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INTERCULTURAL MANAGEMENT ON THE BASIS OF A SPORTS CLUB

A b s t r a c t: In the era of globalization, one increasingly finds oneself in a situation of having to work with representatives of various cultures. A person does not always have an impact on the choice of co-workers, but in order to arrange the relationship correctly it is necessary to know and respect cultural differences. In sport, the effect of globalization is very visible because the coverage of sport knows no bounds. In Poland, it manifests itself in a much greater amount and variety of foreigners employed in Polish clubs. Lack of awareness of cultural differences, insufficient preparation, general ignorance, and at the same time very often lack of humility, lead to the collapse of the communication within a sports organization and general difficulty in cooperation. This article presents dependencies that occur during the implementation of the tasks delegated by the coach among players coming from countries with high-context cultures and low-context cultures. This article presents the basic problems that affect Polish professional clubs. In addition, a detailed analysis of one of the Polish female basketball clubs will show changes in the international structure of employment in this club and what implications they had for its operation.

K e y w o r d s: intercultural management, globalization, internationalization, culture, low-content culture, high-content culture, sport, communication, relationships.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Facing the globalization, one is aware of the differences that characterize the countries to which one travels. Other landscapes, other flavors, different climate and above all other people. Although each person has a different character and disposition, some common features, combining representatives of the cultures and nationalities, can be seen. The place where people grow up and the values that are instilled with from an early age, have a huge impact on many aspects of life. It depends on them how family relationships, friendships, professional relations will be structured, how public life and authority will look. It is recognized that society's values and norms are the most important criterion by which typologies of cultures are created.

Culture is a basis of existence of societies. At the time of Cicero, the term culture was associated with human activities aimed at nurturing, learning and improvement. In principle culture is a multidimensional and ambiguous concept, which also encompasses a variety of items, categories, values and behavior in various spheres of human life. Each region of the world and different nationalities are characterized by individual culture, which should be treated as a social phenomenon. People who belong to a given group react differently and behave in relation to the situation in which they are, differently interpret symbols, and perceive other people, in various ways interpret and shape relationships, tolerate or deny the subordination, strict control, punishment, rewards, bans, more widely appreciate some values and use different languages. In collaboration with culturally diverse groups of people forming organizations, these differences affect the functioning of the management systems of employee participation, the efficiency of communication systems, attitudes to change, appreciation and reward systems for employees, etc. [Mikula, 2015, p. 19].

The degree of difference in an organization may have a different effect on it. It may translate into a different level of efficiency and profitability of the organization and its overall success in the industry and the level of further development. In this article the author tries to present different aspects of cultural and intercultural activities that concern most common sports organizations which are sports clubs. In the age of internationalization of the economy Polish sport and clubs themselves are also changing.

2. SPORT VS. CULTURE

Stanisław Kowalczyk in his work reveals the links between broadly understood culture and physical culture and sport. He concludes that sport is a part of physical culture, and this in turn, is a branch of general culture [Kowalczyk,

2010, p. 19]. Physical culture is mainly focused on somatic human activity, but many authors believe that one should not depreciate human's psycho-mental and spiritual dimension. Kowalczyk in his texts also uses the term "sport". In his work Kowalczyk treats sport as a creative activity of the human motor, implemented accordance with the accepted rules, the elements of the game (fun) and rivalry, which sometimes also work (in a qualified sport), aimed at intensification of somatic excellence and human capabilities as well as comprehensive development of the personality [Kowalczyk, 2010, p. 34]. Due to the complex nature of the sport, it contains some structural elements:

- subject-personnel (players, managers, fans)
- ideological normative (values, norms, symbols, ceremonies, medals)
- material (sports, clothing, manufacturers of sports equipment), which may confirm the relationship between sport and culture [Kowalczyk, 2010, p. 44].

Sport as an important component of culture should satisfy not only the functions of consumption for a potential supporter, but above all draw a pattern of behavior to follow in the mind of the recipient. The globalization process mentioned in the introduction did not spare sport and there are some researchers who believe that sport was one of the first areas in which this process began [Pawlak, Smolen, 2015, p. 226]. Undoubtedly, this is even indicated by the establishment, back in the late nineteenth century, of the International Olympic Committee, which in the form of the Olympic Games¹ initiated keeping a constant, universal, international sports competition. In the process of globalization of the sports world sports federations, which normalized the principle of practicing various sports played a key role. They formulated regulations and schedules of global competitions and took up the selection of organizers of global sports events in the form of the World Cup and the Championships through a competition procedure. Moreover, the number of foreign players who compete in professional leagues around the world gradually increases. The changing structure in the composition of the teams very often makes the international teams focus attention of the international group of fans [Pedersen, Thibault, 2014, s.452]. Thanks to it, the growing base of supporters of the organization abroad allows for further development and setting up subsidiaries leagues and teams in other countries. In addition, international expansion of sport has stimulated activity in the area of constantly evolving sports marketing [Pedersen, Thibault, 2014, s.460].

Globalization of the sport can be seen at many levels: social, economic and political. In addition to the international conditions, international law, which regulates the activities of professional sports clubs is vital. Attempts to

¹Olympic Games as the oldest and the biggest international sports competition are organized every 2 years in summer and winter in different countries popularizing noble competing and brotherhood of all the countries belonging to the Olympic Committee

harmonize sports law at the international level more and more diligently are also undertaken in the European Union².

Sport is an area of human activity that greatly interests citizens of the European Union and has enormous potential for bringing them together, reaching out to all, regardless of age or social origin. About 60% of Europeans say that they regularly practise sport in 700 000 sports clubs or outside them, and the clubs belong to a large number of associations and federations³. The majority of sporting activity takes place in amateur structures. In contrast, the importance of professional sport continues to grow and thus contributes to the social role of sport. Sport is not only important for improving the health of European citizens, but also has a huge educational dimension and plays a social, cultural and recreational role. In addition, the social role of sport also has the potential to strengthen the Union's external relations.

Modern clubs are organizations that largely operate as small businesses and are subjected to the same market rules. Due to the fact that many sports clubs, in particular team sports clubs, are subjected to fierce competition from other clubs where at stake are better sport results and financial profits, they decide for contracting players and coaches of various nationalities. Agreements with foreign players or coaches enable clubs to get the kind of advantage over competitors, but this is already such a common practice that the most important is what quality players join the team.

The clubs use system management. In practice, this means that disposal of resources at a strategic level has an impact on all functional areas of a club [Panfil, 2004, p. 5]. Sports team and individual players directly perform basic goals and functions of the club. Manager, CEO or manager of the club adopts some model assumptions, which in a rational way coordinate the players and coaches which allows to achieve a common goal, including the development of sports and market of a club and the team. Implementation of goals is made possible by the division of tasks, functions and responsibilities in a team, provided that the message is clear and understandable for all club members.

There are many indications that the proper selection of players representing the appropriate athletic level and other employees of the club is a key success factor for the organization. In each organization there are many personalities to deal with, people from different social origins and with past experience, and bearing in mind internationalization processes occurring in Polish sport,

² Strategi guidelines concerning the role of sport in Europe can be found in White Paper on Sport prepared by the European Commission/ The guidelines refer to social, economic and organizational dimensions of sport. As far as professional sport is concerned, the document states that the importance of Professional sport is on the rise and thus strengthens the social role of sport. More on the White Paper on Sport: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PL/TXT/?uri=URISERV%3A135010>

³ European Commission, <http://ec.europa.eu/COMFrontOffice/PublicOpinion/>, [accessed on: 20.01.2016].

different relationships with different effects for themselves and the organization of sport are formed. Additional informal social-emotional relationships are the kind of coordination of pro-social behavior in a sport team, which arises spontaneously and is the result of mutual relations between players and coaches [Stosik, Morawski, 2009, p. 12]. In many cases, these relationships are the key to athletic performance of an organization. While managing an international team, there is a need for action process including planning, organizing, leadership and control in a multicultural environment, with a full understanding of the intercultural differences.

An important aspect is that clubs are subjects to continuous transformation, and there can even be a mention of some kind of cyclicity or seasonality. Practically, at the end of each season professional teams begin the search and recruitment, and then make transfer of new players who in an even better way will pursue the objectives and vision of a sports club. Depending on the phase of their development clubs pursue different purposes (e.g. : social market etc.) in varying degrees. Modern sports clubs, especially those that have teams playing at the highest level, and thus participate in a professional league competitions (in Poland, for example : Orlen Liga, PlusLiga, Tauron Basket Liga Ekstraklasa S.A.) are treated as commercial organizations that take into account the reality of the market with all its consequences. Hence these entities increasingly have to undergo the rigors of a free market economy. Their activities must reflect the expectations of customers while meeting their needs, and human resources must be oriented to satisfy market expectations and give opportunities for survival and development⁴ [Stosik, Morawski, 2009, p. 14].

Modern sports organizations also need to prepare for significant changes flowing from the environment and the interior of the organization, which involve, among other things, changes to the system of values and lifestyles, and increase the impact of social environment including fans themselves. As in most organizations operating on market principles key factors of success will be creativity, flexibility and speed of action and the willingness to learn. In the context of a sports club these factors will affect the employees of a club, who on a daily basis coordinate the work of a club as an organization and the team composed of international players. Given the influence of different cultures, openness to differences, the desire to understand and respect are very important. Well-understood and accepted “otherness” allows building a competitive advantage in the immediate vicinity of a club, but all actions must be supported by the processes of effective interpersonal communication.

The consequences resulting from ignorance of cultural differences may

⁴ In Western European Countries and the USA sports market was defined In the 1970s and Has player an import ant role in economy ever since. In the USA sports market takes 11th place when it comes to turnover.

have serious consequences for a sports organization. Wherever representatives of different cultures meet, there may appear disruption of communication, misunderstandings, mutual blame and even hostility. This may result, inter alia, from sense of endangerment, which is experienced often unconsciously by a person residing in a foreign country, surrounded by a different culture experiences. When the stay in a foreign country is longer and does not take place for tourist but for professional purposes, it may even undermine self-esteem [Kaminska-Radom, 2012, p. 372]. In the new environment where there is a completely different way of life, one may feel fear, risk and uncertainty that may disrupt the sense of security. This is due to the fact that not all the behaviors that are appreciated and respected in one culture will be equally received in another. In the case of negative assessment of these values there may appear different understandings of reality. Additionally, there is a conflict of values if the values are recognized differently than the values of the country in which a person is present. Conflicts on the cultural background, are the situation quite common especially painfully felt, if the values of the two cultures are contradictory.

3. INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

The key to effective intercultural communication is to understand cultural differences that divide nations of the world. Many scientists tried to make the division and classification of cultures. For example, Edward T. Hall in his book *The Hidden Dimension* suggests a breakdown into high-context cultures and low-context cultures based on the way in which people communicate within these cultures. In low-context cultures a greater part of the message during a call is passed verbally, and so with words. The transfer of information is direct, clear, a lot of the facts, details, specifications that make the relationship are very accurate and understandable to the recipient. In contrast, in societies of high-context culture, which it is not customary to speak 'straight from the shoulder', and a large part of the information is transmitted between words using context. It happens that the statements are quite vague, with a lot of ambiguity and lack of direct information. This is due to the fact that other people assume that a range of information is obvious, so there is no point in having to speak about them at all because they can be picked out of context. In contrast, much more important in all communication is the tone of voice, gestures and facial expressions, which can change the meaning of the entire statement, and only on the recipient depends whether it will be decrypted correctly. In this situation, when the key message of conversation is more presumed than clearly expressed for the person that knows no context, that is, for example, a representative of another culture, the utterance will be less understandable.

Table 1. Context division of cultures

Low-context culture	High-context culture
<i>Individualism</i> - promoting resourcefulness and responsibility for one's actions	<i>Collectivism</i> - identification with a group, the large role of customs as culture media
Verbal Communication plays an important role	Importance of intuition in communication
Monochromatic cultures	Polychromatic cultures
Time is of high value, punctuality is appreciated, monochronic time- one activity is performed at a time	Lack of respect for the time, polychromatic time- many tasks are performed simultaneously

Source: own analysis based on E.T.Hall, 2001 and Kamińska- Radomska, 2012.

In addition to aspects of communication, differences in approach to the issue of time are visible, they are termed monochromic and polychromatic. Monochromatic culture corresponds to low-context culture, and polychromatic to high context culture. But there are exceptions, for example in Japan it is possible to see elements of both cultures. The Japanese are monochromatic in their approach to appointments, plans, punctuality, and highly contextual in communication and loyalty in relationships. The example of Japan illustrates perfectly conscious changes in behavior as monochromatic activity was introduced during the US occupation in order to create harmony in relations with foreigners [Kaminska-Radom, 2012, p. 369].

Poland is regarded rather as a country with high context culture, while in communicating there is visible a significant difference between the language used by the young generation of Poles and the generation brought up in the 80's and 90's of the last century. Other reactions and behavior of language indicate that young Polish people are moving more towards individualism, preferring also less distance to authority [Bokszański, 2007].

4. THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN SPORT

Communication is the basis of the skills used in sports having a significant impact on sporting performance and efficiency of training. It takes place on many levels and with the participation of different people. The basis is communication between the athlete and the coach, but in the case of team sports there is no ripping, victories or suitable atmosphere without effective communication between players. Here, the communication quality has a direct impact on the efficiency of the team and the sport result.

Communication is the exchange of information among its participants, and in the environment of a sports club CEO, board members, medical staff or managers (agents being a party to the agreement the majority of professional

players of the club) have to participate in it. The frequency of communication between the members of a sports organization is more sporadic, but it is very important at the stage of informing players and other club members about the objectives, ambitions and values that are crucial for the organization.

In the era of the internationalization of the sport interpersonal communication is even more important. No one who follows the actions of a favorite club or even the national team⁵ will be surprised by the fact that in the ranks of a team foreign players from around the world are present. Clubs often also employ foreign coaches who are expected to have experience and successes in their native countries and are willing to move to Polish leagues. In the process of the appearance of foreign players and coaches in the rosters of the majority of clubs there is a need for coaching staff and the club managers to speak foreign languages. Nowadays, a very common functioning language of communication in a sports club is English generally known by most foreigners who decide to play outside their home country. However, there are cases of organizations in which decision-makers do not meet this criterion well enough as to permit clear and effective communication.

5. ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONALISATION ON THE ACTIVITY OF SPORTS CLUBS

Currently in Poland we have four leagues regarded as professional. They are: Ekstraklasa (top league) of football, men's basketball, volleyball men and women. Clubs with the status of a professional work as sports joint stock companies, and after meeting all necessary criteria, every year receive a license to perform at this level of competition. This group in season 2016/2017 is expected to be joined by Ekstraklasa of women's basketball, also the authorities of Handball Association in Poland are trying to get the league of handball the same status. Clubs in all these leagues, including those who claim to be professionals employ in their ranks players and coaches from abroad.

For the purposes of this article three leagues have been analysed, two professional: PlusLiga (volleyball men), Tauron Basket Liga Koszykówki (men's basketball) and Tauron Basket Liga Kobiet (women's basketball). Tables 2, 3 and 4 show the degree of internationalization of these leagues. All data refers to the current season, 2015/2016. The collected data indicates a high degree of internationalization of selected for the analysis leagues and the majority of teams participating in them.

Table 2 shows the situation that prevails on the courts of PlusLiga. All 14 teams (clubs) meeting the requirements a professional league have in their ros-

⁵ National football and Male and female basketball teams have tried to draft naturalised players from countries like the USA, Erytrea or Nigeria

ter at least one foreign player. However, there is a provision introduced by the Polish Volleyball Federation setting the limit of a maximum of three foreigners who may simultaneously be on the court (where a total of 6 players is present at one time⁶). In PlusLiga 8 teams employ a foreign coach as the head coach. Among them are as many as three Italians and coaches from Spain, Germany, Romania, Argentina and Canada. Much greater diversity in terms of nationality is visible among players. Now, teams of PlusLiga employ players coming from 19 different countries. Most players are from France (5), USA and Belgium (4). Most foreign players are employed by the club from Rzeszow- 6, and the lowest by AZS of Warsaw University of Technology. The main factor in such transfer decisions is usually the budget of a club and the press reports from the last few seasons suggest that it is Asseco Resovia Rzeszow that has the highest budget.

Table 2. Degree of internationalization in PlusLiga- men's volleyball

PLAYERS					COACHES	
Club	Number		Nationality	Number	Club	Nationality
Resovia Rzeszów	6	1	France	5	Zaksa Kędzierzyn-Koźle	Italy
Zaksa Kędzierzyn-Koźle	3	2	USA	4	Skra Belchatów	Spain
Skra Belchatów	4	3	Belgium	4	Jastrzębski Węgiel	Germany
Jastrzębski Węgiel	4	4	Brazil	3	Czarni Radom	Argentina
Czarni Radom	3	5	Ukraine	3	Cuprum Lubin	Romania
Cuprum Lubin	3	6	Serbia	3	Trefl Gdańsk	Italy
Trefl Gdańsk	3	7	Germany	3	AZS Olsztyn	Italy
AZS Olsztyn	3	8	Argentina	2	MKS Będzin	Canada
AZS Politechnika Warszawa	1	9	Canada	2		
BBTS Bielsko-Biała	2	10	Estonia	2		
AZS Częstochowa	3	11	Holland	2		
MKS Będzin	2	12	Bulgaria	1		
Effector Kielce	2	13	Czech Rep.	1		
Łuczniczka Bydgoszcz	2	14	Israel	1		

⁶ Detailed information on this is available on the website of Polish Volleyball Association www.pzps.pl. The rule was set to protect Polish players and guarantee that at least 3 Poles will be present on the court. It also guarantees players for the national team and the rule is In Line with the Treaty on Freedom of Movement of Workers in the EU, more on the topic on <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=457&langId=pl> [accessed on: 25.02.2015].

15	Slovakia	1
16	Italy	1
17	Slovenia	1
18	Australia	1
19	Norway	1

Source: own analysis based on the official website of PlusLiga www.plusliga.pl [accessed on: 04.02.2016].

In the men's basketball league, all 17 teams have foreign players. Polish Basketball Association (PZKosz) introduced a rule limiting the number of foreign team members staying simultaneously on the court to 3 for 5 players playing. Most popular foreign nationality in the league is American (46), followed by Serbian (9). In total there are 15 different nationalities playing on the courts of Tauron Basket Liga in season 2015/2016, which adds up to 80 foreign players in the entire league. In addition, as many as 10 teams employ a coach from abroad, mainly from the countries of the Balkan Peninsula and 2 coaches from Lithuania. Detailed data is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Degree of internationalization in Tauron Basket Liga- men's basketball

PLAYERS					COACHES	
	<i>Club</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Club</i>	<i>Nationality</i>
1	Anwil Włocławek	6	USA	46	Anwil Włocławek	Croatia
2	Asseco Gdynia	5	Serbia	9	Asseco Gdynia	Macedonia
3	AZS Koszalin	7	Ukraine	4	AZS Koszalin	Slovenia
4	Stal Ostrów	4	Czech Rep.	3	Stal Ostrów	Serbia
5	Czarni Słupsk	5	Croatia	3	Czarni Słupsk	Lithuania
6	Wilki Morskie Szczecin	5	Lithuania	3	MKS Dąbrowa Górnicza	Croatia
7	Dąbrowa Górnicza	5	Montenegro	2	Polfarm Starogard Gd.	Lithuania
8	Turów Zgorzelec	6	Australia	2	Stelmet Zielona Góra	Slovenia
9	Polfarmex Kutno	3	Russia	2	Trefl Sopot	Slovenia
10	Polfarm Starogard Gd.	4	Senegal	1	Śląsk Wrocław	Macedonia

11	Polski Cukier Toruń	4	Bulgaria	1
12	Rosa Radom	5	Bosnia and Herz.	1
13	Siarka Tarnobrzeg	4	Canada	1
14	Start Lublin	5	Camerun	1
15	Stelmet Zielona Góra	5	Romania	1
16	Trefl Sopot	3		
17	Śląsk Wrocław	4		

Source: own analysis based on the official website of Tauron Basket Liga www.plk.pl [accessed on: 20.01.2016].

The league, which soon is to be professionalised, female Tauron Basket Liga Kobiet, works on similar principles as men's basketball league specified by the league and PZKosz. In its matches 12 teams participate and only one of them does not employ any foreign players, while others have them in their roster from 3 to 5. With a slightly smaller number of clubs, it was also observed that there is a smaller diversity in terms of nationality of players - 10 nationalities. Most popular nationality just as in the league of men are athletes with American passports - 28. As many as five teams are run by coaches who are not of Polish origin. The current situation in the female Tauron Basket Liga Kobiet is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Degree of internationalization in Tauron Basket Liga Kobiet-women's basketball

PLAYERS					COACHES	
Lp.	Club	Number	Nationality	Number	Club	Nationality
1	Artego Bydgoszcz	3	USA	28	Energa Toruń	Bosnia
2	Basket 90 Gdynia	5	Ukraine	4	MKK Siedlce	Bulgaria
3	Energa Toruń	4	Spain	3	MKS Polkowice	Ukraine
4	Zagłębie Sosnowiec	3	Belarus	2	Wisła Kraków	Spain
5	Muks Poznań	-	Lithuania	2	Ślęza Wrocław	Lithuania
6	AZS Gorzów Wielkopolski	3	Jamaica	1		
7	MKK Siedlce	5	Montenegro	1		

8	MKS Polkowice	4	Canada	1
9	AZS Lublin	4	Latvia	1
10	Ślęza Wrocław	5	Czech Rep.	1
11	Widzew Łódź	3		
12	Wisła Kraków	5		

Source: own analysis based on the official website of Tauron Basket Liga Kobiet www.basketliga-kobiet.pl

[accessed on: 20.01.2016].

On the basis of these comparisons, it is possible to observe which nationalities predominate in volleyball and which in basketball and identify potential problems associated with cultural differences faced by these clubs, remembering how positive the internationalization of sport is.

The undisputed influence of internationalization of Polish sport is the fact that for many fans of these disciplines as well as the sponsors and sport's immediate surroundings, sport has become more attractive. Spectators of sport events with foreign players playing at the highest level appreciate the diversity of behavior and contribution of foreigners to the result of their beloved a team.

In basketball predominant nations are those whose culture, according to what presents E. Hall, is defined as low-context. These players have high individuality and emphasize verbal communication. It is best to refer to a group of American athletes, because they constitute a large group of basketball players. In the league of female athletes, players with American passports account for 63% of all the foreign players and the in men's league the percentage is 57%, while in volleyball there are less than 10% of the total number of foreign players (this being the second largest ethnic group in this league). English as a low-context language is perceived as clear and very direct. Facts and values in speech seem to have the exact relationship. The English speaker tries to capture reality as faithfully as possible, and the thoughts and facts are presented chronologically. Based on the author's experience and contacts with American players, it was found that communication in English is very direct (in with a lot of the statements starting with "I") and very literal (attention paid to the words so that they pass as accurate message as possible). In sports environment there is a great deal of statements packed with emotions, accompanied by cheers, applause mobilizing to greater effort.

Polish players both male and female cooperating with American players, unfortunately, complain about their attachment to the accuracy of verbal communication because it sometimes happens that what was not directly and clearly said, but was thought by the speaker is simply ignored. Polish players hearing the same message understand it without additional explanation and know how to perform the task. Different reactions lead to a situation in which local players are irritated,

and if the situation is notoriously repeated, it actually becomes a growing frustration, which affects the atmosphere in the team. The solution is, of course, making sure the whole team exactly understands the message, but it very often remains the responsibility of the Polish players to explain it to the foreign teammates. Coaches know that they deal with adults and moreover professionals do not like to repeat themselves, and the team is treated as a single entity and not divided into ethnic groups. Such situations should be avoided especially during matches, where there is no time to repeat, and a lack of understanding may be associated with not carrying out instructions of the trainer properly which in turn can give negative results.

The atmosphere when communicating in Polish is more formal than in English where there is more freedom and ease. There are situations where the Polish athlete takes on feedback, moves to implementation of the instructions without any additional comments, and American in a similar situation will add their comments and will continue the discussion. It can also be indicated by a much smaller distance to the authority which can be seen in American culture. An example is even freedom to address the coach, frequently by name. In Polish culture, there is a reverse situation and a much greater distance to authority, there aren't many phrases using "you", which is reserved only for people well-known to speakers.

In volleyball league there is relatively even cultural diversity. There are some representatives of high context and low-context cultures and from the border of these cultures. Foreign players themselves due to a smaller number of them per team decide about their teams in a small degree, especially that Polish volleyball player is worth more. However, attention must be paid to the situation on the "coaches" bench in the analyzed leagues. More than in half of the clubs in volleyball (8) and basketball (10) and five in women's basketball coaches are foreign. In volleyball coaches need an interpreter. Typically, one of the assistants takes on this role. In male basketball the problem of a language barrier for Poles practically does not exist, as coaches are of Balkan origin and Lithuanian, and their language is closer to Polish and there is a greater ease in understanding or even teaching/learning a language. In addition, several of these trainers before becoming coaches were players in Polish clubs. It means they know Polish culture and habits pretty well. This does not change the fact that due to a large number of Americans and many other nationalities, coaches have to communicate most of the messages in English.

All representatives of high-context culture (and especially Americans) very often emphasize their uniqueness, praising their achievements and successes. Thus, they are more hungry for consecutive praise and awards for their achievements. In Polish culture it is a much rarer phenomenon and results from a lot lower sense of individualism. Additionally, lifestyle of Americans and

the spread of an aura of uniqueness around themselves causes them to be often more appreciated (and thus, in many cases more favorably treated) by coaches and club owners. This raises a general concern among representatives of high-context culture, resulting in a growing number of conflicts between players of different nationalities.

A large presence of American athletes in Polish basketball leagues, makes the game of teams, in which there are several of them very individual, which misses the main objective of team sports, but it is not surprising, on the other hand, because the Americans come from a very individualistic society. Many fans enjoy such play, as there appear a lot of impressive individual plays, but if they are not effective (do not give points) or do not give the victory of the team, are perceived very negatively by Polish athletes, authorities of a clubs and as a result fans themselves. Indirect reason is the fact that all the players compete for good statistics, which can give them a better contract and more lucrative deal for the next season.

The experience of many clubs shows that contracting foreign players has a lot of pluses and minuses. Among the negative aspects there is certainly the brevity of foreigners. It definitely hinders complete identification of players with the values and objectives of the club. These players are aware that they are in Poland “for a while” and do not try to learn or better adapt to Polish culture. This shows that many foreigners do not do much for cultural differences not to jeopardize relations in a team.

To better illustrate the changing situation regarding contracting foreign players in Polish basketball over the last 26 years the story of a women’s basketball club MMKS Energa Toruń has been analyzed. The 90s were a period from which the club began to celebrate successes, starting with being a leader in the first league to many years of participation in matches of the top league of women. In this period the team won three medals in Polish Championships: two bronze and one silver (in Table 5 these seasons have been highlighted in bold and underlined). According to data collected in Table 5, there was a clear trend in 1990-2006 to employ players from behind the Easter border of Poland. Among them, the largest number were Russians, Belarussians, Ukrainians - mainly players from countries located relatively close to Poland. Many Polish trainers were educated in schools located in Russia (one might even say a kind of aspiration of the Russian school basketball) and on the basis of experience and contacts a relationship between the eastern clubs was established.

Historical aspects may not be meaningless, i.e. a long-term impact on the situation of Eastern neighbors of Poland. It is associated with many political, scientific and business contacts established by the representatives of these nationalities. A larger proportion of Poles and what follows people in sport spoke Russian language which facilitated communication, and these contacts made the cultural differences between Eastern nations not entirely alien for Poles.

Table 5. Comparison of the number and nationalities of foreign players playing for the club MMKS Katarzynki 1990-2016

Season	Number	Nationality	Season	Number	Nationality
1990-1991*	1	Russia	2003-2004*	1	Russia
1991-1992*	1	Russia	2004-2005*	1	Russia
1992-1993	2	Russia	2005-2006*	1	Ukraine
1993-1994	2	Moldova	2006-2007	5	USA, Ukraine
1994-1995	2	Russia	2007-2008	6	USA, Ukraine
1995-1996	2	Russia, Belarus	2008-2009	6	USA, Dominican Rep., Serbia
1996-1997	2	Russia, Belarus	<u>2009-2010</u>	5	USA, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Nigeria, Slovenia
1997-1998	3	Belarus, Serbia, Hungary	2010-2011	8	USA, Bulgaria, Canada, New Zealand, Croatia, Czech Rep., Serbia
1998-1999	2	Belarus, Ukraine	<u>2011-2012</u>	8	USA, UK, Serbia, Nigeria
1999-2000	3	Belarus, Uzbekistan	2012-2013	4	USA, Serbia
2000-2001	2	Serbia	2013-2014	6	USA, Croatia
2001-2002*	1	Russia	<u>2014-2015</u>	7	USA, Czech Rep., Serbia, Jamaica, Armenia
2002-2003	2	Russia, Ukraine	2015-2016	5	USA, Russia, Belarus,

Source: www.basketliga.pl oraz <http://marlow.blox.pl/html> [accessed on: 01.2016]

* Season played in the first league, when one foreign player was allowed.

Only in 2006 in the official line-up of the team, American athletes and athletes from the Balkan countries and African countries began to appear regularly. The total number of contracted foreign players and their rotation in one season has increased. Unfortunately, in the case of this club a larger variety of national, and hence cultural differences do not always go hand in hand with success. In season 2010-2011, after the biggest success of club in the form of winning a bronze medal in the in Polish Championships, the club having larger budget made a lot bolder and more numerous transfer movements. Over the period from 1990 to 2016 the structure of the sponsors of this club has changed a lot. Between 1990s and 2006 they were mainly local companies of all sizes, while since 2006 some national recognizable companies like Energa and Kia Motors have become sponsors of the club. Additionally, during this period of time the club management made many contacts and negotiated with international companies. The reason for such a change could be mentioned in the introduc-

tion impact of internationalization of sport on sports marketing.

SUMMARY

People tend to incorrectly interpret the values and behaviors of people coming from another culture, especially looking at them through the prism of values and behaviors valued in their own society. If people from countries with different levels of contextuality in culture meet, it is very easy to misunderstand and even insult one another, if one is not aware of different communication styles. All three presented sports leagues have a very diverse international group of players. This makes each league more exceptional, attractive, and offering higher levels of sporting performance. This diversity provokes many situations that can cause conflicts. The question arises whether the hosts and newcomers should adapt to changed circumstances. Most appropriate would be a diplomatic answer. On the one hand, the clubs should try to make the best use of foreign stars in order to succeed, on the other hand, foreigners should put a certain amount of effort in understanding the surrounding culture so that the time spent in Poland was simply enjoyable.

Club owners and coaches have a huge role to play in this field. Beside speaking the language, the solution may be offered by creating situation to bring players together, promote team building, which is especially important at the beginning of a sports season. Events facilitating making such bonds helps players to meet and understand each other better. Players must then adapt for a variety of situations, of course, cooperate and communicate effectively. This practice is a routine part of the functioning of sports teams in the US, where in the course of the season, a team has numerous opportunities to enhance the relationship during a joint voluntary activities, training clinics, sports camps for children, joint celebrations and common extreme ventures, eg. survival expeditions.

Thanks to the internationalization of sport with great support of technology that people have, the international sports marketing is growing. It is even described as a global phenomenon [Pedersen, Thibault, 2014, p. 460]. A positive example of it is that there are plenty of instances where sport brings diverse social groups together. Sport brings together people of different nationalities, with different skin color, sex, religion and financial status. Campaigns and slogans like UEFA's - "No to racism", FIBA's- „We are Basketball” and FIFA's- „For the Game. For the World”⁷ which aim at eliminating discrimination in sport and promoting tolerance evoke popular support. Through specific activities, sport is an effective tool to promote good practice, education, health, inter-cultural dialogue, development and peace. This can be successfully implemented locally, in Polish leagues.

⁷ UEFA- the Union of European Football Associations, FIFA- International Football Federation, FIBA- International Basketball Federation.

Greater emphasis must, however, be placed on it so that sports organizations in Poland become aware of this and they implement it.

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ZARZĄDZANIE MIĘDZYKULTUROWE NA PRZYKŁADZIE KLUBU SPORTOWEGO

Zarys treści: W dobie globalizacji coraz częściej odnajdujemy się w sytuacji konieczności współpracy z przedstawicielami najróżniejszych kultur. Nie zawsze mamy wpływ na wybór współpracowników, jednak aby relacje układały się poprawnie konieczna jest znajomość i respektowanie różnic kulturowych które nas odróżniają i dzielą. W sporcie efekt globalizacji jest bardzo widoczny gdyż zasięg sportu nie zna granic. W Polsce przejawia się to dużo większą ilością i różnorodnością cudzoziemców zatrudnianych w polskich klubach. Brak świadomości różnic kulturowych, niedostateczne przygotowanie, ogólna niewiedza, a przy tym bardzo często brak pokory, prowadzą do załamywania się komunikacji wewnątrz organizacji sportowej i ogólne utrudnienie współpracy. Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie zależności jakie występują podczas realizacji zadań delegowanych przez trenera wśród zawodników pochodzących z krajów o kulturze niskokontekstowej i wysokokontekstowej. W niniejszym artykule przedstawione zostaną podstawowe problemy, które dotyczą polskie kluby profesjonalne. Dodatkowo szczegółowa analiza jednego z polskich klubów koszykówki żeńskiej pokaże jak zmieniła się międzynarodowa struktura zatrudnienia w tym klubie oraz jakie to miało skutki dla

jego funkcjonowania.

Słowa kluczowe: zarządzanie międzykulturowe, globalizacja, internacjonalizacja, kultura, kultura, kultura niskokontekstowa, kultura wysokokontekstowa, sport, komunikacja, relacje.