THE POTENTIAL OF SPORT
FOR INTEGRATION AND INCLUSION

Péterné BLATT[1]

ABSTRACT
The concept of inclusion has changed in several ways over the past two decades, on the one hand, the range of target groups, individuals and areas has expanded, and on the other hand, it has become a concept that is now understood at a societal level. In the case of inclusion, the focus of inclusion is not on the person or group to be included, but on the receiving environment [46]. This environment is not always successfully created within the walls of the school. In such cases, sports clubs offer an excellent opportunity. "Sport is now much more than a leisure activity: it permeates the economy and society as a whole... it is the perfect educational tool: it teaches social coexistence and the individual to integrate into a group, becoming a useful member of it. Through it, one learns respect for both peers and opponents, respect for rules, solidarity, entrepreneurship and collective discipline" (Szent-Györgyi – quoted in [20: 94]).

INTRODUCTION

"A society can survive only if a sufficient degree of homogeneity is established among its members; education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by reinforcing in the child from the very beginning all the essential similarities which collectively organised life requires" (Durkheim – quoted in [16:22]).

Education, like other subsystems of society, has four functions: reproduction, adaptation, signalling and integration. The latter can help to transform the social structure and bring about positive social change for marginalised social groups [2]. According to Coleman (1966), disadvantages in school are the result of social, economic and cultural differences of students, i.e. they are closely related to their origin.

Research in recent years has shown that schools alone cannot always compensate for disadvantage. In such cases, sport can be an effective weapon.

DISADVANTAGED SITUATION

Interpretation of the concept

The concept of disadvantage began to emerge and become known in the 1960s, after the abolition of university/college enrolment by origin. The concept itself has never been well understood or scientifically defined [36]. "There are two cases of disadvantage. In one case it is understood as the unequal opportunities in the so-called upward vertical mobility of different strata, groups or individuals in our society. In the other case, it is used to denote a certain state of affairs in order to characterize the position of certain social groups' [26: 18]. Ilona Liskó defines disadvantage as a flexible category that adapts to the economic - social environment and is always present 'here and now' [28]. Nowadays, many disciplines use this term, but for my topic the sociological and

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[1] Blatt Péterné Barbara, Pécsi Tudományegyetem, Oktatás és Társadalom Neveléstudományi Doktori Iskola, 7622 PÉCS, Vasvári P. U. 4.

pedagogical definitions are relevant.

Sociology understands the concept as social disadvantage. It is interpreted as a trigger by Liskó (1997):
- low levels of parental education
- the number of dependants
- parental deviance
- the broken families
- the precarious existential situation of families
- minority, ethnic situation.

Papp (1997), like Liskó, mentions the following factors as typical manifestations of disadvantage:
- low income
- poor housing conditions
- low educational attainment of parents
- family, or lack of it
- parents unable to provide adequate care for their children
- the socialisation harms of a deviant microenvironment.

These factors form a chain, as one often leads to another. Children from such families are easily marginalized, often forming substitute communities with their own subculture, and are more exposed to certain deviant influences [26]. As can be seen from the list, in addition to economic factors, race and ethnicity can also be a breeding ground for disadvantage. In Hungary this is particularly true for members of the Roma minority.

Réthy and Vámos (2006) take two approaches to the concept of disadvantage:
- socio-economic disadvantage: economic situation is the determining factor
- socio-cultural disadvantage: ethnicity, education, place of residence or living environment are the root causes.

Disadvantage can also be interpreted in terms of social status. In contrast to Lisko, Kolosi (2010) does not take family background as a benchmark, but develops different status dimensions. He mentions three status characteristics that are closely related to social status. These are occupation, education and income.

"An essential element in the definition of deprivation is the residential environment, which can be interpreted in many ways: it can be limited to housing conditions, extended to the village-urban area, or, broadening the definition further, the whole settlement can be considered as a residential environment." [18: 169].

The spatial distribution of disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged pupils is not even. Studies by Tamás Híves (2015) show that these pupils live mainly in deprived and peripheral areas. In these areas, economic indicators are much lower and basic infrastructure provision is weaker. Unemployment, impoverishment and falling property values are much more marked in these areas.

It is important to note, however, that it is not only the child who may be disadvantaged, but also the family, which is disadvantaged if it cannot provide the right socialisation conditions for its members.

Disadvantage and school

The factors contributing to disadvantage mentioned earlier also have an impact on educational attainment. Pedagogy, unlike sociology, considers school performance as a measure of disadvantage. The source of disadvantage at school is the academic gap with respect to one's own abilities. Inequality in schools means that not everyone has access to the education and training that is appropriate to their abilities and talents [5].

In addition to children, educational institutions can also be disadvantaged. Such schools are attended by a large number of disadvantaged children from disadvantaged families. These institutions are usually located in a disadvantaged municipality or part of a municipality [21]. Anna Imre (2002) identifies the reasons for the creation of disadvantaged institutions as being not only geographical location but also staff and material conditions and teaching methods. Ilona Liskó's (2002b) research shows that the education of disadvantaged pupils takes place in less favourable conditions than the average. The data showed that in schools with a large number of disadvantaged pupils, the quality of the physical conditions is below average. Anikó Fehérvári's (2015) research showed that these institutions have more early career teachers, a higher teacher shortage and a higher number of teachers with inadequate qualifications. Mártonfi (2006) introduces the concept of segregation of teachers in his article on the topic, referring to the significantly higher work and psychological burden of teachers working in such institutions. Széll's (2015a) research also shows that segregated schools have a higher turnover of teachers, which hinders the development of a cohesive staff climate, thus hampering the effective pedagogical work and the compensatory power of the school.

Another risk is a lack of attachment to school, as students who are attached to school are mentally healthier, have a more positive self-image and perform better. Factors that influence school attachment include family, student communities, culture and school influences. Among the latter, the size of student groups, the teacher-student relationship and the tolerance and receptiveness of the student community are the most significant [42] Mayer (2016) also lists inappropriate assessment practices and passive teaching methods as risk factors.

In addition to these, there are also factors of a non-economic and non-material nature, such as
- parents' attitudes towards education and school,
- and the family's level of education.

It is the former factor that is perhaps most effectively addressed. However, we must also acknowledge that this is a very difficult task for staff in nurseries and schools. Often the parents themselves come from disadvantaged backgrounds, with poor academic results and many failures at school, which have a very negative impact on their perception of the school and its teachers. Closely related to the literacy level of the family is the level of the language they use [50].

Klaus Mollenhauer (1996) argues that the reasons for school failure are only partly to be found in the school. Another important factor is that children who enter school have different chances of starting the learning process. The reasons for this must be sought in the period before the child starts school. School implies a process of socialisation. However, this process is influenced by many factors. A number of studies have shown that the values that children have acquired in the family and that they have been brought up with strongly influence their performance at school.

Family socialisation is strongly influenced by the early caring relationship between the child and the caregiver. The lack of this relationship has a negative impact on the child's learning abilities, skills, social behaviour, creative activities and language skills.

The number of children in a family and the relationship between parents have a similar effect on school performance. Based on studies by Bronfenbrenner (1965), he concludes that a child's aspiration level is highest in families that are mother-centred [33]. Rosen's research has shown that children at the lower levels of society are more passive, present-focused and family-oriented, with lower motivation to continue their education. In contrast, children in the middle classes are more active, future-oriented and individualistic, with higher intentions to continue their education and better academic performance [33].

The results of international and domestic measurements (PISA, PEARL, TIMMS, National Competency Measurement), which also examine the relationship between family background and student performance, have already shown that the correlation between the two factors is particularly strong in Hungary. Family background is responsible for a quarter of the differences in student performance [4]. Studies by Anikó Fehérvári (2015) have also shown that the vast majority of teachers also blame the family environment, inappropriate lifestyle and lack of family socialisation for school failure. In addition, they attribute a significant role to the lack of good quality nursery education, and only then do they mention school factors. The majority of teachers see little scope for school to compensate for disadvantages brought from home.

In addition to the spatial distribution of disadvantaged families, there are also significant differences between different types of secondary school. The highest number of disadvantaged pupils is found in vocational schools, the lowest in upper secondary schools. Only one out of two disadvantaged children reach upper secondary education, while only one third of pupils with multiple disadvantages do so [19]. According to Liskó's 2001 study, the secondary schools with the highest drop-out rates were those with the most disadvantaged pupils [30].

According to Aranka Varga (2015a), the number of early school leavers can be significantly reduced by creating and maintaining an inclusive school environment.

INTEGRATION, INCLUSION

Understanding integration

"In today's parlance, integrated education refers to a pedagogical approach that involves the combined education and teaching of children with learning difficulties for whatever reason" [1: 191]. "A process that aims to maximise the relationship between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners" (Evens et al. – quoted in [23]).

Children come to school with different needs, interests, motivation and family backgrounds. The values and norms of the school are generally not the same as those of disadvantaged pupils. Thus, if teachers want to do effective and quality work, they need to approach them in different ways and with different methods [44]. All these facts have been recognised by legislators in European societies. In recent decades, it has become increasingly clear that disadvantaged children who are raised and educated in segregation find it very difficult to integrate into society as adults. This recognition has led to the emergence of the concept of children with special educational needs and the growing need for integrated education. Today, disadvantage is a situation that can be changed by shaping the environment, thus enabling the social integration of the persons and groups concerned [1].

The legal basis for the practice of integration

The first of a series of legal instruments to ensure equal opportunities for disadvantaged pupils, the Charter adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993, states that Member States shall strive to provide children, young people and adults with an equal and integrated education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The so-called Salamanca Declaration on Principles, Programmes and Practices for the Education of Pupils with Special Educational Needs was adopted at the 1994 UNESCO Conference. "The Declaration emphasised the importance of education adapted to individual characteristics, meeting individual learning needs and creating equal opportunities" [1: 188]. In 1996, the then fifteen Member States of the European Union established the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education to coordinate the development of education for pupils with special educational needs [1]

Integration in Hungarian public education

The first roots of the idea of integration in our country date back to the 18th century. Joseph II's decree of 1782 ordered the merging of schools of different denominations. The second Ratio Educationis, issued in 1806, aimed at common education without religious or national distinction. After the Reunification, the first law on public education in Hungary, the XXXVIII Law of 1868, was drafted. Although it does not specifically mention disadvantaged individuals, it states that 'all children shall be taught in their mother tongue in the folk school' [32: 309].

This positive trend started to decline already at the end of the 19th century [1]. As the mainstream institutions could not cater for pupils with special educational needs, the development of a system of supportive special education institutions began. Article XXX of Law No. 1921 already designated 'remedial-educational' institutions for pupils with physical or mental retardation or mental illness or dull-mindedness [1].

It was only in the late 1980s that segregation started to ease. By that time, citizens and legislators in European societies had become increasingly aware of the positive aspects of integrated education and the damaging effects of the segregating world of special education institutions. In Hungary, the legal basis for the practical implementation of integrated education was first provided by Act LXXIX of 1993 on Public Education, Article 30 (1) of which declares that: 'every child and pupil has the right to receive pedagogical, remedial and conductive educational care appropriate to his or her condition within the framework of special care, starting from the time when his or her entitlement to such care has been established' [51]. It is also important to mention Act XXVI of 1998 on the rights of persons with disabilities and ensuring their equal opportunities [1].

However, several factors are essential for integration to take place. According to Ágnes Lányiné Engelmayer (1990), these are:

- psychologically well-trained teachers who accept that they have to deal with more than just the average "normal" person
- teachers trained in special education for problem children
- positive social opinion
- differentiated assistance adapted to individual learning abilities
- appropriate technical and specialised training tools
- active partnership between children
- a supportive atmosphere
- more flexible assessment, grading and standards than classical pedagogical practice.

Forms of integration

László Katona (2020) distinguishes the following types of integration:

- local integration: the simplest form of integration, which aims to reduce spatial distance. The most common form of integration is the simplest form of integration. This variant has the potential for integration, for example through the organisation of joint leisure activities, but in its absence it is merely a form of segregation.

- social inclusion: this type of inclusion involves the above-mentioned joint leisure activities. This type of social inclusion is the one described above. This can take two forms:
  - periodically and occasionally: for example, trips, certain school events
  - regularly and continuously: for example, meals, afternoon classes, afternoon leisure activities are always organised together
- Functional inclusion: the highest level of inclusion, where disadvantaged children are developed alongside their peers. This joint development can be achieved:
  - partial integration, where children are only together for certain lessons, and
  - full inclusion, where disadvantaged children spend all their time with their peers.

The author distinguishes two levels of integration. The first is integration, as already discussed, where the school expects the disadvantaged pupil to adapt as much as possible to the school's norms, values and rules. The teacher does not change his or her own teaching methods or pedagogical tools, and it is up to the special needs teacher and the parents to remedy the problems. The second, and most desirable level of co-education is inclusion, where the school itself changes the framework for implementing the curriculum and tries to create conditions to ensure the progress of all pupils.

Inclusion

The concept of inclusion has changed in several ways over the past two decades, on the one hand, the range of target groups, individuals and areas has expanded, and on the other hand, it has become a concept that is now understood at a societal level. In the case of inclusion, the focus of inclusion is not on the person or group to be included, but on the receiving environment. It aims to make the environment inclusive through interventions that prevent the exclusion of certain individuals or groups [46]. "Inclusive pedagogy presupposes a system that begins with the recognition of difference between students, which sees the student as an autonomous individual in its complexity" [46: 253]. "'The aim of inclusive education and teaching is to enable children with special educational needs to learn in schools that are suitable for inclusion, where the organisational and content framework for implementing co-education is considered, and the conditions are thought through to maximise the progress of all pupils' [1: 197]. Inclusive schools are constantly adapting to their students through the teaching methods they use and the curricular content they deliver, i.e. they are able to innovate continuously. Teachers in inclusive education institutions strive for the individual development of students and the differentiated development of their abilities, emphasising the importance of joint activities and mutual communication [46]. In the opinion of Aranka Varga (2015b), "the inclusive institutional approach, which can be seen in the attitudes of teachers, is the cornerstone of inclusiveness" [47: 80].

SPORT AS A POTENTIAL FOR INTEGRATION AND INCLUSION

School alone cannot compensate for disadvantage, but sport can be an effective weapon. In Germany, an initiative was launched as early as 1972 with the aim of making sport accessible to socially disadvantaged and marginalised groups. It was advocated that sports clubs should focus on overcoming social challenges rather than on performance. If schools, sports clubs and social institutions align their sporting offer with the needs of their social environment, taking into account its problems, sport can be implemented in a socially responsible way. However this can only be achieved if organised physical activity is available to all [7].

Bailey's (2005) research in the UK shows that sport offers the opportunity to build wider networks of friendships by increasing the number of friendships and to reduce social isolation by developing social capital.

"Through its socialising and value-communicating effects, its power to shape healthy lifestyles and its integrating mechanisms, physical education at school can play an important role in the lives of young people with integration problems, disadvantaged groups and those who may be prone to deviant behaviour. It is often the first link that binds these children to school, providing them with a sense of achievement' [15: 55]. Belonging to a sports club is an excellent opportunity to meet people of other ethnic or national backgrounds and to develop friendships. Athletes who train in a club can integrate linguistically more easily than recreational athletes or their non-athletic counterparts [17]. The German Olympic Sports Association claims that organised sport promotes intercultural understanding and makes a positive contribution to democratic and tolerant coexistence [9]. Nádori (2009) cites sport as an effective weapon for preventing social exclusion, counteracting school failure and integrating disadvantaged people. The Annex on Sport to the Amsterdam Treaty of October 1997 also stresses its importance in reducing cultural and ethnic disparities. Tonts (2005), drawing on the results of his research in Australia, stresses the potential of sport to provide a bridge between different groups and social networks. It is an excellent form of social interaction not only for athletes but also for spectators and non- sporting participants, and can thus be seen as a hub for local and regional communities.

Pühse et al (2011) define sport as a "social marketplace" where children can meet peers and build relationships. Membership of a sports club increases the chances of social contact and the bonds that develop between members, thus promoting integration [9]. Research by Slutzky and Simpkins (2009) has shown that sport is particularly beneficial for children who are difficult to accept by their peers, as students tend to value success in sport. Young people with low social status tend to have lower self-esteem and often do not perform well in group-oriented activities. The author's research shows that the more time children spend in team sports, the better they feel about themselves during the sporting activity and the more positive their self-esteem becomes. Time spent in team sports can therefore contribute positively to a positive change in their self-esteem and perception.

Steptoe and colleagues (1997) found a significant positive correlation between regular physical activity and the level of social support, i.e. more physically active individuals have higher social support. Studies by Klenk and colleagues (2019) among children with disabilities have shown that sport also contributes positively to their social acceptance. Physical activity strengthens their social bonds, makes it easier for them to adopt community rules and improves their positive self-image. Sport also helps children to integrate into the social system. Through sport, they can experience social expectations, which helps them to assert themselves in adulthood and find ways to become useful members of society. It is an opportunity for socially marginalised groups to break out of society, as it creates a kind of equal opportunities for them [12].

Bíróné et al. (2011) have compiled a bundle of factors that contribute to the community-building of sport, which are:
- common objectives
- the shared experience of doing the activity
- good performance
- recognition of achievement, community status
- being bound by the rules
- togetherness and interdependence within the team

- shared experiences related to sport but beyond training
- upholding traditions

Meeting the same people regularly is an excellent way to build and maintain relationships. Sport can therefore facilitate regular social contact and thus contribute to the social integration of the individual [6]. From the point of view of social integration, sports clubs have a monitoring and support function. Individuals who belong to formal and informal groups have higher mental health indices. They suggest that those who play sports with others have more positive psychological indicators, while this is less the case for individual sports [49].

The integration potential of sport is an opportunity in itself. It is not the sport itself that brings people together, but rather the way it is organised and the values it represents that have the potential for integration [35]. Nor is it uncommon for sport to promote segregation rather than integration, in other words exclusion of some - for example, when an immigrant player is met with reservations, prejudice and rejection from the rest of the team. Therefore, integration goals should be deliberately targeted. Favourable conditions are needed to support and promote effective integration [9]. "The promotion of intercultural coexistence through physical education and sport presupposes highly personality- dependent, social, professional and didactic competences. A mindset oriented towards the promotion of equal opportunities, the reduction of discrimination and the further development of social justice is a particular requirement of this educational environment" [14: 88]. Sport is a magic bullet that can be a natural tool for reducing tensions between different nations. Sport can easily form a bridge for tolerance, respect and trust [35].

SUMMARY

In summary, "sport integration is a tool for social inclusion that is an accepted and popular activity among young people of Roma origin and disadvantaged groups. The use of sport is of crucial importance for inclusion" [12: 138].

However, research by Sacker and Cable (2005) found that, despite the long-term positive effects of sport on disadvantaged young people, it does not compensate for adverse life circumstances. Herzog and colleagues (2009) point out that if there are specific national or ethnic criteria for belonging to a sports club, a sporting space can be created that can have a socially destabilising effect.

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