role in Moldovan society. Existing for over 147 years, this system has continuously expanded its activity areas getting fully involved in the implementation of national programs for social and economic development.

In order to ensure further development of national consumer cooperatives, strategic planning for the medium and long term development of this sector has an important role focusing on implementation of development policies, advanced modernization of the system, supporting

increase of competitiveness as well as of consistent, efficient and sustainable development of consumer cooperatives while fully meeting the needs of their members, employees and population served.

Given the importance of this issue and based on the Law regarding consumer cooperatives no. 1252/2000 [3], at the request of the Central Union of Consumer Co-operatives from the Republic of Moldova the research team of the Trade Co-operative University of Moldova elaborated the Development Strategy of Consumer Co-operatives for 2016-2019 (hereinafter the Strategy), which was approved by the XVIth Congress on February 12, 2016 and is being implemented currently.

2. The degree of investigation of the problem currently, and purpose of research

Cooperatives are an important segment in the social-economic system of many countries with substantial contributions to the formation of macroeconomic indicators, development of priority economic sectors, meeting the population's consumption needs, enhancing the quality of life, having a strong economic and social impact. According to the International Co-operative Alliance, the number of cooperative members has exceeded one billion people worldwide. Cooperatives offer about 250 million jobs, provide employment for 12% of total employment in G20 countries. According to The third (2014) edition of the World Co-operative Monitor, turnover of the largest 300 cooperatives increased by 11,6% in the last 3 years to reach USD 2.2 trillion [5].

Taking into account the significance of cooperative development, the International Labour Organization adopted in 2002 ILO Recommendation no. 193 concerning Promotion of Cooperatives [5] which highlights the need to adopt and promote cooperatives in all countries irrespective of their level of development, and to get their support from the public sector. Governments should provide a supportive policy and legal framework consistent with the nature and function of cooperatives.

This recommendation is also applicable for the Republic of Moldova, including the consumer cooperatives sector. Consumer co-operative system is the largest among all forms of co-operatives existing in the country.

The activity of cooperatives is influenced by both external factors and internal ones, the latter having a particularly important role. To ensure economic growth, sustainable and stable development, increase of the level of competitiveness, cooperatives must adopt and implement strategies that, on the one hand, help achieving their mission and, on the other hand, ensure an economic activity efficient and targeted towards the needs of its members and society as a whole.

Matters relating to strategic planning, concepts and fundamentals of strategic management, the methodology for elaboration of development strategic documents are the subject of multiple scientific research and are widely discussed in scientific publications. However, the issues of cooperative activity, analysis of the legal framework regulating their functioning, diagnosis of their evolution, evaluation of innovative visions regarding the development of this sector are the subject of studies of a small circle of researchers only and are insufficiently addressed in the specialty literature. Researches in this area, especially in what concerns the drafting of development strategies for cooperatives, are episodic and sequentially, without being integrated into a systemic, complex and integrated study.

In such circumstances it is required, as an objective necessity, to carry out research on the current situation in the field of consumer cooperatives, identifying the challenges they face, assessing

trends of cooperative development worldwide, identifying domestic needs for change and developing a strategy based on sustainable, smart and inclusive development.

3. Methods and materials applied

Given the importance of the Strategy several steps have been undertaken for its development, such as:

- studying of relevant evaluation documents (reports) regarding the implementation of National Development Programs and recorded progress,
- analysis of the implementation of Consumer cooperatives development Program for 2012-2015 [9],
- SWOT analysis of consumer cooperatives activity as well as of encountered challenges,
- social and economic analysis of rural environment where consumer cooperatives entities operate,
- analysis of European regulatory and strategic development framework for consumer cooperatives,
- analysis of national strategic development documents of the Republic of Moldova until 2020,
- analysis of statistical data, reviews, social and economic reports,
- identification of internal needs that are challenging the consumption cooperation system, identification of stakeholders (members, employees, other beneficiaries of cooperative services, authorities, etc.) needs and expectations [7, 8],
- analysis of strategies and programs for local (district and community) development of consumer cooperatives in 2016-2019,
- consultation with sector's key stakeholders (cooperatives and cooperative enterprises, cooperative members, academics, researchers, farmers, processors and traders from rural areas, local government).

The Strategy was developed based on Art. 74 (c) of the Law on consumer cooperatives no. 1252 – XIV of September 28, 2000 [3], on the priorities of social and economic development of the Republic of Moldova established in the National Development Strategy "Moldova 2020", approved through Law no.166 of 11/07/2012 [4], on European economic integration priorities contained in the Republic Moldova - European Union Association Agreement [1], ratified by the Moldovan Parliament on July 2, 2014 (Law no. 112 of July 2, 2014) and by the European Parliament on November 13, 2014, on the Strategy "Europe 2020" providing for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth [2], on national sectorial strategies for economic development, on other policy documents according to international cooperative principles, Regulation (EC) no. 1435/2003 of the Council from July 22, 2003 on the Statute for a European Cooperative Society (SCE) [6], the Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation R193 of International Labour Organisation, adopted by the ILO session no. 90 on June 20, 2002 [5], the international priorities for the development of cooperatives promoted by International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) [10], Cooperatives Europe (CoopsEurope – The European region of ICA) [11], sectoral international organisations of cooperative activity fields, and to other relevant documents.

To achieve research quantitative and qualitative methods were used including bibliographic documentation, induction, deduction, systemic method, statistical and economic-mathematical methods, method of comparison, questioning, modelling, interviewing, brainstorming etc.

The Strategy was developed on the basis of systemic, complex, problematic approaches and is aimed towards boosting the development of Moldovan consumer cooperatives under increased competition, economic globalization, development of information society.

4. Results obtained and discussions

4.1. The trends of consumer cooperatives development

During the last four years (2012-2015) consumer cooperatives continuously offered a wide range of services and promoted various activities (retail and wholesale trade, purchase of agricultural products and of agricultural products of animal origin, their processing, various services, including educational, market, catering services), this activity depending on the interests of their members and of the population from the activity area, thus providing service to about 57% of the population.

As a membership-based system, consumer cooperatives continuously choose community strengthening and development of infrastructure, which currently includes:

- cooperative members – over 144 thousand,
- economic entities – 161, including consumer cooperatives – 98,
- trade units – 1930 with commercial area of 185 thousand m²,
- catering facilities – 230,
- locations where consumer cooperatives exist – 770,
- markets – 32 with 10850 places for sale,
- the production sector comprises 21 factories and bakeries, 14 confectionery-pastry departments, 16 slaughterhouse, 29 agricultural products processing facilities, including 15 for sunflower seeds, 10 for grain, 2 sausage departments, 5 production enterprises,
- educational institutions – 3,
- employees – 4265.

Aiming for increased quality of services offered by cooperative enterprises, in the previous period these focused on infrastructure modernization, on trade, manufacturing and service update. Thus, in 2012-2015:

- 31 trade units were re-opened and put into service of the rural community, 190 stores were re-designed and upgraded in terms of commercial technology,
- 54 catering facilities were refurbished,
- 2 companies and 15 specialized purchasing units and their branches were created in different areas of the country,
- 12 bakeries within the system were refurbished and 5 cafeteria departments were re-equipped,
- 12 commercial markets were refurbished.

Mobilization of domestic resources, employment of existing potential, development of cooperative infrastructure favored growth of all areas of activity as well as of economic activity results during 2012-2015:

- in the mentioned period retail sales have grown up by 8.4%, wholesale sales - by 52.1%, together registering 3,124.7 million lei and 383.5 million lei respectively;
- during the mentioned period, purchase of agricultural production, of animal type and other production has grown by 13.2% recording 315.4 million lei;
- manufacturing of industrial production increased by 7.2%, totaling 238.5 million lei for the reference period;

- from 2012 to 2015 payment-based services for the population have grown by 31.1%, including market services by 27.1%, and accounted for 589.5 million lei;
- export volume amounted to 64.7 million lei, growing 3.8 times;
- domestic investment amounted 88.6 million lei;
- turnover (net sales) increased by 8.4% and amounted 3716.7 million lei;
- net profit increased to 14,057 thousand lei in 2015 (compared with 45 thousand lei in 2012);
- increased contributions to the republican budget by 26.4%, accounting for about 431.8 million lei.

However, lack of financial resources is one of the main impediment factors for intensive and extensive development of consumer cooperatives. Lack of required investment and unattractiveness of the system for foreign investors remain an important barrier to sustainable long-term development of consumer cooperatives.

4.2. SWOT analysis of consumer co-operatives activity

In order to design an overall view on the development of consumer cooperatives a SWOT analysis of this system was conducted.

Strengths:

- social background of consumer cooperatives system consisting of cooperative members, associated on the basis of free consent and contribution to their charter capital,
- the legal basis for the operation (national and international) of consumer cooperatives,
- organizational unity of consumption cooperative system,
- multidimensional (diversified) character of economic activities (trade, purchase-processing, services, etc.),
- unified management system based on democratic principles and participatory management,
- image created by a socially oriented system,
- contribution to the implementation of several national development programs,
- experienced personnel for cooperative sector activity,
- established sales market,
- decades-lasting working experience,
- established domestic relations,
- own infrastructure (technical and material),
- investment in infrastructure upgrade,
- own educational system existing at various stages of professional education,
- available research potential,
- contribution to rural development,
- ubiquity of cooperatives worldwide and support of the cooperative activity worldwide,
- national consumer cooperatives system is part of the international cooperative system,
- transfer of experience and international best practices toward the national consumer cooperatives.

Weaknesses:

- imperfection of the legislative and regulatory framework regarding consumer cooperatives,
- decreasing interest of cooperative members in support and development of cooperatives,

- imperfect mechanisms of members' co-participation in economic and administrative activity of cooperatives and of cooperative members responsibility for the work of cooperatives,
- certain imperfect and inefficient elements of the organizational structure,
- diminished responsibility of several managers and employees of cooperative entities for financial and economic results,
- partially obsolete, unused or inefficiently used infrastructure,
- insufficient financial resources for the implementation of extensive programs of infrastructure modernization, refurbishment and work expansion,
- unattractiveness of consumption cooperation system for foreign investment due to the nature and legal status of economic entities from this sector,
- trend towards disintegration among several cooperative organizations,
- positional decrease of cooperative enterprises and organizations within activity markets,
- low profitability of economic activity in certain areas mainly caused by the social character of cooperative benefits in rural regions,
- imperfect motivational system,
- insufficient public information on the benefits of consumer cooperatives.

Opportunities:

- improvement of legislation, harmonization of domestic needs with the acquis communautaire,
- state structures' support of consumer cooperatives activity, synergistic cooperation with all-level public authorities,
- increase of the credibility in front of foreign partners and of attractiveness for foreign investment,
- strengthening of cooperative members community and recruiting of new members,
- enhancement of integration and associative processes,
- optimization of cooperatives' structure and management,
- modernization of cooperative infrastructure,
- diversification of the areas of cooperative activities according to the needs of society and to international best practices,
- entering new markets and domestic market niches (urban, regional, food products, etc.) as well as entering external market,
- cooperation with other cooperative areas and cooperatives types,
- implementation of an informational system integrated into consumer cooperatives system,
- rapid adaptation to constantly changing internal and external environment,
- expansion and diversification of the supply of goods and enhancing the quality of goods available to consumers,
- enlargement of opportunities for attraction and employment of consumer purchasing funds,
- increasing confidence, implementing customer loyalty programs.

Threats:

- maintaining contradictions between the legislation on consumer cooperation and other laws, including civil legislation,
- substantial reduction of positions in segments of economic activity,
- reduced interest for consumer cooperatives association,
- uneven competitive environment for all economic players operating in the domestic market, maintaining of unfair competition,

- underestimation by public authorities of the consumption cooperatives system and of the role of businesses and organizations from this system for the achievement of state social policies, lack of support for social-based cooperative activities in remote or low populated regions,
- amplification of the impact of economic and financial crisis,
- destructive demographic trends from the country, labor migration, population and demand decrease,
- reduction of income and purchasing power of the population from service area,
- variation of the structure of population consumption expenditure,
- discrepancies between qualification levels of personnel and skills required for innovative, effective consumer cooperatives activity,
- low attractiveness of consumer cooperatives for youth enrollment in their work,
- limited financial possibilities,
- amplification of disintegration process.

4.3. Considerations on the vision, strategic lines and objectives of cooperative development

The vision consist in development of consumer cooperatives as a sustainable and competitive system, resistant to internal and external challenges, ensuring welfare for its members and for the population served as well as benefits for its employees.

Strategic lines are focused on:

- development of consumer cooperatives as a unified system, economically strong,
- strengthening the positions of consumer cooperatives system within the internal market (rural) and entering other markets (urban), enhancing the competitiveness of consumer cooperatives system, its economic growth,
- amplification of integration and association processes in the consumer cooperatives, expansion of these processes within internal and external dimensions,
- synergistic cooperation with public authorities, potential investors, other stakeholders,
- modernization and innovative development of cooperatives' system,
- integration into the international economic turnover.

According to this vision and strategic guidelines, the strategic objectives of consumer co-operatives development are:

- strengthening cooperative members' community,
- optimization of organizational structure and making the management of cooperatives' system more effective,
- optimization of traditional activities promoted by consumer cooperatives and diversification of cooperative benefits,
- ensuring financial stability, efficient and effective use of resources, ensuring the efficiency of cooperative entities work,
- development of internal potential and increase of system's competitiveness on domestic and foreign markets,
- strengthening relations with external partners.

The strategy includes priority directions for the development of cooperative activity as well as actions necessary for its successful implementation. The main directions are given below.

Strengthening cooperative members' community. The increase of the number of members requires implementation of an effective incentives mechanism, motivation to support and develop local cooperatives, stimulation of investment in the development of cooperatives, increase of subscribed shares. Development of a motivational system for members has become urgent.

An effective tool in this regard would be the allocation of a part of the benefit obtained by cooperative organizations to their members according to the subscribed capital.

In the following period it is necessary to implement an information system in order to keep record of cooperative members and to timely renew the database.

Optimization of organizational structure and making the management of cooperatives' system more effective. Optimization of internal organization of consumer cooperatives system should focus on integration (vertically and horizontally) and association processes, regardless of the territorial area of operation and of the profile of economic activity (retail, wholesale, purchase-processing-storage-distribution of agricultural products, etc.)

Organizational restructuring must be based on:

- diagnosis of the activity of cooperative economic entities across the country and re-organization/disbanding of inefficient and legally non-conforming entities;
- support of economically strong cooperative organizations and integration of their infrastructure into a single economic system,
- re-structuring of cooperative enterprises and their integration into structures specialized in cooperative areas (trade, purchase, services, etc.) at republican and regional levels.

Managerial re-structuring must be based on the optimization of both vertical and horizontal managerial hierarchy of consumer cooperatives through:

- reduction of hierarchical structure and transition to a two-level structure (consumer cooperatives - Central Union),
- optimization of cooperative organizations' management bodies,
- organizational re-structuring of internal management (cooperatives, enterprises).

Optimization of traditional activities promoted by consumer cooperatives and diversification of cooperative benefits. *Trade* is the traditional economic activity area having a dominant share in consumer cooperatives turnover. Within this area mapping and assessment of trade facilities in terms of economic and social efficiency, of territorial location, of specialization profile, of the role for community development is planned as well as the elaboration of a *concept regarding the development of cooperative trading system*.

Has become urgent the need for a *unified (integrated) trade system* based on enterprises and on available trade infrastructure of consumer cooperatives' system (retail and wholesale trade), which could compete with national and international networks operating on the domestic market.

In order to strengthen the image and to increase the visibility of consumer cooperatives it is necessary to develop and promote *own trademark(s) for products manufactured and/or sold* through consumer cooperatives networks and trade facilities.

Transport - and logistics-related constraints to trade directly and indirectly affect the competitiveness of the sector. Establishment of a *unified system for product distribution* within consumer cooperatives employing a modern logistics system will allow to reduce distribution costs, lower prices for consumer goods, optimize expenses, and streamline the decision-making process.

An important role in promoting cooperative trade services further lies with expanding the implementation of "CoopPrim" and "CoopPlus" stores formats, development and implementation of new formats of trade facilities.

Special attention must be given to implementation of digital forms and instruments for sales promotion, to initiation and development of electronic trade within consumer cooperatives.

Development of the sector for purchasing agricultural-, animal origin- and other products has strategic importance for the development of cooperatives system. This activity area, similar to trade, comes to support the state with the promotion of its social policy in rural regions, therefore it requires support from authorities.

The development of this sector is hampered by shortage of funds, lack of a unified system for sale of purchased production and for processing, unfair competition on the market of agricultural food products, etc. In order to revitalize this sector evaluation of purchasing potential of the consumer cooperatives' system is imperative based on: agricultural specialization of republic's regions and districts, capacities of cooperative enterprises and organizations, investment needs and *elaboration of a long-term development program for the sector*, attractive for both domestic and foreign investment and involving stakeholders.

Lack of horizontal and vertical coordination of purchase chains within the consumption cooperatives' system, scattering of financial, logistical, human resources as well as information deficiencies cause low competitiveness of this sector and justify the need and opportunity for *establishing a republican cooperative enterprise specializing in purchase-processing-trade-export*.

Industrial sector development is an important source for creating cooperatives' own resources and product supply. Cooperative industry is mainly oriented towards the manufacture of essential products, including bread and bakery products, confectionery and pastry, pasta, sausages, beverages, etc.

Further development of the industrial sector and its economic efficiency can be achieved through integration of production structures (enterprises, departments) into a *single complex* with the centralization of certain functions (design and development of new products, joint information infrastructure, joint distribution system, etc).

Development and launching of *own co-operative production brand* as well as its promotion will increase the visibility of these products internally and externally and will increase consumer confidence.

Services development and diversification will focus on the diversification of services, upgrade of relevant infrastructure, expansion of services traditionally rendered by cooperative entities (catering, marketing, educational and research, etc.) and increase of their quality as well as beginning to render certain social services, services provided to farmers, advertising and other services.

Ensuring financial stability, efficient and effective use of resources, ensuring the efficiency of cooperative entities work is an important factor for sustainable operation of cooperative organizations and enterprises, implementation of projects regarding modernization and expansion of cooperative benefits, increase of service quality, rewarding of cooperative members and of employees from the system.

Insufficient financial resources remain a significant barrier to the development of consumer cooperatives, especially in areas where cooperative activity is unprofitable but needed by the

population, primarily for ensuring products of first necessity. Since social mission is the responsibility of public authorities, in order to maintain cooperative benefits in such regions and improve the economic condition of cooperative entities urgent authorities' support of such cooperative activities, that can be achieved in various forms (grants, exemption or reduction of location fees, etc.), is required.

As main external factors that can contribute to the improvement of economic activity of the consumer cooperatives' system, the following can be listed:

- development of economic activities, entering new markets, diversification and expansion of cooperative services,
- modernization and upgrade of cooperatives' infrastructure,
- establishment of internal audit units within the cooperatives' structure,
- implementation of an integrated information system for recording economic and financial results,
- improvement and streamlining of financial and economic activity management, employment of financial management- and risk management tools for economic and financial management of the system,
- cooperation with credit and investment organizations for financing consumer cooperatives development programs,
- establishment of own consumer cooperatives' financial institutions.

Further sustainable development of consumer cooperatives requires strengthening investment potential through:

- attraction of external financial resources (loans, credits, deposits, etc.) from various third parties without losing cooperative identity,
- attraction of monetary resources from members, cooperative employees and from the population,
- application to microfinance and technical assistance projects,
- development and implementation of an effective investment reward system,
- accessing European funds for the development of cooperatives infrastructure.

Development of internal potential and increase of system's competitiveness on domestic and foreign markets. Given continuous economically and socially changing environment, increasing competition on domestic and foreign markets, development of digital economy, in order to meet these challenges the consumer cooperation must follow a process of continuous modernization, implementation of innovations, development of its internal resources, expansion of partnerships with stakeholders (internal, national and international) and with other beneficiaries.

Infrastructure development must focus primarily on three dimensions: expansion of cooperative infrastructure, strengthening of material and technical basis of the cooperative system and refurbishment of activities.

A major priority for increasing the competitiveness of consumer cooperatives' system internally and externally is the implementation of digital marketing tools (e-marketing) in cooperative activity for better visibility and promotion of services.

Human resources are the key resource for ensuring sustainable development of each enterprise and consumer cooperatives. Personnel employed in consumer cooperatives' system, although distinguished by loyalty and having great working experience, are characterized by an "aging" process. This trend and the acute shortage of labor in rural regions urgently need a *program*

regarding ensuring competitive human resources for consumer cooperatives in the medium and long term.

Domestic and external economic environment, internal needs of cooperatives' system require imperative development and implementation of a *corporate integrated information system* within consumer cooperatives for integration of all data and information flows, of all cooperative system components and of its management, thus facilitating a more efficient and transparent decision-making, resource optimization, efficiency of economic activities.

An important role for the future development of consumer cooperatives lies with employment of opportunities offered by modern ICT for economic activity and beneficiaries' information. In this regard has become urgent: expansion of cooperative activities in cyberspace; implementation of electronic forms for the trade and sale of goods, of B2C, B2B and B2A e-commerce models; implementation of electronic payment methods, etc.

Internal change needs as well as European integration aspirations of the Republic of Moldova determine the need to harmonize national legislation on consumer cooperatives with the *acquis communautaire* to the extent ensuring maximal approximation with EU legislation.

Strengthening relations with external partners. To provide the population with goods, particularly of primary need, consumer cooperation requires support from authorities at all levels (from the central to local one). Partial compensation of expenses related to the implementation of social projects in remote localities with small populations, and support of these activities can be realized by:

- allocation of subsidies for economic activities conducted by consumer cooperation and directed towards providing goods of vital importance (production and delivery of bread, etc.) or partial coverage of the costs for transportation of such products;
- exemption of location taxes, local taxes, other tax of cooperative units entities in localities where economic activity is unprofitable due to low number of population served, difficulties related to goods supply.

Development of partnerships should be also extended on the dimension of cooperation with other types and forms of cooperatives (manufacturing, agricultural, entrepreneurship etc.) in order to promote projects of common interest, to modernize legislation, to amplify the potential of promoting common interests and protection.

Cooperation on the external dimension will focus in the future on: implementing international best practices regarding normative-legislative regulation of cooperative activity, organization of cooperatives, attraction of members; extending cooperation with overseas cooperative organizations in carrying out joint economic activities, commodity exchange; promoting export of products purchased and processed by the consumer cooperatives in the country, benefiting from advantages offered by the signed Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement etc.

5. Conclusions

Implementation of the Strategy will have an impact both *economically*, materialized in enhancing the economic potential of cooperative system, creating favourable conditions of work, improving the legal framework in the field, increasing investment in development, and *socially*, expressed in improving the level of service to its members and to other categories of beneficiaries, affordability

of cooperative services, consumers' protection, contribution to the development of localities and community.

Strategy implementation will contribute to achieving the following progress indicators:

- turnover increase by 3-5% annually,
- increase the income of cooperatives on average by 4-6% annually,
- attraction, at least, of 250 new cooperative members annually, implementation of incentive mechanisms for them in developing consumer cooperatives at local, regional and republican levels,
- increase of wages for employees working in consumer cooperatives, provision by 2019 of a share of 75% of the average monthly salary in the country,
- organization of 500 new jobs during the Strategy period of action.

Development of consumer cooperatives will help increase the indicators characterizing the economic and financial activity: retail sales will grow annually during the Strategy period of action by 3-5%, wholesale sales will increase by 5-7%, purchasing of goods - by 4-7%, production of goods - by 3-6%, provision of paid services - by 3-5%, sales revenue will increase by 3-5% and net profit will increase by 3-6%.

Implementation of the Strategy will contribute to sustainable and intelligent recovery of the consumer cooperatives potential in all its dimensions (institutional, infrastructural, human, financial, informational, managerial, etc.), and will support progress in economic and social development of this system.

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COOPERAȚIA DE CONSUM DIN REPUBLICA MOLDOVA: TENDINȚE EVOLUTIVE, PROVOCĂRI, ORIENTĂRI STRATEGICE DE DEZVOLTARE

1. Introducere

Cooperației de consum din Republica Moldova, potrivit misiunii și obiectivelor sale, îi revine un rol economic și social important în societate. Pe parcursul existenței sale de peste 147 de ani, acest sistem și-a extins continuu domeniile de activitate, înrolându-se plenar în realizarea programelor naționale de dezvoltare social-economică.

Un rol important în asigurarea dezvoltării în continuare a cooperației de consum din țară revine planificării strategice a evoluției sectorului pe termen mediu și lung, care trebuie să se axeze pe implementarea unor politici evolutive în domeniu, avansarea modernizării sistemului, sprijinirea creșterii competitivității și a dezvoltării consecvente, eficiente și durabile a cooperativelor de consum în condițiile satisfacerii ample a necesităților membrilor săi, angajaților și populației deservite.

Având în vedere importanța acestui aspect și bazându-se pe prevederile Legii cooperației de consum 1252/2000 [3], la solicitarea Uniunii Centrale a Cooperativelor de Consum din Republica Moldova, echipa de cercetare din cadrul Universității Cooperatist-Comerciale din Moldova a elaborat Strategia de dezvoltare a cooperației de consum pentru perioada 2016-2019 (în continuare Strategia), care a fost aprobată de Congresul al XVI-lea, la 12 februarie 2016 și este în curs de implementare.

2. Gradul de investigare a problemei la momentul actual, scopul cercetării

Cooperativele reprezintă un important segment în sistemul economic-social al multor țări, cu contribuții substanțiale la formarea indicatorilor macroeconomici, dezvoltarea sectoarelor economice prioritare, satisfacerea necesităților de consum ale populației, sporirea calității vieții, având un puternic impact economic și social. Conform datelor Alianței Cooperatiste Internaționale, numărul membrilor cooperativelor a depășit un miliard de persoane în întreaga lume. Cooperativele oferă cca 250 mil. locuri de muncă, asigură angajarea a 12% din totalul populației ocupate în țările G20. Conform The third (2014) edition of the World Co-operative Monitor cifra de afaceri a celor mai mari 300 de cooperative a crescut cu 11,6% în ultimii 3 ani, constituind 2,2 trilioane USD [5].

Având în vedere semnificația dezvoltării cooperativelor, Organizația Mondială a Muncii a adoptat în 2002 ILO Recomandările no. 193 referitor la promovarea cooperativelor [5], care subliniază necesitatea adoptării și promovării cooperativelor în toate țările indiferent de nivelul lor de dezvoltare, susținerea acestora din partea sectorului public. Guvernul ar trebui să ofere o politică de susținere și cadrul legal în concordanță cu natura și funcția cooperativelor.

Această recomandare este aplicabilă și pentru Republica Moldova, inclusiv pentru sectorul cooperativelor de consum. Sistemul cooperativelor de consum este cel mai numeros dintre toate formele de cooperative existente în țară.

Activitatea cooperativelor este influențată atât de factori externi, cât și cei interni, celor din urmă revenindu-le un rol deosebit de important. Pentru asigurarea creșterii economice, dezvoltării

sustenabile și stabile, sporirii nivelului de competitivitate, cooperativele trebuie să adopte și să implementeze strategii, care, pe de o parte, să contribuie la realizarea misiunii lor, iar, pe de altă parte, să asigure o activitate economică eficientă și orientată spre necesitățile membrilor săi și societății în ansamblu.

Aspectele referitoare la planificarea strategică, conceptele și fundamentele managementul strategic, metodologia de elaborare a documentelor strategice de dezvoltare constituie obiectul multiplelor cercetări științifice și este amplu abordat în publicațiile științifice. Cu toate acestea problematica activității cooperativelor, analiza cadrului legislativ de reglementare a acestora, diagnosticul evoluției lor, evaluarea viziunilor inovative de dezvoltare a acestui sector constituie obiectul studiilor doar unui cerc restrâns de cercetători și este insuficient abordată în literatura de specialitate. Cercetările în această sferă, în special în ceea ce vizează proiectarea strategiilor de dezvoltare a cooperativelor, au un caracter episodic și secvențial, fără a fi integrate într-un studiu sistemic, complex, integrat.

În asemenea condiții se impune ca o necesitate obiectivă realizarea unor cercetări privind situația actuală în domeniul cooperativelor de consum, identificarea provocărilor cu care se confruntă acestea, evaluarea tendințelor de dezvoltare a cooperativelor pe plan internațional, identificarea nevoilor interne de schimbare și elaborarea unei strategii, bazate pe o dezvoltare sustenabilă, inteligentă și favorabilă incluziunii.

3. Metode și materiale aplicate

Data fiind importanța Strategiei, pentru elaborarea acesteia au fost inițiate mai multe demersuri, astfel:

- a) studiul documentelor relevante (rapoartelor) de evaluare a implementării Programelor Naționale de Dezvoltare și a progreselor înregistrate în domeniu,
- b) analiza implementării Programului de dezvoltare a cooperației de consum pentru a. 2012-2015,
- c) analiza SWOT a activității cooperației de consum, a provocărilor cu care se confruntă,
- d) analiza socio-economică a spațiului rural în care activează entitățile cooperației de consum,
- e) cadrul normativ și strategic european de dezvoltare a cooperativelor de consum,
- f) documente strategice naționale de dezvoltare a Republicii Moldova până în 2020,
- g) date statistice, analize, rapoarte socio-economice,
- h) identificarea nevoilor interne cu care se confruntă sistemul cooperației de consum, a necesităților și așteptărilor părților interesate (membri, angajați, alți beneficiari ai serviciilor cooperatiste, autorități ș. a.),
- i) strategiile și programele locale (raionale, comunitare) de dezvoltare a cooperativelor de consum pentru 2016-2019,
- j) consultarea actorilor cheie din domeniu (organizații și întreprinderi cooperatiste, membri cooperatori, cadre universitare, cercetători, fermieri, procesatori și agenți economici din spațiul rural, administrația publică locală).

Elaborarea Strategiei s-a bazat pe art. 74. lit.c) al Legii cooperației de consum, nr. 1252 – XIV din 28 septembrie 2000 [3], prioritățile de dezvoltare social – economică a Republicii Moldova stabilite în Strategia națională de dezvoltare „Moldova 2020”, aprobată prin Legea nr. 166 din 11.07.2012 [4], prioritățile de integrare economică europeană punctate în Acordul de Asociere Republica Moldova – Uniunea Europeană, ratificat de Parlamentul Republicii Moldova la 2 iulie 2014 (Legea Nr. 112 din 2 iulie 2014) și de Parlamentul European pe 13 noiembrie 2014, Strategia

”Europa 2020”, care susține creșterea inteligentă, durabilă și favorabilă incluziunii, strategiile naționale sectoriale de dezvoltare economică, alte documente de politici și se bazează pe principiile cooperatiste internaționale, Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1435/2003 al Consiliului din 22 iulie 2003 privind statutul societății cooperative europene (SCE) [6], Recomandările R193 ale Organizației Mondiale a Muncii privind promovarea cooperativelor, adoptate de sesiunea 90 OMM la 20 iunie 2002, prioritățile de dezvoltare a cooperativelor pe plan internațional, promovate de Alianța Cooperatistă Internațională (ACI), Cooperativele Europei (CoopsEurope - diviziunea Europeană a ACI), asociațiile sectoriale internaționale pe domenii de activitate cooperatistă și alte documente relevante.

Pentru realizarea cercetării au fost utilizate metode cantitative și calitative de cercetare, inclusiv documentarea bibliografică, inducția, deducția, metoda sistemică, metode statistice, economico-matematice, metoda de comparație, problematizarea, modelarea, interviuarea, brainstorming ș. a.

Strategia este elaborată în baza abordărilor sistemice, complexe, problematice și este orientată spre impulsivarea dezvoltării cooperăției de consum din Moldova în condițiile creșterii competiției, globalizării economice, informatizării societății.

4. Rezultate și discuții

4.1. Tendințe de dezvoltare a cooperăției de consum

În perioada ultimilor patru ani (2012-2015) cooperăția de consum a continuat oferirea unui spectru larg de servicii și promovarea diferitor activități (comerț cu amănuntul și cu ridicata, achiziționarea produselor agricole, de origine animalieră, procesarea acestora, prestarea diverselor servicii, inclusiv celor educaționale, de piață, de alimentație publică), subordonându-și activitatea intereselor membrilor săi și populației din aria sa de activitate, fiind în serviciul a cca 57% din populația țării.

Fiind un sistem centrat pe membri, cooperăția de consum optează continuu pentru consolidarea comunității și dezvoltarea infrastructurii sale, care în prezent include:

- membri cooperatori – peste 144 mii,
- agenți economici – 161, inclusiv cooperative de consum – 98,
- unități de comerț – 1930 cu suprafața comercială 185 mii m²,
- unități de alimentație publică – 230,
- număr de localități în care este prezentă cooperăția de consum – 770,
- piețe – 32 cu 10850 locuri de desfacere,
- sectorul de producție cuprinde 21 fabrici și brutării, 14 secții de cofetărie-patiserie, 16 abatoare, 29 unități de procesare a produselor agricole, inclusiv 15 pentru semințe floarea soarelui, 10 pentru cereale, 2 secții de mezeluri, 5 întreprinderi de producție,
- instituții de învățământ – 3,
- angajați - 4265 de persoane.

Optând pentru sporirea calității serviciilor oferite de întreprinderile cooperatiste, accentul în perioada anterioară a fost pus pe modernizarea infrastructurii, retehnologizarea activităților comerciale, de producere, de prestări servicii. Astfel, în a. 2012-2015 au fost:

- redeschise și puse în serviciul comunității rurale 31 de unități de comerț, modernizate în aspect de design și tehnologii comerciale 190 de magazine,
- retehnologizate 54 de unități de alimentație publică,
- organizate 2 întreprinderi și 15 puncte specializate de achiziționare și filiale ale acestora în diferite localități din țară,

- re tehnologizate 12 brutării din cadrul sistemului și reutilitate 5 secții de cofetărie,
- modernizate 12 piețe comerciale.

Mobilizarea resursele interne, valorificarea potențialul existent, dezvoltarea infrastructurii cooperatiste au favorizat creșteri în toate domeniile de activitate și a rezultatelor activității economice în perioada 2012-2015:

- vânzările cu amănuntul sau majorat în perioada menționată cu 8,4%, vânzările angro – cu 52,1%, constituind cumulativ respectiv 3124,7 mln. lei și 383,5 mln. lei;
- achiziționarea producției agricole, de origine animalieră și de altă natură cu 13,2 %, alcătuind în perioada vizată 315,4 mln. lei;
- fabricarea producției industriale a crescut cu 7,2%, însumând 238,5 mln.lei în perioada de referință;
- prestarea serviciilor cu plată populației cu 31,1%, alcătuind 589,5 mln lei în 2012-2015, inclusiv a serviciilor de piață cu 27,1%,
- volumul exportului a constituit 64,7 mln.lei, înregistrând o creștere de 3,8 ori,
- investițiile interne au constituit 88,6 mln. lei,
- creșterea cifrei de afaceri (vânzărilor nete) cu 8,4 %, constituind 3716,7 mln lei,
- majorarea profitul net, alcătuind 14057 mii lei în 2015 (în raport cu 45 de mii lei în 2012),
- majorarea contribuțiilor la bugetul consolidat cu 26,4%, înregistrând cca 431,8 mln. lei.

Cu toate acestea, insuficiența resurselor financiare este unul din factorii principali care împiedică dezvoltarea intensivă și extensivă a cooperăției de consum. Lipsa investițiilor necesare și neatractivitatea sistemului pentru investitorii externi rămâne o barieră importantă pentru dezvoltarea sustenabilă a cooperăției de consum pe termen lung.

4.2. Analiza SWOT a activității cooperativelor de consum

Pentru proiectarea unei viziuni de ansamblu asupra dezvoltării cooperăției de consum a fost efectuată analiza SWOT a sistemului.

Puncte tari:

- baza sociala a sistemului cooperativelor de consum constituită din membrii cooperatori, asociați în baza liberului consimțământ și subscrierii la capitalul social al acestora,
- baza legislativă de funcționare a cooperăției de consum (națională și internațională),
- unitatea organizațională a sistemului cooperăției de consum,
- caracterul multidimensional (diversificat) al activităților economice (comerț, achiziționare-procesare, prestări servicii etc.),
- sistem managerial unitar, bazat pe principii democratice și management participativ,
- imaginea formată de sistem social orientat,
- contribuție la implementarea unor programe naționale de dezvoltare,
- resurse umane cu experiență de activitate în sectorul cooperatist,
- piața de desfacere asigurată,
- experiență de activitate acumulată pe parcurs de decenii,
- relații interne constituite,
- infrastructură proprie (baza tehnico-materială),
- investiții în modernizarea infrastructurii,
- sistem educațional propriu prezent prin diferite trepte de învățământ profesional,
- dispunere de potențial de cercetare,
- contribuție la dezvoltarea rurală,

- omniprezența cooperativelor în întreaga lume și susținerea mișcării cooperatiste la nivel mondial,
- sistemul cooperativelor de consum din țară este parte a sistemului cooperatist internațional,
- transferul de experiență și de bune practici internaționale către cooperația de consum națională.

Puncte slabe:

- imperfecțiunea cadrului legislativ-normativ privind cooperația de consum,
- diminuarea cointerесării membrilor-cooperatori în susținerea și dezvoltarea cooperativelor,
- mecanisme imperfecte de coparticipare a membrilor în activitatea economică și administrativă a cooperativelor și de responsabilizare a membrilor-cooperatori pentru activitatea acestora,
- anumite elemente ale structurii organizatorice sunt imperfecte și inefficiente,
- responsabilitatea diminuată a unor manageri și angajați ai entităților cooperatiste pentru rezultatele activității economico-financiare,
- baza tehnico-materială parțial învechită, neutilizată sau folosită inefficient,
- insuficiența de resurse financiare pentru implementarea unor programe ample de modernizare a infrastructurii, de retehnologizare și de extindere a activității,
- neatractivitatea sistemului cooperației de consum pentru investiții externe datorită naturii și statutului juridic al subiecților economici din acest sector,
- tendința spre dezintegrare a unor organizații cooperatiste,
- reducerea poziționării întreprinderilor și organizațiilor cooperatiste în piețele de activitate,
- rentabilitatea scăzută a activității economice în unele domenii generată preponderent de caracterul social al prestațiilor cooperatiste în localitățile rurale,
- sistem motivațional imperfect,
- informarea insuficientă a populației referitor la beneficiile oferite de cooperația de consum.

Oportunități:

- perfecționarea legislației în vigoare, armonizarea la necesitățile interne și aquis-ul comunitar,
- susținerea de către structurile statale a activității cooperației de consum, cooperarea sinergică cu autoritățile publice de toate nivelele,
- creșterea credibilității partenerilor străini și a atractivității pentru investiții externe,
- consolidarea comunității de membri-cooperatori și recrutarea noilor membri,
- amplificarea proceselor integraționiste și asociative,
- optimizarea structurii și a managementului sistemului cooperatist,
- modernizarea infrastructurii cooperatiste,
- diversificarea domeniilor de activitate cooperatistă în funcție de necesitățile societății și bunele practici internaționale,
- penetrarea pe noi piețe interne și nișe de piață (urbană, regională, a produselor agroalimentare etc.) și pe piața externă,
- cooperarea cu alte domenii de activitate cooperatistă și tipuri de cooperative,
- implementarea sistemului informațional integrat în cadrul cooperației de consum,
- adaptarea rapidă la mediul intern și extern în continuă schimbare,
- extinderea și diversificarea ofertei de bunuri și sporirea calității mărfurilor puse la dispoziția consumatorilor,
- extinderea posibilităților de atragere și valorificarea fondurilor de cumpărare a consumatorilor,
- sporirea gradului de încredere, implementarea programelor de loialitate a consumatorilor.

Amenințări:

- menținerea contradicțiilor dintre legislația cu privire la cooperăția de consum și alte acte legislative, inclusiv legislația civilă,
- diminuarea substanțială a pozițiilor pe segmentele pe activitate economică,
- reducerea interesului de asociere în cooperativele de consum,
- mediu concurențial neechitabil pentru toți subiecții economici ce operează în piața internă, menținerea concurenței neloiale,
- subaprecierea sistemului cooperăției de consum de către autoritățile publice și a rolului pe care îl exercită întreprinderile și organizațiile cooperăției de consum în realizarea politicilor sociale a statului, nesuținerea activităților cooperatiste cu caracter social în localitățile îndepărtate sau cu număr mic al populației,
- amplificarea impactului proceselor de criză economico-financiară,
- tendințele demografice distructive în țară, migrația forței de muncă, a populației și a cererii,
- reducerea veniturilor și a capacității de cumpărare a populației deservite,
- modificarea structurii cheltuielilor de consum ale populației,
- discrepanțe dintre nivelul de calificare a personalului și competențele solicitate pentru activitate inovativă, eficientă în cooperăția de consum,
- nivel redus de atractivitate a cooperăției de consum pentru înrolarea tinerilor în activitatea acesteia,
- posibilități financiare limitate,
- amplificarea proceselor de dezintegrare.

4.3. Considerații privind viziunea, direcțiile și obiectivele strategice de dezvoltare

Viziunea constă în dezvoltarea cooperăției de consum în calitate de sistem durabil și competitiv, rezistent la provocări interne și externe, care asigură bunăstarea membrilor săi și a populației deservite și beneficii angajaților săi.

Direcții strategice sunt focusate pe:

- dezvoltarea cooperăției de consum în calitate de sistem unitar, puternic economic,
- consolidarea poziționării sistemului cooperatist de consum pe piața internă (rurală) și penetrarea pe alte piețe (urbană), sporirea competitivității sistemului cooperativelor de consum, creșterea economică a acestuia,
- amplificarea proceselor integraționiste și asociative în cooperăția de consum, extinderea acestor procese în aria internă și pe dimensiunea externă,
- cooperarea sinergică cu autorități publice, potențiali investitori, alte părți interesate,
- modernizarea și dezvoltarea inovativă a sistemului cooperatist,
- integrarea în circuitul economic internațional.

În conformitate cu viziunea și direcțiile strategice, obiectivele strategice de dezvoltare a cooperativelor de consum sunt:

- consolidarea comunității membrilor cooperatori,
- optimizarea structurii organizatorice și eficientizarea managementului sistemului cooperatist,
- optimizarea activităților tradiționale promovare de cooperăția de consum și diversificarea prestațiilor cooperatiste,
- asigurarea stabilității financiare, utilizarea eficientă și eficace a resurselor, asigurarea eficienței activității entităților cooperatiste,

- dezvoltarea potențialului intern și sporirea competitivității sistemului pe piața internă și externă,
- consolidarea relațiilor cu partenerii externi.

Strategia conține direcțiile prioritare de dezvoltare a activității cooperatiste și acțiunile de urmat în scopul implementării cu succes a acesteia. Cele mai principale sunt expuse mai jos.

Consolidarea comunității membrilor cooperatori, creșterea numărului de membri necesită implementarea mecanismelor eficiente de cointerese a acestora, motivarea pentru susținerea și dezvoltarea cooperăției la nivel local, stimularea investițiilor în dezvoltarea cooperativelor, creșterea părților sociale subscrise. Elaborarea unui sistem de motivare a membrilor a devenit stringentă.

Un instrument eficient în acest sens ar constitui repartizarea unei părți din beneficiul obținut de către organizațiile cooperatiste către membrii lor proporțional cu valoarea capitalului subscris.

În perioada viitoare este necesară implementarea unui sistem informațional de evidență a membrilor cooperatori și a mișcării lor, de înnoire oportună a bazei de date.

Optimizarea structurii organizatorice și eficientizarea managementului sistemului cooperatist. Optimizarea organizării interne a sistemului cooperăției de consum se va axa pe procese integraționiste (pe verticală și orizontală) și asociative, indiferent de aria teritorială de acțiune și profilul de activitate economică (comerț cu amănuntul-comerț angro; achiziționare–procesare–păstrare-distribuție a produselor agricole ș. a.).

Restructurarea organizațională se va efectua în baza:

- diagnosticării activității entităților economice cooperatiste din întreaga țară și reorganizării/lichidării celor ce activează ineficient și nu sunt conforme legislației;
- susținerii organizațiilor cooperatiste puternice din punct de vedere economic și integrarea infrastructurii acestora într-un sistem unic economic,
- restructurării întreprinderilor cooperatiste și integrarea lor în structuri specializate pe domenii de activitate cooperatistă (comerț, achiziționare, prestări servicii etc.) de nivel republican, regional.

Restructurarea managerială se va baza pe optimizarea ierarhiei manageriale pe întreaga verticală a cooperăției de consum, precum și pe orizontală prin:

- reducerea structurii ierarhice și trecerea la structura pe două nivele (cooperative de consum – Uniune Centrală),
- optimizarea organelor de conducere a organizațiilor cooperatiste,
- restructurarea internă managerială la nivel organizațional (cooperative, întreprinderi).

Optimizarea activităților tradiționale promovate de cooperăția de consum și diversificarea prestațiilor cooperatiste. Comerțul este domeniul tradițional de activitate economică și cu pondere dominantă în cifra de afaceri a cooperăției de consum. În acest domeniu se preconizează cartografierea și evaluarea unităților de comerț din punct de vedere al eficienței economice și sociale, al amplasamentului teritorial, profilului de specializare, a rolului în dezvoltarea comunităților și elaborarea unui *concept de dezvoltare a sistemului comercial cooperatist*.

Stringentă a devenit necesitatea creării unui *sistem unitar (integrat) comercial* în baza întreprinderilor și infrastructurii comerciale disponibile a sistemului cooperăției de consum (comerț cu amănuntul și angro), care ar putea concura cu rețelele internaționale și naționale ce operează pe piața internă.

Pentru consolidarea imaginii și sporirea vizibilității cooperăției de consum este necesară elaborarea și promovarea *mărcii/mărcilor comerciale proprii pentru produsele fabricate și/sau comercializate* prin intermediul rețelelor și unităților comerciale ale cooperăției de consum.

Constrângerile legate de transport și logistică a comerțului afectează în mod direct și indirect competitivitatea sectorului. Instituirea unui *sistem unic de distribuție a mărfurilor* în cadrul cooperăției de consum cu un sistem logistic modern ar permite micșorarea costurilor de distribuție, reducerea prețurilor la mărfurile de consum, optimizarea cheltuielilor, eficientizarea procesului decizional.

Un rol important în promovarea serviciilor comerciale cooperatiste în continuare revine *extinderii implementării formatelor de magazine „CoopPrim” și „CoopPlus”*, elaborarea și implementarea noilor formate de unități de comerț.

O atenție sporită se va acorda implementării formelor și instrumentelor digitale de promovare a vânzărilor, inițierii și dezvoltării comerțului electronic în cadrul cooperăției de consum.

Dezvoltarea sectorului de achiziționare a produselor agricole, de origine animalieră și de altă natură are o importanță strategică pentru dezvoltarea sistemului cooperatist. Acest domeniu de activitate, la fel ca și cel comercial, vine în suport statului în promovarea politicii sale sociale în mediul rural, de aceea ar trebui să fie susținut de autorități.

Dezvoltarea acestui sector este împiedicată de insuficiența de mijloace financiare, lipsa unui sistem unic de desfacere a producției achiziționate și de procesate, concurența neloială pe piața produselor agroalimentare ș. a. Pentru relansarea acestui domeniu este stringent necesară evaluarea potențialului de achiziționare a sistemului cooperăției de consum în funcție de: specializarea agricolă a regiunilor și raioanelor republicii, capacitățile întreprinderilor și organizațiilor cooperatiste, necesitățile de investiții și *elaborarea unui program de dezvoltare a sectorului pe termen lung*, atractiv pentru investiții interne și externe, cu implicarea părților interesate.

Lipsa de coordonare pe orizontală și verticală a lanțurilor de achiziționare în cadrul sistemului cooperăției de consum, dispersarea resurselor financiare, logistice, umane, precum și deficiențele de ordin informațional constituie o cauză a competitivității scăzute a acestui sector și justifică necesitatea și oportunitatea *instituirii unei întreprinderi cooperatiste republicane specializate în achiziționare-procesare-comerț-export*.

Dezvoltarea sectorului industrial reprezintă o sursă importantă pentru formarea resurselor și ofertei de produse proprii ale cooperăției. Industria cooperatistă este orientată prioritar spre fabricarea produselor de prima necesitate, inclusiv a pâinii și a produselor de panificație, de cofetărie-patiserie, pastelor făinoase, a mezelurilor, băuturilor ș. a.

Dezvoltarea în continuare a sectorului industrial, eficiența economică a acestuia poate fi asigurată prin integrarea structurilor de producție (întreprinderi, secții) într-un *complex unitar* cu centralizarea anumitor funcții (proiectarea și elaborarea produselor noi, infrastructură informațională comună, sistem de distribuție comun etc.).

Elaborarea și lansarea unui *brand propriu pentru producția cooperatistă* și promovarea acestuia va spori vizibilitatea acestor produse pe plan intern și extern și încrederea consumatorilor.

Dezvoltarea și diversificarea serviciilor se va axa pe diversificarea serviciilor prestate, modernizarea infrastructurii în domeniu, extinderea serviciilor tradiționale oferite de entitățile cooperatiste (de alimentație publică, de piață, educaționale și de cercetare ș. a.) și sporirea calității

acestora, precum și inițierea prestării unor servicii sociale, servicii prestate antreprenorilor agricoli, de publicitate și altele.

Asigurarea stabilității financiare, utilizarea eficientă și eficace a resurselor, asigurarea eficienței activității entităților cooperatiste reprezintă un factor important pentru funcționarea sustenabilă a organizațiilor și întreprinderilor cooperatiste, implementarea proiectelor de modernizare și de extensie a prestațiilor cooperatiste, de sporire a calității serviciilor oferite, recompensării membrilor cooperatori și a angajaților sistemului.

Insuficiența resurselor financiare rămâne a fi o barieră importantă în dezvoltarea cooperăției de consum, în special în localitățile unde activitățile cooperatiste sunt neprofitabile, dar sunt solicitate de populație, prioritar pentru asigurarea cu produse de primă necesitate. Deoarece misiunea socială este în responsabilitatea autorităților publice, pentru menținerea prestațiilor cooperatiste în asemenea localități și ameliorarea situației economice a entităților cooperatiste este stringentă susținerea din partea autorităților a astfel de activități cooperatiste, care poate fi realizată în diferite forme (subvenții, eliberarea sau reducerea taxelor de amplasare ș. a.).

Din cadrul factorilor interni principali care pot contribui la eficientizarea activității economice a sistemului cooperăției de consum pot fi listați:

- dezvoltarea activităților economice, penetrarea pe noi piețe, diversificarea și extinderea serviciilor cooperatiste,
- modernizarea și re tehnologizarea infrastructurii cooperatiste,
- instituirea serviciului de audit intern în cadrul cooperativelor;
- implementarea unui sistem informațional integrat de evidență a rezultatelor economico-financiare,
- perfecționarea și eficientizarea managementului activității economico-financiare, aplicarea instrumentelor managementului financiar, managementului riscurilor în gestiunea economico-financiară a sistemului,
- cooperarea cu organizații de creditare, investiționale pentru finanțarea programelor de dezvoltare a cooperăției de consum,
- instituirea instituțiilor financiare proprii ale cooperăției de consum.

Dezvoltarea durabilă în continuare a cooperăției de consum necesită consolidarea potențialului de investiții, prin:

- atragerea surselor financiare din exterior (împrumuturi, credite, depuneri etc.) de la diferiți terți, fără a pierde identitatea cooperatistă,
- atragerea resurselor bănești ale membrilor, angajaților cooperativelor și a populației,
- aplicarea la proiecte de microfinanțare, de asistență tehnică,
- elaborarea și implementarea unui sistem eficient de recompensare a investițiilor,
- accesarea fondurilor europene pentru dezvoltarea infrastructurii cooperatiste.

Dezvoltarea potențialului intern și sporirea competitivității sistemului pe piața internă și externă. În condițiile unui mediu economico-social în permanentă schimbare, a creșterii competiției pe piața internă și externă, dezvoltării economiei digitale, pentru a face față acestor provocări cooperăția de consum trebuie să se plaseze într-un proces de modernizare continuă, de implementare a inovațiilor, de dezvoltare a resurselor sale interne, de extindere a parteneriatelor cu părțile interesate (la nivel intern, național și internațional) și alți beneficiari.

Dezvoltarea infrastructurală se va axa prioritar pe trei dimensiuni: extinderea infrastructurii cooperatiste, consolidarea bazei material-tehnice a sistemului cooperatist și re tehnologizarea activităților.

O prioritate majoră pentru sporirea competitivității sistemului cooperăției de consum pe plan intern și extern constituie implementarea instrumentelor de marketing digital (e-marketing) în activitatea cooperatistă pentru o mai bună vizibilitate și promovare a serviciilor.

Resursele umane constituie resursa cheie în asigurarea dezvoltării sustenabile a fiecărei întreprinderi și cooperative de consum. Personalul ce activează în sistemul cooperăției de consum, deși se distinge prin fidelitate și are o mare experiență de activitate în domeniu, se caracterizează printr-un proces de ”îmbătrânire”. Această tendință, precum și insuficiența acută a forței de muncă în mediul rural impune stringent necesitatea elaborării *unui program de asigurare cu resurse umane competitive a cooperăției de consum* pe termen mediu și lung.

Mediul economic intern și extern, necesitățile interne ale sistemului cooperatist impun imperativ elaborarea și implementarea unui *sistem informațional integrat corporativ* în cadrul cooperăției de consum, care ar integra toate datele și fluxurile informaționale, toate componentele sistemului cooperatist și al managementului acestuia, ce va facilita eficientizarea și transparența procesului de luare a deciziilor, optimizarea utilizării resurselor, eficientizarea activităților economice.

Un rol deosebit de important pentru dezvoltarea viitoare a cooperăției de consum revine valorificării oportunităților ce le oferă utilizarea TIC moderne în activitatea economică și informarea beneficiarilor. În acest sens a devenit stringentă: extinderea activităților cooperatiste în spațiul virtual; implementarea formelor electronice de tranzacționare și de vânzare a mărfurilor, a modelelor de comerț electronic B2C, B2B, B2A; implementarea tehnicilor de plăți electronice ș.a.

Necesitățile interne de schimbare, precum și aspirația de integrare europeană a Republicii Moldova determină necesitatea armonizării legislației naționale în domeniul cooperăției de consum cu aquis-ul comunitar în măsură să asigure o maximă aproximare cu legislația UE.

Consolidarea relațiilor cu partenerii externi. Pentru asigurarea populației cu produse, în special de prima necesitate, cooperăția de consum are nevoie de susținere din partea autorităților la toate nivelele (de la cel central până la cel local). Compensarea parțială a cheltuielilor legate de implementarea proiectelor sociale în localități îndepărtate și cu număr mic al populației, susținerea acestor activități se poate valorifica prioritar prin:

- alocarea de subvenții pentru activitățile economice realizate de cooperăția de consum și orientate spre asigurarea cu produse de importanță vitală (producerea și livrarea pâinii ș. a.) sau acoperirea unei părți a cheltuielilor de transportare a asemenea produse;
- scutirea de taxe de amplasare, alte taxe locale, de impozite a entităților cooperatiste pentru unitățile din localitățile în care activitatea economică este neprofitabilă din cauza numărului redus al populației deservite, dificultăților de aprovizionare cu mărfuri.

Dezvoltarea parteneriatelor trebuie extinsă și pe dimensiunea cooperării cu alte tipuri și forme de cooperative (de producere, agricole, de întreprinzător ș. a.) pentru promovarea proiectelor de interes comun, modernizarea legislației, amplificarea potențialului de promovare a intereselor comune, de protecție.

Cooperarea pe dimensiunea externă se va axa în viitor pe: implementarea bunelor practici internaționale de reglementare legislativ-normativă a activității cooperatiste, de organizare a cooperativelor, de atragere a membrilor; de extinderea cooperării cu organizații cooperatiste de peste hotare în vederea desfășurării activităților economice comune, schimbului de mărfuri; promovarea exportului de produse achiziționate și procesate în cooperăția de consum din țară, beneficierea de avantajele ce le oferă semnarea Acordului de Comerț Liber Aprofundat și Cuprinzător ș. a.

5. Concluzii

Implementarea Strategiei va avea impact atât *economic*, materializat în consolidarea potențialului economic al sistemului cooperatist, crearea condițiilor favorabile de activitate, perfecționarea cadrului legislativ în domeniu, sporirea investițiilor în dezvoltare, cât și *social*, exprimat în îmbunătățirea nivelului de deservire a membrilor și altor categorii de beneficiari, a accesibilității serviciilor cooperatiste, protecția consumatorilor, aportului la dezvoltarea localităților și a comunității.

Realizarea Strategiei va contribui la atingerea următorilor indicatori de progres:

- creșterea cifrei de afaceri cu 3-5 % anual,
- sporirea veniturilor sistemului cooperatist în mediu cu 4-6 % anual,
- atragerea cel puțin a 250 noi membri cooperatori anual, implementarea mecanismelor de cointereseare a acestora în dezvoltarea cooperăției la nivel local, regional și republican,
- majorarea retribuirii muncii angajaților ocupați în cooperăția de consum, asigurarea către a. 2019 a ponderii de 75 % din salariul mediu lunar pe țară,
- organizarea a 500 locuri noi de muncă în perioada de acțiune a Strategiei.

Dezvoltarea cooperăției de consum va permite sporirea indicatorilor ce caracterizează activitatea economică și financiară: vânzările cu amănuntul vor crește anual în perioada de acțiune a Strategiei cu 3-5%, vânzările angro cu 5-7%, achiziționarea produselor cu 4-7%, a producerii de mărfuri cu 3-6%, a prestării serviciilor cu plată cu 3-5%, veniturile din vânzări se vor majora cu 3-5% și profitul net va crește cu 3-6%.

Implementarea Strategiei va contribui la valorificarea sustenabilă și inteligentă a potențialului cooperăției de consum pe toate dimensiunile acesteia (instituțională, infrastructurală, umană, financiară, informațională, managerială ș. a.), va susține progresul în dezvoltarea economico-socială a acestui sistem.

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Rezumat

Cooperativele joacă un rol din ce în ce mai important în societate, grație diversității activităților ce le desfășoară și caracterului lor profund social. Sectorul cooperativelor în Republica Moldova este prezent în diferite forme: cooperative de consum, de producere, de antreprenariat, de locuințe, agricole ș. a., cel mai numeros fiind sistemul cooperației de consum.

Modelul de business cooperatist se dezvoltă mai lent în raport cu alte forme de activitate economică. Necesitățile interne de schimbare și provocările contemporane solicită regândirea modului de organizare și de management a cooperativelor, a domeniilor lor de activitate, a relațiilor cu membrii săi, a relațiilor de proprietate și a sistemului motivațional.

Prin semnarea Acordului de Asociere Republica Moldova-Uniunea Europeană, Moldova și-a exprimat ferm adeziunea față de valorile europene și focusarea pe integrarea în Spațiul Economic Comunitar. Aceasta solicită adoptarea a unor noi viziuni de dezvoltare a cooperativelor și de implementare a bunelor practici europene în domeniul cooperativelor.

Scopul cercetării constă în analiza sistemului cooperativelor de consum din Republica Moldova, evaluarea provocărilor cu care se confruntă acesta și identificarea direcțiilor strategice de dezvoltare și de consolidare a poziției pe piața internă și externă. Rezultatele cercetărilor au fost utilizate la elaborarea Strategiei de dezvoltare a cooperației de consum din Republica Moldova pentru perioada 2016-2019. Implementarea acesteia va impulsiona dezvoltarea cooperației de consum din țară.

Cuvinte-cheie: cooperative de consum, dezvoltare strategică, modernizare, optimizare, eficiență economică.

Аннотация

Кооперативы играют всё более значимую роль в обществе, благодаря разнообразию осуществляемых видов деятельности и их глубокому социальному характеру. В Республике Молдова кооперативный сектор представлен различными формами: потребительскими, производственными, предпринимательскими, жилищными, строительными, сельскохозяйственными кооперативами и т.д., крупнейшей является система потребительской кооперации.

Кооперативная модель бизнеса развивается значительно медленнее, чем другие виды экономической деятельности. Необходимость внутренних изменений и современные вызовы требуют переосмысления организации и управления кооперативами, пересмотр их сферы деятельности, взаимоотношений между ее членами, в том числе имущественных отношений и мотивационной системы.

Подписав Соглашение об Ассоциации РМ-ЕС, Молдова выразила свою твердую приверженность европейским ценностям и сосредоточенность на интеграцию в экономику сообщества. Этот процесс требует нового видения развития кооперативов и внедрения передовых европейских практик.

Цель данного исследования заключается в проведении анализа системы потребительских кооперативов в Молдове, в оценке проблем, с которыми сталкивается система, и в определении стратегий развития и укрепления её позиций на внутренних и внешних рынках. Результаты исследования заложили основу разработки Стратегии развития потребительской кооперации в Республике Молдова на период 2016-2019 гг. Реализация данной стратегии позволит стимулировать развитие потребительской кооперации в стране.

Ключевые слова: потребительские кооперативы, стратегическое развитие, модернизация, оптимизация, экономическая эффективность.

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SOCIAL ROLE OF COOPERATIVES

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Abstract

Study of the problems and directions of the development of the international cooperative movement is of paramount importance in the conditions of economic crisis. Cooperatives are the most suitable viable organizational and legal form of doing business, which enables businesses to survive in hard economic conditions.

The goal of the article is to show social role of cooperatives, their contribution in the solution of social and economic problems of the society.

General scientific and special economic methods of research were used in the course of the study. While using general scientific methods in the framework of logical approach we applied historic method of research, methods of synthesis, induction and deduction.

The article shows social importance of cooperatives, their role in employment assurance, creation of jobs, reduction of poverty; analyzes social functions of cooperatives. A special attention is given to the role of the UN and the International Labor Organization (ILO) in implementation by cooperatives of social functions and social mission of consumer cooperation in Russia. Cooperatives' contribution in poverty reduction is shown on the grounds of the basic principles of the World Bank (opportunity, security, creation of necessary conditions for active participation in social life). Social role of cooperatives is considered on the basis of the analysis of global instruments, adopted by the UN, the ILO.

Study of the social role of cooperatives, activity of social cooperatives and the role of cooperatives in informal economy would provide for the extension of their social functions.

Keywords: *cooperatives, social role, social functions, struggle against poverty, International Labor Organization.*

1. Introduction

Sustainable socio-economic development determines the existence of a system of forms and methods of state economic policy realization that is conducive to social stability. In this regard, it is necessary to define the place and role of each industry, infrastructure and businesses in the implementation of social policies aimed at development of social sphere of society, increasing prosperity, improving the conditions of life and work.

The crisis increases social role of cooperatives that have a social nature, the main advantage of which is the combination of social and economic activities.

2. The degree of investigation of the problem currently, and purpose of research

The degree of study of the problem. A study of the social role of cooperatives was done by domestic and foreign scientists, including I. I. Vokatch-Boldyrev, [1], E. V. Isaenko [2-4, 10, 20], S. G. Itkulov [5], L. P. Nagovitsina [6], E. E. Tarasova [8, 9, 22], V. I. Teplov [10-14], L. E. Teplova [15-17], D. S. Ternovsky [18], H. Henry [19], etc.

However, in conditions of economic crisis it is necessary to fully realize the potential of cooperatives for realization of social mission, employment, fulfillment of social functions. In this regard, the urgent task is the study of the experiences and social roles of cooperatives in different countries and the contribution of the International Labor Organization in the social activities of cooperatives.

The aim of the research is the study of social role of cooperatives in the society.

3. Methods and materials applied

The study used general scientific and special economic methods of research. When using scientific methods within a logical approach we consistently applied historical research method, methods of synthesis, induction and deduction. The use of special methods of economic research was based on a combination of positive and normative analysis, which respectively explained the economic facts of the formation of the social role of cooperatives and has established priorities for its development.

4. Results obtained and discussions

The economic literature widely examines the problem of social economy. The contribution of cooperatives to economic and social objectives of the society is shown in the works of Isaenko E. V. [2; 3; 4], Tarasova E. E. [8; 9], and Teplov V. I. [10; 14]. The authors consider the historical aspect of cooperative development, expansion of the social functions of cooperatives, domestic and foreign experience of social activities of the societies, the social policy of consumer cooperation organizations.

From the standpoint of understanding the social role of cooperatives in the present economic crisis the historical aspect of research in the social economy is of particular interest.

Organizations of social economy can be defined as independent private businesses which primary purpose is to provide quality economic and social services.

The goal of the companies of social economy is to be useful to the greatest number of people, the provision of any benefits to all, but not to individuals, solidarity and social justice based on democratic principles, the optimal combination of individual and group interests.

The influence of cooperative entrepreneurship in the development of social economy is by involving members of cooperatives, socially active people, promote more efficient use of labor and creative potential of the population, and reproduction of favorable conditions of life.

Social functions of cooperatives play an important role in the process of dynamic development of regions. They solve problems of employment, specific social issues affecting the interests of the wider community.

The report "Promotion of cooperatives", prepared for the 89th session of the ILO (2001) [30] states: "Cooperatives have always played an important role in mitigating the effects of important unresolved social problems and their solution. They always contributed and continue to contribute to the improvement of conditions of life and labor of workers of agriculture and industry (particularly agricultural production and work cooperatives), and providing them with banking services; small manufacturers and farmers, they provide consumer and business loans (savings and credit cooperatives), carry out insurance of their production, health and life (cooperatives, created by the indigenous population, agricultural, craft, supply and distribution, as well as insurance cooperatives) and protect consumers from adulterated food products (consumer cooperatives). In addition, today, cooperatives began to carry out a full range of social functions, that is, to care for the elderly, children and handicapped, create jobs for vulnerable from a social point of view, groups to introduce new technologies to deal with waste, to use renewable energy sources and to take measures for the protection of the environment".

Another position expressed in the report is also significant: "Cooperatives also play a role of a buffer between the forces conducting the liberalization, globalization and technological progress, on the one hand, and the increasing marginalization of the population and reductions in social security on the other hand" [30].

As a rule, new cooperatives have a tendency to appear where public social protection systems are in crisis or unable to provide the full range of social services.

The same thing happens at the local level. Local authorities in conditions of financial resources shortage are willing to pass on the right to provide social services to cooperatives under contract.

Contribution of cooperatives at the regional level is particularly important because of their integration and knowledge of local social problems.

Social cooperative enterprises in cooperation with small and medium enterprises of other forms of ownership are designed to create a flexible system of providing the population with goods and services, to contribute to optimum employment and fuller use of the potential of members and employees of cooperatives by promoting their entrepreneurial activity.

The extension of a network of small cooperative enterprises has two objectives: to fill free or relatively free niche in meeting the needs of population in goods and services; to create new jobs and on this basis to increase the level of employment, and income. Both of these goals are interrelated.

It is important that many cooperative enterprises manufacturing products from local raw materials, supplement the market with domestic products, often superior in quality to imported ones.

Cooperatives make a significant contribution in job creation, employment and hence incomes.

It is important that cooperatives offer goods to the public at reasonable and competitive prices. A source for such socially-oriented pricing is the consistent implementation of the austerity reduction to minimum units of product distribution, flexible use of sellers' labor linked to the intensity of customer flows.

When assessing the social performance of cooperatives it should be taken into account that, as a law-abiding organizations, cooperatives contribute to the budgets, especially the local, heavily in the form of taxes and fees.

To implement the cooperative principle of "concern for society" it is necessary to strive that the society has the opportunity to properly evaluate the work of a cooperative.

Social the role of cooperatives in the society gives them a reason to expect certain forms of state support. The most effective are those forms of state support, which allow cooperatives to better use their potential.

Cooperative organizations are ethically and democratically managed and controlled organizations: cooperative principles and cooperative values as well as ethical values are the main objectives for the implementation of the right to work.

As for job creation, employment, cooperatives are large employers in many countries (France, Korea, USA, Germany etc.), creating direct, indirect employment, and self-employment. They provide income through the payment of salaries to their employees and directly to the shareholders. Cooperatives provide employment to other business sectors and promote the local economy. For these reasons the ILO is committed to increasing jobs through the promotion of cooperative organizations.

Cooperatives are associations of people and care about their shareholders, the social role of cooperatives provides security in the broadest sense of the word. They have experience in improving the conditions of living and working conditions of its stockholders. In recent time, cooperatives perform a range of additional social functions. It is a social foundation of any cooperative.

Finally, cooperatives as socially responsible and traditional partner organizations of employers and workers create for their shareholders a platform to protect their interests at the local, regional, national and international levels. This is an important condition of the cooperative movement. At the national level, the highest body of the cooperative is a member of the employers' organizations and therefore it is represented in the Advisory Committee on the implementation of the ILO Program on decent work. Under this Program, cooperatives participate in the creation of jobs for specific target groups, including women, youth and people with disabilities. Participation and efficient operation of cooperatives in the framework of the Program on decent work will create important conditions for social dialogue in each country.

The ILO supported the efforts of cooperatives in the creation of special conditions such as: rural employment, youth employment, local economic development, food security, fair trade, crisis overcoming, gender equality, child labor, etc.

In March 2002, they established the World Commission on the social dimension of globalization. The report "Fair globalization. Creating opportunities for all" refers to the need to develop specific recommendations and to proclaim decent work as a global goal. Cooperatives are recognized in this report as "global power", based on its economic and social potential.

The dual nature of a cooperative is evident in its purposes: they are not merely economic in nature, but they are aimed at solving primarily socio-economic challenges. Therefore, the mission of a cooperative should be considered as social. Economic activities of a cooperative and, accordingly, the receipt of entrepreneurial income, acts as a means to achieve social goals. The social role of cooperatives can be considered on the example of consumer cooperatives of Russia.

The Law "On consumer cooperation (consumer societies and their unions) in the Russian Federation" [7] indicates that consumer cooperation is a system of consumer societies and their unions, created to meet material and other needs of their members. Thus, the social mission of consumer cooperation has legal recognition.

Consumer cooperation is a socially oriented system. This means that, firstly, it implements a social mission, and secondly, the social mission is the priority.

The mission of consumer cooperation in Russia is a participation in the development of social infrastructure, primarily in rural areas, ensuring the sustainable development of the country's consumer market through the satisfaction of needs and social protection, employment of the population involved in the activity and service of consumer cooperation, strengthening the security of Russia in the field of food security.

Social mission is the main strategic activity of consumer cooperative societies. The objective of cooperative organizations is to focus on the social mission as the most important factor in the growth of sustainable dynamics of economic activity, stabilization of the local budget, formation of the monetary incomes of rural population, and increase of commodity resources.

The social role of cooperatives is primarily in the economic support of the shareholders and of the rural population in the following forms:

- delivery of socially important goods to remote settlements and their sales at the prices of the regional centers;
- the maintenance of unprofitable stores;
- services of budgetary organizations (schools, orphanages, shelters, hospitals, etc.);
- school meals;
- trade credit to the population (the release of goods under a contract for the purchase of goods under entry);
- discounted tickets to members of the cooperative at the expense of cooperative payments;
- food packages, gifts for veterans;
- transport and other services [4; 10].

Social mission should be aimed at the entire rural population. Thus we form the image of consumer cooperatives as socially oriented system, and create a possibility of cooperation, i.e. strengthening of the social base.

Consumer cooperation attracts the population for temporary, seasonal work, part-time work, reviving domestic work, and crafts. Consumer societies and unions must monitor the employment of workers dismissed from the system during the crisis, the disabled, pensioners, the most vulnerable population groups and to give them preference in employment [8; 9].

Along with the creation of jobs and employment cooperatives play an important role in reducing poverty and in creating conditions for full participation in society.

Cooperatives and poverty reduction. To date, the eradication of poverty remains one of the most pressing problems for the world community [11; 13].

Poverty is, in fact, a relationship between people, which reflects the social status. In practical terms, poverty is the phenomenon in which entities or individuals lack enough resources or opportunities to meet their needs.

At the Summit [27], dedicated to social problems, held in Copenhagen in 1995, fight against poverty, with its consequent complete eradication was seen as the main task for the world community. For the first time 117 heads of state and governments officially announced their intention to conduct an active struggle against poverty. Also at the Summit, it was stated the desire to fully exploit the potential of cooperatives in addressing this issue. In 1997, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the special attention to the activities of cooperatives in addressing social and economic issues [25]. In the framework of the UN cooperatives are

considered as an important means of poverty alleviation. In late 2001, the UN adopted a resolution on the role of cooperatives in social development [28].

A cooperative enterprise is an organizational and legal form capable of solving all the issues related to poverty. In a historical context, it is impoverished segments of the population which invented the cooperative as an economic association of business entities that are able to cope with poverty. The history of the development of cooperatives is a testament to their ability to provide assistance to the poor. Cooperatives have the capacity to offer versatile solutions for this problem.

To study the contribution of cooperatives to poverty reduction is possible by considering the basic principles of the World Bank: opportunity, security, and creating conditions for full participation in society.

Opportunity. Cooperatives are full-fledged businesses and create opportunities for employment, economic growth and decent income. Thanks to their ability to unite all sectors of the economy, cooperatives help people classified as poor, to see and understand these opportunities. For example, cooperatives provide an opportunity for small farmers, incapable to reach large markets with their products, to come together and achieve financial success at the expense of scale. Thus, it is possible to keep reasonable prices. Those individuals or entities that have been excluded from classic financial systems, cooperatives give the opportunity to obtain loans on more favorable terms and accumulate income. For those who do not have sufficient financial resources to purchase basic food cooperatives offer these products at lower than market prices due to bulk purchases, etc. moreover, cooperatives are a form of social capital, stimulating the collective self that is the foundation of development. Working on your own small enterprises, small producers, workers and the poor, especially in rural areas, receive the goods, access to markets and public services, making conscious efforts to improve their own quality of life, and through self and mutual aid contribute to raising the standard of living of the whole community.

Security. Cooperatives are associations of people and care about their members, the social role of cooperatives reflects the concept of security in the broadest sense of the word. Cooperatives make it possible to transfer individual risks to the category of collective enterprises by persons wishing to obtain protection from the same risks at acceptable costs. In developed and developing countries, insurance cooperatives have proved their effectiveness. The presence of risk and vulnerability directly affect the poverty level: for example, the depletion of productive assets due to unfavorable weather conditions or termination of school attendance of children whose families have low production activity. Thus, making efforts to protect against risks or vulnerability, cooperatives have a direct impact on poverty reduction.

Creating conditions for full participation in society. Cooperatives play an important role in daily life. For their members they provide a platform to protect their own interests and learn to engage in dialogue. Access to information, involvement in public processes and direct part in them, contribute to a more active cooperative activities. For small agricultural producers ' cooperatives often provide an opportunity to use the potential of a more advanced group when discussing more favorable conditions for continuing agricultural activities, the acquisition of the necessary tools at lower prices or to gain access to the market for products.

The conditions for a full and normal life are also created by providing the members of the cooperatives of services, such as vocational training and retraining, consultation, use of information resources and technologies. Regarding the creation of opportunities for women, cooperatives actively contribute to their participation in economic production, thereby contributing to the growth of their economic independence and well-being.

In the mid-2000s, the ILO has organized a number of workshops for African and Asian regions to implement the above document and broaden understanding of the social role of cooperatives. As a result of the work participants have come to the conclusion about significant role of cooperatives in the implementation of strategies to combat poverty through the organization of these populations and providing them with acceptable living conditions.

The emergence of such concepts as fair trade and global value chains is another opportunity for the development of cooperatives. The concept of fair trade based on a partnership between producers and consumers aimed at creating favorable conditions for small producers in developing countries by determining the fair value of their products and strengthening the position of industrial organizations.

The movement «For fair trade» [23] is developing and gaining strength in the global community, the main objective of which is to provide manufacturers a favourable environment for their activities. The principles of fair trade and global value chains are comparable to the principles of cooperation. And those and others aspire to raise the standard of living of their employees. Small-scale entrepreneurs, their families and whole communities, organized in cooperatives, are receiving direct benefits in participation in these movements. The cooperative movement and its development partners should fully exploit the potential of fair trade and global value chains to improve living conditions and provide sources of income for small producers.

The Millennium Summit of 2000 confirmed that the outcome of the Summit on social issues 1995, held in Copenhagen, proved to be correct. According to the results of the Summit, all UN agencies have collectively identified the eight Millennium development goals, which together require the aid and assistance to the poorest segments of the population. Goal No. 1 [26], namely, the eradication of poverty and hunger, is directly linked to cooperatives, particularly in connection with their activities in rural areas. Also this link is clearly seen with respect to other goals in education, the status of women in society and the fight against diseases such as hepatitis, etc.

At the same time, the cooperative form of organization of management only won thanks to a revival of interest in it. The fact that the cooperatives were the main actors in activities aimed at the development of society both economically and socially, is recognized. Helping people learn to help themselves, a cooperative venture is an effective means of combating poverty, and as a consequence, the means of achieving the core Millennium Development Goals. However, many people classified as "poor", have no idea of the opportunities that can be provided by cooperatives.

For this reason, on 10 February 2004 the ILO signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) [24]. Following the principles reflected in the Memorandum of Understanding, the ILO and the ICA have joined forces and launched the Global cooperative campaign to save the needy segments of the population from poverty.

The campaign activities were aimed at groups that are disadvantaged and do not have enough resources to meet basic needs, as well as on those sections of society that have turned to cooperatives as a means of improving the quality of life. Moreover, in the course of the campaign, all public institutions (governmental, non-governmental (NGOs) and social ones, interested in cooperatives and cooperative organizations, received strong support through increased awareness and increased funding of the proposed programs and projects.

The campaign had two main objectives:

- to create favorable conditions for the development of cooperatives by drawing the attention of stakeholders to the possibilities of the cooperatives and strengthen the capacity of relevant organizations;

- to demonstrate the importance of cooperatives in the implementation of projects developed by the relevant local agencies for certain countries.

The above objectives are complementary to each other. Attracting attention of stakeholders to the possibilities of cooperatives was necessary due to the fact that the level of understanding of the activities of cooperatives is low, even among those states in which they exist and operate successfully a large enough cooperative organizations. Raising awareness has become a prerequisite in the fight against poverty, especially in the context of the Global cooperative campaign, but it was not enough. In order to demonstrate the potential and possibilities of cooperatives, it is necessary to develop and implement specific projects.

The ILO publication "Cooperatives against poverty. The Renaissance of the African cooperative movement" [29] provides an overview of cooperative development in Africa, as well as a detailed description of the program of fight against poverty in the region. This book was the result of the activity of a Cooperative Fund for Africa (CoopAfrica), which realized the regional program of the ILO for the development of cooperatives and contributed to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

To date, the international debate on development issues focus on further activities in this direction after 2015, when the duration of the program « Main Objectives of the Millennium » is terminated. In the outcome document adopted during the conference by the UN in June 2012 on sustainable development they emphasize the role of cooperatives in sustainable development and their contribution to social development and poverty reduction. Due to the fact that the role of cooperatives continues to be obvious after 2015, then we can talk about the occurrence of an important period for cooperatives in the framework of international discussions on development.

However, despite the high potential of cooperatives in poverty reduction, there are a number of problems and limitations. Their influence on this process is significant, but still insufficient compared to the scale of the problem. Sometimes there is the view that cooperatives do not provide any assistance to the poor segments of society. However, by definition, cooperatives are the organizations on the basis of open membership, which means that the poor and the impoverished sections of the population can become members of cooperatives and must have the motivation to organize their own cooperatives.

In 1976, Professor Hans Muenker made a report under the title "Cooperatives for the rich or the poor?" [21]. Later, after conducting numerous studies of the degree of influence of cooperatives on poverty, many of the findings of Muenkner were confirmed. Based on these studies, it was decided that for the impoverished segments of the population it is necessary to create cooperatives of a special type. In this, the most important is the fact that the poor are themselves aware of the possibilities and potential of cooperatives and participate actively in the development process.

5. Conclusions

Thus, cooperatives play an important social role in society. They perform a social function, create jobs, provide employment, reduce poverty and create conditions for full participation in society.

The study examines the social functions of cooperatives, shows the influence of cooperative enterprise for the development of social economy; the role of cooperatives in providing employment, creating jobs, reducing poverty. Special attention is paid to the role of the UN and

the International Labor organization (ILO) to promote cooperatives social functions, with demonstration of the social mission of consumer cooperation of Russia.

Study of the social role of cooperatives, a study of the activities of social cooperatives and the role of cooperatives in the informal economy would contribute to the expansion of their social functions.

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СОЦИАЛЬНАЯ РОЛЬ КООПЕРАТИВОВ

1. Введение

Устойчивое социально-экономическое развитие обуславливает наличие системы, форм и методов реализации экономической политики государства, способствующих социальной стабильности. В связи с этим необходимо определение места и роли каждой отрасли, инфраструктуры и хозяйствующих субъектов в реализации социальной политики, направленной на развитие социальной сферы общества, повышение благосостояния, улучшение условий жизни и труда.

В условиях кризиса повышается социальная роль кооперативов, имеющих социальную природу, главное преимущество которых заключается в сочетании социальной и хозяйственной деятельности.

2. Степень и цель исследования проблемы

Степень исследования проблемы. Исследованием социальной роли кооперативов занимались отечественные и зарубежные ученые, в числе которых: И. И. Вокач-Болдырев, [1], Е. В. Исаенко [2–4, 10, 20], С. Г. Иткулов [5], Л. П. Наговицина [6], Е. Е. Тарасова [8, 9, 22], В. И. Теплов [10–14], Л. Е. Теплова [15–17], Д. С. Терновский [18], Г. Хаген [19] и др.

Однако в условиях экономического кризиса необходимо в полной мере реализовать возможности кооперативов по реализации социальной миссии, обеспечению занятости, выполнению социальных функций. В связи с этим актуальной задачей является изучение опыта и социальной роли кооперативов в разных странах и вклада Международной организации труда в социальную деятельность кооперативов.

Целью исследования является изучение социальной роли кооперативов в жизни общества.

3. Методы исследования

В ходе исследования использовались общенаучные и специальные экономические методы исследования. При использовании общенаучных методов в рамках логического подхода последовательно применялись исторический метод исследования, методы синтеза,

индукции и дедукции. Использование специальных экономических методов исследования базировалось на сочетании позитивного и нормативного анализа, при помощи которых соответственно объяснялись экономические факты формирования социальной роли кооперативов и обосновывались приоритетные направления ее развития.

4. Результаты исследования

В экономической литературе широко исследуются проблемы социальной экономики. Вклад кооперативов в решение экономических и социальных задач общества показан в трудах Исаенко Е. В. [2; 3; 4], Тарасовой Е. Е. [8; 9], Теплова В. И. [10; 14]. Авторы рассматривают исторический аспект развития кооперативного движения, расширение социальных функций кооперативов, отечественный и зарубежный опыт социальной деятельности кооперации, социальную политику организаций потребительской кооперации.

С позиций осмысления социальной роли кооперативов в настоящее время в условиях экономического кризиса особый интерес представляет исторический аспект исследования социальной экономики.

Организации социальной экономики можно определять как частные самостоятельные предприятия, главной целью которых является оказание качественной экономической или социальной услуги.

Цель предприятий социальной экономики – быть полезными возможно большему числу людей, предоставление каких-либо льгот всем, а не отдельным лицам, достижение солидарности и социальной справедливости на основе демократических принципов, оптимального сочетания индивидуальных и групповых интересов.

Влияние кооперативного предпринимательства на развитие социальной экономики оказывается путем вовлечения в состав членов кооперативов социально активных людей, содействия более эффективному использованию трудового и творческого потенциала населения, воспроизводства благоприятных условий жизни.

Социальные функции кооперативов играют важную роль в процессе динамического развития регионов. Они решают проблемы занятости населения, конкретные социальные вопросы, затрагивающие интересы широких кругов населения.

В докладе «Содействие развитию кооперативов», подготовленном к 89-й сессии МОТ (2001 г.) [30], указывается: «Кооперативы всегда играли важную роль в смягчении последствий важных нерешенных социальных проблем и в их решении. Они всегда содействовали и продолжают содействовать улучшению условий жизни и труда работников сельского хозяйства и промышленности (особенно сельскохозяйственные, производственные и рабочие кооперативы) и оказывают им банковские услуги; мелким производителям и земледельцам они предоставляют потребительские и производственные кредиты (сберегательные и кредитные кооперативы), осуществляют страхование их производства, здоровья и жизни (кооперативы, создаваемые коренным населением, сельскохозяйственные, ремесленные, снабженческие и сбытовые, а также страховые кооперативы) и защищают потребителей от фальсифицированных продуктов питания (потребительские кооперативы). Помимо этого, сегодня кооперативы начали выполнять весь спектр дополнительных социальных функций, то есть ухаживать за престарелыми, детьми и инвалидами, создавать рабочие места для уязвимых с социальной точки зрения групп населения, внедрять новые

технологии, заниматься утилизацией отходов, использовать возобновляемые источники энергии и проводить мероприятия по охране окружающей среды».

Существенно и другое положение, высказанное в данном докладе: «Кооперативы играют также роль буфера между силами, проводящими либерализацию, глобализацию и технический прогресс, с одной стороны, и возрастающей маргинализацией населения и сокращениями в социальном обеспечении, с другой» [30].

Как правило, новые кооперативы имеют тенденцию появляться там, где государственные системы социальной защиты переживают кризис или не могут оказывать весь комплекс социальных услуг.

То же самое происходит и на местном уровне. Местные власти в условиях нехватки финансовых средств охотно передают право предоставления социальных услуг кооперативам на условиях подряда.

Особенно важен вклад кооперативов на региональном уровне в силу их интегрированности и знания местных социальных проблем.

В социальном плане кооперативные предприятия совместно с малыми и средними предприятиями других форм собственности призваны создавать гибкую систему обеспечения населения товарами и услугами, содействовать оптимальной занятости населения и более полному использованию потенциала членов, а также работников кооперативов путем стимулирования их предпринимательской активности.

Расширение сети малых кооперативных предприятий преследует две цели: заполнить свободные или относительно свободные ниши в удовлетворении потребностей населения в необходимых видах товаров и услуг; создать новые рабочие места и на этой основе повысить уровень занятости населения, его доходы. Обе эти цели взаимосвязаны.

Важно, что многие кооперативные предприятия, выпуская продукцию из местного сырья, пополняют рынок отечественной продукцией, нередко превосходящей по своему качеству импортную.

Значительный вклад вносят кооперативы в создание рабочих мест, обеспечение занятости и, следовательно, доходов населения.

Важно, чтобы кооперативы предлагали товары населению по умеренным и низким ценам. Источником для подобного социально ориентированного ценообразования служит последовательное проведение режима экономии, сокращение до минимума звеньев товародвижения, гибкое использование труда продавцов, увязанное с интенсивностью покупательских потоков.

При оценке социальной эффективности деятельности кооперативов следует принимать во внимание, что, будучи законопослушными организациями, кооперативы вносят в бюджеты, особенно местные, значительные средства в виде налогов и сборов.

Для реализации кооперативного принципа «забота об обществе» необходимо стремиться, чтобы общество имело возможность должным образом оценивать работу кооператива.

Социальная роль кооперативов в обществе дает им основание рассчитывать на определенные формы государственной поддержки. Наиболее эффективными являются такие формы государственной поддержки, которые позволяют кооперативам лучше использовать собственный потенциал.

Кооперативные организации – это этически и демократически управляемые и контролируемые организации: кооперативные принципы и кооперативные ценности, а также этические ценности являются основными целями для осуществления права на труд.

Что касается создания рабочих мест, занятости, то кооперативы являются крупными работодателями во многих странах (Франция, Корея, США, Германия), создавая прямую занятость, непрямую занятость и samozанятость. Они обеспечивают доход через выплаты заработной платы своим наемным работникам и непосредственно пайщикам. Кооперативы обеспечивают занятость в других бизнес-секторах и продвигают локальную экономику. По указанным причинам МОТ стремится к увеличению рабочих мест благодаря содействию кооперативных организаций.

Кооперативы являются ассоциацией лиц и заботятся о своих пайщиках, социальная роль кооперативов обеспечивает безопасность в широком смысле этого слова. Они имеют опыт в улучшении условий проживания и труда своих пайщиков. В последнее время кооперативы выполняют целый спектр дополнительных социальных функций. Это – социальные основы любого кооператива.

И наконец, кооперативы в качестве социально ответственного и традиционного партнера организаций работодателей и трудящихся создают для своих пайщиков платформу по защите их интересов на местном, региональном, национальном и международном уровнях. Это является важным условием кооперативного движения. На национальном уровне высший орган кооператива является членом организации работодателей и поэтому представлен в консультативном комитете по реализации Программы МОТ о достойном труде. В рамках этой Программы кооперативы принимают участие в создании рабочих мест для специфических целевых групп, включая женщин, молодежь и людей с ограниченными возможностями. Участие и эффективная деятельность кооперативов в рамках Программы о достойном труде создадут важные условия для социального диалога в каждой стране.

При поддержке МОТ усилия кооперативов заключаются также в создании специальных условий, таких как: сельская занятость, занятость молодежи, развитие местной экономики, продовольственная безопасность, принцип справедливой торговли, преодоление кризиса, гендерное равенство и т.д.

В марте 2002 года была создана Всемирная Комиссия по социальному измерению глобализации. В докладе «Справедливая глобализация. Создание возможностей для всех» говорится о необходимости разработать конкретные рекомендации и провозгласить достойный труд в качестве глобальной цели. Кооперативы признаются в этом докладе в качестве «глобальной силы», базирующейся на своем экономическом и социальном потенциале.

Двойственная природа кооператива проявляется в его целях: они носят не просто хозяйственный характер, а направлены на решение, прежде всего, социально-экономических задач. Поэтому миссию кооператива следует рассматривать исключительно как социальную. Хозяйственная деятельность кооператива и, соответственно, получение предпринимательского дохода, выступает как средство для достижения социальной цели.

Социальную роль кооперативов рассмотрим на примере потребительской кооперации России.

В Законе «О потребительской кооперации (потребительских обществах, их союзах) в Российской Федерации» [7] указывается, что потребительская кооперация – это система

потребительских обществ и их союзов, созданных в целях удовлетворения материальных и иных потребностей их членов. Таким образом, социальная миссия потребительской кооперации имеет законодательное признание.

Потребительская кооперация – социально ориентированная система. Это означает, что, во-первых, она реализует социальную миссию, во-вторых – социальной миссии отдается приоритет.

Миссия потребительской кооперации в России – участие в развитии социальной инфраструктуры, в первую очередь на селе, обеспечение стабильного развития потребительского рынка страны за счет удовлетворения потребностей и социальной защиты, повышения занятости населения, вовлекаемого в деятельность и обслуживаемого потребительской кооперацией, укрепление безопасности России в сфере продовольственного обеспечения.

Социальная миссия является главным стратегическим направлением деятельности потребительской кооперации. Задача кооперативных организаций – сосредоточить усилия на социальной миссии как важнейшем факторе роста устойчивой динамики хозяйственной деятельности, стабилизации местного бюджета, формирования денежных доходов сельского населения, увеличения товарных ресурсов.

Социальная роль кооперативов заключается прежде всего в экономической поддержке пайщиков и всего сельского населения в следующих формах:

- доставка социально значимых товаров в отдаленные населенные пункты и их реализация по ценам райцентров;
- обслуживание бюджетных организаций (школ, детских домов, приютов, больниц и т.д.);
- организация школьного питания;
- товарный кредит населению (отпуск товаров под договор на закупку товаров и под запись);
- льготные путевки членам кооператива в счет кооперативных выплат;
- наборы продуктов, подарки ветеранам;
- транспортные и другие услуги [4; 10].

Социальная миссия должна быть направлена на все сельское население. Тем самым формируется имидж потребительской кооперации как социально ориентированной системы, создается возможность кооперирования, то есть укрепления социальной базы.

Потребительская кооперация привлекает население на временную, сезонную работу, на условиях неполного рабочего дня, возрождает надомный труд, народные промыслы. Потребительские общества и союзы должны отслеживать занятость работников, уволенных из системы во время кризиса, инвалидов, пенсионеров, то есть самых незащищенных групп населения и отдавать им предпочтение в трудоустройстве [8; 9].

Наряду с созданием рабочих мест и обеспечением занятости кооперативы играют важную роль в сокращении уровня бедности и в создании условий для полноценного участия в жизни общества.

Кооперативы и сокращение уровня бедности. На сегодняшний день искоренение бедности по-прежнему является одной из самых актуальных проблем для всего мирового сообщества [11; 13].

Бедность, по сути, представляет собой взаимоотношения между людьми и она отражает социальный статус. В практическом плане бедность – это явление, при котором хозяйствующие субъекты или отдельные лица не имеют достаточно ресурсов или возможностей для удовлетворения своих потребностей.

На Саммите [27], посвященном социальным проблемам, который проводился в Копенгагене в 1995 году, борьба с бедностью с ее последующим полным искоренением рассматривалась как основная задача для всего мирового сообщества. Впервые 117 глав государств и правительств официально заявили о своем намерении вести активную борьбу против бедности. Также на Саммите было заявлено о стремлении полноценно использовать потенциал кооперативов в решении данного вопроса. В 1997 году Генеральная Ассамблея ООН приняла резолюцию об особом внимании к деятельности кооперативов в решении социальных и экономических вопросов [25]. В рамках ООН кооперативы рассматриваются как важное средство преодоления бедности. В конце 2001 года ООН приняла Резолюцию о роли кооперативов в социальном развитии [28].

Кооперативное предприятие является организационно-правовой формой, способной решать вопросы, связанные с бедностью. В историческом контексте, именно обедневшие слои населения изобрели кооператив как ассоциацию экономических хозяйствующих субъектов, способных справиться с бедностью. История развития кооперативов является свидетельством их возможности оказывать помощь бедным слоям населения. Кооперативы обладают достаточным потенциалом, чтобы предложить разносторонние решения для этой проблемы.

Изучить реальный вклад кооперативов в сокращение бедности можно, рассматривая основные принципы Всемирного банка: возможность, безопасность и создание условий для полноправного участия в жизни общества.

Возможность. Кооперативы являются полноценными хозяйствующими субъектами и создают возможности для занятости, экономического роста и достойного уровня дохода. Благодаря их способности объединять все секторы экономики, кооперативы помогают людям, относимым к категории бедных, увидеть и понять эти возможности. Например, кооперативы предоставляют возможность мелким фермерам, неспособным выйти на крупные рынки со своей продукцией, объединиться и добиться финансового благополучия за счет расширения масштабов. Таким образом, появляется возможность удерживать приемлемые цены. Тем лицам или организациям, которые были исключены из классических финансовых систем, кооперативы дают возможность получить кредиты на более выгодных условиях и накапливать доходы. Для тех, кто не имеет достаточных финансовых ресурсов для приобретения основных продуктов питания, кооперативы предлагают эти продукты по более низким, чем рыночные, ценам за счет оптовых закупок и т.д. Более того, кооперативы являются формой организации социального капитала, стимулирующей коллективную самопомощь, что является основой развития. Работая на собственных малых предприятиях, мелкие производители, работники и бедные слои населения, особенно проживающие в сельской местности, получают товары, доступ к рынкам и государственным услугам, предпринимают целенаправленные усилия по улучшению их собственного уровня жизни, и посредством само- и взаимопомощи вносят вклад в повышение уровня жизни всего сообщества.

Безопасность. Кооперативы являются объединениями людей и проявляют заботу о своих членах, при этом социальная роль кооперативов как нельзя лучше отражает понятие

безопасности в самом широком смысле этого слова. Кооперативы позволяют переводить индивидуальные риски в разряд коллективных путем объединения лиц, изъявляющих желание получить защиту от одинаковых рисков при приемлемых затратах. Наличие рисков и уязвимость напрямую влияют на рост уровня бедности: например, истощение производственных активов вследствие неблагоприятных погодных условий или прекращение посещения школы детьми, чьи семьи имеют низкую производственную активность. Таким образом, предпринимая усилия по защите от рисков или уязвимости, кооперативы непосредственно влияют на сокращение уровня бедности.

Создание условий для полноправного участия в жизни общества. Кооперативы играют важную роль в ежедневной жизни общества. Для своих членов они создают платформу для защиты собственных интересов и учат вести диалог. Доступ к информации, включенность в общественные процессы и непосредственное в них участие способствуют более активной деятельности кооперативов. Для малых сельскохозяйственных предпринимателей кооперативы часто предоставляют возможность использовать потенциал более расширенной группы при обсуждении более выгодных условий для продолжения ведения сельскохозяйственных работ, приобретения необходимых инструментов по более низким ценам или возможности получить доступ на рынок для сбыта продукции.

Условия для полноценной и нормальной жизнедеятельности также создаются за счет предоставления членам кооперативов таких услуг, как профессиональное обучение и переподготовка, консультации, возможность пользоваться информационными ресурсами и технологиями. Что касается создания возможностей для женщин, кооперативы активно содействуют их участию в экономическом производстве, тем самым способствуя росту их экономической независимости и благосостояния.

В середине 2000-х годов МОТ организовал ряд мастер-классов для африканского и азиатского регионов по реализации вышеуказанного документа и расширению понимания социальной роли кооперативов. В результате работы участники мероприятий пришли к выводу о значимой роли кооперативов в процессе реализации стратегий по борьбе с бедностью за счет организации этих слоев населения и создания для них приемлемых условий жизни.

Возникновение таких понятий, как добросовестная торговля и глобальные производственно-сбытовые цепи, стали еще одной возможностью для развития кооперативов. Понятие добросовестной торговли основано на партнерских отношениях между производителями и потребителями, направленных на создание благоприятных условий для мелких производителей в развивающихся странах за счет определения справедливой стоимости их продукции и укрепления позиций производственных организаций.

Движение «За добросовестную торговлю» [23] развивается и набирает силу в рамках мирового сообщества, основной задачей которого является обеспечение производителей благоприятными условиями для их деятельности. Принципы добросовестной торговли и глобальных производственно-сбытовых цепей вполне сопоставимы с принципами кооперации. И те, и другие стремятся поднять уровень жизни своих работников. Мелкие предприниматели, их семьи и целые сообщества, организованные в кооперативы, получают непосредственную выгоду при участии в данных движениях. Кооперативное движение и их партнеры по развитию должны полноценно использовать потенциал добросовестной

торговли и глобальных производственно-сбытовых цепей для улучшения условий жизни и предоставления источников заработка для мелких производителей.

Саммит Тысячелетия 2000 года подтвердил, что итоги работы Саммита по социальным проблемам 1995 года, проведенного в Копенгагене, доказали свою правомерность и истинность. По результатам работы Саммита, все подразделения ООН коллективно определили восемь целей развития тысячелетия, которые в своей совокупности предполагают помощь и содействие беднейшим слоям населения. Цель № 1 [26], а именно, искоренение нищеты и голода, непосредственно связана с кооперативами, особенно в связи с их деятельностью в сельских областях. Также эта связь явно прослеживается и в отношении других целей в области образования, положения женщин в обществе и борьбы с такими заболеваниями, как гепатит и др.

В то же время кооперативная форма организации хозяйствования только выиграла благодаря возрождению интереса к ней. Тот факт, что кооперативы были основными участниками деятельности, направленной на развитие общества как в экономическом, так и в социальном отношении, является общепризнанным. Кооперативное предприятие представляет собой эффективное средство борьбы с бедностью, и как следствие, средство достижения основных Целей Развития Тысячелетия. При этом многие люди, относимые к категории «бедные», не имеют представления о тех возможностях, которые могут быть предоставлены кооперативами.

Именно по этой причине 10 февраля 2004 года МОТ подписал Меморандум о понимании с Международным Кооперативным Альянсом (МКА) [24]. Следуя принципам, отраженным в Меморандуме о понимании, МОТ и МКА объединили усилия и организовали Глобальную кооперативную кампанию с целью избавить нуждающиеся слои населения от бедности.

Деятельность кампании была направлена на группы населения, находящиеся в неблагоприятном положении и не имеющие достаточного количества ресурсов для удовлетворения основных потребностей, а также на те слои общества, которые обращались к кооперативам как средству повышения уровня жизни. Более того, в ходе проведения кампании все виды общественных институтов, заинтересованные в работе кооперативов и кооперативных организаций, получили значительную поддержку за счет повышения осведомленности и увеличения финансирования предлагаемых программ и проектов.

Проведение кампании преследовало две основные цели:

- создать благоприятные условия для развития кооперативов путем привлечения внимания заинтересованных лиц к возможностям кооперативов и укреплению потенциала соответствующих организаций;
- продемонстрировать значимость кооперативов в процессе реализации проектов, разработанных соответствующими местными организациями для определенных стран.

Вышеуказанные цели дополняют друг друга. Повышение уровня осведомленности стало необходимым условием в борьбе с бедностью, особенно в рамках Глобальной кооперативной кампании, но этого было недостаточно. Для того, чтобы продемонстрировать потенциал и возможности кооперативов, необходима разработка и реализация конкретных проектов.

В публикации МОТ «Кооперативы против бедности. Возрождение Африканского кооперативного движения» [29] дается обзор развития кооперативов в Африке, а также

представлено детальное описание программы борьбы с бедностью в данном регионе. Эта книга явилась результатом деятельности Кооперативного фонда для Африки (КООПАфрика), реализовавшего региональную программу МОТ по развитию кооперативов, которая внесла свой вклад в достижение Целей Развития Тысячелетия.

На сегодняшний день международные дискуссии по проблемам развития сосредоточены на дальнейшей деятельности в этом направлении после 2015 года, когда заканчивается срок действия программы основных Целей Тысячелетия. В итоговом документе, принятом в ходе конференции, проведенной ООН в июне 2012 года по проблемам устойчивого развития, подчеркивается особая роль кооперативов в устойчивом развитии и их вклад в социальное развитие и снижение уровня бедности. А так как роль кооперативов продолжает быть очевидной и после 2015 года, то можно говорить о наступлении важного периода для кооперативов в рамках международных дискуссий по проблемам развития.

Тем не менее, несмотря на высокий потенциал кооперативов в борьбе с бедностью, имеется ряд проблем и ограничений. Их влияние на этот процесс значительно, но по-прежнему недостаточно в сравнении с масштабом самой проблемы. Иногда возникает мнение, что кооперативы не оказывают никакого содействия бедным слоям общества. Однако по определению кооперативы представляют собой организации на основе открытого членства, что означает, что и бедные, и обнищавшие слои населения могут стать членами кооперативов и должны иметь мотивацию организовывать собственные кооперативы.

В 1976 году профессор Ганс Мюнкер выступил с докладом под заголовком «Кооперативы для богатых или бедных?» [21]. Позже, после проведения многочисленных исследований степени влияния кооперативов на уровень бедности, многие выводы Мюнкера нашли свое подтверждение. На основании этих исследований было принято решение о том, что для обнищавших слоев населения должны создаваться кооперативы особого типа. При этом, самым важным остается факт, что бедные уже сами осознают возможности и потенциал кооперативов и принимают активное участие в процессе развития.

5. Заключение

Таким образом, кооперативы играют важную социальную роль в жизни общества. Они выполняют социальные функции, создают рабочие места, обеспечивают занятость населения, способствуют сокращению уровня бедности, создают условия для полноправного участия в жизни общества.

С целью выявления возможностей расширения социальных функций кооперативов авторами в ходе исследования показано влияние кооперативного предпринимательства на развитие социальной экономики; определена роль кооперативов в обеспечении занятости населения, создании рабочих мест, сокращении уровня бедности. Особое внимание уделено роли ООН и Международной организации труда (МОТ) в реализации кооперативами социальных функций, показана социальная миссия потребительской кооперации России.

Исследование социальной роли кооперативов, изучение деятельности социальных кооперативов и роли кооперативов в неформальной экономике будет способствовать расширению их социальных функций.

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Rezumat

În condițiile crizei economice globale devine din ce în ce mai actuală cercetarea problemelor și direcțiilor de dezvoltare a mișcării cooperatiste internaționale. Cooperativele reprezintă cea mai acceptabilă și viabilă formă organizatorico-juridică de gospodărire, care permite agenților economici să supraviețuiască în condiții economice dificile.

Scopul acestui articol a constituit semnalarea rolului social al cooperativelor, contribuției acestora la soluționarea problemelor sociale și economice ale societății. În procesul derulării cercetării au fost aplicate metode și principii științifice economice generale și speciale. Utilizarea metodelor științifice generale în abordarea logică a informației a conceput aplicarea consecutivă a metodei istorice de cercetare, metodelor, precum: sinteza, inducția și deducția.

Articolul pune în evidență importanța socială a cooperativelor, rolul lor în asigurarea ocupării forței de muncă, crearea locurilor de muncă, reducerea sărăciei; funcțiile sociale ale cooperativelor și impactul afacerilor cooperatiste asupra dezvoltării economiei sociale. O atenție deosebită este acordată rolului Organizației Națiunilor Unite și Organizației Internaționale a Muncii (OIM) în realizarea funcțiilor sociale ale cooperativelor și misiunii sociale a cooperației de consum din Federația Rusă. Evaluarea contribuției cooperativelor în reducerea sărăciei a dat baza aplicării principiilor fundamentale ale Băncii Mondiale (capacitate, securitate, creare a condițiilor pentru participarea deplină în viața societății). Rolul social al cooperativelor a fost abordat în baza actelor de ordin global, adoptate de ONU, OIM.

Studiul rolului social al cooperativelor, cercetarea activității cooperativelor sociale și rolului cooperativelor în economia nonformală va contribui la extinderea funcțiilor lor sociale.

Cuvinte-cheie: cooperative, rol social, funcții sociale, combaterea sărăciei, Organizația Internațională a Muncii.

Аннотация

В условиях мирового экономического кризиса особую актуальность приобретает исследование проблем и направлений развития международного кооперативного движения. Кооперативы являются наиболее приемлемой и жизнеспособной организационно-правовой формой хозяйствования, позволяющей хозяйствующим субъектам выживать в сложных экономических условиях.

Цель статьи – показать социальную роль кооперативов, их вклад в решение социальных и экономических проблем общества. В ходе исследования использовались общенаучные и специальные экономические методы исследования. При использовании общенаучных методов в рамках логического подхода последовательно применялись исторический метод исследования, методы синтеза, индукции и дедукции.

В статье показаны социальная значимость кооперативов, их роль в обеспечении занятости населения, создании рабочих мест, сокращении уровня бедности; рассмотрены социальные функции кооперативов и влияние кооперативного предпринимательства на развитие социальной экономики. Особое внимание уделено роли ООН и Международной организации труда (МОТ) в реализации кооперативами социальных функций и социальной миссии потребительской кооперации России. Оценка вклада кооперативов в сокращение бедности дала базу использования основных принципов Всемирного банка (возможность, безопасность, создание условий для полноправного участия в жизни общества). Социальная роль кооперативов рассмотрена на основе анализа глобальных документов, принятых ООН, МОТ.

Исследование социальной роли кооперативов, изучение деятельности социальных кооперативов и роли кооперативов в неформальной экономике будет способствовать расширению их социальных функций.

Ключевые слова: кооперативы, социальная роль, социальные функции, борьба с бедностью, Международная организация труда.

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CONTENT OF SPECIAL STANDARDIZING AND PLANNING FUNCTIONS OF GOODS ASSORTMENT MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

The commercial goods assortment management can only be accomplished by performing a number of general, special and specific functions. The nomenclature of special and specific functions of commercial goods assortment management is under development and specification and largely depends on clearly distinguishing of their scope.

In order to shape the scope of each function of commercial goods assortment management, it is very important to formulate and determine the content of each function definition that includes the elements purpose, objectives (tasks) and the function thereof.

In this paper we will present the definitions and contents of special standardizing and planning functions of commercial goods assortment management, as well as the specified and broad version of the special functions nomenclature of the complex system of goods assortment management, the implementation of which would ensure the efficient goods assortment management in the retail trade network.

Keywords: *commercial goods assortment; commercial goods assortment management; special standardizing and planning functions of commercial goods assortment management; content of special standardizing and planning functions of commercial goods assortment management; purposes, tasks and elements of special standardizing and planning functions of commercial goods assortment management.*

1. Introduction

The objective and critical need to guide (manage) the goods assortment in the retail trade network is proved in a number of publications of scientists and specialists in the field [3, p. 17; 4, p. 77; 6, p. 21; 7, p. 8; 11, p. 5, p. 9].

Goods assortment management can be defined [6, p. 22; 7 p. 8) as developing and implementing activity of aggregate (complex) interrelated organizational, technical, economic, social and ideological set of measures (actions), governed by the laws and normative-technical documentation in force, using the related means and methods, directed towards the formation and permanent correction in the field of turnover of the assortment structure of consumer goods, which would correspond to the structure of the consumer's needs and society on the one hand, and to the possibilities and interests of producers (suppliers) and society, on the other hand. Such assortment of goods is called optimal assortment. So, the objective of commercial goods assortment management is creating and maintaining permanently within the retail trade network of optimal assortment of goods, and the goal is to maximum meet the consumer's needs while achieving the goods sellers interests.

Like any other, the commercial goods assortment management is done by implementing a number of functions: general functions, special functions and specific functions, the nomenclature which is under development and specification [6, p. 22]. Each of specific and special functions shall have its specific content and its scope [2, p. 15; 6, p. 22-23].

2. Degree of investigation of the problem at present, research purposes

The problem of forming the assortment of goods in retail trade network has always been in the focus of specialists and researchers in the field of trade, especially in recent decades [1-3, 10, 11], when the assortment of goods became extremely large and complicated in structure. However, at present, the researches in the field and their results [1, 5, 14] are focused more on processes and methods of forming the assortment and do not include the aggregate measures and actions which determine and contribute to the formation and improvement, continuous maintenance of optimal goods assortment in the retail trade network. The formation and permanent maintenance in retail trade of optimal goods assortment can be provided only under a complex system of commercial goods assortment management, which developing is currently at the initial stage.

The ultimate purpose of the investigation is to create and propose a complex system of goods assortment management, and the purpose of this paper is to formulate the definitions and to develop the content of special functions of standardizing and planning of commercial goods assortment management, as well as filling in the nomenclature and specifying the classification of special functions of this complex system of management.

3. Methods and materials applied

The research is performed using the following methods: comparative analysis, correlative analysis, analogy, induction and deduction, expertise, practical experience etc. Definitions and content of standardizing and planning functions, as well as the filling in of classification of some functions of the complex system of commercial goods assortment management [6, p. 22-23] were nominated, by orienting ourselves to the standard of production quality management in the field of turnover [12, 13].

4. Results and discussions. Content of special functions of standardizing and planning of goods assortment management

Goods assortment management is accomplished by performing a complex of functions, including a number of special functions [6, p. 23]. Based on the study of standards [12, 13] and the experience gained in the field of goods quality management we found the need to fill-in the nomenclature of goods [6, p. 23] and specify the classifications of some special functions of the complex system of goods assortment management.

This nomenclature, in our view, as regards the commercial goods assortment management, includes the following special functions:

- 1) forecasting consumers' needs and demands to commercial goods assortment;
- 2) standardization of demands to commercial goods assortment;
- 3) determining the necessity and directions of change (improvement) of nomenclature and demands to the characteristics [8-9] of commercial goods assortment;
- 4) planning the change (improvement) of nomenclature and demands to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment;
- 5) material-technical and financial provision of forming and continuous improvement of commercial goods assortment;
- 6) staffing, special training in the field and continuous training of staff;

- 7) providing technological formation and continuous improvement of commercial goods assortment;
- 8) providing methodological formation and continuous improvement of optimal commercial goods assortment;
- 9) providing legal formation and systematic improvement of commercial goods assortment;
- 10) providing informational formation and systematic improvement of commercial goods assortment;
- 11) providing ideological formation and systematic improvement of optimal commercial goods assortment;
- 12) organizing and performing timely forming, maintaining and changing (improving, correcting) of optimal commercial goods assortment;
- 13) permanent internal and systematic external control of optimality of commercial goods assortment;
- 14) periodic certification of commercial goods assortment;
- 15) stimulating the formation and maintenance of optimal commercial goods assortment in retail trade network;
- 16) periodic certification of the complex system of management of commercial goods assortment.

Depending on its nature, the special functions above can be grouped into:

- a) *special standardizing and planning functions*, to which functions are assigned as follows: forecasting consumers' needs and demands to the commercial goods assortment; standardizing the requirements to commercial goods assortment; determining the need and directions to change (improve) the nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics [8-9] of commercial goods assortment; planning of change (improvement) of the nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment;
- b) *special provision functions*, to which functions are assigned as follows: providing material and financial formation and continuous improvement of commercial goods; staffing, special training in the field and continuous training of staff; providing technological formation and regular improvement of commercial goods assortment; providing methodological formation and regular improvement of optimal commercial goods assortment; providing legal formation and regular improvement of commercial goods assortment; providing informational formation and regular improvement of commercial goods assortment; providing ideological formation and regular improvement of optimal commercial goods assortment;
- c) *special organizational-stimulation functions*, to which functions are assigned as follows: timely organization and performance of formation, maintenance and change (improvement, correction) of optimal commercial goods assortment; stimulating formation and providing maintenance of optimal commercial goods assortment in retail trade network;
- d) *Special control and assessment functions*, to which functions are assigned as follows: continuous internal and regular external control of optimality of commercial goods assortment; periodic certification of commercial goods assortment; periodic certification of complex management system of commercial goods assortment.

Each of the functions listed above have their own definition and content that includes the purpose, objectives (tasks) of function and elements thereof, which have not been normally developed yet.

The purpose of this paper is to formulate definitions and develop the content of special standardizing and planning functions of the commercial goods assortment management.

Based on the analysis of normative documentation [12-13] and specialty literature [1-5; 10-11; 14] in the field of formation of commercial goods assortment and production quality management, including in the sphere of turnover, there were formulated *definitions* and drafted the *content of special standardization and planning functions* of the commercial goods assortment management as follows:

The function “*Forecasting consumer’s needs and demands to the commercial goods assortment*” is the activity of drafting and implementing of the aggregate organizational, methodological, investigational measures and actions etc., using related methods and means, aiming at investigating the dynamics and forecasting the quantitative and qualitative changes of consumers’ needs and demands to the goods assortment. *The purpose of function* is to set the nomenclature and volume of consumers’ needs and demands to the goods assortment and drafting the forecast of their quantitative and qualitative change for a defined future term.

The tasks of function are:

- a) establishing the nomenclature of consumers’ needs and demands to commercial goods assortment;
- b) determining the nature of consumers’ needs and demands to goods;
- c) determining the legalities of development (change) of consumers’ needs and demands to goods;
- d) establishing the trends of changing the nature and quantitative and qualitative change of consumers’ needs and demands to the goods assortment for a defined future term;
- e) determining the level of meeting the consumers’ needs and demands to goods assortment;
- f) developing the forecast of consumers’ needs and demands quality and quantity to goods assortment for a defined term.

The implementation of this function tasks consists of numerous *elements*: organizing the activity of analyzing the consumers’ (buyers’) needs and demands to commercial goods assortment; preparing the nomenclature of required information on consumers’ (buyers’) needs and demands to commercial goods assortment; determining and selecting the required information sources; establishing the information collection methods and means; developing the methodology and organizing the activity of collection, processing, and storing of the required information; developing the methodology and order and organizing the activity of drafting forecasts on the dynamics of quantitative and qualitative change of consumers’ (buyers’) needs and demands to the commercial goods assortment; drafting the methodology and order and organizing the use of forecasts on the dynamics of quantitative and qualitative change of consumers’ (buyers’) needs and demands to the commercial goods assortment; studying and periodic review of commercial goods assortment of competitors; collecting and analyzing the users’ objections to forecasts drafted; specifying and timely correcting the forecasts on commercial goods assortment, taking into account the users’ objections etc.

The function “*Standardizing the requirements to the commercial goods assortment*” is the activity of drafting and implementing the aggregate organizational, methodological, scientific, and regulatory measures and actions etc., by using related methods and means, aiming at developing the nomenclature of characteristics and quantitative indicators of commercial goods assortment characteristics; drafting, testing, approving and ratifying, in the established manner, as well as implementing and putting into practice the rules and requirements to the commercial goods assortment characteristics.

The purpose of function - determining and approving the nomenclature of characteristics and quantitative indices of commercial goods assortment characteristics; drafting, approving and

putting into practice of rules (norms) of requirements to the commercial goods assortment characteristics.

The tasks of function are:

- a) drafting and approving in the established manner the scheme of complex classification of consumer goods, adjusted and applicable accordingly within the management system of commercial goods assortment;
- b) drafting the nomenclature of qualitative characteristics of commercial goods assortment properties;
- c) nominating and delimiting the notions, drafting and approving the definitions of commercial goods assortment characteristics;
- d) drafting the nomenclature of quantitative indices of commercial goods assortment characteristics;
- e) drafting, approving and ratifying, in the established manner, of rules (norms) on requirements to the characteristics indices of commercial goods assortment;
- f) implementing and putting into practice of rules (norms) on requirements to the characteristics indices of commercial goods assortment;
- g) estimating and periodic improvement of values (limits) of rules (norms) of characteristics indices of commercial goods assortment;
- h) providing the entering into the normative-technical documentation of rules (norms) and scientifically justified requirements to the characteristics indices of commercial goods assortment;
- i) providing the protection of consumer's interests and rights in standardizing the demands to the commercial goods assortment;
- j) providing the selection of efficient nomenclature and optimal values (limits) of quantitative indices of goods assortment characteristics;
- k) preventing the decrease of quality and demands to the commercial goods assortment characteristics;
- l) providing regular assessment of quality and optimality of commercial goods assortment.

The implementation of tasks of the above function consists of numerous *elements*: drafting the requirements to the consumer goods classification scheme, applicable within the management system of commercial goods assortment; nominating, delimiting of notions, formulating, testing, adopting and approving, in the established manner, of single definitions of classification levels of consumer goods, to be used uniformly within the management system of commercial goods assortment; establishing the order of drafting, coordinating, approving, ratifying, implementing and using the consumer goods classification scheme; drafting and justifying, ratifying and using, in the established manner, the complex classification scheme of consumer goods, applicable within the complex management system of commercial goods assortment; detecting and highlighting of goods assortment properties; establishing the order of drafting, coordinating, approving, ratifying and implementing of rules (norms) of demands to commercial goods assortment; drafting the list of varieties of required information on properties and characteristics of commercial goods assortment and the factors thereof, as well as on regularities of change and significance of commercial goods assortment properties for meeting the consumers' needs and manufacturers' (suppliers') interests etc.; determining and selecting the required information sources; establishing the information collection methods and means; drafting the methodology and organizing the activity of collecting and storing the required information; drafting the methodology and order and organizing the activity of processing and analyzing of collected information, as well as of drafting, coordinating, approving and implementing of proposals on the subject matter; nominating, delimiting of notions, formulating and approving the definitions of qualitative characteristics of commercial goods assortment properties; preparing the nomenclature of characteristics of

commercial goods assortment properties; developing and approving the quantitative indices of characteristics of commercial goods assortment properties and expression units thereof; drafting the methodology and organizing the activity of drafting, testing, coordinating, approving, ratifying and implementing of rules (norms) on the values (limits) of quantitative indices of characteristics of commercial goods assortment properties; drafting, testing, coordinating, approving and ratifying of rules (norms) of indices values (limits) of characteristics of commercial goods assortment properties; implementing the estimation of commercial goods assortment quality of rules (norms) concerning quantitative indicators values (limits) of characteristics of commercial goods assortment properties; regular assessment of practicability of rules (norms) in force of quantitative indices values (limits) of characteristics of commercial goods assortment properties and timely correction thereof; regular assessment of quality level and optimality of commercial goods assortment etc.

The function “*Determining the needs and directions of change (improvement) of the nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment*” is defined as activity of drafting and implementing of the aggregate organizational, methodological investigational etc. related methods and means, aiming at determining the need and directions of change (improvement) of the nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment. *The purpose of function* is justifying and providing the appropriate consistency (correction) of nomenclature and normative requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment to the users’ (specialists’, buyers’, consumers’, etc.) needs and demands.

The tasks of function are:

- a) revealing the nonconformity of nomenclature and normative requirements in force to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment to users’ (specialists’, buyers’, consumers’, etc.); needs and demands;
- b) assessing, justifying, including economically and socially, and determining the need, rationality and opportunity of change (improvement) of nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment;
- c) determining the directions and ways of changing (improving) of nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment.

The tasks of this functions are implemented through numerous *elements*: drafting the methodology of assessment and socio-economical justification of the need of change (improvement) of nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment; drafting the methodology of change (improvement) of nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment; drafting the list of varieties of required information on users’ (specialists’, buyers’, consumers’, etc.) demands to the nomenclature and characteristics of commercial goods assortment; determining and selecting the required information sources; establishing the information collection methods and means; drafting the methodology and organizing the activity of collecting and storing the required information; drafting the methodology and order and organizing the activity of processing and analyzing of collected information, as well as drafting, coordinating, approving and implementing of the proposals on the subject matter; justifying, including economically and socially, and assessing the need, drafting and submitting directions and ways of change (improvement) of nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment; coordinating, approving and implementing of proposals drafted etc.

The function “*Planning the change (improvement) of nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment*” is defined as activity of drafting and

implementing of the aggregate organizational, methodological, investigative, regulatory, etc., measure and actions, by using related methods and means, aiming at providing the complex planning of multilateral activities of change (improvement) of the nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment, specifying the terms of execution and the executors thereof, costs and funding sources, expected results and benefits.

The purpose of function - determining the consecutiveness and terms of efficient implementation of measures of changing (improving) the commercial goods assortment, by specifying the sources and mobilization, targeting the human, material, financial and information resources, in order to timely implement the measures above, as well as the accountability of staff executing these measures.

The tasks of function are:

- a) rational and efficient use of data collected by implementing the functions “Forecasting the consumers’ needs and demands to the commercial goods assortment” and “Standardizing the requirements to the commercial goods assortment”;
- b) establishing the terms of change (improvement) of the nomenclature and implementation of indices and new requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment;
- c) including the topic on changing (improving) the nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment in the plans of scientific developments of the institutions;
- d) phasing in real time and determining the consecutiveness of implementing the measures of change (improvement) of commercial goods assortment;
- e) determining the volumes and sources of human, material, financial and information resources necessary for the implementation of planned measures;
- f) establishing the terms of implementation of planned measures;
- g) planning the costs and expected benefits by implementing each measure;
- h) appointing the responsible persons for the timely implementation of planned measures;
- i) providing monitoring of timely and qualitative implementation of planned measures.

The tasks listed above of this function are made by the following *elements*: drafting the planning methodology of changing (improving) the nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment; drafting the list of varieties of required information for planning the change (improvement) of nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment; determining and selecting the required information sources; establishing the information collection methods and means; drafting the methodology and organizing the activity of collecting and storing the required information; drafting the methodology and order and organizing the activity of processing and analyzing the collected information, as well as drafting, coordinating, approving and implementing the proposals on the subject matter; analyzing the data obtained by implementing the functions “Forecasting the consumers’ needs and demands to the commercial goods assortment”, “Standardizing the requirements to the commercial goods assortment”, “Determining the need and directions of change (improvement) of the nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of the commercial goods assortment” and drawing proper conclusions; formulating and assessing the aggregate measures to be planned needed to be implemented, to provide the change (improvement) of the nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment according to the consumers’ needs and demands; selecting and determining the consecutiveness of implementing the selected measures and included in the plan (planned); assessing the complexity, volumes of works and establishing the terms of implementation of each planned measures; determining the need in human, financial, material and information resources for the implementation of each planned measure; calculating the costs of

implementing each measure and the aggregate measures to change (improve) the nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment, according to consumers' needs; determining the sources of human, material, financial and information resources required to change (improve) the nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of the commercial goods assortment; selecting and appointing the responsible persons for the timely implementation of each planned measures; establishing the forms and periodicity of submitting to the responsible persons of reports on the progress of planned measures; determining the order and manner of monitoring of implementation of the planned measures; selecting and appointing the responsible persons for monitoring of implementation of each planned measure and the plan in full; calculating and forecasting the expected benefits by changing the nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment; preparing and assessing, approving and ratifying, in the established manner, the plan of change (improvement) of the nomenclature and requirements to the characteristics of commercial goods assortment; assessing and regular analyzing of progress of the implementation of plan and making the necessary corrections, etc.

5. Conclusions

The creation of the complex system of commercial goods assortment management in the retail trade network is an objective and critical need. The successful management of goods assortment requires the implementation of numerous special functions, the nomenclature of which is presented broadly, completed by two special functions (functions no.11 and no.12), nominated for the first time, and the nomination of some functions is specified (functions no. 2-6, 8, 10, 14 and 16).

In order to be effectively implemented, it is necessary to clearly delineate the scope of application of each function, which shall arise from the definition of its content. The content of each functions specified in the nomenclature includes the purpose, tasks and the specific elements of the related function.

Drafting the definitions and contents of functions of commercial goods assortment management is one of the objectives of the researches in the field. At the current stage, there are drafted and presented for the first time the definitions and contents (purpose, tasks and specific elements) of special standardizing and planning functions of complex system of commercial goods assortment management, followed by investigations for drafting the definitions and contents of other special functions, as well as of the specific functions of the complex system of commercial goods assortment management.

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CONȚINUTUL FUNCȚIILOR SPECIALE DE NORMARE – PLANIFICARE ALE MANAGEMENTULUI SORTIMENTULUI MĂRFURILOR

1. Introducere

Necesitatea obiectivă și acută de a dirija (managera) sortimentul de mărfuri în rețeaua comercială en-detail este demonstrată într-un șir de publicații ale savanților și specialiștilor în domeniu [3, p. 17; 4, p. 77; 6, p. 21; 7, p. 8; 11, p. 5, p. 9].

Managementul sortimentului mărfurilor poate fi definit [6, p. 22; 7, p. 8] ca activitate de elaborare și realizare a ansamblului (complexului) de măsuri (acțiuni) interconexe organizatorice, tehnice, economice, sociale și ideologice, reglementate de legislația și documentația normativ-tehnică în vigoare, cu utilizarea mijloacelor și metodelor corespunzătoare, direcționate spre formarea și corecția permanentă în sfera circulației a structurii sortimentului de mărfuri, care ar corespunde pe de o parte structurii necesităților consumatorilor și societății, iar pe de altă parte – posibilităților și intereselor producătorilor (furnizorilor) și societății. Astfel de sortiment de mărfuri este numit sortiment optimal. Deci, obiectivul managementului sortimentului comercial de mărfuri este crearea și menținerea permanentă în rețeaua de comerț en-detail a sortimentului optimal de mărfuri, iar scopul – satisfacerea maximală a necesităților consumatorilor de mărfuri concomitent cu realizarea intereselor vânzătorilor.

Ca și oricare altul managementul sortimentului comercial de mărfuri este efectuat prin realizarea unui șir de funcții: generale, speciale și specifice, nomenclatorul cărora este în curs de elaborare și precizare [6, p. 22]. Fiecare dintre funcțiile speciale și specifice trebuie să aibă conținutul său specific și aria sa de aplicare [2, p. 15; 6, p. 22-23].

2. Gradul de investigare a problemei la momentul actual, scopul cercetării

Formarea sortimentului de mărfuri în rețeaua comercială en-detail totdeauna a preocupat specialiștii și cercetătorii în domeniul comerțului, în deosebi în ultimele decenii [1-3, 10, 11], când gama sortimentală de mărfuri a devenit extrem de numeroasă și complicată în structură. Însă, la momentul actual cercetările în domeniu și rezultatele acestora [1, 5, 14] sunt axate mai mult pe procedeele și metodele formării sortimentului și nu cuprind complexul de măsuri și acțiuni care ar asigura formarea și perfecționarea sistematică, menținerea în permanență în rețeaua comercială en-detail a sortimentului optimal de mărfuri. Formarea și menținerea în permanență în rețeaua de comerț cu amănuntul a sortimentului optimal de mărfuri de consum poate fi asigurată doar în baza sistemului complex de management al sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum, elaborarea căruia în prezent este doar la stadiu incipient.

Scopul final al investigației este de a crea și propune sistemul complex de management al sortimentului mărfurilor, iar scopul prezentei lucrări este de a formula definițiile și de a elabora conținutul funcțiilor speciale de normare-planificare ale managementului sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum, precum și completarea nomenclatorului și precizarea nominalizărilor unor funcții speciale ale acestui sistem complex de management.

3. Metode și materiale aplicate

Cercetarea este efectuată utilizând metodele: analiza comparativă, analiza corelativă, analogia, inducția și deducția, expertiza, experiența practică etc. Definițiile și conținutul funcțiilor de normare-planificare, precum și completarea nomenclatorului și precizarea nominalizărilor unor funcții ale sistemului complex de management al sortimentului comercial de mărfuri [6, p. 22-23] sunt propuse orientându-ne la standardele privind managementul calității producției în sferele producerii și circulației [12, 13].

4. Rezultate și discuții. Conținutul funcțiilor speciale de normare – planificare ale managementului sortimentului mărfurilor

Managementul sortimentului mărfurilor este efectuat prin realizarea complexului de funcții, inclusiv a unui șir de funcții speciale [6, p. 23]. În baza studierii standardelor [12, 13] și experienței acumulate în domeniul managementului calității mărfurilor constatăm necesitatea completării nomenclatorului [6, p. 23] și precizării nominalizărilor unor funcții speciale ale sistemului complex de management al sortimentului mărfurilor.

Acest nomenclator, în viziunea noastră, în cazul managementului sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum, include următoarele funcții speciale:

- 1) prognozarea necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri de consum;
- 2) normarea cerințelor către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri de consum;
- 3) determinarea necesității și direcțiilor modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile [8-9] sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum;
- 4) planificarea modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum;
- 5) asigurarea material-tehnică și financiară a formării și perfecționării sistematice a sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum;

- 6) asigurarea cu personal, pregătirea specială în domeniu și formarea profesională continuă a cadrelor;
- 7) asigurarea tehnologică a formării și perfecționării sistematice a sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum;
- 8) asigurarea metodologică a formării și perfecționării sistematice a sortimentului comercial optimal de mărfuri de consum;
- 9) asigurarea juridică a formării și perfecționării sistematice a sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum;
- 10) asigurarea informațională a formării și perfecționării sistematice a sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum;
- 11) asigurarea ideologică a formării și perfecționării sistematice a sortimentului comercial optimal de mărfuri de consum;
- 12) organizarea și efectuarea formării, menținerii și modificării (perfecționării, corecției) oportune a sortimentului comercial optimal de mărfuri de consum;
- 13) controlul permanent intern și sistematic extern a optimalității sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum;
- 14) atestarea periodică a sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum;
- 15) stimularea formării și asigurării menținerii sortimentului comercial optimal de mărfuri de consum în rețeaua de comerț en-detail;
- 16) certificarea periodică a sistemului complex de management al sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum.

În dependență de caracterul său funcțiile speciale enumerate pot fi grupate în:

- a) *funcții speciale de normare-planificare*, la care sunt atribuite funcțiile: prognozarea necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri de consum; normarea cerințelor către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri de consum; determinarea necesității și direcțiilor modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile [8-9] sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum; planificarea modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum;
- b) *funcții speciale de asigurare*, la care sunt atribuite funcțiile: asigurarea material-tehnică și financiară a formării și perfecționării sistematice a sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum; asigurarea cu personal, pregătirea specială în domeniu și formarea profesională continuă a cadrelor; asigurarea tehnologică a formării și perfecționării sistematice a sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum; asigurarea metodologică a formării și perfecționării sistematice a sortimentului comercial optimal de mărfuri de consum; asigurarea juridică a formării și perfecționării sistematice a sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum; asigurarea informațională a formării și perfecționării sistematice a sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum; asigurarea ideologică a formării și perfecționării sistematice a sortimentului comercial optimal de mărfuri de consum;
- c) *funcții speciale de organizare-stimulare*, la care sunt atribuite funcțiile: organizarea și efectuarea formării, menținerii și modificării (perfecționării, corecției) oportune a sortimentului comercial optimal de mărfuri de consum; stimularea formării și asigurării menținerii sortimentului comercial optimal de mărfuri de consum în rețeaua de comerț en-detail;
- d) *funcții speciale de control și evaluare*, la care sunt atribuite funcțiile: controlul permanent intern și sistematic extern al optimalității sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum; atestarea periodică a sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum; certificarea periodică a sistemului complex de management al sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum.

Fiecare din funcțiile enumerate are definiția sa și conținutul său care include scopul, obiectivele (sarcinile) și elementele funcției, care până în prezent practic încă nu-s elaborate.

Scopul lucrării prezente este formularea definițiilor și elaborarea conținuturilor funcțiilor speciale de normare-planificare ale managementului sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum.

În baza analizei documentației normative [12-13] și literaturii de specialitate [1-5; 10-11; 14] în domeniul formării sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum și managementului calității producției, inclusiv în sfera circulației, a fost formulate *definițiile și elaborate conținuturile funcțiilor speciale de normare – planificare* ale managementului sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum după cum urmează.

Funcția „*Prognostizarea necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri de consum*” este activitatea de elaborare și realizare a ansamblului de măsuri și acțiuni organizatorice, metodologice, de investigare etc., cu utilizarea metodelor și mijloacelor corespunzătoare, ce au misiunea de a cerceta dinamica și a prognoza modificările cantitative și calitative ale necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor către sortimentul mărfurilor.

Scopul funcției – stabilirea nomenclatorului și volumului de necesități și cerințe ale consumatorilor față de sortimentul mărfurilor și elaborarea prognozei modificării lor cantitative și calitative pentru termenul de perspectivă stabilit.

Sarcinile funcției sunt:

- a) stabilirea nomenclatorului necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri;
- b) determinarea caracterului necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor către mărfuri;
- c) determinarea legăturilor dezvoltării (modificării) necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor către mărfuri;
- d) stabilirea tendințelor modificării caracterului și dezvoltării cantitative și calitative a necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor către sortimentul de mărfuri pentru termenul de perspectivă determinat;
- e) stabilirea nivelului de satisfacere a necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor către sortimentul mărfurilor;
- f) elaborarea prognozei cantității și calității necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor către sortimentul mărfurilor pentru termenul determinat.

Realizarea sarcinilor acestei funcții este constituită dintr-un șir de *elemente*: organizarea lucrărilor de studiere a necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor (cumpărătorilor) către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri; întocmirea nomenclatorului informației necesare privind necesitățile și cerințele consumatorilor (cumpărătorilor) către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri; determinarea și selectarea surselor informației necesare; stabilirea metodelor și mijloacelor colectării informației; elaborarea metodologiei și organizarea lucrărilor de colectare, prelucrare și păstrare a informației necesare; elaborarea metodologiei, ordinii și organizarea lucrărilor de elaborare a prognozelor privind dinamica modificării cantitative și calitative a necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor (cumpărătorilor) către sortimentul comercial al mărfurilor; elaborarea metodologiei, ordinii și organizarea utilizării prognozelor privind cantitatea și calitatea necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor (cumpărătorilor) către sortimentul comercial al mărfurilor; studierea și analiza periodică a sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum la concurenți; colectarea și analiza obiectivelor utilizatorilor privind prognozele elaborate; precizarea și corecția oportună a prognozelor privind sortimentul comercial de mărfuri, ținând cont de obiectivele utilizatorilor etc.

Funcția „*Normarea cerințelor către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri de consum*” este activitatea de elaborare și realizare a ansamblului de măsuri și acțiuni organizatorice, metodologice,

științifice, de reglementare etc., cu utilizarea metodelor și mijloacelor corespunzătoare, ce au misiunea de a întocmi nomenclatorul caracteristicilor și indicilor cantitativi ai proprietăților sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; de a elabora, testa, aproba și omologa în modul stabilit, precum și de a implementa și utiliza în practică normele și cerințele către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri.

Scopul funcției – determinarea și omologarea nomenclatorului de caracteristici și indici cantitativi ai proprietăților sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; elaborarea, omologarea și aplicarea practică a normelor (normativelor) de cerințe către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri.

Sarcinile funcției sunt:

- a) elaborarea și omologarea în modul stabilit a schemei clasificării complexe a mărfurilor de consum, adaptate corespunzător și aplicabile în sistemul de management al sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum;
- b) elaborarea nomenclatorului de caracteristici calitative ale proprietăților sortimentului comercial de mărfuri;
- c) nominalizarea și delimitarea noțiunilor, elaborarea și omologarea definițiilor caracteristicilor sortimentului comercial de mărfuri;
- d) elaborarea nomenclatorului de indici cantitativi ai caracteristicilor proprietăților sortimentului comercial de mărfuri;
- e) elaborarea, aprobarea și omologarea în modul stabilit a normelor (normativelor) privind cerințele către indicii caracteristicilor sortimentului comercial de mărfuri;
- f) implementarea și utilizarea în practică a normelor (normativelor) privind cerințele către indicii cantitativi ai caracteristicilor sortimentului comercial de mărfuri;
- g) estimarea și perfecționarea periodică a valorilor (limitelor) normelor (normativelor) indicilor caracteristicilor sortimentului comercial de mărfuri;
- h) asigurarea includerii în documentația normativ-tehnică a normelor (normativelor) și cerințelor argumentate științific către indicii caracteristicilor sortimentului comercial de mărfuri;
- i) asigurarea protejării intereselor și drepturilor consumatorilor în normarea cerințelor către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri;
- j) asigurarea selectării nomenclaturii eficiente și valorilor (limitelor) optime ale indicilor cantitativi ai caracteristicilor sortimentului de mărfuri;
- k) prevenirea diminuării calității și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri;
- l) asigurarea evaluării periodice a calității și optimalității sortimentului comercial de mărfuri.

Procesul realizării sarcinilor funcției examinate este constituit dintr-un șir de *elemente*: elaborarea cerințelor către schema clasificării mărfurilor de consum, aplicabile în sistemul de management al sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum; nominalizarea, delimitarea noțiunilor, formularea, testarea, adoptarea și omologarea în modul stabilit a definițiilor unice a nivelelor de clasificare a mărfurilor de consum, pentru utilizarea uniformă în sistemul de management al sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum; stabilirea ordinii elaborării, coordonării, aprobării, omologării, implementării și utilizării schemei clasificării mărfurilor de consum; elaborarea și argumentarea, omologarea și utilizarea în modul stabilit a schemei complexe de clasificare a mărfurilor de consum, aplicabile în sistemul complex de management al sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum; descoperirea și evidențierea proprietăților sortimentului de mărfuri; stabilirea ordinii elaborării, coordonării, aprobării, omologării și implementării normelor (normativelor) cerințelor către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri; întocmirea listei varietăților de informație necesară privind proprietățile și caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum și factorii ce le

condiționează, precum și privind legitățile modificării și importanța proprietăților sortimentului comercial de mărfuri pentru satisfacerea necesităților consumatorilor și intereselor producătorilor (furnizorilor) etc.; determinarea și selectarea surselor informației necesare; stabilirea metodelor și mijloacelor colectării informației; elaborarea metodologiei și organizarea lucrărilor de colectare și păstrare a informației necesare; elaborarea metodologiei, ordinii și organizarea lucrărilor de prelucrare și analiză a informației colectate, precum și de elaborare, coordonare, aprobare și implementare a propunerilor privind subiectul în cauză; nominalizarea, delimitarea noțiunilor, formularea și omologarea definițiilor caracteristicilor calitative ale proprietăților sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; întocmirea nomenclatorului de caracteristici ale proprietăților sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; elaborarea și omologarea indicilor cantitativi ai caracteristicilor proprietăților sortimentului comercial de mărfuri și unităților de exprimare a lor; elaborarea metodologiei și organizarea lucrărilor de elaborare, testare, coordonare, aprobare, omologare și implementare a normelor (normativelor) privind valorile (limitele) indicilor cantitativi ai caracteristicilor proprietăților sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; elaborarea, testarea, coordonarea, aprobarea și omologarea normelor (normativelor) valorilor (limitelor) indicilor caracteristicilor proprietăților sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; implementarea în practica estimării calității sortimentului comercial de mărfuri a normelor (normativelor) privind valorile (limitele) indicilor cantitativi ai caracteristicilor proprietăților sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; estimarea periodică a practicabilității normelor (normativelor) în vigoare ale valorilor (limitelor) indicilor cantitativi ai caracteristicilor proprietăților sortimentului comercial de mărfuri și corecția lor oportună; estimarea periodică a nivelului calității și optimalității sortimentului comercial de mărfuri etc.

Funcția „*Determinarea necesității și direcțiilor modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum*” este definită ca activitate de elaborare și realizare a ansamblului de măsuri și acțiuni organizatorice, metodologice, de investigare etc., cu utilizarea metodelor și mijloacelor corespunzătoare, ce au misiunea de a determina necesitatea și direcțiile modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri.

Scopul funcției – argumentarea și asigurarea concordării (corecției) oportune a nomenclatorului și cerințelor normative către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri necesităților și cerințelor utilizatorilor (specialiștilor, cumpărătorilor, consumatorilor etc.).

Sarcinile funcției sunt:

- a) relevarea neconformităților nomenclatorului și cerințelor normative în vigoare către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri necesităților și cerințelor utilizatorilor (specialiștilor, cumpărătorilor, consumatorilor etc.);
- b) estimarea, argumentarea, inclusiv economico-socială, și determinarea necesității, raționalității și oportunității modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri;
- c) determinarea direcțiilor și căilor modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri.

Sarcinile acestei funcții sunt realizate printr-un șir de *elemente*: elaborarea metodologiei estimării și argumentării economico-sociale a necesității modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum; elaborarea metodologiei modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; întocmirea listei varietăților de informație necesară privind cerințele utilizatorilor (specialiștilor, cumpărătorilor, consumatorilor etc.) către nomenclatorul și

caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; determinarea și selectarea surselor informației necesare; stabilirea metodelor și mijloacelor colectării informației; elaborarea metodologiei și organizarea lucrărilor de colectare și păstrare a informației necesare; elaborarea metodologiei, ordinii și organizarea lucrărilor de prelucrare și analiză a informației colectate, precum și de elaborare, coordonare, aprobare și implementare a propunerilor privind subiectul în cauză; argumentarea, inclusiv economico-socială, și estimarea necesității, elaborarea și propunerea direcțiilor și căilor modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; coordonarea, aprobarea și implementarea în practică a propunerilor elaborate etc.

Funcția „*Planificarea modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum*” este definită ca activitate de elaborare și realizare a ansamblului de măsuri și acțiuni organizatorice, metodologice, de investigare, de reglementare etc., cu utilizarea metodelor și mijloacelor corespunzătoare, ce au misiunea de a asigura planificarea complexă a lucrărilor multilaterale de modificare (perfecționare) a nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri, cu indicarea termenilor de executare și a executorilor, costurilor și surselor de finanțare, rezultatelor și beneficiilor scontate.

Scopul funcției – determinarea consecutivității și termenilor realizării eficiente a măsurilor de modificare (perfecționare) a sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum, indicarea surselor și mobilizarea, direcționarea resurselor umane, materiale, financiare și informaționale spre realizarea oportună a măsurilor în cauză, precum și responsabilizarea personalului executor al acestor măsuri.

Sarcinile funcției sunt:

- a) utilizarea rațională și eficientă a datelor obținute de la realizarea funcțiilor „Prognostizarea necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri de consum” și „Normarea cerințelor către sortimentul comercial al mărfurilor de consum”;
- b) stabilirea termenilor modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și implementării indicilor și cerințelor noi către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri;
- c) includerea tematicii privind modificarea (perfecționarea) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri în planurile elaborărilor științifice ale instituțiilor respective;
- d) etapizarea în timp real și determinarea consecutivității realizării măsurilor de modificare (perfecționare) a sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum;
- e) stabilirea volumelor și surselor resurselor umane, materiale, financiare și informaționale necesare pentru realizarea măsurilor planificate;
- f) stabilirea termenilor realizării măsurilor planificate;
- g) planificarea costurilor și beneficiilor scontate de la realizarea fiecărei măsuri;
- h) nominalizarea responsabililor de realizarea oportună a măsurilor planificate;
- i) asigurarea monitorizării realizării oportune și calitative a măsurilor planificate.

Sarcinile enumerate ale funcției în cauză sunt realizate prin următorul șir de *elemente*: elaborarea metodologiei planificării modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; întocmirea listei varietăților de informație necesară pentru planificarea modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum; determinarea și selectarea surselor informației necesare; stabilirea metodelor și mijloacelor colectării informației; elaborarea metodologiei și organizarea lucrărilor de colectare și păstrare a informației necesare; elaborarea

metodologiei, ordinii și organizarea lucrărilor de prelucrare și analiză a informației colectate, precum și de elaborare, coordonare, aprobare și implementare a propunerilor privind subiectul în cauză; analiza datelor obținute prin realizarea funcțiilor „Prognozarea necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri de consum”, „Normarea cerințelor către sortimentul comercial de mărfuri de consum”, „Determinarea necesității și direcțiilor modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum” și formularea concluziilor adecvate; formularea și estimarea complexului de măsuri necesar de planificat pentru a fi realizat ca să fie asigurată modificarea (perfecționarea) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri conform necesităților și cerințelor consumatorilor; selectarea și determinarea consecutivității realizării măsurilor selectate și incluse în plan (planificate); estimarea complexității, volumelor de lucrări și stabilirea termenilor realizării fiecărei măsuri planificate; determinarea necesității în resurse umane, materiale, financiare și informaționale pentru realizarea fiecărei măsuri planificate; calcularea costurilor realizării fiecărei măsuri și complexului integral de măsuri pentru modificarea (perfecționarea) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri conform necesităților consumatorilor; determinarea surselor de resurse umane, materiale, financiare și informaționale necesare pentru modificarea (perfecționarea) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; selectarea și nominalizarea responsabililor de realizarea oportună a fiecărei măsuri planificate; stabilirea formelor și periodicității prezentării de către responsabili ale rapoartelor privind mersul realizării măsurilor respective planificate; stabilirea ordinii și modurilor de monitorizare a realizării măsurilor planificate; selectarea și nominalizarea responsabililor de monitorizarea realizării fiecărei măsuri planificate și a planului integral; calcularea și prognozarea beneficiilor scontate în rezultatul modificării nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; întocmirea și estimarea, aprobarea și omologarea în modul stabilit a planului modificării (perfecționării) nomenclatorului și cerințelor către caracteristicile sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; estimarea și analiza sistematică a mersului realizării planului în cauză și efectuarea corecțiilor necesare etc.

5. Concluzii

Crearea sistemului complex de management al sortimentului comercial de mărfuri în rețeaua de comerț en-detail este o necesitate obiectivă și acută. Efectuarea reușită a managementului sortimentului de mărfuri necesită realizarea unui șir de funcții speciale, nomenclatorul cărora este prezentat extins, completat cu două funcții speciale (funcțiile nr. 11 și nr. 12), nominalizate în premieră, iar nominalizarea unor funcții este precizată (funcțiile nr. 2-6, 8, 10, 14 și 16).

Pentru a fi realizate eficient, este necesar de a delimita clar aria aplicării fiecărei funcții, ceea ce trebuie să decurgă din definiția și conținutul acesteia. Conținutul fiecărei din funcțiile nominalizate în nomenclator include scopul, sarcinile și elementele specifice funcției concrete.

Elaborarea definițiilor și conținuturilor funcțiilor managementului sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum constituie unul din obiectivele investigațiilor în domeniu. La etapa curentă sunt elaborate și prezentate în premieră definițiile și conținuturile (scopul, sarcinile și elementele specifice) funcțiilor speciale de normare-planificare ale sistemului complex de management al sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum, urmând continuarea investigațiilor pentru a elabora definițiile și conținuturile altor funcții speciale, precum și ale funcțiilor specifice ale sistemului complex de management al sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum.

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Rezumat

Managementul sortimentului comercial de mărfuri de consum poate fi efectuat doar prin realizarea unui șir de funcții generale, speciale și specifice. Nomenclatorul funcțiilor speciale și specifice ale managementului sortimentului comercial de mărfuri este în curs de elaborare și precizare și, în mare măsură, depinde de claritatea delimitării ariilor lor de aplicare.

Pentru a contura aria aplicării fiecărei funcții a managementului sortimentului comercial de mărfuri este foarte important să fie formulată definiția și determinat conținutul fiecărei funcții, care include scopul, obiectivele (sarcinile) și elementele funcției.

În această lucrare prezentăm definițiile și conținuturile funcțiilor speciale de normare-planificare ale managementului sortimentului comercial de mărfuri, precum și varianta precizată și extinsă a nomenclaturii funcțiilor speciale ale sistemului complex de management al sortimentului de mărfuri, realizarea cărora ar asigura managementul eficient al sortimentului de mărfuri în rețeaua comercială en-detail.

Cuvinte-cheie: sortimentul comercial de mărfuri; managementul sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; funcțiile speciale de normare-planificare ale managementului sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; conținutul funcțiilor speciale de normare-planificare ale managementului sortimentului comercial de mărfuri; scopurile, sarcinile și elementele funcțiilor speciale de normare-planificare ale managementului sortimentului comercial de mărfuri.

Аннотация

Менеджмент торговым ассортиментом потребительских товаров может быть осуществлён только через реализацию ряда общих, специальных и специфических функций. Перечень специальных и специфических функций менеджмента торговым ассортиментом товаров находится на стадии разработки и уточнения и, значительно, зависит от чёткости разграничения областей их применения.

Для очертания области приложения каждой функции менеджмента торговым ассортиментом товаров особо важны формулирование определения и установление содержания каждой функции, в том числе: цели, задач и элементов функции.

В данной работе представляем определения и содержания специальных нормативно-плановых функций менеджмента торговым ассортиментом товаров, а также уточнённый и расширенный перечень специальных функций комплексной системы менеджмента ассортиментом товаров, реализация которых призвано обеспечить эффективный менеджмент ассортиментом товаров в розничной торговой сети.

Ключевые слова: торговый ассортимент товаров; менеджмент торговым ассортиментом товаров; специальные нормативно-плановые функции менеджмента торговым ассортиментом товаров; содержание специальных нормативно-плановых функций менеджмента торговым ассортиментом товаров; цели, задачи и элементы специальных нормативно-плановых функций менеджмента торговым ассортиментом товаров.

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SYNERGETIC APPROACH AS A METHODOLOGICAL BASIS OF RESEARCH ON THE ECONOMIC SUBSTANCE OF FIXED ASSETS DEPRECIATION

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Abstract

In the article the different approaches to the economic essence of depreciation has been investigated, the background and benefits of using a synergistic approach as a methodological basis for its determination have been revealed. It has been established that the synergetic approach is a method of intercourse researches within the systematic approach in the basis of which is the principle of development. The main approaches of researchers and lawful regulatory requirements for determining of depreciation has been analyzed taking into consideration that its calculation is the most important aspect of the circulation of non-current assets. It is suggested to consider a depreciation as one that combines both the features of the expenditures that reduce retained earnings and the features of income items and does not affect the cash flow.

Keywords: *amortization, depreciation, fixed assets, method of accounting, synergetic approach, systemic approach.*

1. Introduction

In the current economic conditions a well-organized accounting is essential for entrepreneurs - a flexible set of economic actions that are constantly changing and improving. Today in Ukraine, one of the most complex and controversial accounting issues is accounting of depreciation withholdings of fixed assets.

The operations and accounting of depreciation charges in accordance with the laws and internal documents of the entity providing consistency and accuracy in completing primary documents, the calculation of depreciation of fixed assets, the control of operations, display operations in the accounts and reports can significantly improve the reliability of ongoing operations at the site and reduce the costs of accounting entity.

The presence of controversial issues and discussions on accounting amortization and depreciation of fixed assets, namely the issue of harmonization of tax claims and financial accounting of amortization and depreciation, the choice of the optimal useful life of fixed assets and establishing of the residual value, the proof of identity or difference between the concepts of “wear and tear” and “depreciation” and others indicate the relevance of the research topic.

Therefore, an objective need for a systematic study of the essence of depreciation regarding its legal definition and economic nature in the context of making a clear approach to its definition, due to the need to harmonize the financial accounting and tax legislation claims, the interests of the state, enterprises and society as a whole has arisen. The lack of scientifically based and

economically sound concept of depreciation can be explained by the ambiguity of many theoretical and methodological provisions of accounting science that in practice causes the ambiguity in choosing the optimal useful life of fixed assets and establishing of the residual value.

2. The degree of investigating the problem

The following scientists devoted their works to the issue of nature and accounting of amortization: N. Vygovska, S. Golov, L. Horodyanska, Z.- MV Zadorozhnyy, V. Orlova, S. Khoma etc., Russian: B. Averyanov, E. Bozhkova, E. Vinogradova, A. Goloshchapov, S. Grishina, T. Eremenko, K. Kostiukov, A. Kuznetsov, A. Lisenkov, A. Sokolovskiy and other scientists.

Today there is a quite significant number of publications concerning the nature of the depreciation from the legal and economic points of view, but there is no a single scientifically based approach to the interpretation of the concept “depreciation” that affects the choice of methods of its record display and, in turn, makes it difficult to take effective management decisions.

The purpose of writing the article is to study the conceptual approaches to determining the depreciation of fixed assets and justification of the use of a synergistic approach to the research problems of its definition that will take into account the multidimensional and complex nature of this category and agree on the conceptual apparatus.

3. Materials and methods

In the article a synergetic approach to the investigation is used, because it can provide the basis for the accuracy of extracting the objects of amortization and explore the relationship between them, taking into account the impact of the environment on the system of financial control.

The synergetic approach is a method of interdisciplinary research within the system approach. The system researches are a collection of scientific theories, concepts and methods in which the object of study or simulation is considered as a system. The system approach is a scientific basis for the rational investigation and efficient management of different systems, a set of methodological principles and provisions allowing to consider the system as a whole with the agreement of all its subsystems. The system principle or systemic approach to economic processes is the recognition of the fact that any organization is a system that consists of parts, each of which has its own purpose. Therefore, to achieve the common goals of the organization is possible only in case, when it is considered as a single system, trying to understand and appreciate the interaction of all its parts and combine them on the indispensable basis.

The system principle is put into the base of systematic analysis and the principle of development is in the basis of self-organization theory. The development can be represented as the implementation of new objectives, targeted changes; the process of adaptation to the environment; the contradictions in the system. The economic system operates on the one hand, according to the established laws of its development, rules and regulations, and, on the other hand, according to the taken management decisions. The system of financial control allows to detect the growing contradictions and provides the information to eliminate them. Consequently, there is an urgent need to study the economic and accounting depreciation essence as an integral system for taking management decisions.

4. Results and discussions

4.1. Determination of depreciation of fixed assets in the international and domestic accounting practice

The etymology of the term “amortization” and its historical development is going to be under consideration. The etymology of the term “depreciation” is a borrowing formed from Greek and Latin words. Despite this, in Russian this concept is borrowed not from Greek or Latin, but through German language: the word ‘depreciation’ is borrowed in the nineteenth century from German. The German word ‘amortisation’ in the meaning of “weakening, muffling” is a suffix derivation from ‘amortisieren’ which means “weaken, jamming”, that is reopening of French word ‘amortir’ - “weaken, soften, discharge, kill” [1, p. 169-170].

Today the problem of interpretation of the nature and content of disclosure of economic nature of fixed assets depreciation is quite relevant because still there is no a single approach to the definition of these concepts. The concept of depreciation is the most controversial and ambiguous in categorical apparatus, as the evidence is the lack of a unified approach to the interpretation of the concept.

The interpretations of the concept ‘amortization’, which are given in the economical literature, are considered in the table (Table 1).

Table 1: The definition of “depreciation” on the basis of the literature

№	Source	Definition
1	2	3
1.	Azriliyana A. [2, p.19]	Depreciation is 1) bringing forward the value of gradually worn fixed assets on the cost of manufactured products; 2) targeted accumulation of monetary financial assets and their subsequent application for compensation of worn-out fixed assets
2.	Baranov A. [3, p. 112]	Depreciation is the process of gradually transferring the cost of labour means as deteriorated on the manufactured product and the use of this value for further reproduction (replacement, refurbishment) of labour means
3.	Biluha M. [4, p. 82]	Depreciation is the process of gradual transferring of the value of fixed assets and intangible assets taking into account the costs of acquisition, production or improvements under the rules of depreciation established by legislative acts
4.	Borisov A. [5, p. 29]	Depreciation is a gradual wear of fixed assets and bringing forward their value on manufactured products
5.	Butinets F. [6, p. 103]	Depreciation is a calculated wear of fixed assets in monetary terms in the process of their implementation and production use
6.	Galchinsky A., -Yeshchenko P. [7, p. 45]	Depreciation is a cash replacement of worn means of production by gradual transferring of their cost per product produced
7.	Grabova N. [8, p. 23]	Depreciation is a form of fixed assets wear and tear. Two forms of physical and moral deterioration are distinguished. The first form of physical deterioration occurs in the process of the appliances use when their working units lose their qualities because of attrition. The second form is associated with the underuse of labour appliances when under the influence of natural and time factors the metal joints and machine mechanisms and tools are getting rusted and the plastic parts and rubber are getting “aged”.

1	2	3
8.	Zagorodny A. [9, p. 69]	Depreciation is a wear and tear of capital assets the calculating basis of which is the original value of fixed assets and their replacement value at the time of wear, i.e. the cost of reproduction at the moment
9.	Zadorozhnii Z.-M. [10, p. 169]	Depreciation occurs as monthly compensation for shock absorption of fixed assets
10.	Kovalev V. [11, p. 154]	Depreciation is wear, the basis for the establishment of standards of which is the replacement value of capital assets, which represents the cost of their reproduction in modern prices
11.	Len' V. [12, p. 112]	Depreciation is the deductions, the calculation of which should be based on the real value of capital assets, i.e. renewable value and in determining depreciation rates it should be taken into account only the costs of simple reproduction
12.	Mocherny S. [13, p.87]	Depreciation is the process of bringing forward the fixed assets value on the finished product in the course of the physical and moral wear
13.	Orlova V. Khoma S. [14, p. 217]	Depreciation is a gradual decline in the value of fixed assets as a result of wear and gradual transferring of their value to the manufactured products with the purpose of accumulating funds for their reproduction. Depreciation withholdings, being brought forward on the finished product, is the part of compensation previously advanced for the purchase of fixed assets capital, which has moved from the category of non-current assets in the category to the current assets of the company.
14.	Panchyshyn S. [15, p. 539]	Depreciation is the compensation in cash value of capital goods which correspond to their wear and tear (physical - from the use in production - and moral - because of undercharging of existing machines and mechanisms or appearance of their productive analogues)
15.	Pokropivny S. [16, p. 35]	Depreciation is the process of transferring the previously advanced cost of labour means to the cost of manufactured products with the purpose of their full recovery
16.	Rudenko A. [17, p. 216]	Depreciation is a way to accumulate funds for reproduction of fixed assets
17.	Tarasiuk G., Schwab L. [18, p. 220]	Depreciation is a systematic allocation of the asset cost, which is amortized over the period of useful operation of the assets
18.	Chebanova N., Vasilenko Yu. [19, p. 307]	Depreciation is a systematic allocation of amortized amount of assets over the term of their useful operation
19.	Shegda A., Litvinenko T. [20, p. 135]	Depreciation is the process of gradual reduction of fixed assets cost to the value of the newly created products with the purpose of their full recovery

Source: own development

Based on the data presented in the table it may be noted that most scientists believe that depreciation is the calculating in monetary terms of wear and tear of fixed assets in the process of their implementation and production use.

The summary data show that:

- ✓ one group of scientists believe that depreciation is simply a monetary expression of wear and tear of fixed assets 16,6 % (Boichyk I., Hanin B.);
- ✓ –the supporters of the other position consider amortization to be nothing but a process of transferring the depreciation cost of fixed assets to the production cost 50 % (Babich V., Bandurka V., Butynets' F., Boliukh M., Popovych P., Poddieriogin A.);
- ✓ –the third group of scientists state that depreciation is a way and method of accounting 33,4 % (Koblianska O., Korobov M., Moshensky S., Sopko V.).

After analysing the concept of “depreciation”, we can conclude that four basic positions on this definition are pointed out in the textbooks (Figure 1).

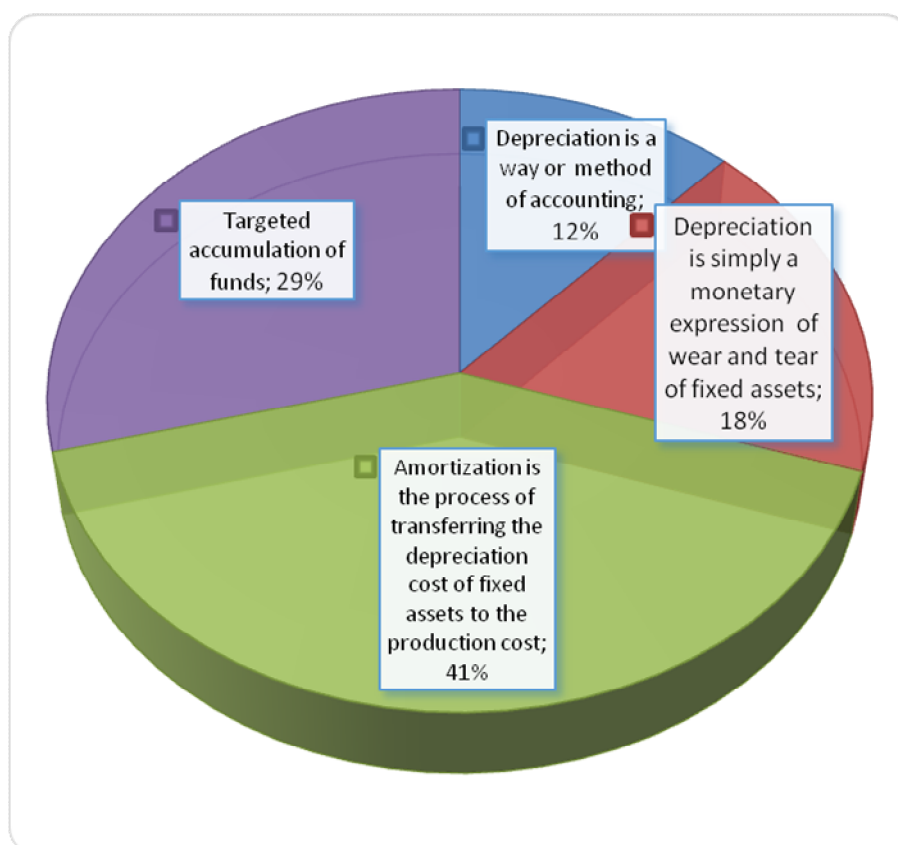


Figure1: Approaches to the interpretation of the essence of the concept of “depreciation”

Source: own development

Thus, scholars and practitioners' opinions are divided. One group believe that depreciation is a monetary expression of wear, the second - the process of transferring the wear and tear cost to the production cost, the third - argue that depreciation is a way or method of accounting, and the fourth - it is a targeted accumulation of assets (Figure 1).

Scientist M. Chumachenko [21] remarks that in the current regulations on accounting, particularly in paragraph 4 NAS 7 “Non-current Assets” [22] a simplified interpretation of the concept of fixed assets depreciation for the term of their useful operation is presented, namely “the systematic allocation of the cost that is depreciated”. He proves that this concept is much broader and it should be understood together with a profit as the source of a simple reproduction of fixed assets, and, accordingly, as an important factor in the implementation of innovative processes in the

economy of Ukraine. Such approach to the concept of depreciation will affect the construction of the entire state economic policy.

However, S. Golov [23] argues that the definition of amortization, shown in the NAS 7 “Non-current Assets” [22], is used in most foreign sources and supplemented as follows: “Depreciation for the accounting period is calculated directly or indirectly from the net profit or loss for a certain period”.

These authors confirm the validity requirements of monitoring the implementation of investment activity and use for these purposes depreciation withholdings. Also, S. Golov, agreeing in general to M. Chumachenko’s idea on definition of depreciation, remarks that the reason for this phenomenon is not the inertia or lack of knowledge about the requirements of market economy in the domestic managers’ thinking, but non-flexible state fiscal policy which discourages the investment activity of enterprises [23, 21].

Moreover, such diversity of views is characteristic not only for the initial period of the development of depreciation theory, but also for the modern period. However, despite the controversial interpretations of the concept of depreciation, there is not still a single point of view, though the fundamental solution to this issue is very important. It is considered to be quite obscure that most experts define the depreciation of fixed assets as a reimbursement of wear and tear of non-current asserts, confusing these concepts to great extent. But this is not the point because these two concepts differ from each other in the content and characteristics. Taking into account these data we can conclude that the term “depreciation” used in accounting, is not as physical deterioration or decrease in the market value of the object within the given time, but as a debiting of the production assets cost during the period of their useful operation. The term is used to reflect the gradual debiting of the fixed assets cost on expenditures.

4.2. Systematization of approaches to determining depreciation

Thus, there is no precision in the views of scientists to determine the economic essence of depreciation. It is connected with the fact that the economic mechanism for identifying and accruing of depreciation is being investigated within many sciences, particularly in economics, accounting, analysis, planning, and law. The author’s approach to the definition of the studied term allows us to focus on interdisciplinary nature of determining depreciation. It is fair to notice that until recently the problem of determining depreciation was the subject matter of study for various specialists. The identification and interpretation of economic essence of amortization was the traditional object of study for experts in the field of accounting. The interest to the investigation of the problems in defining and accounting display of the fixed assets depreciation has increased as a result of the transition to the international standards in recent years. In this regard some preconditions have occurred for implementation of the comprehensive study of issues on the economic essence of depreciation taking into account the scientific achievements of different expert groups.

Taking into account the diversity and complexity of issues on fixed assets depreciation, the ambiguity of approaches to their determination, we consider that it is reasonable to use a synergistic approach as an interdisciplinary research method for specifying this category and harmonizing the conceptual apparatus.

In the course of analysis of the definitions of “depreciation” we can summarize the main approaches to the interpretation of this definition: accounting, economic, financial taking into account the preconditions and benefits of using a synergistic approach as a methodological basis of the study and present them in Figure 2.

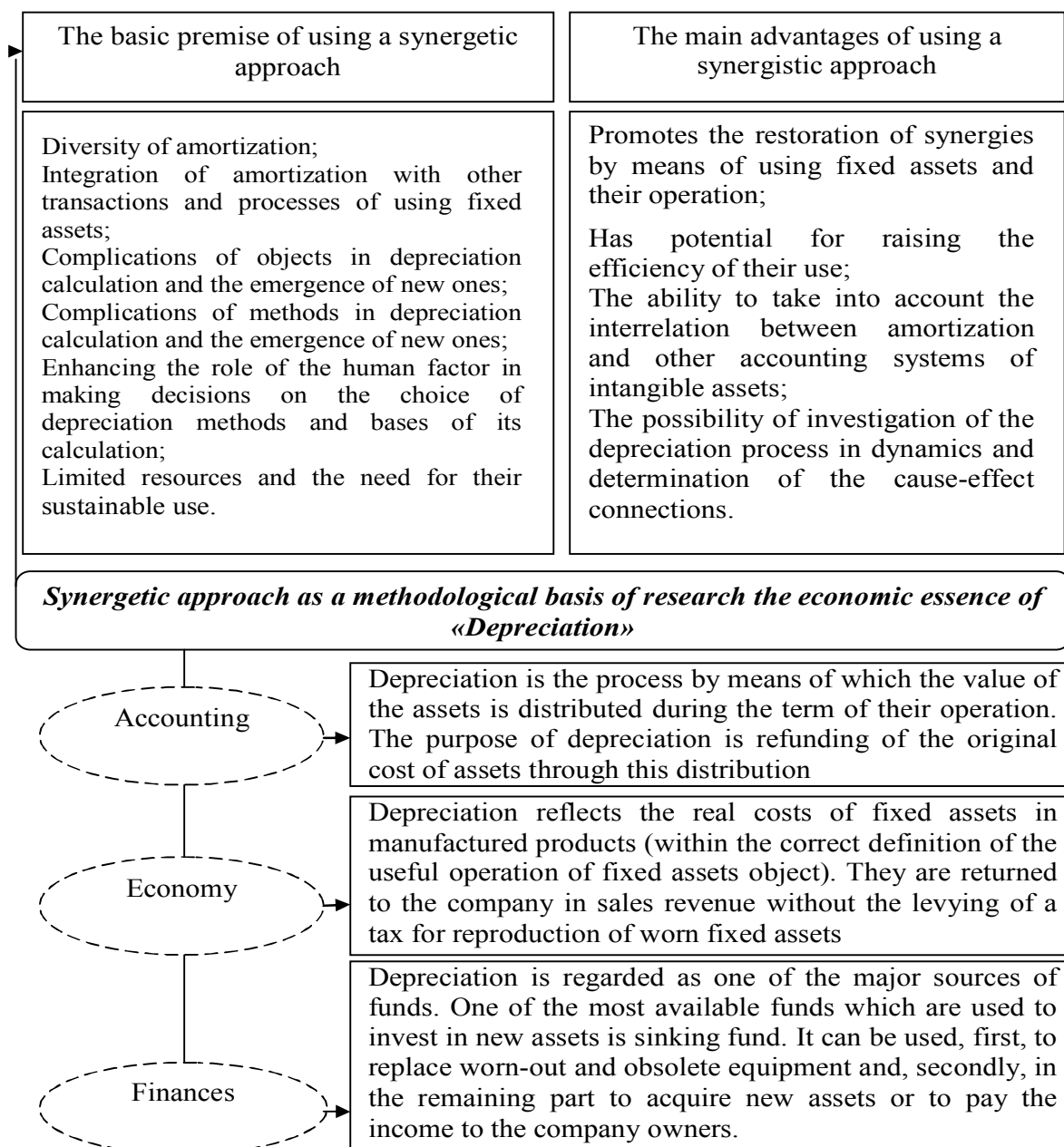


Figure 2: Synergetic approach as a methodological basis of the study of depreciation as an economic category

Source: own development

It has been found out through researches that the author considers depreciation from three main points of view that is codified in Figure 2. These approaches to the interpretation of the essence of the concept of “depreciation” give us a full and clear understanding of this phenomenon in the company that makes management decisions effective.

5. Conclusions

Examining definitions and approaches that have been proposed by various scientists, academics and economic trends across time being, we have found that virtually none of the authors do not provide a complete, more advanced and comprehensive definition of the term “depreciation”.

As a result of writing the article the following conclusions, that take into account the existence of different points of view disclosed in the economic literature and summarize a large number of views on certain aspects of depreciation, have been made:

1. Depreciation is the most important aspect of the circulation of non-current assets.
2. Discussion on determining of depreciation is related to its interdisciplinary integration with other sciences. The study of the evolution of the formation of the term “depreciation” allowed us to point out three main conceptual approaches: economic, financial, accounting.
3. Taking into account the multidimensional and complex control, the ambiguity of approaches to its definition, for specifying this category and harmonizing the conceptual apparatus, it is proposed to use a synergistic approach as interdisciplinary research method that will ensure the accuracy of distinguishing the objects of depreciation accrual and explore the interconnection between them, taking into account the environmental impact, identify synergistic effect of depreciation and amortization accrual and efficient use of fixed assets and suggest the ways to strengthen it.
4. Some authors equate the concept of “depreciation” with the concept of “depreciation withholdings”. But depreciation is a process of transferring the cost of labour means to the re-established product, and depreciation withholdings are financial value of the lost value of fixed assets in the process of production and as a result of their obsolescence.
5. Depreciation combines in the same time both the features of expenditures that reduce retained earnings and features of income items and does not affect the cash flow. In the first case the depreciation stands as an element of production costs not associated with the funds outflow in the form of depreciation withholdings, which are included in the cost of production. In the second case, depreciation is a part of the proceeds from the sale of products which does not bring additional cash inflow.
6. Due to depreciation as an economic process the lost value of fixed assets in the process of production is not being lost but is being stored, accumulating in the sinking fund.

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Rezumat

În articol sunt cercetate diverse abordări aferente conținutului economic al amortizării, sunt dezvăluite fundamentele și prioritățile aplicării abordării sinergice ca bază metodologică pentru conturarea acesteia. Ca rezultat s-a stabilit că, abordarea sinergică este o metodă sau principiu metodic de cercetare interdisciplinară, ca parte integrantă a unei abordări complexe, bazată pe principiul evolutiv de dezvoltare. Sunt studiate principalele tratamente ale cercetătorilor și prevederile reglementatorii normativ-legislative referitoare la depreciere-amortizare, considerând că calculul acesteia este cel mai important moment al rotației activelor imobilizate. Se propune examinarea amortizării ca fenomen care combină caracteristici aferente cheltuielilor, ce reduc profitul din bilanț, precum și ca elemente de venituri, și care în acest context nu afectează numerarul.

Cuvinte-cheie: amortizare, uzură (depreciere), active imobilizate, metoda de evidență, abordare sinergică, abordare sistemică.

Аннотация

В статье исследованы различные подходы к определению экономической сущности амортизации, раскрыты предпосылки и преимущества использования синергетического подхода как методологической основы для ее определения. Установлено, что синергетический подход это метод междисциплинарных исследований в рамках системного подхода, в основе которого - принцип развития. Проанализированы основные подходы ученых и нормативно-правовые требования по определению амортизации, учитывая, что ее начисление является наиболее важным моментом кругооборота основных средств. Предложено рассматривать амортизацию, как такую, что одновременно сочетает черты статей расходов, которые уменьшают балансовую прибыль и черты статей дохода и при этом не влияет на движение денежных средств.

Ключевые слова: амортизация, износ, необоротные активы, метод учета, синергетичный подход, системный подход.

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**INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF FOOD SECURITY AND ITS
MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

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Abstract

The problem of food security of the population crosses all other problems - social, economic and living standards, the development of agro-industrial sector, infrastructure of transportation, storage, distribution, sales, and the import-export policy of the individual state.

In this context, the aim of this paper is to show that food security is one of the most important components of the internal economic security, and there are enough reserves on a global scale in order to ensure that food cease to be one of the main problems of the modern world economy.

For carrying the research, normative and comparative economic analysis methods were used, empirical analysis, synthesis and statistical grouping.

The article reviews the concept of food security from the Individual to National and Global levels, taking into consideration the policies and strategies of the state. Based on the research, there are assessed certain parameters of food security at global scale and presented development forecasts of this important problem which humanity faces.

Keywords: food security, agricultural production, acces to the food, poverty, export-import of wheat.

1. Introduction

The problem of food security of the population crosses all social, economic and living standards, the development of agro-industrial sector, infrastructure of transportation, storage, distribution, sales, and the import-export policy of the individual state. In the modern economy, the food security is seen as a determinant of the national economic security, in general.

Food security represents an extremely actual concern both on global scale, as well as for the world countries regarded separately, as it addresses one of the fundamental needs of people - nutrition as a source of survival, but also as an essential component of ensuring a decent quality of life at the adequate standards levels of the contemporary world. The main source of food production is agriculture, which is simultaneously considered as industry providing jobs, income and goods for foreign trade.

A variety of factors influence the food security. Among them a decisive role has the most traditional factor - the land resource, agricultural areas, which are widely analyzed in scientific

studies in the field. In addition to agricultural land important factors, influencing the growth of agricultural production, are as use of chemicals in agriculture; irrigation of croplands, pastures, perennial plantations; scientific selection, which allowed the creation of hybrids and varieties of genetically modified agricultural plants.

In this context, the aim of this paper is to show that food security is one of the most important components of the internal economic security, and globally there are sufficient reserves to ensure food has ceased to be one of the main problems of the modern world economy.

Normative and comparative economic analysis methods, empirical analysis, synthesis and statistical grouping were used to carry out research.

The article reviews the concept of food security from the Individual to National and Global levels, taking into consideration the policies and strategies of the state. Based on the research, there are assessed certain parameters of food security at global scale and presented development forecasts of this important problem which humanity faces.

2. The investigation degree of the problem

Food security is a relatively a new concept. Starting from its appearance in the 1970s of the twentieth century, the concept of food security has been continuously developed and enriched with new aspects. Below (Table 1) it is shown a comparative analysis of the evolution of food security definitions, which clearly demonstrates the dynamics and the term saturation.

Table 1: A comparative analysis of the evolution of food security definitions

Definition	Source
<i>“availability at all times of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices”</i>	United Nations. 1975. Report of the World Food Conference, Rome 5-16 November 1974. New York
<i>“ensuring that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to the basic food that they need”</i>	FAO, 1983. World Food Security: a Reappraisal of the Concepts and Approaches. Director General's Report. Rome
<i>“access of all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life”</i>	World Bank, 1986. Poverty and Hunger: Issues and Options for Food Security in Developing Countries. Washington DC
<i>“Food security, at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels [is achieved] when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”</i>	FAO.1996. Rome Declaration on World Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action. World Food Summit, 13-17 November 1996. Rome
<i>“Food security [is] a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”</i>	FAO. 2002. The State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2001. Rome.

Source: elaborated on indicated sources

Some Romanian authors define food security as "the number of products required to individual in order to meet the physiological equilibrium and 3 types of consumption: to grow, to content and to provide labor activity" [3, p. 23].

A large scientific and practical importance of food security is find in the researches promoted also in the Republic of Moldova [7, pp. 106-117].

We would like also mention the role of agricultural areas as main resource and factor for the food security and safety, which is analyzed in some sources of specialty literature in the field [5, pp. 139-140; 6, pp. 195-206]. So, land resources are the starting point of the process of agricultural production and food security. Global Land Fund (the earth's surface area, from which the area occupied by the glaciers of the Arctic and Antarctic is subtracted) is 134 milion km² or 26 % of the total global area of the planet. In turn, on cultivated land (arable land, gardens, plantations) account for 11%; meadows, pastures – 26 %; forests, bushes - 32%; land for residential sector, industry, transport - 3% of low-production or non-production environments (swamps, deserts and areas with extreme climatic conditions) – 28 %. Total agricultural land of use (cultivated areas, meadows, pastures) make up only 37 % of the total land fund, 4.8 billion ha. The areas under arable land in the structure of agricultural land make up 28 % (1.3 billion ha), pastures - 70% (3.3 milliard ha), the area under perennials - 2%. China, Australia, the United States, the Russian Federation are the countries with the greatest agricultural areas.

Along with an increase in population on the earth agricultural area per capita is decreasing. In 1980, the figure was 0.3 ha of cropland, in 1994 - 0.24 ha, and in 2004 - 0.21 ha. The average per capita - 3.0 ha of arable land in Australia, in Canada - 1.5 ha, Russian Federation - 0.9 ha in the United States - 0.7 ha, Japan - 0.03 ha. With regard to agricultural land, falling per capita employed in the industry, this figure is in Australia - 671 ha, in the United States - 155 ha, in New Zealand - 69 ha. In Latin America the figure is 13.8 ha, in Western Europe - 12 ha. Globally, the average per person employed in agriculture accounts for 3.7 ha of agricultural land.

But the topic of food security is dealt extensively by the international community in various treaties, regulations, laws, especially those developed by FAO, the UN, EC.

Thus, at the present time specialists believe the determining criterion of food security, all people and in all times should have social and economic access to food products - in sufficient quantity and befitting quality - to ensure their needs and food preferences, and in order to maintain an active and a healthy lifestyle.

Based on the above, we can state that the modern concept of food security is a complex concept, with many aspects. And it takes into account not only objective aspects (needs, quantity, quality, accessibility), but also subjective aspects such as preferences, which are consistent with the value system of modern society.

3. Methods and materials applied

The research methodology used in this paper, had as its starting point the qualitative analysis of the literature. Theoretical and methodological basis of research and results consists of the methods and the fundamental principles of economic theory, particularly the systemic methodology, such as analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, historical and logical methods. Also, positive economic methods of analysis were used as well as regulatory, comparative and empirical

analysis. To elucidate the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the researched subject, data was processed using mathematical and statistical methods, using the following processes: data grouping and tabular representation.

In the paper, the authors resorted to existing scientific approaches in economic theory and global economic relations practice, that allow understanding of the content, features and determinants factors of food security.

4. Results and discussions

4.1. Levels of food security

The concept of food security has evolved gradually, accumulating a lot of definitions. Each of these definitions is of some importance for the perception. The original concept of security is derived from the Latin word - securitas, - atis, which has the following definition or description: “to be safe; feel confident and relaxed realizing that no danger awaits for you; security, self-defense”. English term – “food security” - has double translation- as food security and security

The production of grain is considered to be as a reference for the assessment of food safety, as crops provide, directly or indirectly, 50% of the energy consumed by a human. In the scientific literature, food safety is divided into:

- a) food security at an individual level;
- b) food security at the household level;
- c) food security of society within a particular region;
- d) food security at the national level;
- e) food security at global or world level.

Food security at the individual level means the ability to have a relatively secure access to adequate and quality nutrition to maintain a healthy lifestyle. In 1963, the FAO notes that the level of food security of individual is identified with the human right to food, and this is nothing but guaranteed access to high-quality and adequate food for everyone, according to individual needs.

The concept of food security of households has parallelly been developed, which is a guaranteed way to access to adequate and quality nutrition for the whole family, including referring to specific consumer needs of each of its members.

Food security of society means moving the focus from the individual level and the family level to the integrated level of the regional society, bearing in mind the food possibilities of society, through the inclusion of own resources of local agriculture in economic turnover with the appropriate storage infrastructure, transportation, sale, according to supply and demand proposal, the income of the population of a given society, etc..

Food security at the national level is ensuring self-efficiency in food products by developing their own agriculture and related infrastructure for the storage, warehousing, transportation, processing and sale of food products in order to adequately supply the population. The country can ensure its food security by determining the level of self-sufficiency in food products daily necessities and critical levels of food imports, production of which in the the given country is objectively impossible or ineffective. Meeting the food consumption of the population of the country does not mean that the state should necessarily self-satisfy requirements by means of an

integral production of the product in the country, but also using their financial and economic capacity to import from the international market of the missing products that are not produced by its own national economic complex.

Food security at global or world level depends on a number of factors, it is fragile and difficult to implement. With the exception of developed countries and some developing countries, where certain categories of the population with high incomes can afford even the consumption in terms of the amount of food, the practice of food security at the global level indicates, as a rule, even in the most productive years, on the qualitative and quantitative differences. In cases where food production is not sufficient, it does not have adequate quality structure. In fact, when the volume of the necessary products, as well as the computed reserves are available, food security at the global level is provided only with respect to, in general, the detriment of many regions and poor countries.

4.2. Trends in food security at the global level

The dynamics of grain production at the global level was not sufficiently satisfactory in 2004-2007. According to FAO data, in 2004 the volume of grain amounted to 632 million tons, in 2005-626 million, in 2006 - 602 million and in 2007 - 612 million. The food crisis in 2007-2008 complicated the situation even more due to the rise in prices due to the reduction of wheat reserves in the world. This is explained by the production of grain lower than consumption level in 2004-2007, 2010-2011, 2012-2013 (Table 2).

Table 2: Wheat production, consumption, reserves at the global level, million tonnes

	2007/ 2008	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/2015 estimate	2015/2016 forecast
Production	607	679	653	697	654	710	729	733
Consumption	603	652	656	693	682	692	711	723
Reserves	132	199	196	196	172	182	199	205

Source: elaborated on FAO data [10, 11]

We can see that immediately after the crisis, in 2009-2010, global wheat reserves increased by 50.8%, while prices decreased by 54%. The following year, 2010-2011, the price suddenly rose again (+ 79%), primarily due to the reduction of global production (- 4%) and an increase in consumption, which led to a deficit of 3 million tonnes. FAO forecasts for 2011-2012, did not come true because of the catastrophic drought of summer 2012. Therefore, production of wheat increased only by 6.7%, a global wheat reserves remained at the same level as in 2010-2011. Due to the increase in global production in 2013-2014 and in 2014-2015 production of wheat and reserves increased again. Projections for the 2015-2016 years are more optimistic, and show an increase in production by 6.5%, increase in reserves at 7.7% and the decline in prices by 20.4%.

Therefore, we can conclude that if the global economic crisis led to a deepening of poverty and reduce the income of the population, while food crises hit by higher prices, which poses a threat to food security of 1/7 of the world's population, which, according to the FAO and the WB, itself estimates as the most vulnerable in the context of poverty and ensuring food supply. The statistics relating to the first 10 countries - the largest wheat producers in the world, are of interest (Table 3).

Table 3: 10 leading countries of wheat production in 2009 and 2014

Country	Quantity, million tonnes	
	2009	2014
<i>China</i>	115.11	126.21
<i>India</i>	80.68	94.48
<i>Russian Federation</i>	61.74	59.71
<i>USA</i>	60.36	55.4
<i>France</i>	38.33	38.97
<i>Canada</i>	26.85	29.28
<i>Germany</i>	25.19	27.78
<i>Pakistan</i>	24.03	25.98
<i>Australia</i>	21.66	25.3
<i>Ukraine</i>	20.99	24.11
<i>Total 10 countries</i>	474.95	507.22
Global production	686.96	729.0

Source: elaborated on FAO data [8, 11]

According to the FAO data, it can be noted that these 10 countries produced 474.9 million tons of wheat, or 69.1% of global production in the amount of 686.96 million tonnes in 2009. China, the biggest producer of wheat, reached 16.8% of the world total production, India - 11.7%, the Russian Federation and the United States - 8.8%, France - 5.6%. It should be noted that the first 5 largest producers of wheat produced 51.7% of the total world's annual output. During 2014 these 5 states also lead in wheat production: China - 17.3% of the world total production, India - 13.0%, Russia - 8.2%, USA - 7.6%, France - 5.3%.

In addition, the production of wheat in large quantities allows these countries to export surplus wheat without risk to national food security. Excluding China and India, which produce the largest amounts of grain in the world, but their domestic consumption is also high due to the large number of people. Others are the largest producers of grain - exporting in large volumes. From the foregoing, it appears that States which produce the greatest amount of grain are also the most prosperous in terms of food, as these states create their own large reserves and do not depend on imports and changes in world prices. Table 4 shows the top 10 countries - the largest wheat exporters. As noted above, most major grain producers are not the largest exporters because of high domestic consumption (for example in China and India). In this context, we can not say that the food security of these countries is provided, in spite of the fact that they occupy the first two places in the world production of products. Other countries, producing in smaller amounts, can export more due to lower internal consumption. Australia, for example, according to data in Table 2, ranks 9th among the leading producers of wheat, however, according to the data in Table 3, takes 3rd place on the export volumes. Ukraine occupies 10th place among the producers and the 5th place in 2009, 8th place in 2011 among exporters.

According to this table, the share of US exports in world exports was 14.7% in 2009 and 22.1% in 2011; Canada - 13% and 11% accordingly; Australia - 11.7% and 11.9%; France - 11.3% and 13.7%; Russian Federation - 11.2% and 10.2%. It should be mentioned that the first five states that are the largest exporters in 2011, carry out 69% of total exports (61.9% in 2009). According to the data of 2014, the share of the 10 largest of the cereal-exporting countries accounted for 82.8% of the world total. These countries are the United States, Canada, Russia, France, Australia, Germany, Ukraine, Romania, Kazakhstan and India.

Table 4: 10 leading countries exporting wheat in 2009, 2011 and 2014

2009		2011		2014	
Country	Quantity, mil. tonnes	Country	Quantity, mil. tonnes	Country	Quantity, mil. tonnes
<i>USA</i>	21.9	<i>USA</i>	32.8	<i>USA</i>	25.6
<i>Canada</i>	19.3	<i>France</i>	20.3	<i>Canada</i>	24.1
<i>Australia</i>	17.5	<i>Australia</i>	17.7	<i>Russian Federation</i>	22.1
<i>France</i>	16.9	<i>Canada</i>	16.3	<i>France</i>	20.4
<i>Russian Federation</i>	16.8	<i>Russian Federation</i>	15.2	<i>Australia</i>	18.2
<i>Ukraine</i>	12.9	<i>Argentina</i>	8.4	<i>Germany</i>	11.0
<i>Germany</i>	9.7	<i>Germany</i>	6.2	<i>Ukraine</i>	10.5
<i>Argentina</i>	5.1	<i>Ukraine</i>	4.1	<i>Romania</i>	5.0
<i>Kazakhstan</i>	3.2	<i>Kazakhstan</i>	2.9	<i>Kazakhstan</i>	4.2
<i>Great Britain</i>	2.5	<i>Great Britain</i>	2.3	<i>India</i>	3.9
Global export total	149.3	Global export total	148.3	Global export total	175.2

Source: elaborated on FAO data [9, 10]

In this context the largest importers of wheat may be noted too. These countries do not produce sufficient quantities to meet domestic consumption, for various reasons, both natural (due to lack of the necessary conditions for the cultivation of wheat and other crops) and feasibility (because of the low level of productivity, production organization, poor management, that is, under conditions where more profitable to import). States in this category are more vulnerable and strategically dependent on other countries exporters. And they can not isolate themselves from changes in world prices, jeopardizing their food security. However, underdeveloped states are the most vulnerable. Any price increase affects primarily the poor, as they spend most of their income to the obtain food products, which is typical of the Republic of Moldova [7]. Table 5 shows the countries that imported the largest quantity of wheat in 2009, in 2011 and in 2014.

Table 5: The leading countries importing wheat in 2009, in 2011 and in 2014

2009		2011		2014	
Country	Quantity, mil. tonnes	Country	Quantity, mil. tonnes	Country	Quantity, mil. tonnes
<i>Egypt</i>	9.1	<i>Egypt</i>	9.8	<i>Egypt</i>	9.5
<i>Italy</i>	6.5	<i>Algeria</i>	7.4	<i>Italy</i>	7.5
<i>Spain</i>	6.4	<i>Italy</i>	7.3	<i>Indonesia</i>	7.4
<i>Algeria</i>	5.7	<i>Japan</i>	6.2	<i>Algeria</i>	7.4
<i>Iran</i>	5.5	<i>Brasil</i>	5.7	<i>Iran</i>	7.1
<i>Brasil</i>	5.4	<i>Indonesia</i>	5.6	<i>Brasil</i>	5.8
<i>Netherlands</i>	5.0	<i>Turkey</i>	4.7	<i>Japan</i>	5.7
<i>Japan</i>	4.7	<i>Germany</i>	4.4	<i>Turkey</i>	5.3
<i>Indonesia</i>	4.7	<i>Spain</i>	4.4	<i>Marocco</i>	5.1
<i>Germany</i>	4.1	<i>Mexic</i>	4.0	<i>Spain</i>	4.8
<i>Nigeria</i>	3.8	<i>Nigeria</i>	4.0	<i>Mexic</i>	4.5
<i>Belgium</i>	3.6	<i>Netherlands</i>	3.9	<i>Netherlands</i>	4.5
<i>Turkey</i>	3.4	<i>Marocco</i>	3.7	<i>Germany</i>	4.3
<i>Mexic</i>	2.8	<i>Belgium</i>	3.4	<i>Bangladesh</i>	2.9
<i>Bangladesh</i>	2.4	<i>Bangladesh</i>	3.1	<i>Nigeria</i>	2.6
Global import total	146.3	Global import total	147.2	Global import total	163.3

Source: elaborated on FAO data [9, 10]

It is important to note that the advanced countries, such as Italy, Spain, Japan, Germany, Holland, although they are in the top importing countries, in some years they are wheat exporters too. These states are better off with a food point of view. And first of all, due to the fact that the population of these countries has a high income compared with the underdeveloped countries, and agriculture is highly developed. In this context, referring to the incomes of the population and the level of development of agriculture, the most vulnerable are such countries as Algeria, Iran, Indonesia, Egypt, Bangladesh, Nigeria, and others. According to international practice, in the evolution of food security, it is considered to be the optimum import quota at a level of up to 30% of total consumption. A larger quota increase strategic dependence on other countries.

In 2000, in New York, 147 heads of states and governments signed the “Millennium Declaration of the United Nations: the development of mankind - a goal of paramount importance”, which briefly stated development goals for the next millennium (MDGs). The first objective is to reduce by half the number of hungry people in the period of 2000-2015. However, this number is not only not decreased, but even increased by 15% (about 150 million people) and the first time in the history of over 1 billion people. The main reason for hunger and malnutrition in the world is poverty. According to World Bank statistics, 20% of the world population is considered particularly poor; their incomes are spent mainly on obtaining food products (more than 70-80% of the total income in the poorest countries).

5. Conclusions

The main conclusion is that the lack of food security on a global scale is not a consequence of the depletion of the world's agricultural potential, and is due to the lack of adequate modern industrial and financial resources for social and economic development of underdeveloped countries. This development makes hundreds of thousands of people suffer hunger and malnutrition. On the other hand, the industrialized countries, which spend huge funds for agriculture, are interested to maintain high prices on the world market, in order to obtain the expected profit. Such prices are unacceptable for many poor countries. The contradictions between developed and poor countries lead to support and development of food security in many countries. In addition, the actual situation of the deterioration is due to the negative impact of environmental problems, as a result of the intensive development of agriculture, such as the erosion of the land fund, accumulation in the soil of pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, other substances and chemicals, reducing the groundwater level, landslides and others. We can therefore conclude that the level of food security on a global scale in the period up to 2050 will probably not have been improved.

Based on these realities, contemporary concerns related to food security, regardless of geographic location, it is a complex issue and joint efforts to resolve it can bring a significant contribution to the overall goal of improving the quality of life.

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Rezumat

Problema securității alimentare a populației tangențiază cu un ansamblu larg de alte probleme - sociale, economice, standardele de viață și dezvoltarea sectorului agroindustrial, infrastructura de transport, depozitarea, distribuția, vânzările, politica de import-export a unui stat.

În acest context, obiectivul acestei lucrări este de a arăta că securitatea alimentară este una dintre componentele importante ale securității economice interne și la scară globală există suficiente rezerve pentru ca asigurarea cu produse alimentare să înceteze a fi una dintre principalele probleme ale economiei mondiale contemporane. Pentru realizarea cercetării au fost utilizate metode de analiză economică normativă și comparativă, analiză empirică, sinteză, gruparea statistică.

Articolul analizează conceptul de securitate alimentară de la nivel individual la cel național și global, luând în considerare politicile și strategiile statului. În baza cercetărilor, sunt apreciați anumiți parametri ai securității alimentare la nivel global și sunt prezentate pronosticuri ale evoluției acestei probleme importante cu care se confruntă omenirea.

Cuvinte-cheie: securitate alimentară, producție agricolă, acces la hrană, sărăcie, export-import de grâu.

Аннотация

Проблема продовольственной безопасности населения пересекается с множеством других проблем - социальных, экономических, уровня жизни, развития агропромышленного комплекса, инфраструктуры транспорта, хранения, распределения, продажи, политики импорта-экспорта государства.

В этом контексте, целью данной работы является показать, что продовольственная безопасность это один из важнейших компонентов внутренней экономической безопасности, а в глобальном масштабе существует достаточно резервов для того, чтобы обеспечение продовольствием перестало бы быть одной из основных проблем современной мировой экономики.

Для проведения исследования авторы использовали нормативные и сравнительные методы экономического анализа, эмпирический анализ, синтез и статистическую группировку.

В статье рассматривается понятие продовольственной безопасности, от уровня отдельного человека до уровня национального и глобального, принимая во внимание политику и стратегии государства. На основании исследования, оценены некоторые параметры продовольственной безопасности в глобальном масштабе и представлены прогнозы эволюции этой важной проблемы, с которой сталкивается человечество.

Ключевые слова: продовольственная безопасность, сельскохозяйственное производство, доступность питания, бедность, экспорт-импорт пшеницы.

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STUDY ON MICROENCAPSULATED FOOD FOR HUMAN NUTRITION

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Abstract

Microencapsulation is a new technology that has been used in various fields: food industry, cosmetics, detergents, textiles, photography, chemical, medical and pharmaceutical, agricultural, electronics, drawing and painting, waste treatment and biotechnology.

Microencapsulation offers a variety of opportunities, such as: labile compounds protection (lipid and vitamin protection against oxidation processes, probiotic protection), facilitation of handling (intelligent and interactive packaging), mixing the immiscible components (the microencapsulation of essential oils and their introduction as microcapsules in a liquid medium), transforming a liquid component in a powder (powders are obtained from liquid components by microencapsulation in cyclodextrin), masking the unpleasant taste and smell (the unwanted smell of fish or the bitter taste of amino acids, the strong odour of allyl isothiocyanate) and providing a controlled slow release of bioactive substances (the aroma compounds microencapsulation).

The general objective of the authors is consulting a database required to establish a work plan needed to achieve the project research and the thesis.

The authors hope that the scientific information presented in this paper could be useful for food industry specialists, and other professionals who want to know and to strengthen their scientific framework regarding the benefits of microencapsulation.

Keywords: *microencapsulation, food industry, human nutrition, encapsulant, encapsulated, flavour.*

1. Introduction

Encapsulation is a process that involves the coating and enclosing a core (*encapsulated*) in a membrane (*encapsulant*), until the core is losing its identity [1, p. v]. Encapsulation is focused on isolation, protection, transport and controlled release of the active substance (*encapsulated*) [1, p. 2; 2, p. 3]. Nowadays, the dietary habits of the world's population are in a state of permanent change. To satisfy consumer requirements, the *microencapsulation* of food ingredients has become a topic of current interest for the products availability, to providing nutrients, ensuring innocuity, energy supply and products packaging. *Microencapsulation* is applicable on a broad spectrum of food and drinks, ranging from the health aspect, for creating specific taste and *flavour*, to the range of possible interactions and food packaging [3, p. 543]. The general objective of this paper is consulting a database required to establish a work plan need it to achieve the research project and the doctoral thesis. The authors hope that the scientific information presented in this paper could

be useful for food industry specialists, and other professionals who want to know and to strengthen their scientific framework regarding the benefits of microencapsulation.

2. Applied methods and materials

Method applied was a descriptive exploratory research. Operational objectives were (i) to provide a better knowledge about the phenomenon of microencapsulation, (ii) the clarification of certain concepts, (iii) suggesting some research directions through the establishment of the work plan. The used instrument was the existing data analysis via exploitation the results obtained by other researchers from different sources, such as: ISI or BDI online journals, books, chapters in books, doctoral thesis.



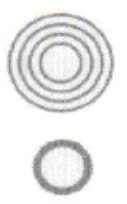
3. Results and discussions

3.1. Aspects concerning microencapsulation and its role in industry

In the scientific literature, the term encapsulation is often confused with immobilization, the encapsulation is considered by some researchers to be an immobilization technique. The difference between those two processes is concerned with the relationship between the active substance and the *encapsulant* material. Through encapsulation the core is totally covered by the *encapsulant* material, while by immobilisation the active substance is adsorbed on the support material, so the nutrient can leave the system and destroy it [4, p. 295; 5, p. 31].

The term microcapsules covers several configurations that differ by morphology and size (Table 1).

Table 1: The main types of products obtained by *microencapsulation* operation

Products type	Characteristics	Schematic illustration
Microcapsules	They are obtained by coating a core liquid with a solid membrane. They have micrometric dimensions.	
Nanocapsules	They present the same structure as microcapsules, but are smaller, they have nanometric dimensions.	
Microspheres or microparticles	These are products that possess both a solid core and solid membrane. Mostly, there is no clear distinction between the core and the membrane. The membrane acts as a porous matrix by absorbing the active substances. They have micrometric dimensions.	
Nanospheres or nanoparticles	They present the same structure as microspheres, but are smaller, they have nanometric dimensions.	
Liposomes	Products represented by a lipid membrane, consisting most often of phospholipids and cholesterol. They are represented by two subtypes: unilamellar and multilamellar, and they have micrometric dimensions.	
Niosomes	Products with a similar structure to liposomes, but which differ by the membrane composition, which is made of synthetic amphiphilic molecules. It have nanometric sizes.	

Sources: [1, p. 2; 6, p. 8]

Microencapsulation has a wide application spectrum in industry [1, p. 3; 7, p. 221] (Table 2).

Table 2: Fields and examples of industrial applications of *microencapsulation*

Field	Examples
Food industry	Flavours, essential oils, colorants plant extracts, antioxidants, minerals, preservatives, essential fatty acids, amino acids, enzymes, microorganisms, vitamins
Agriculture	Insecticides, acaricides, nematocides, herbicides, fungicides, pheromones, fertilizers, micronutrients, microbial bioinsecticides
Biotechnology	Immobilized enzymes, complex multienzymatic, microorganisms living cells, cell complex hybrid tissue, culture mononuclear antibodies, markers, ADN and ARN, nutritional compounds, food for aquaculture, chromatographic materials
Chemical industry	Catalysts and enzymes, oxidants and reductants agents, fireproof materials, adhesives, dyes, perfumes, lubricants, hygroscopic and chromatographic materials
Detergent industry	Perfumes, enzymes, chelating agents, decolouring agents, bleaching activators, antistatic, bleaches, abrasives
Textile industry	Materials that can be subject to phase transition, dyes, pigments, perfumes, waterproofing agents, color stabilizers
Drawing and painting	Dyes, revelatory, pigments, perfumes, organic solvents, adhesives, photosensitive compounds, heat-sensitive compounds, toners, liquid crystals
Photo	Silver halides, pigment colorants photographic emulsions, photopolymerizable compounds, film-potting compounds, colors, plasticizers
Waste treatment	Microorganisms, substrates, enzymes, catalysts, detoxifying, liquid waste, radioactive waste, industrial waste with high perceived risk
Electronics	Liquid crystal materials that can be subject to phase transition, semiconductor materials, adhesive agents, drying agents, fireproofing agents, antistatic agents, repellent substances
Pharmaceutical and medical industry	Antibiotics, analgesics, sedatives, prostaglandin inhibitors, contrast substances, hydrocortisone, cytostatics, alkaloids, detoxifying, hemoglobin, contraceptives, insulin
Cosmetics	Perfumes, antiperspirants, essential oils, agents humectants, bronzing agents, sunscreens, capillary dyes, depilatory substances

Sources: [6, p. 9; 8]

The capsules are cell-like. The cell membrane plays a decisive role in the existence of the cell by the delimitation of extracellular and intracellular space, protecting cell components from external aggression, allowing permanent communication with the outside environment through the transfer of mass, energy and information [1, p. v].

The same functions need to be activated also on the encapsulation of active substances in food systems: the capsule core delimitation from the external environment via stabilization and protection from external factors, such as (oxygen, moisture, light, chemical hazards, biochemical and microbiological) and the membrane's permeable property and to provide a controlled release of the active substance with a controlled speed in the right place and at the right time [1, p. v].

In the *food industry*, encapsulation is used for the stabilization of food ingredients and to increase their bioavailability; to prevent the evaporation and degradation of volatile components; to mask the undesirable taste and odour; mixing immiscible compounds; for preventing the reaction between biocomponents and various substances from the food matrix during storage; converting a powder compound into a liquid; providing a slow, controlled release of the active substance and

it's protection against the aggressiveness of physical factors such as temperature, pH, oxygen, enzymes, light, and moisture [4, p. 293, p. 300; 5, p. 3, p. 4].

3.2. Aspects concerning the use of microencapsulated food in *human nutrition*

Because of the convenience or the lack of time resources required for food preparation, consumers are focused on foods that do not require so much time and energy to cook. By using *microencapsulation* techniques, a whole range of products ready to eat (RTE), food and drinks, are offered on the market [9, p. 42; 10, p. 3]. In the poultry meat industry, *microencapsulation* accomplishes the improvement of food security, mainly through controlled delivery of salts of organic acids in meat, such as lactate and sodium diacetate, substances that determine an increased resistance against the bacteria growth of the genus *Listeria*, *Clostridium*, *Salmonella* and *Lactobacillus* [3, p. 543]. In the case of raw fish such as salmon RTE, through *microencapsulation* the controlled release of astaxanthin pigment for ensuring the reddish-orange colour and providing the antioxidant activity can be accomplished [11, US Patent 2010/0319077A1].

The main applications of *microencapsulation* for *human nutrition* are shown in Figure 1.

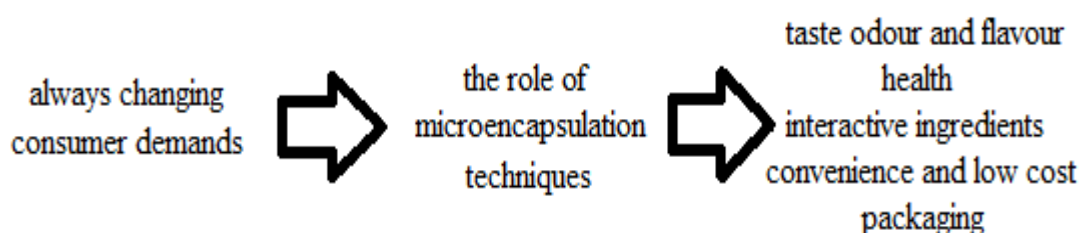


Figure 1: The main applications of *microencapsulation* for *human nutrition*

Source: [3, p. 543-546]

New *microencapsulation* technologies have led to a whole series of industrial applications in terms of enhancing the *flavour*, the introduction of odour masking, maintaining the *flavour* for a longer period of time, or release rapid onset and stabilization *flavour* [3, p. 545]. In the case of hot drinks the lipid matrices with a high melting point are used to ensure the capture and the *flavour* protection, but to low enough melting points for release only after the application of hot water, especially for coffee products, tea, milk or chocolate.

Other uses of the techniques of *microencapsulation* are based on the pH value, using alginate especially calcium alginate, by coacervation of the polyelectrolytes with different electrical loads, in which case it will release the flavour after it has been exposed to certain pH conditions. Some researchers, like Nedovic and his team, Deepak and his collaborators have developed *microencapsulation* technologies to mask unpleasant tastes and aromas. The microcapsules are designed to protect the active substance so that it does not come into contact with taste receptors on the tongue [12, p. 108; 13, p. 1806]. Another application of *microencapsulation* of flavouring

compounds is with regards to its release over a long period of time, in particular gum, sweets and bakery products. There are certain brand of chewing gum which have the capacity to release aroma during mastication, or at the breaking moment, as well as nutrient and medical substances (e.g. teeth whitening agents) [14, p. 678; 15, p. 323; 16, p. 546; 17, WO Patent 2012/145611; PCT/US Patent No. 2012/034427]. In general, the compounds used must have a high solubility in organic solvents and poor solubility in water (e.g. ethyl cellulose), which are capable of the slow release of *flavour* [3, p. 545]. Other researchers, like Ko and his colleagues investigated the applicability of allyl isothiocyanate (AITC) to increase the validity period and maintaining the quality of Kimchi. AITC is a very useful antimicrobial agent, but its use in foods is limited because it has a strong odour and high volatility. *Microencapsulation* is used to decrease the volatility and mask the undesirable odour, but also increase product validity. The *encapsulated* materials that were used are arabic gum and chitosan. By adding the microencapsulated AITC (<0.1%), Kimchi has a longer shelf life, whilst maintaining its quality [18, p. 92]. The new trend in health refers to functional foods. Through *microencapsulation*, the active substances were introduced into foods easily, especially for teas made ready-to-drink, drinks for athletes, beverages based on milk, water and fortified snacks, baked products, foods with a low sodium level, dietary supplements, chewing gums, candies [3, p. 545]. *Microencapsulation* techniques allows for the protection of probiotics and also for oxidation susceptible compounds, such as: vitamins, unsaturated lipids and other functional active substances [19, p. 3; 20, US Patent 2011/0217410 A1, p. 1; 21, US Patent 2011/0020520A1, p. 5; 22, p. 126; 23, US Patent 2012/0195868 A1; 24, US Patent 2012/10120156330 A1; 25 p. 214]. The *microencapsulation* of omega-3 fatty acids plays an important role in reducing lipid oxidation and permit its use for a form easy to assimilate. Complex coacervation and spray-drying are the most commonly used methods [26, p. 1]. Nicolo Della Rosa et al studied the feasibility of fortified fish snacks with seaweed extract as a natural antioxidant and polyunsaturated fatty acids long-chain (n-3 LCPUFAs) as a source of high quality lipids as cod liver oil and fish oil. The samples enriched with omega-3 fatty acid showed oxidation levels higher than the controls and by *microencapsulation* of fish oil the oxidation process was greatly diminished. The products quality was not affected by adding algae extracts. The sensorial properties did not change. The lipid quality and its oxidation were determined by chemical analysis namely peroxide value (PV), the test thiobarbituric acid (TBARS) and by sensory analysis (descriptive analysis) after a storage period of 28 days in refrigeration conditions [27, p. 746]. The sensitive ingredients microencapsulated in functional food include caffeine, taurine, D-ribose, vitamin B, aroma compounds, essential electrolytes (sodium, potassium, chloride, calcium, phosphate and magnesium salts), antioxidants, colorants, sweeteners, prebiotics and probiotics, stabilizers, fruit extracts, and whey protein hydrolyzate.

To mask the unwanted smell of fish or the bitter taste of amino acids, microencapsulation of aroma compounds is used [3, p. 545]. Wen-Ching Ko and his team have studied an optimum method of curcumin *microencapsulation*, a compound soluble in the oil phase using γ polyglutamic acid, a natural polymer, water soluble, biodegradable and non-toxic. The use of Span80 (sorbitanoleate) increased the efficiency of encapsulation [28, p. 497]. Nowadays, via *microencapsulation*, the consumers can be pampered with a lot of new products, foods and beverages with interactive properties. For example, in the case of candies, high pressure CO₂ is encapsulated in a glassy polymer matrix food. After the introduction of the candy to the mouth, there is a sharp noise as the CO₂ is released [29, US Patent 7,122,215B2]. In the case of candies for children, when the microcapsules come into contact with saliva, the tongue changes colour, it turns to green, blue,

yellow or red. With some breakfast cereals when the grain oatmeal is introduced into milk, a change of colour also occurs [3, p. 546]. In the beverage industry, gas infusion or the injection of microcapsules which are capable of causing the product to begin foaming when it is combined with water, milk or other suitable liquid is used. The suitable products for this type of *microencapsulation* are instant soft drinks, instant cappuccino, coffee mixes, or instant milkshake [30, US Patent 2010/0278995 A1; 31, US Patent 2010/0092629 A1, p. 1; 32, US Patent 7,713,565B2]. The introduction of the microcapsules which respond to movement in a drink has also been carried out [29, US Patent 7,122,215B2]. Norris and his collaborators studied a delivery system with a small explosion with a very intense *flavour* when drinkers come into contact with the beverage container [33, US Patent 8,042,356B2]. Concerning packaging, *microencapsulation* technologies are focused on creating intelligent and interactive packaging. Specially designed intelligent packaging are incorporating nanoparticles with a role in the relationship between both with the external environment and also with the food. Thus, the packaging contributes to improving food safety, to preservation of the food and an increase in food consumption [34, p. 496]. Edible films, increasingly being a new trend used, incorporates the *flavour* compounds and let them become free upon contact with saliva by total dissolution. The main constituents of soluble edible films are pullulan, starch, cellulose derivatives, proteins and derivatives resulting from different mixtures [3, p. 546]. In the case of telescopic straws, the active ingredient, such as a probiotic is suitably mounted in an adherence agent on the interior wall of the straw. The probiotic is consumed when the water or drink is drawn through the straw. By the same principle, the bioactive compound is protected by a thin aluminum foil which is situated on the lid of the drink. By unscrewing the lid of a bottle of water, the aluminum foil is broken and the active substance is released into the water. Through this method the products can be enriched with moisture-sensitive functional ingredients, such as *flavour*, colour compounds or, probiotics, because the active ingredient is protected and released immediately during use [3, p. 546].

The general objective of the authors is consulting a database required to establish a work plan necessary to achieve the project research and the thesis.

4. Conclusions

Microencapsulation is a process that involves the coating and potting of a core in a membrane until the *encapsulated* loses its identity, and it has applications in many fields, in many industries. In this study we summarized some aspects of *microencapsulation* and its role in the industry, and some aspects concerning the use of microencapsulated food in *human nutrition*. *Microencapsulation* is not the same with immobilisation. The relationship between the active substance named also *encapsulated* material and the *encapsulant* material make the difference between those two processes. A database about the actual situation in *microencapsulation* for *human nutrition* was created. The studies have been being focused in two directions, such as: (i) microencapsulation of citrus essential oils and bring flavour for cocktails published on 1st International Conference named Essential Oils in Aromatherapy – Food Industry – Cosmetic, which took place on March, 2016, in Galati, Romania and (ii) microencapsulation of oregano oil for fish nutrition in recirculating aquaculture systems. There have been several preliminary tests with different coloured capsules which indicated that the red colour was preferred and the *Great sturgeon* need wet capsules, while *Nile tilapia* preferred dry capsules. The authors hope that the

scientific information presented in this paper could be useful in the *food industry* by specialists, and other professionals who want to know and to strengthen the scientific framework regarding the benefits of *microencapsulation*.

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Rezumat

Microîncapsularea este o nouă tehnologie, utilizată în varii domenii: alimentară, cosmetică, al detergentilor, textil, al fotografiei, chimic, medical și farmaceutic, agricol, electronic, pentru desen și pictură, tratarea deșeurilor și biotehnologic.

Microîncapsularea oferă o varietate de oportunități, cum ar fi: protecția compușilor labili (protecția lipidelor și a vitaminelor împotriva proceselor de oxidare, protecția probioticilor), facilitarea manipulării (ambalajele inteligente și interactive), amestecarea componentelor nemiscibile (microîncapsularea uleiurilor esențiale și introducerea acestora sub formă de microcapsule în mediu lichid), transformarea unui component lichid într-o pulbere solidă (prin microîncapsularea în ciclodextrine a componentelor lichide se obțin pulberi), mascarea gustului și mirosului neplăcut (mirosul nedorit de pește, gustul amar al aminoacizilor, mirosul neplăcut și puternic al izotiocianatului de alil), oferind o eliberare lentă și controlată a substanțelor bioactive (prin microîncapsularea compușilor de aromă).

Obiectivul general al lucrării este consultarea datelor științifice actuale în vederea întocmirii unei baze de date bibliografice necesară pentru derularea planului de lucru obligatoriu proiectului de cercetare și realizării tezei de doctorat.

Autorii speră că informațiile științifice prezentate în această lucrare ar putea fi utile studenților, tinerilor cercetători dar și specialiștilor din industria alimentară și altor categorii de profesioniști care doresc să cunoască și să-și consolideze informațiile științifice cu privire la beneficiile tehnicilor de microîncapsulare.

Cuvinte-cheie: microîncapsulare, industria alimentară, alimentație umană, încapsulat, încapsulant, aromă.

Аннотация

Микроинкапсуляция это новая технология, используемая в различных областях: пищевой, косметической, моющих средств, текстиля, фотографии, химической, медицинской и фармацевтической, сельскохозяйственной, электронной, рисования и живописи, обработки отходов и в биотехнологии.

Микроинкапсуляция предоставляет многообразие возможностей, таких как: защита лабильного соединения (защита липидов и витаминов от процессов окисления, защита пробиотиков), облегчение

обработки (интеллектуальная и интерактивная упаковка), смешивание несмешиваемых компонентов (микроинкапсуляция эфирных масел и их внедрение в виде микрокапсул в жидкую среду), превращение жидкого компонента в твердый порошок (путем микрокапсулирования жидких компонентов в циклодекстрин получают порошки), маскировку неприятного вкуса и запаха (запах рыбы, горького вкуса аминокислот, сильного и неприятного запаха аллилизотиоцианата), медленное и контролируемое высвобождение биологически активных веществ (через микрокапсулирование ароматических соединений).

Основная цель данной работы заключается в исследовании актуальных научных достижений для составления базы библиографических данных, необходимых для надлежащего выполнения рабочего плана по исследовательскому проекту и реализации диссертации.

Авторы надеются, что научная информация, представленная в данной работе, может быть полезна студентам, молодым ученым и специалистам в области пищевой промышленности и другим категориям специалистов, заинтересованных в углублении своих научных познаний о преимуществах методов микроинкапсуляции.

Ключевые слова: микрокапсулирование, пищевая промышленность, продукты питания, инкапсулированный, инкапсулянт, аромат.

METHODICAL APPROACH OF ASSESSING COMPETITIVENESS IN DOMESTIC TRADE AND IN CONSUMER COOPERATION

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Abstract

The paper proposes a new methodical approach in order to assess the competitiveness of enterprises in domestic trade and in consumer cooperation as a necessary condition for improving their activity on the market, it pays a special attention to indicators of enterprise's competitiveness based on the marketing principles, choosing the criteria of evaluating the product's competitiveness by calculating the indicators of probability on the basis of using the Delphi method of experts' questionnaires, calculating the domain's indicators that reflect the level of competition in domestic trade and in consumer cooperation of the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: *enterprise's competitiveness, product competitiveness, domestic trade, consumer cooperation, fields' indicators, Delphi method, SWOT analysis, integral competitiveness indicator.*

1. Introduction

Currently there has not yet been developed a unique method of assessing the company's competitiveness on the basis of field's indicators that would reflect the level of competition in domestic trade and consumer cooperation because each economic agent uses his own strategy and tactics of activity to extend his goals.

The competitiveness is based on a set of indicators reflecting primarily the level of product's competitiveness, and secondly the company's overall competitiveness. To assess the competitiveness of an economic agent, it is required to compare the data, which must meet certain requirements, including: measurability parameters of products and market segments which these products are intended to, measurability phases of the product's lifecycle and environment in which the business operates, etc.

2. The degree of investigating the issue at the present moment, the aim of research

The need of developing and implementing a method of evaluating the company's competitiveness is due to the enterprises' characteristics within domestic trade and consumer cooperatives that are influenced by a number of factors. The results of the evaluation will enhance the company's

competitiveness if it accounts for an important criterion as product competitiveness and there will be taken into consideration factors which form the economic conditions of businesses from domestic trade and consumer cooperation.

3. Applied methods and materials

In the present research, there have been applied analysis methods that reflect the level of products' competitiveness and of companies as a whole, the sales volume of the product taking into account the competitiveness of the enterprise on the market. The authors pay attention to the necessity of choosing the criteria that would reflect the level of competition in domestic trade and consumer cooperation taking into account the specific economic activity. The comparative method used in research, SWOT analysis, Delphi method, grouping method on assessing the effectiveness and running businesses within the domestic trade and consumer cooperation.

4. Results and discussions

4.1. Specifics of developing methods for evaluating enterprise's competitiveness

In the specialty literature methods of assessing enterprise's competitiveness based on the theory of competitive advantages, described by A. Curno, M. Porter and P. Samuelson [6], are widely met.

In these works it is stated that to ensure the economic competitiveness of the subject it is necessary to use more efficiently the material, human and financial resources. The competitive advantages of the company are those, which create certain advantages of production factors over its competitors.

Also the methods of evaluating competitiveness, described in the specialty literature, have some drawbacks because they cannot take into account the compliance of the company's manufactured products to real consumers' demand.

The important thing is the use of structural and functional approaches in determining the level of enterprise's competitiveness. The structural approach enables the company to assess the situation on the market, given the level of competition and the possibility of its positioning on the market. Functional approach involves making comparisons of economic indicators of the companies with the ones of the competing firms, characterizing the efficiency of all enterprises in various fields: the use of fixed and circulating capital, ratio of sales to working capital, ratio of profit to the working capital, ratio of working capital to current liabilities and other indicators characterizing the financial activity.

At the same time, structural and functional approaches to measure the level of competitiveness of the company should be completed with product competitiveness based on marketing principles. To this end, it is necessary to make marketing applied researches that will determine the main products' parameters evaluated by consumers to determine the competitive level of competing products depending on quality and price indicators. In our view, this approach objectively reflects the company's competitiveness in the market and competition in domestic trade that is known that, the higher the product's competitiveness is, the higher both the company's competitiveness and competition in the branch are.

4.2. The evaluation of enterprise and product competitiveness

The method of evaluating the enterprise's competitiveness based on the marketing principles has advantages because it takes into account an important criterion influencing enterprise's competitiveness – product's competitiveness. But the results of the assessment will increase if they take into account factors influencing economic conditions of enterprise's activity, strengths and weaknesses in their company based on SWOT analysis and Delphi method, as well as normative acts, their implementation to improve competitiveness [1, 2].

Product competitiveness can be assessed on the basis of the analysis of the quality indicators' importance and comparative economic indicators of the product evaluated against consumer needs. Therefore, product competitiveness is ensured only by fulfilling the conditions of its priority by the consumer to the basic product taken as a model, sample. On the definite market as a model can be analyzed specifically the product with the largest share of sales volume or the product which is mostly demanded by consumers as a result of the field survey.

The process of evaluating enterprise's competitiveness is based on the following methodical approach:

1. Calculating the indicators which characterize competitiveness / competition / product;
2. Calculating the unique / full / product competitiveness indicator;
3. Calculating the indicator characterizing the product sales volume corrected by the indicator of product competitiveness and market image of the company;
4. Calculating the benchmark assess of the effectiveness of running business activity, etc. [4, 5, 6, 7].

Simultaneously, we highlight the factors influencing the competitiveness of enterprises which should be taken into consideration [8]:

1. Limit the number or range of suppliers: there may be situations when an exclusive right is the only way to ensure that a service reaches the market. However, the regulating authorities should understand that alternatives that restrict less the competition are impracticable before tackling such a right.
2. Establishing a license or authorization as an operation condition: a license to practice, the size of the restriction imposed on the entry can be high because the qualifying conditions are often complemented with additional elements. Other common conditions for licensing include the need on minimum working capital. Qualification assessment of practitioners can be justified in cases where consumers cannot make a decision on the competences of a practitioner/ the damages suffered by consumers / making a weak decision are serious and irreversible.
3. An important factor influencing enterprise's competitiveness is significantly increasing the cost of entry or exit of businesses on the market: the regulations that set strict standards for product testing may be justified when there is significant risk of occurrence of adverse effects associated with customers' use of the product. In some cases, alternatives such as providing more information or the terms of disclosing the product's characteristics can be taken into account to enable consumers to make more informed decisions.
4. Restricting the flow of goods and services in domestic trade: geographically limiting the flow of goods and services which are imposed where trade would be feasible technically and economically, has the effect of artificially reducing the size of the goods or services

market. By reducing the size of the market, there are more negative effects on competition: likelihood the degree of market's concentration grows to the point where producers reach out and use their market power; a smaller and more isolated market may be associated with lower levels of innovation, product's differentiation and others. Thus, consumers can be served at a lower level in terms of quality.

4. Controlling the selling prices of goods or services: when minimum tariffs are established, the suppliers with the lowest cost are prevented to gain the market share by offering better tariffs to consumers. Legislation on minimum tariff has the disadvantage of reducing the total economic efficiency and encourages inefficient producers to remain on the market, thus preventing the use of resources in other more productive, alternative areas.
5. Limitation of advertising and marketing: even if sometimes there are limited situations where advertising restrictions are justified for certain goods or services, each situation must be carefully analyzed in terms of cost / benefit. Such restrictions almost always reduce economic efficiency and harms consumers. When excess consumption should be encouraged, alternative approaches to advertising restrictions include information campaigns and consumption taxes. They represent more direct means, effectively solving the identified problem.

The process of assessing the competitiveness of domestic trade enterprises and consumer cooperatives involves using complex approach to all economic, technological, social, organizational, environmental factors and others related to enterprise's competitiveness, which are described in the specialty literature.

4.3. Peculiarities of domestic trade development, new amendments and changes in the Law on Domestic trade

Domestic Trade is a system that stimulates small business development with a much faster pace than other sectors of the economy. According to the National Bureau of Statistics and the State Registration Chamber in 2015 out of all enterprises registered in the country's economy 43% work in the sphere of domestic trade. The specifics of domestic trade activity lies in the fact that it is easier to organize business in trade in comparison to other branches of the economy and requires less initial capital. Through domestic trade a profit can be obtained in a relatively short time, which allows faster recovery of investments than in other types of activity.

Domestic trade actively participates in creating GDP. Thus, if in 2006 it was for 11.5% of domestic trade in GDP, then in 2012 its share was about 14%, positioning among the main branches of the gross value added (GVA). During 2006-2012 GVA in domestic trade has increased about 2.4 times from 5.145 billion lei to up to 12.25 billion lei [9].

According to the data on investment in the economy from 2012 the domestic trade is ranked the fourth in total investment, with a share of about 12.5% (after transport and communications sectors, real estate sector and manufacturing sector).

Also, in 2015 the sales volume in retail trade (apart from selling cars and motorcycles) according to the National Bureau of Statistics of Moldova decreased by 6.4% (in comparable prices) compared to 2014 [9] because of the influence of a reason number of negative factors. The index noted that actual payment (but not nominal) of labor payment in December 2015 was only 94.5%

compared to December 2014. If we calculate the dollar value of Moldova's GDP in 2015 which was only 6.2 billion dollars against 7.14 billion in 2014, i.e. Moldovan economy fell by almost a billion dollars a year. If the systemic reforms are not speeded up, the banking-financial, justice and energy sectors, Moldova is likely to remain in a state of amorphous future growth.

In the coming years, the competitiveness of the economy remains to be affected on the ground that labor productivity's growth over the past decade was slower than the increase of wages. In 2016 Moldovan economy could stagnate in case of internal and external constraints since 2015 will remain valid for the current year. Thus, the main negative constraints in budgetary-fiscal domain in the view of the authors are:

1. Maintaining the blockage of external financial assistance;
2. Increasing the costs of State's debt servicing;
3. The risk of over indebtedness as a result of conversion the emergency loans in bankrupt banks in government securities;
4. Economic instability further diminishes the confidence of the business in market which erodes business confidence in the future.

Volume reduction in retail sales in 2015 compared to 2014 is caused by a decrease in remittances of money sent home by people who work abroad. Thus, those working in the West have lost any hope that the situation will improve in Moldova and have started to bring their families. On the other hand, those working in the Russian Federation due to the deepening crisis in this country are forced to return home because of lack of jobs. As a result, money remittances from Russia fall further.

In this situation, the authors propose to change the paradigm of development of the domestic trade and economy as a whole from the model based on the export of labor model of attracting remittances, satisfying consumption needs, improve the functioning of state institutions by changing the orientation of development programs from consumption to production investment and exports through higher rates than imports today.

Development of domestic trade in their vision is hampered by other main factors such as: rendering poor services, inefficient activity of the business environment, lack of product competitiveness and business competitiveness, poor quality of governance at all levels of leading the commercial agents, corruption growth in trade followed by inadequate tax legislation.

To improve the situation in domestic trade it is necessary to implement a set of measures: implementation of anti-corruption initiatives and reforms to streamline the state institutions, streamlining procedures for moving the goods from the producer to the consumer by improving transport and logistics services; facilitate domestic trade through building better roads and attracting public investments.

According to the strategy of developing the domestic trade for 2014-2020 it is foreseen that the Action Plan provides an increase in retail sales by about 3-4% annually, which will reduce the disproportion between supply and demand and trade infrastructure between urban and rural areas by 10-15%. The strategy foresees expanding commercial network by 50 units annually and the growth of modern trade format to retail sales to 45%.

The strategy of developing the domestic trade will be implemented in two stages. At the first stage during 2014-2016 were foreseen actions to improve the legal and institutional framework that are

not effectively implemented in practice and the creation of booths for territorial licensing of trading activities. At the second stage of implementation for the period 2017-2020 actions related to the improvement of trade's infrastructure and upgrading forms of products' and services' distribution are envisaged.

Currently, a series of amendments on developing the strategy of domestic trade have been developed; among them - the Law on Domestic Trade [1] to optimize the licensing requirements in the field of domestic trade (exact establishment of control powers of Local Public Authorities (LPAs) and Central Public Authorities (CPA) involved in the authorization and supervision of the trade; excluding the acts which are currently required by LPAs, which are not necessary in the process of approval in domestic trade; determining when LPAs is entitled to refuse the issue, suspend or withdraw the authorization of functioning, inclusion of standard acts that will be applied at issuing the operation authorization, shortening the period for issuing the operating license, extending the validity term of the operation authorization, maintaining the conditions of free release of operating license, regulate the matters related to the fees paid by merchants for holding the operating license, etc.). In the future, an information system will be developed allowing the automation of issuing process of operating permits and will be offered to all local public authorities (LPA), which will ensure the establishment of single window mechanism of issuing licenses.

The new amendments provide essential reduction of the term for obtaining the authorization, exclude pre-opinions without the necessity to establish a reduced set of documents required to be submitted for authorization, to reduce the involvement in authorizing process of authorities which must do the checks in force, reduce the need to obtain the operating license repeatedly every year. Taking into account that the domestic trade is very important to organize the competition and equal conditions for economic entities, it is necessary to take over European practices in the harmonization of legislation related to the establishment of requirements which must be met by the merchant to obtain authorization to operate in the domestic trade.

A special place in amending the Law on domestic trade belongs to targeted measures to support internal producers. The authors consider that it is necessary to allocate a quota of 1/3 surfaces of commercial shopping centers and Metro Cash shops for exposing local products on the condition that there is consumer's demand and supply from domestic producers. It is necessary to cap the size of financial advantages (discounts, bonuses) offered to traders by the supplier in the amount of 6% from the selling price of foodstuffs and 2% from the sale price of socially important food products.

Currently domestic producers will not withstand competition with producers in Ukraine on selling the dairy products in the commercial network. This is explained by the fact that production costs are higher for dairies in Moldova in the absence of an effective style of directing enterprises' resources than in Ukraine.

The authors consider unclear the State's interference in introducing changes in the nomenclature of socially important goods for the population from 29 to 14 items by reducing trade margins. We believe that the State should stimulate the business environment and develop competitive advantages in selling the first necessity products.

We believe that stores should pass to quick payment to the producers of perishable products up to two weeks from the day of delivery. Discounted sales must be regulated to prevent and counteract unfair trade practices (by setting conditions for fulfilling discounted sales, including liquidation

sales, clearance, promotion sales etc.). At the same time it is necessary to set clearance periods when accelerated sales of stock-sized cargo to seasonal products autumn-winter for 3-4 months in the first half, and for spring-summer products is rational to set 3-4 months for second semester. To calculate whether real or price reduction is not necessary, it is rational to establish „reference price”, or reporting the price reduction to the reference price. In case the rules of discounted sales are violated, it is necessary to establish sanctions or differentiated penalties or fines depending on the violation of the law.

In our view, all these proposals of amendment and improvements of Domestic trade law will stimulate the activity of small and medium enterprises which currently hold a share of over 50% from trade.

4.4. The characteristic features of consumer cooperatives enterprises in the Republic of Moldova and possibilities for evaluating its competitiveness

Consumer cooperatives provide goods and services to rural population by fulfilling cooperative principles. The economic-financial activity results for the years 2012-2015 to 2008-2011 were examined at the XVIth Congress of Consumer Cooperatives of the Republic of Moldova [3] where it was stated that the retail sector has increased by 108.4% over 4 years. Essential increases were observed in wholesale trade, a growth by 152% in 2012-2015. The increases are evident in catering services where the growth was by 108.1% compared to the previous four years. In marketing the growth over the four years was by 127%. Procurement volume of activity at current prices increased by 113.2% during 2012-2015 and production taken from the population stands at 315.4 million lei [3]. A more modest increase was observed in the processing industry by 107.2%, which requires greater support of agricultural activity for services of processing agricultural products. These figures can provide a positive impetus to the Congress participants and confidence in the future development of consumer cooperatives. At present in the consumer cooperatives system operate 63 units of "CoopPrim" concept and two units of the "CoopPlus" type in settlements from 18 districts of the country [3].

To boost the activity of cooperative organizations and enterprises in the future it is necessary to achieve a set of measures related to: organizing a more efficient procurement activity, retail trade and rendering services; fulfilling development projects in providing profitable activities in all areas of consumer cooperatives; enhancing the role of wholesale trade in development retail trade by transmitting trading units which are stationed at wholesaler cooperative enterprise's balance sheets; efficient management of financial and economic costs and efficient use of cooperative heritage; supporting co-operative members and landowners in the agricultural works, in organizing different agricultural services and purchases of agricultural products; programming financial and economic activity by strengthening the role of each unit of revenue and expenditure as an important tool for the development strategies of current activities of each economic agent.

The assessment of commercial enterprises and consumer cooperatives competitiveness should be based on the social significance of trade and the specific economic functioning in the republic's economy. The main directions for corporate social activity should be focused on meeting the needs of the population in goods and services, to bring to a normal state the consumers' goods' market based on the potential use from inside, enhancing the competitiveness of enterprises and organizations.

5. Conclusions

Formation of competitiveness of domestic trade enterprises' and consumer cooperatives is influenced by a number of internal and external factors conditioned by the specifics of their development in the republic's economy.

In the paper there was researched the specifics of training competitiveness of enterprises in the domestic trade and consumer cooperation, which is based on the interaction output of the enterprise, its internal resources and efficiency, influence of external factors of the republic's economy.

The authors proposed the methodical assessment approach of competitiveness based on calculating field's indicators characterizing the financial situation, effectiveness of work, including marketing activities, the ability to react to market's needs, product competitiveness, efficiency and running the enterprise, the observance of the six conditions described above. The authors' recommendations are:

1. Relevant ministries will introduce an appropriate process to identify some of the existing policies that restrict competition unduly and to develop specific criteria for assessing competitiveness in trade [8];
2. To subject to competition assessing the policies in trade which aim to promote competition policy (restricting monopolies held by companies in the market; introduction of a regulatory scheme to strengthen the competitiveness of enterprises etc.);
3. To revise the policies that restrict trade's competitiveness by achieving the following measures (the introduction of proper public review of state policies that restrict unduly competitiveness; adoption of some measures which observe the objectives related to the costs and benefits of implementing public policies);
4. To assess competitiveness by observing the specified methodology and implementation of a work plan on reforming the economy of the Republic of Moldova, adjusting the institutional and regulatory frameworks for the management and prevention of economic crisis related to economic and consumption activities.

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Rezumat

În lucrare este propusă o nouă abordare metodică în vederea evaluării competitivității întreprinderilor în comerțul interior și cooperarea de consum ca o condiție necesară în perfecționarea activității acestora pe piață, se acordă o deosebită atenție indicatorilor competitivității întreprinderii în baza principiilor marketingului, alegerii criteriilor evaluării competitivității produsului prin calculul coeficienților ponderabilității în baza utilizării metodei Delphi de chestionare a experților, calculării indicatorilor sectoriali ce ar reflecta nivelul concurenței în comerțul interior și cooperarea de consum a Republicii Moldova.

Cuvinte-cheie: competitivitatea întreprinderii, competitivitatea produsului, comerțul interior, cooperarea de consum, indicatori sectoriali, metoda Delphi, analiza SWOT, coeficient integral al competitivității.

Аннотация

В статье предложен новый методический подход к оценке конкурентоспособности предприятий внутренней торговли и потребительской кооперации в качестве необходимого условия для улучшения их деятельности на рынке, уделено особое внимание показателям конкурентоспособности предприятия, основанных на принципах маркетинга, выбору критериев оценки конкурентоспособности продукции посредством расчета удельных коэффициентов согласно методу Delphi по опросу экспертов, расчету отраслевых показателей, отражающих уровень конкуренции во внутренней торговле и потребительской кооперации Республики Молдовы.

Ключевые слова: конкурентоспособность предприятия, конкурентоспособность продукции, внутренняя торговля, потребительская кооперация, отраслевые показатели, метод Delphi, SWOT анализ, интегральный показатель конкурентоспособности.

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**THEORIES REGARDING THE IMPACT OF COMPETITION ON
FINANCIAL STABILITY**

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Abstract

The concept of competition in economic literature is associated with the engine of economic development, which contributes to the increase of competitiveness, efficiency, innovation and creation of new jobs. However, competition in the banking system is a controversial concept and widely discussed by experts in the field, because competition can cause the bankruptcy of economic entities that are not competitive in the market. In these conditions, ensuring financial system stability is a main priority of policymakers, because financial crises cause considerable damage on economic development. The core problem is outlined in finding a balance between promoting competition in the banking system and financial stability. Economic experts have different opinions about the impact of banking competition on the development of the financial system. Some argue that competition in the banking sector generates crises and financial instability, the promoters of so-called "competition-fragility" hypothesis. The other group of economists promotes "competition-stability" hypothesis and argue that competition helps to ensure financial stability. In this work, we intend to present the main arguments and theories developed by the economists about the linkage between competition and financial stability.

Keywords: competition, financial stability, concentration, banking consolidation.

1. Introduction

In a market economy, competition is the engine of economic development, which aims to increase competitiveness and create new jobs. In the market, each entity is interested in gaining a more advantageous position compared to other participants.

As a result, healthy competition is a factor of progress, efficiency and welfare. In order to ensure a stable, competitive environment, regulatory framework prohibits the activities of unfair competition, abuse of dominant position and agreements between companies that could reduce the rivalry between economic entities.

Competition in the financial market is a distinct sector, which requires the establishment of specific rules. The financial market is the driving force of the real economy because it provides access to financial products to economic entities and households.

Thus, the economic growth of a country is directly linked to financial market performance. However, the economic literature argues that too much competition in the financial market may cause financial instability. In this context, competition policy for banking sector must take into

account the link between competition and financial instability. From a static view, high competition may be good for efficiency, but can damage financial stability.

The specialized literature contains different views about the importance of competition in the banking system and its impact on financial stability. In this article, we intend to present the most important views of the theoreticians that focus on the link between banking concentration, competition and financial stability.

Thus, experts share two main views. Some argue that competition has a negative impact on financial stability, the promoters of the so-called competition-fragility hypothesis. Researchers who support this hypothesis are: John H. Boyd, Edward Prescott, Arnoud Boot, Anjan V. Thakor, Franklin Allen, Douglas Gale, etc.

The other group of economic researchers argues that competition results in greater financial stability, they support competition-stability hypothesis. Some representatives are: Federic S. Mishkin, Andre Uhde, Ulrich Heimeshoff, etc. In addition, the financial literature provides information about the third group of experts who claim that a direct and close connection between competition and financial stability does not exist (Antonio Ruiz-Porras).

2. The investigation degree of the problem, the research purpose

Competition and financial stability are two key economic concepts. Economic experts have studied in detail the connection between these two concepts, especially due to the importance of each notion on economic development. The competition promotes efficiency, innovation and economic growth, while financial stability is a precondition for sustainable economic development and avoiding financial crises is a desideratum for any economic system.

However, competition in the financial market means the exit of market participants who do not satisfy the market conditions, being created premises for financial instability. Under these conditions, economists of all times tried to find an answer on how to establish a balance between promoting competition in the banking sector and financial stability. The research purpose is to synthesize and present the main economic theories and arguments regarding the impact of competition in the banking sector on the financial stability.

3. Applied methods and materials

In preparing the research, we have used different research methods, with emphasis on comparative and logical methods. Also, to identify key concepts included in the paper the results of some publications, articles made by economic experts, which is an important source of arguments and facts based on empirical data were used.

4. Results and discussions

4.1. Approaches about the role of competition policy and financial stability in banking sector

One of the basic questions that arise when competition in the banking sector is analyzed is: "What is the optimal level of competition to ensure financial stability?" Thus, policymakers in developing

financial policies are guided by the need to find a balance between promoting competitiveness and avoiding financial crises.

Experts affirm that the banking system is more vulnerable to instability in comparison with other sectors, as banks exercise the function of financial intermediation, by transferring funds from those who have a surplus to those who have a deficit. In terms of active operations, commercial banks specialize in assessing the viability and profitability of the projects submitted by entrepreneurs to finance them. Thus, financial instability can be caused by excessive risk-taking in providing loans by commercial banks, aggravated by the existence of safeguard measures in order to cover losses of depositors in case of bank failure. In terms of passive operations, according to the traditional concepts, commercial banks attract deposits, which are used to finance long-term projects.

Maturity mismatch between assets and liabilities operations trigger risks in the financial system, which is the starting point for financial instability. In addition, commercial banks are deeply involved in managing the interbank lending and payment system. These deepen the links between financial market participants. Thus, the bankruptcy of a bank could influence the activity of another bank, creating a systemic risk, because of close ties, asymmetric information and the lack of measures to protect the financial system.

In this context, economists Allen and Gale in the paper “Competition and Financial Stability” cited the research made by Glenn Hoggarth, Ricardo Reis and Victoria Saporta “Cost of banking instability: some empirical evidences” in order to present the high costs of financial instability.

The study was developed based on empirical data on economic crises that occurred during 1977-1998. According to the results, the average cumulative output loss recorded, because of financial instability for all crises, represents about 16.9% of GDP.

The cumulative loss caused by monetary and banking system crises were about 29.9% of GDP and loss caused by banking crises represented only around 5.6% of GDP. In addition, loss caused by financial crises is much higher in developed countries compared to the emerging countries. According to the research, the loss in developed countries equals to 23.8% of GDP, while in emerging countries - 13.9% of GDP [1, p. 454].

Taking into account the extremely high costs of financial crises, it is logical that financial stability is one of the main priorities for policymakers. In contrast, the difficulty in measuring the loss of efficiency because of bank mergers suggests that ensuring a competitive environment has a low degree of importance for policymakers.

The ambiguity about the efficiency costs of reduced competition in the financial market and the need to ensure a balance between competition and financial stability, force policymakers to give priority to financial stability by supporting banking consolidation. However, this subordination of competition policy to financial stability can be irrational because of some arguments.

First, the costs of financial instability are quite large, but it does not mean that is necessary to reduce competition in the banking sector to ensure financial stability. In addition, a number of studies show that gains obtained because of encouraging competition on the market are much higher than cost reduction registered because of banking consolidation.

Moreover, financial crises occur approximately every 10 years, while the costs of banking concentrations are born every day. In this context, we aim to present the economists' views on the link between banking concentration, competition and financial stability.

4.2. Theoretical concepts about harmful impact of competition on financial stability

The specialized literature contains some opinions about the negative effects of competition on financial stability. Proponents of this theory have established the “competition-fragility” hypothesis. According to the “competition-fragility” hypothesis, too much competition in the financial market erodes the market power, reduces marginal profits and result in reduced charter value, which encourage excessive risk-taking by banks.

One of the basic arguments about the negative impact of competition on financial stability is “charter value hypothesis”. Referring to the paper of Elena Carletti, among the first who studied this theory was Michael C. Keeley, who in his publication “Deposit Insurance, Risk and Market Power in Banking” explained the indirect relationship between competition and bank’s charter value. Thus, due to increased risks regarding banking assets and reduced capitals, the risk of bank failures increases. In his work Keeley found that increased market competition, deregulation, followed by relaxation of legislation on opening branches in the USA in 1980 generated an erosion of the monopoly rents and resulted in a wave of banking bankruptcies [6, p. 19].

Citing the paper of Doll, Guttentag and Herring in the article “The Insolvency of Financial Institutions: Assessment and Regulatory Disposition” define the concept of charter value as “the present value of the net revenue that a bank could gain from new businesses if they keep only the headquarters, employees and consumers” [7, p. 12].

In other words, the concept of charter value means the present value of future earnings that banks could obtain based on its reputation, market and information about consumers. For banks, charters value is an intangible asset and the easiest method to measure it is by the ratio of the bank’s market value and book value of tangible assets.

Moreover, Thomas F. Hellman, Kevin C. Murdock, Joseph E. Stiglitz in their paper “Liberalization, Moral Hazard in Banking and Prudential Regulation: Capital Requirements Are Enough?” concluded that financial liberalization increases competition in the financial market and reduces the bank’s charter value.

Thus, a deregulation of the financial markets allows banks to determine how to allocate the assets and value of interest rates, resulting in outlining the problem of moral hazard and assuming excessive risks by banks. In addition, they studied the role of charter value in an environment where capital requirements are established.

The capital requirements are forcing banks to hold more risk capital when they invest in risky activities. They call this effect the “risk capital” effect. However, they argue that there is another effect of capital requirements concerning banks’ attempts to take risks, so-called “future franchise value effect”. The capital requirements act as a tax on the banking system. Therefore, they erode bank profitability and reduce the bank charter value and as a result, increase rather than decrease the bank’s intentions to take risks [8, p. 27].

Competition on deposit market tends to increase interests paid to depositors. This is due to “market stealing” effect. Banks will offer a higher interest rate compared to its competitors to attract more funds. This kind of competition erodes bank’s profitability and reduce the banking charter value. In addition, such situation encourages banks to assume risky activities. The market stealing effect is a common feature of the credit market. Franklin Allen and Douglas Gale, economic experts,

showed that because of the increase in the number of banks, each bank would attract a smaller amount of deposits in their research [7, p. 13].

As a result of the increasing number of banks, on the market was outlined the features of perfect competition, where companies were encouraged to develop their business until the expected profits are positive. The bank profit would tend to zero because of competition, so banks would be engaged in increasingly risky actions to gain profit.

Another argument supporting the “competition – fragility” hypothesis is the relationship between banks and interbank contagion. This theory is closely related to charter value theory. Among those who developed this idea were Franklin Allen and Douglas Gale, who stressed the importance of the interbank market as a source of financial contagion. The interbank market connects different regions and sectors and financial shocks could spread to other sectors of the financial system. In the paper “Competition and Financial Stability”, Allen and Gale developed an econometric model that argued that a relatively small shock, initially affecting a small area or only a few institutions, could spread throughout the financial system and cause a financial crisis [1, p. 477].

Several types of contagion were outlined in the specialized literature. The first is contagion through the channels between banks and financial institutions. The second type is contagion that occurs within monetary crisis, and the third type is the contagion through financial markets. The concept of financial fragility is closely linked to the concept of contagion. Thus, when the financial system is weak, a small shock can cause a big effect. In the model developed by Allen and Gale, they demonstrated that perfect competition is one the factors that could cause financial system contagion. A small shock in the liquidity demand in a particular region may cause a systemic risk. Although the shock is small, it could cause a bank failure. The bank that went bankrupt, in turn, could cause failure of the banks, which held deposits in it. The bank, which faced liquidity problems, was insignificant for maintaining balance in the financial market, so, no other bank, would take measures to support it. Referring to the paper by Allen and Gale, Lawrence Saez and Xianwen Shi, in 2004, showed that in a financial market with a limited number of banks, market participants would act strategically and provide liquidities to the problematic institutions. These actions will prevent contagion and ensure the avoidance of a financial crisis [1, p. 477].

Another argument in favour of the “competition-fragility” hypothesis is the importance and duration of relationship banking. Competition can affect the length and quality of the relationship established between the bank and its customers. The economic researcher Arnoud Boot defines the relationship banking as the provision of financial services by a financial intermediary that:

- i) invests in obtaining customer-specific information, often proprietary in nature;
- ii) evaluates the profitability of these investments through multiple interactions with the same customer over time and/or across products [3, p. 10].

Intense competition in the banking sector reduces the extent and duration of relationship banking. A short connection between banks and consumers may reduce the information credibility about the debtors. Relationship banking could make the banking system more stable, because it would reduce the level of non-performing loans. Citing the paper of Doll, experts Saurina and Jimenez demonstrated the empirical link between the probability of failure in bank lending and the relationship banking in Spain. According to the results, they concluded that banks would finance risky loans, especially if they had a close and long-term relationship with the client [7, p. 14].

Although, relationship banking refers to the link between the bank and customer, competition in the deposit market also may reduce the relationship between bank and depositors. Strong competition and the battle for market share could increase liquidity risk. Economic experts Iyer and Puri analysed the depositor behaviour during the banking crisis. Thus, they concluded that depositors, which have a long relationship with the bank, are less likely to panic [7, p. 15].

Therefore, if the competition reduced the length of the relationship between banks and consumers, the probability of banks to face liquidity problems would increase. The effectiveness of banking regulation is another argument, which supports the “competition-fragility” hypothesis. Along with the direct effects of competition in the banking system, competition and market structure may influence the effectiveness of prudential supervision. Citing the paper of Doll, according to Thorsten Beck, a concentrated market with a small number of banks facilitates actions of supervisory authority on financial supervision and financial stability. Supporters of the same argument are researchers Franklin Allen and Douglas Gale, who argued that the creation of a financial system with a large number of banks and other financial institutions is inappropriate from the viewpoint of the efficiency of the banking supervision system [7, p. 15].

In order to support the competition-fragility hypothesis, researchers Franklin Allen and Douglas Gale in their paper “Competition and Financial Stability” published in 2004, analyzed the link between competition and financial stability using spatial competition model [1, p. 468].

The spatial competition model analyses the competition between companies with different products. Spatial dimension can be interpreted as the presence of banks in different localities or the existence of qualitative differences in their services. In the paper, researchers analysed the importance of competition in unitary banking and branch banking. Unitary banking means a banking system where each bank representative is an individual institution.

This model consists of three characteristics: the lock-in effect; limited information and product diversity. The first two refer to the asymmetric information. Thus, the lock-in effect is a fixed cost that is charged when the client changes the bank. In this context, it is well known that the cost of switching to another financial institution offers to the bank some monopoly power.

Limited information refers to the lack of information on prices and services offered by the bank after the relationship between banks and consumers was established. In fact, if the bank was small, it is less likely that the bank’s reputations would be a suitable source of information about the quality and the price provided to consumers. A third feature of the model lies in the diversity of products. Once customers have different preferences, depending on the location of the branch, a bank with multiple branches would offer a large spectrum of services adjusted to consumer preferences. Analyzing these three features in the model, experts Allen and Gale concluded that banking concentration would lead to greater efficiency in the banking system.

The affirmation means that small banks with few services and limited presence in different locations would exploit the lock-in effect, manifested in particular by the possibility to charge monopoly prices for banking services. According to the paper of Elena Carletti, experts Michael D. Bordo, Angela Redish and Hugh Rockoff conducted a research in 1994 and got some empirical evidences concerning branch banking and unitary banking, based on the analysis of the banking system in the United States and Canada between 1920 and 1980. During this period, the system in Canada was branch banking; while in the US was unitary banking. The results demonstrated that Canada’s banking system was more efficient compared to the US [6, p. 28].

The results consist of several important factors. In Canada, the interest rates on deposits were higher and income received by securities holders were slightly higher than in the USA. In addition, the interest rates on loans were at similar levels in both states. Finally, the return on capital was higher in Canada. In the end, the researchers concluded that branch banking is more efficient and competitive comparing to unitary banking. Another argument in favour of the “competition – fragility” hypothesis is the Schumpeterian model [1, p. 473].

Joseph Schumpeter is an economic researcher, who in his works analyzed the importance of competition for economic development. In 1950, Schumpeter pointed out that perfect competition undermines the intention to innovate because of weak intellectual property rights. In this context, imperfect competition could be more efficient than perfect competition. Therefore, they argued that any company wants to gain a monopoly position. Monopoly rents are a strong reason for companies to innovate and holding exclusive rights conferred by a patent of intent justify the expenditures spend for innovation. Thus, imperfect competition would stimulate innovation and economic progress. This model can be applied to the banking system. If banks were oriented to innovation, they would expand their market share and eliminate inefficient banks from the market. Competition according to Schumpeter’s model may be associated with financial instability, based on the concept of “creative destruction”.

4.3. Theories about the positive effects of competition on financial stability

Over the past decades, economists have questioned the accuracy of “competition-fragility” hypothesis and developed models and theories that competition in the banking system increases the financial stability. Proponents of this theory have established the “competition-stability” hypothesis.

One of the basic arguments of this hypothesis is the adverse selection and moral hazard in the credit market. According to the theory, banks with greater market power would charge higher costs for market services. Among the first who proved this theory were Joseph Stiglitz and Andrew Weiss in 1981, who demonstrated that higher interest rates would increase the risk of loan portfolio due to adverse selection and moral hazard risks.

Thus, high costs discourage certain borrowers and banks would select the risky borrowers and likely would face high levels of non-performing loans, which could undermine bank stability [11, p. 408].

Recently, in 2005, economic researchers Gianni Nicolo and John Boyd claimed that large market power would destabilize the financial system and worsen the financial stability. In addition, they argue that banks in determining the allocation of assets based on profitability and price, disregard the information asymmetry that is a common feature of financial markets.

They argue that optimal contracting problem, which means that the debtor's intentions are unobservable or observable at certain costs, is a better description of the environment in which banks operates [4].

Their model takes into account that banks compete in both, deposits and loans market. Less competition in the credit market means banks’ probability to charge higher interest rates.

As interest rates are high, the risk of bankruptcy of companies that were credited by banks increase. Moreover, high interest rates lead to adverse selection and moral hazard. Both effects contribute to increase probability of bankruptcy. Thus, more competition in the credit market may reverse the relationship described above between competition and financial stability.

Other researchers that support competition-stability hypothesis are Ramona Caminal and Carmen Matutes. In their paper “Market power and banking failure” in 2002, they demonstrated that it is not the case that the increase of competition would increase the financial instability [5, p. 1355]. They argue that banks in a monopoly environment are prone to monitor borrowers, compared to banks in a competitive environment. These banks have monopolistic market power and the ability to transfer the monitoring costs.

Thus, in a monopolistic environment, banks rely less on credit rationing than banks in a competitive environment. Lack of rationing in the lending process increases aggregate portfolio risk exposure or non-diversified risk, which increases the failure probability of the bank.

In addition, citing the work of Doll, in 1995 experts Petersen and Rajan argued that banks in a concentrated system are prone to finance companies with small loans because later banking relationships gives them the opportunity to exploit gains due to the relationship established [7, p. 16]. The literature said that financing small companies is more risky than providing loans to large companies. Therefore, activity of banks in a concentrated system may be more risky than banks operating in a competitive environment.

Another argument in favour of the “competition – stability” hypothesis is the systemic risk and efficiency of regulations. Some of the researchers that provided some evidences in their works are Thorsten Beck and Federic S. Mishkin.

The “competition-fragility” hypothesis claims that small number of banks allow the supervisory authority to monitor better the activities of banks. However, some researchers have different opinions concerning this. Thorsten Beck, in his paper published in 2008, “Bank competition and financial stability: friends or foes?” argued that the benefits of competition are huge for an efficient financial system and regulatory and supervisory policies should encourage measures compatible with the financial system.

In the last period, a wave of banking consolidation has occurred worldwide, which intensified the concerns of policymakers about the banking concentration. Thus, many foreign banks have broadened their marketplace in developing countries and took place a large number of mergers in the financial market worldwide.

The financial consolidation resulted in the creation of financial conglomerates which offer loans and deposits, insurance and pension funds. Beck argued that the creation of such complex institutions could undermine the proper regulation and supervision from consumers and authorities. Also, the large size of financial institutions would create difficulties for supervisors to intervene in case of bankruptcy, outlining the “too-big-to fail” problem.

In conclusion, he argues that competition does not harm financial stability. Policies associated with a competitive financial system with fewer restrictions, reduced barriers to entry, open foreign banks - are associated with ensuring financial stability. However, the authorities should take the necessary steps to obtain the maximum competition’s benefits.

Thus, Beck argued that unbridled competition could lead to fragility in a weak institutional environment. In this context, it is important that supervisory authorities improve the regulatory and relief measures, rather than limit competition in the market [2, p. 18].

Another proponent of this theory is Federic S. Mishkin, who in his paper “Financial Consolidation: dangers and opportunities” demonstrates that the creation of large financial institutions is dangerous for the financial system soundness since the failure of a large financial institutions exposes the entire financial system to a systemic risk [9, p. 5].

Thus, Mishkin argues that banking consolidation puts pressure on policy makers to follow “too-big-to fail” policy, where both depositors and creditors are protected. Financial institutions are aware of the policymaker actions to avoid the failure of a big bank and as a response, the moral hazard problems deepen.

Once depositors and creditors are aware that public authorities will not allow the bankruptcy of a large bank, they undertake fewer efforts to monitor institutions and withdraw funds when the bank takes too much risk.

Due to lack of monitoring, financial institutions take excessive risks and risk of bankruptcy is imminent. As solutions for reducing the risks caused by the intensification of too-big-to-fail problem and moral hazard,

Mishkin suggests to undertake action in order to enhance vigilant surveillance and safety actions of policymakers with an adequate amount of constructive ambiguity. The constructive ambiguity would introduce some uncertainties in the government actions to rescue the problematic banks. Therefore, the financial institutions may not be aware if the government would rescue them in case of bankruptcy.

In addition, John H. Boyd and Mark Gertler supported the assumption that the bankruptcy of a large financial institution could cause a systemic risk empirically. They demonstrated that the main pressure on the financial system wasn't the large number of bank failures, but low performance of large banks [7, p. 16].

5. Conclusions

Both, the promotion of a competitive environment in the financial market and ensuring financial stability are important priorities of policymakers. However, economic researchers constantly try to find answers to the question about the optimal level of competition in the banking system that will not harm the stability of the financial system. By the present work, we intend to present a summary of the main arguments of the theories concerning the impact of competition on financial stability.

Among the basic arguments in favour of the “competition-fragility” hypothesis, which argues that competition is harmful to financial stability are:

- i) Assumption of reducing charter value, due to a large number of banks and finally, such banks are prone to undertake risky activities in order to increase profits;
- ii) Interbank contagion risks, which refers to the lack of safeguard measures in order to support small banks in difficulties, which could cause a systemic risk and financial crisis;

- iii) Weakness of relationship banking, which reduces the quality of information about the bank's client credibility and could increase the level non-performing loans;
- iv) Effectiveness of bank regulations, which says that is much easier to monitor a small number of banks;
- v) Results of spatial competition model, which shows that branch banking is more efficient than unitary banking;
- vi) Results of Schumpeterian model, showing that competition promotes innovation and as a result, the failure of uncompetitive banks.

The other group of economists has made the following arguments in favour of "competition-stability" hypothesis:

- i) Adverse selection and moral hazard risk, which claims that a small number of banks, which hold a higher market power, would charge higher costs for its services, which would increase the customers' bankruptcy risks;
- ii) Systemic risk and efficiency regulations, which are relate to the impact of big bank failure on the financial system stability and the difficulties in supervising large banks, which result in complex financial institutions because of banking consolidation.

In conclusion, we would like to mention that the financial literature does not have a right answer about the relationship between competition and financial stability. Each financial system contains certain features which are essential in determining the balance between financial stability and competition policy. The policy makers should take into account the importance of each priority for economic development and welfare of society in setting development priorities.

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Rezumat

Conceptul de concurență, în literatura de specialitate este asociat cu motorul de dezvoltare economică, care contribuie la sporirea competitivității, eficienței, inovării și crearea de noi locuri de muncă. Totuși, concurența în sistemul bancar este o noțiune controversată și discutată pe larg de către experții în domeniu, deoarece concurența poate provoca falimentul entităților economice care nu sunt competitive pe piață. În aceste condiții, asigurarea stabilității sistemului financiar este o prioritate de bază a factorilor de decizie, deoarece crizele financiare produc pagube considerabile asupra dezvoltării economice. Nucleul problemei se conturează în găsirea unui echilibru între promovarea concurenței în sistemul bancar și asigurarea stabilității financiare. Totuși, cercetătorii economici au păreri împărțite privind impactul concurenței bancare asupra dezvoltării sistemului financiar. Unii consideră că concurența în sistemul bancar este catalizatorul crizelor și instabilității financiare, fiind promotorii ipotezei "concurență-fragilitate". Celălalt grup de economiști promovează ipoteza "concurență-stabilitate" și susțin că concurența contribuie la asigurarea stabilității financiare. În lucrarea dată, ne propunem să prezentăm principalele argumente și teoriile dezvoltate de economiști privind legătura dintre concurență și stabilitatea financiară.

Cuvinte-cheie: concurență, stabilitate financiară, concentrare, consolidare bancară.

Аннотация

В экономической литературе концепция конкуренции ассоциируется с рычагом экономического развития, который способствует росту конкурентоспособности, эффективности, инноваций и созданию новых рабочих мест. В то же время, в банковской системе, конкуренция является противоречивым понятием, широко обсуждаемым экспертами в этой области, так как может привести к банкротству хозяйствующих субъектов, которые не являются конкурентоспособными на рынке. В этих условиях, обеспечение устойчивости финансовой системы является основным приоритетом государственной политики, поскольку финансовые кризисы наносят значительный ущерб экономическому развитию. В этой связи, основная проблема состоит в нахождении равновесия между поощрением конкуренции в банковской системе и обеспечением финансовой стабильности системы. В то же время, специалисты в области экономики, имеют разные мнения о влиянии конкуренции в банковской сфере на развитие финансовой системы. Некоторые ученые утверждают, что конкуренция в банковском секторе является катализатором кризисов и финансовой нестабильности, являясь двигателем, так называемой гипотезы "конкуренция-неустойчивость". Другая группа экономистов продвигает гипотезу "конкуренция-стабильность", утверждая, что конкуренция способствует обеспечению финансовой стабильности. В данной статье, авторы стремились отразить основные разработанные экономистами теории о взаимосвязи конкуренции и финансовой стабильности.

Ключевые слова: конкуренция, финансовая стабильность, концентрация, банковская консолидация.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF E-LEARNING WITHIN THE TRADE CO-OPERATIVE UNIVERSITY OF MOLDOVA

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Abstract

A balance, thoughts and reflections concerning 516597-TEMPUS-1-2011-1-FR „CREATION RESEAU UNIVERSITIES NUMERIQUES THEMATIQUES EN SCIENCES APPLIQUEE ET SCIENCES ECONOMIQUES EN MOLDAVIE” project implementation within the Trade Co-operative University of Moldova.

This project has been implemented in collaboration with nine universities of the country and with support of other seven universities from European Union, which had large experience in the domain. The main scope of the project is modernization of higher education through renovation of teaching-learning-evaluating methods with emphasis on electronic education on the base of “Moodle” platform.

We succeeded to provide basic knowledge to pedagogical staff and students concerning methodology of electronic courses design and implementation, to provide them training on realization of the online education, to perform tests and improvements of the courses designed. There were created the prerequisites and conditions necessary for development, implementation of mass online education at the University. But efforts, concentration and support are still required.

Keywords: *e-learning, information and communications technology (ICT), Moodle platform, educational process management and quality assurance.*

1. Introduction

Evolution of economy and society is greatly influenced by the quality of education. Accumulation of the intellectual capital, acquisition of professional and operational skills on the base of this capital, lead to the development and materialization of society, individual, community. All this becomes possible through professional growth, through continuous training, constant education, online education, e-learning.

In the proper sense of the word, under electronic education we understand the whole totality of educational activities and processes which use information and communications technology tools (ICT).

At the moment, there exists a large variety of electronic materials which help the teacher to provide, with better quality, young people with theoretical and practical knowledge from the designed educational courses: electronic books, didactical films, encyclopedias, different forms of presentations, tests, software tools designed to acquire skills, simulators, models, games and so on. Computers and electronic materials, being modern tools of communication, became an essential support in teaching, learning, evaluating and researching activities. E-learning represents a new paradigm of knowledge acquisition and professional skills development.

E-learning presumes implementation of different kinds and forms of trainings by massive use of the theory of information and communications: course presentation, independent work with

electronic sources, distance interaction with educational staff (tutors), creation of educational network.

TCUM (UCCM), as well as many other universities, has been involved into implementation of the electronic education. This happened simultaneously with the 516597-TEMPUS-1-2011-1-FR „CREATION RESEAU UNIVERSITIES NUMERIQUES THEMATIQUES EN SCIENCES APPLIQUEE ET SCIENCES ECONOMIQUES EN MOLDAVIE” project, which started on October 2011.

The general objective of the given project was modernization of the higher school education in the Republic of Moldova, with renovation of teaching–learning–evaluating methods by reference to the electronic education based on the “Moodle” platform. The project targeted on the creation of the Inter-University digital network, which provided online trainings for the fundamental and applied sciences, economics and management.

This project has involved nine universities from Moldova (MD), TCUM being one of them, which educate 85% of the whole number of students in the country, and seven universities from the European Union (EU) (from Belgium, Spain, France, Italy and Romania), which are very experienced in e-learning in different domains and can provide their competences to Moldova partners.

However, the institutions involved in the project, have proposed and specific objectives, namely:

- ✓ Informing MD teachers and students with e-learning methodology and techniques. Implementation of the project was accompanied by creation of specialized functional structures in the MD institutions;
- ✓ Providing to MD teachers training on implementation of the online education, through joint working groups MD-EU;
- ✓ Experimentation and dissemination of online education with help of training coordinators;
- ✓ Developing the synthesis and the appropriateness assessment of the methods used in relation to the training requirements of students;
- ✓ Improvement and dissemination of the results.

2. Activities, results

2.1. Project promotion

On December 7, 2012, by decision of the TCUM senate, the plan for the implementation of the above mentioned project within the University has been approved, among which we can mention the following issues:

- ✓ To define the members of pilot group for project implementation within TCUM;
- ✓ To train the staff coordinating the project and persons involved into the development of electronic courses;
- ✓ To organize courses for pedagogical staff training in the domain of electronic education:
 - a) Development of “e-learning” training program with modules:
 - introduction to e-learning;
 - design of a University course in the electronic format;
 - e-learning platforms;

- b) Deployment of lifelong training courses involving prepared training coordinators from other universities;
- ✓ Anticipated development of online courses by pedagogical staff involved into the subject-oriented working group: Economy and Management - Mrs. C. Melinte and Applied Mathematics – Mr. V. Seiciuc;
 - ✓ To ensure conditions for the first trial period of the online developed courses. To evaluate results;
 - ✓ To evaluate potential of the departments for identification of persons to be involved into e-learning courses development and management. To select responsible persons for each discipline, who will develop electronic courses and to ensure their continuous learning in the domain of electronic education and information technologies;
 - ✓ To create the Center for Information and Documentation on electronic education and information technologies;
 - ✓ To provide necessary equipment for the Inter-University digital network connection (Moodle network in Moldova);
 - ✓ To create a set of courses in electronic format and, after their certification in the agreed mode, to store them in digital Library.

As we can see above - good intentions and prudent steps, but what has been really done?

2.2. Creation of the Center

The first - with the financial support of this project, it has been created a specialized e-learning Center, equipped with advanced appliances (20 modern personal computers), multi-media blackboard, projector, laptop, video camera, where the courses with use of information technologies and electronic communications are held. On the basis of the Center training for pedagogical staff was organized on implementation of e-learning. All teachers were supplied with advanced hardware and software resources (computers, projectors, printers).

2.3. Pedagogical staff training

Further – under the aegis of the TEMPUS project 9 people (including 2 specialists in the field of information technology and 7 teachers) participated in different courses on getting “e-learning” competencies, organized by the Technical University of Moldova (TUM).

At the same time, TCUM has organized theoretical and practical seminars on e-learning regarding the formation of professional competences of pedagogical staff with participation of Continuous Training Center for teaching staff at the State University from Bălți –prof., dr. V. CABAC, assoc. prof., dr. E. CABAC (December 2012) and at ASEM – assoc. prof., dr. S. PORTARESCU (November 2013, March 2014 and June 2015). 32 teachers out of 66 total have been trained in these seminars. The course’s curriculum contains – Course Design, E-learning and Learning platform MOODLE.

Also, the TCUM teaching staff participated in the TUM Informative Seminars on the given project and followed the learning cycles on the Development and use of support materials for multimedia learning, moderator Gabriel JALAM, Agrocampus, Rennes, France (January 2012, February 2013 and May 2014).

What about formation of e-learning competences? It can be mentioned that TCUM participated in:

- ✓ The training for the representatives of Moldovan universities at Santiago de Compostella University, Spain, on March 25-29, 2012 (Mr. S. MUSTEATA, assoc. prof., dr., vice-rector);
- ✓ The theoretical and practical formation of the concept, use and maintenance of on-line courses in Iași, Romania (Mr. V. SEICIUC, prof., dr.);
- ✓ The training on the development of on-line courses, University of Rennes 1, France (Mrs. C. MELINTE, assoc. prof., dr., Mr. V. SEICIUC, prof., dr.).

2.4. Online courses development and implementation

During the process of project implementation, the TCUM pedagogical staff initiated 26 electronic courses. The courses can be accessed following the link www.elearning.uccm.md.

Among these courses, we have:

- 3 courses: Mathematics applied to economics, Enterprise economy and European Environment of Business which contain the Presentation course, Resource course (PDF, PPT), Practical tasks, Self-assessment tests, Bibliography, Students survey and have been tested in the process of educational activities with students:
 - Mathematics applied to economics (2 semesters);
 - Enterprise economy (3 semesters, the first semester was on ASEM portal);
 - European Environment of Business (1 semester);
- 7 advanced courses, which include - Presentation course, Resource course (PDF, PPTX, some courses – links to video resources), Practical tasks, Self-assessment tests, Bibliography.

Achievements and current problems concerning creation of electronic courses, were reflected in the scientific works of TCUM authors and presented at national and international scientific Conferences:

Larisa ȘAVGA, Claudia MELINTE

The experience and opportunity of implementation of research-based academic education at Trade Co-operative University of Moldova. Journal of Research on Trade, Management and Economic Development, VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1/2014.

Claudia MELINTE, Claudia TCACIUC

The Experience and the Opportunity of Implementation of Research- Based Academic Education on Corporate Social Responsibility of Co-Operative Enterprises. International scientific and professional conference, Contemporary Issues In Economy & Technology, CIET, Split, Croatia, 19 -22 June, 2014, s. 82-91, ISBN 978-953-7220-15-0.

Vladislav SEICIUC, Victor SEICIUC

Moodle platform implementation in teaching subject “Theory of probability and mathematical statistics”. The TCUM Jubilee International Scientific Conference, June 21-22, 2013.

Vladislav SEICIUC*, Victor SEICIUC*, Eleonora SEICIUC**

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** Moldova State University, Chișinău.

About the use of Moodle platform in the development of the course: „Theory of probability and mathematical statistics” for distance education. The 20th International

Conference on Applied and Industrial Mathematics (CAIM-2012), dedicated to the academician Mitrofan Ciobanu. Communications in Education. Chişinău, August 22-25 2012, p. 201-202.

Vladislav SEICIUC*, Victor SEICIUC*, Eleonora SEICIUC**

About Moodle platform architecture of the University course „Theory of probability and mathematical statistics”. The 21st International Conference on Applied and Industrial Mathematics (CAIM-2013). Bucharest, Romania, September 19-22 2013, p. 108-109.

Simion MUSTEAȚĂ

The pedagogical management of e-learning in TCUM. Scientific Annals of the TCUM, vol. X, Chişinău, 2012.

TCUM provides moral and material support for the designed electronic courses: 100 hours (time reserved for training-methodical activity), material encouragements, rewards.

TCUM collaborates with all national partners within the above mentioned project in the domain of online education.

In the framework of another project TEMPUS 530181-2012-INURE: „INTEGRATED UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: EU EXPERIENCE ON NIS COUNTRIES GROUND”, which now is being implemented in the university, we cooperate with other institutions of higher education from Germany, Holland, Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova and Georgia in the field of Integrated Informational Systems in University Management (S.I.I.M.U.) (online education being the component part of S.I.I.M.U.).

Also, on December 6-7, 2010, TCUM participated in the international scientific-practical seminar «Дистанционные технологии образования в высших учебных заведениях потребительской кооперации» („Distance education technologies in the institutions of higher education on consumer co-operation”) which took place in Poltava University of Economics and Trade, Ukraine. Representatives of co-operate universities from Ukraine (Poltava, Vinița, Hmelniț and Lvov), Russian Federation (Belgorod and Novosibirsk), Republic of Moldova, Belarus and Kazakhstan participated in this seminar. TCUM has been represented by S. MUSTEAȚĂ, A. GRADINARU and P. PAVALACHI, who presented the ways of e-learning implementation within TCUM and got acquainted with the experiences in the field of implementation of electronic education in the educational institutions of Ukraine, Russian Federation, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

2.5. Results and Reflections

By means of a series of training seminars provided for the teaching staff from partner institutions, the implementation of this project made it possible to create the prerequisites for large scale implementation of e-learning, development and use of support materials for media trainings in these institutions, creation of Inter-University partnerships in the given field, improvement of material and technical base of partner universities necessary for the implementation of new ICT in education.

The impact is, obviously, positive. Moodle platform offers to teaching staff a possibility to diversify materials provided for course (narrative materials, PowerPoint presentations, video materials, recent articles and so on...) and to offer these materials to students in a quick mode. Students obtain possibility to work individually, and in case of necessity, to work in group with

other students as well as with the professor. We have many electronic courses elaborated, but not all of them are functional.

In the process of students' evaluation of the courses placed on the Moodle platform, it has become obvious that this project had a positive impact on the development of online education in the University. This survey on a sample of 337/221 people showed that students appreciate very much the courses hosted by the platform, as they have constant access to course resources from any location (home, University, campus, etc.), can get access to the tests for self-assessment that allows them to move faster and, at the same time, increasing student motivation for learning.

Very positive feedback has been provided by the part-time students, and those from TCUM branch at Soroca, as well as master degree students. Moodle platform provides quick feedback between the teacher and student, at least in the case of individual and group projects, developed by the students within a course. In our opinion, the courses got quite high appreciation (positively appreciated - 80-85 %) due to the diversification of learning tools that Moodle platform can offer to students.

From those well-known and implemented, we can conclude that: new information and communications technologies change the educational practice perspective by completing educational framework with modern teaching methods, specific to the information society. Currently, e-learning has become a viable alternative to traditional methods of education, so that it was adopted by many educational institutions, especially because of the advantages to obtain better quality in professional training provided to young specialists and to those people, who are offered opportunities of continuous training.

Higher education introduces more and more new technologies, reporting positive experiences in possibilities of training by means of on-line libraries, systems for distance learning courses via Internet, student support via on-line forums and via informational learning management systems.

However, in parallel, the other details can be observed. For some teachers, use of e-learning represents an attribute, imposed by fashion, rather than the realization of the fact that it is a reliable way to improve quality of getting professional skills.

During training of future developers of electronic courses the emphasis is set on technical aspects of e-learning. Learning platform is often considered only as means of content delivery, and electronic course – as digital version of traditional course.

Educational reserves and potential are not valued at their fair value. The accent is set on the informative aspect, to the detriment of the forming one. Many courses represent deposit of information. All “crumbles” because of low-quality course developed - the course designed without main deck - directing the learning activities of students.

Courses are implemented without going through an official certification procedure. Moreover, such procedures are not developed. There are no even elementary regulations developed for electronic education, for distance learning, with exception of simple declaration in a word of distance education in the Education Code. Best practices from European Universities remain unassimilated. We are 2-3 decades away from advanced practices of the European Universities in the domain of information technologies, distance learning and electronic education. Millions of students and pupils all over the world take advantage of electronic education services, employees of many companies develop new concepts and technologies in the workplace through e-learning.

3. Conclusions

However, we do not go into despair. Necessary prerequisites for mass deployment of electronic education (infrastructure, pedagogical staff training, experience got in design, development and management of e-courses) are already created. This process needs to be undertaken by the heads of Universities and to be included in the strategic development plan of the University. It is necessary to have the development program, approved by Senate, assisted by the corresponding support (financial, informational, methodological, employee incentive and so on).

This is at the institutional level (the lower one), what about national level – it should be determined by the Ministry, Government.

Implementation starts with change of pedagogical and management staff mentality.

Implementation model should be based on the below principles:

- ✓ Awareness of the fact that changes should be done;
- ✓ Desire to achieve the changes planned;
- ✓ Getting necessary knowledge for implementation of changes (any change starts with a training);
- ✓ Ability to implement the proposed technology;
- ✓ Motivation / call to action.

All of us should acknowledge the reality that e-learning penetrated in the formal and informal education, at home, both in the city and in the rural areas. Electronic education is spread everywhere, we can conclude that this is education without borders - it affects everyone and represents an essential component of each transformation.

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Rezumat

Un bilanț, gânduri și reflecții ale implementării proiectului 516597-TEMPUS-1-2011-1-FR „CREATION RESEAU UNIVERSITIES NUMERIQUES THEMATIQUES EN SCIENCES APPLIQUEE ET SCIENCES ECONOMIQUES EN MOLDAVIE” în cadrul Universității Cooperatist-Comerciale din Moldova.

Acest proiect, implementat în parteneriat cu nouă universități din țară și cu sprijinul altor șapte universități din Uniunea Europeană cu bune practici în domeniu, are drept obiectiv major modernizarea învățământului superior prin renovarea metodelor de predare-învățare-evaluare, fiind axat pe învățământul electronic în baza platformei „Moodle”.

S-a reușit cunoașterea cadrelor didactice și studenților cu metodologia elaborării și implementării cursurilor în format electronic, instruirea lor în realizarea învățământului on-line, experimentarea cursurilor elaborate și îmbunătățirea lor. S-au creat premise și condiții necesare pentru elaborarea, implementarea în masă a învățământului on-line în universitate. Însă se cer eforturi, concentrare și susținere.

Cuvinte-cheie: e-learning, tehnologii informaționale și comunicații (TIC), platforma Moodle, managementul și asigurarea calității procesului didactic.

Аннотация

Итоги, мысли и рассуждения по внедрению проекта 516597-TEMPUS-I-2011-I-FR „CREATION RESEAU UNIVERSITIES NUMERIQUES THEMATIQUES EN SCIENCES APPLIQUEE ET SCIENCES ECONOMIQUES EN MOLDAVIE” в Кооперативно-Торговом Университете Молдовы.

Данный проект, реализованный в партнерстве с девятью университетами страны и при содействии других семи университетов с передовой практикой в конкретной области из Европейского Союза, преследует основную цель – модернизирование высшего образования путем преобразования учебно-оценочных методов, с ориентацией на электронное обучение на базе платформы „Moodle”.

Удалось ознакомить дидактические кадры и студентов с методологией разработки и внедрения курсов в электронной форме, их обучение в области онлайн преподавания, экспериментирование с разработанными курсами и их усовершенствование. Созданы предпосылки и условия для разработки, массового внедрения электронного образования в университете. Но необходимы еще усилия, сосредоточение и поддержка.

Ключевые слова: *e-learning, информационные и коммуникационные технологии (ИКТ), платформа Moodle, управление учебным процессом и обеспечение его качества.*

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