

ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE SPORT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, I. E.: IS THE SPORT IMPORTANT IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

Authors:

Emese Balázs-Földi (PhD)
University of Debrecen

Miklós Villás
Social, Family- and Child Welfare
Center of Derecske

E-mail address of first author:
balazs.foldi.emese@gmail.com

Lectors:

Christa Sára Pfau (PhD)
University of Debrecen

Éva Judit Bartha (PhD)
University of Debrecen

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Abstract

The equal opportunities approach of the second half of the 20th century emphasizes the social inclusion of disadvantaged groups, including persons with disabilities. Education and employment play a key role in achieving integration. Nevertheless, other fields such as leisure time and sporting activities also contribute positively to the social involvement of persons with disabilities. At present nearly 7,000 persons with disabilities are registered in Hungary who pursue sports competitively, of whom approximately 5,000 persons with intellectual disabilities (Regényi et.al, 2017). The study discloses the partial results of a research aimed at revealing the awareness of the Hungarian population regarding the sport of people with disabilities. As such research has never been carried out in Hungary before, it can fill in a niche. The results of our exploratory research may be the starting point for further investigations. The importance of the topic is given by the fact that thanks to the sport the focus is on the outstanding performance of the social group concerned rather than on their limitations and deficiencies, which therefore reinforces the positive and accepting attitude of citizens. Previous research findings have highlighted that the nature of disability-related knowledge influences the way the members of society think about persons with disabilities, i.e. when it is possible to provide information and gain experience focusing on the existing abilities and strengths of the above -mentioned group, attitudes become more positive as well. The findings of the research reveal that respondents consider it important to pursue sport within an integrated framework, at the same time they

feel it is justified to do segregated sports with a view to persons with disabilities. Based on the results we can state that the media coverage of achievements in sports competitions of persons with disabilities is perceived as low level, but apparently it is not considered to be a key area in the lives of persons with disabilities.

Keywords: integration, inclusive approach, attitude, media, sport habits, equal opportunity

Disciplines: sociology

Absztrakt

FOGYATÉKOSSÁGGAL ÉLŐ SZEMÉLYEK SPORTOLÁSÁVAL KAPCSOLATOS ATTITÜDÖK, AVAGY: FONTOS-E A SPORT A FOGYATÉKOSSÁGGAL ÉLŐ EMBEREK ÉLETÉBEN?

A XX. század második felében megjelenő esélyegyenlőségi szemlélet, a hátrányos helyzetű csoportok, köztük a fogyatékossgal élő személyek társadalmi befogadását hangsúlyozza. Az integráció megvalósulásában az oktatás és a foglalkoztatás kiemelt szerepet játszik. Ugyanakkor egyéb területek, így a szabadidő és a sport területe szintén pozitívan járul hozzá a fogyatékossgal élő emberek társadalmi részvételének teljesüléséhez. Magyarországon ma versenyszerűen csaknem 7000 fő fogyatékossgal élő sportolót tartanak nyilván, közülük kb. 5000 fő értelmi fogyatékossgal élő személy (Regényi et.al, 2017).

A tanulmány a magyar lakosság fogyatékossgal élő személyek sportolásával kapcsolatos tájékozottságának feltárására irányuló kutatás részeredményeit mutatja be. Mivel ezidáig hazánkban ilyen jellegű kutatásra még nem került sor, hiánypótlónak tekinthető. Felderítő jellegű kutatásunk eredményei további vizsgálatok kiindulópontja lehet. A téma azért is fontos, mivel a sport által az érintett társadalmi csoport kiemelkedő teljesítménye kerül középpontba, nem pedig korlátaik és hiányosságaik, így az állampolgárok pozitív viszonyulását és elfogadó szemléletét erősíti. Korábbi kutatási eredmények rávilágítottak, hogy a fogyatékossgal kapcsolatos ismeretek jellege befolyásolja a társadalom tagjainak gondolkodását a fogyatékossgal élőkkel kapcsolatosan, azaz amennyiben a nevezett csoport meglévő képességeire és erősségeire fókuszáló tájékoztatásra és tapasztalatszerzésre van lehetőség az attitűdök is pozitívabbá válnak.

A kutatás eredményei szerint a megkérdezettek fontosnak ítélik az integrált keretek között zajló sportolást, ugyanakkor indokoltnak érzik a fogyatékossgal élők szempontjából a szegregált sportolást. Az eredmények alapján megállapítható, hogy a fogyatékossgal élő személyek versenyeken elért helyezéseiről szóló média megjelenést alacsony szintűnek vélik, ugyanakkor láthatólag nem érzik a fogyatékossgal élők életében kiemelten fontos területnek.

Kulcsszavak: integráció, befogadó szemlélet, attitűd, média, sportolási szokások, esélyegyenlőség

Diszciplínák: szociológia

The role and importance of sport for the individual and the society

The sport is a specific human activity and as activity it is part of the universal culture (Bíróné et al., 2011). The sport has got a number of positive effects both on the micro and the macro level. From the person's perspective the sport plays an important role in the field of education, personality development, health promotion, recreation, etc. Thanks to the sport, the person's cognitive functions, communication strategies, social (cooperation, problem solving) abilities, as well as coping strategies are developing (Pikó et al., 2010; Benczúr, 2017). The health promoting and preserving factor of the sport is well-known, but it also plays a significant role in overcoming diseases and restoring health. By doing physical exercises the physical, psychical, and mental state, the endurance of the individual strengthen (Pikó et al., 2010). The positive effects of sport on mental health are widely known, thus the intention of mental recharging and stress relief is an important motivation for engaging in leisure sports (Bartha&Bácsné, 2018). The importance of sport is reflected in the management of tension and stress, and it increases the individual's resilience (Szokolszky&V Komlósi, 2015).

In a broader context its role both in the society and economy is well-known (Bíróné et al., 2011). The sport facilitates the integration into the society, the mobility and attainment of community standards, it helps to prevent the development of deviances, on the other hand thanks to the team spirit the individual can experience the power of common goals, the particular way the community works, and significant sports achievements are acknowledged by mates and the community (Tigyi-né, 2015).

From an economic point of view, positive outcomes both on the social and the individual level have long-term benefits. The productivity, performance and consumption of economic operators increase, whereas the social (health) expenditure

becomes lower due to the health promoting and deviance preventing functions (Paár, 2015). Today sport as an economic field significantly contributes to the national income, what is more, an important source of it is the sports broadcasting (Ács et al., 2011; Ács, 2015).

Why is sport important in the life of persons with disabilities?

In the life of persons with disabilities sport has the same significance as for persons without disabilities: health promotion, self-fulfilment, success, social life, gaining publicity (Dorogi, 2012:7; Tóvári, 2015). According to Pfau (2017) sport "can also serve for disadvantaged groups as means of catching up in the society" (Pfau, 2017, p.13.), in other words, it can be an important tool for increasing chances (Pfau, 2019). A common activity done together with non-disabled people can facilitate integration, decrease the negative attitudes expressed towards them, increase their acceptance and reception in the community. Benczúr (2017) claims that the special sport also plays a huge role in rehabilitation. Through improved physical health and healthy lifestyle education, thanks to the achievements, the quality of life of athletes significantly improves (Petrika, 2012).

However, access to physical activity and sport is not always guaranteed to persons with disabilities. Recognising the positive impact of sport on the individuals and the society, the international and domestic legislation promotes equal opportunities for people with disabilities in leisure and competitive sport.

Hungary was one of the first countries to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2007 (Act XCII of 2007). Article 19 of the Convention emphasises that persons with disabilities have the right to participate in the community on an equal basis with others, that is,

they also have the right to learn, work, have entertainment, have access to culture, and do sport. Article 30 calls on States Parties to enable persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in sporting activities, that is, they shall take appropriate steps and measures to encourage and promote persons with disabilities to participate in integrated sporting activities. The amendment of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009 gives the EU a formal competence on sport in the member states. In Hungary Act XXVI of 1998 on the Provision of the Rights and Equal Opportunities of Persons Living with Disability specifies the field of culture and sport as one of the focus areas of equal opportunities. In accordance with Section 18 (1) „persons with disabilities shall be enabled to visit cultural, sports and other types of community facilities”. The National Disability Program (2015-2025) (hereinafter: Program) calls the lack of facilities in the area of leisure sport a difficulty, on the other hand the disabled accessibility of existing facilities is also problematic, which calls for intervention. In addition to leisure sports, competitive sporting goals are also included in the Program, i.e. the development of competitive sports of persons living with disability, sports scholarships promoting competitive sports, and provision of specialised sports equipment.

Act I of 2004 on sports and the preamble to its amendment, Act XXIX of 2019, class the support of sporting activities of persons living with disability among the tasks of the state, as it has an important role in the life of the social group concerned with a view to equal opportunities.

The role of media in changing social attitudes

The existence of statutory provisions does not in itself create equal opportunities, as not only the state, but also the majority society shall regard its fulfilment as their own task (Kálmán&Könzei,

2002). The media has a significant role in shaping social attitudes by broadcasting news and information to citizens.

The mass media has two important purposes in the lives of persons with disabilities. The first one is to make programmes and writings understandable and accessible for them. The other one is to inform the majority society on events connected to persons with disabilities. In the National Disability Program the national assembly requests media service providers to promote information on the program in order to further the change in social attitudes towards persons living with disability (OFP 2015- 2025).

In the Hungarian media the sport of disabled persons appears in the Paralympic broadcast: we can see the fight of Paralympians live on TV. Beyond that, there is another noteworthy programme: the report of Special Olympics Hungary on the world games, and other than that, in the media there is only occasional news on persons with disabilities.

In the written media there is also integrated information on persons with disabilities, news on the Paralympics can be read on the pages of National Sport. Special Olympics Hungary has an own publication: the World Of Champions. Both newspapers are available online.

In reality, the digital media provides most information on sporting activities of persons with disabilities, but these sites are less frequented than the popular ones, we could say they are invisible. They appear only by chance. Social media has, however, a great possibility (and responsibility) in it, as in a matter of seconds it can share news, reports, information with hundreds of people.

Sporting habits of persons with disabilities

Studies on the sporting habits of persons with disabilities are available only to a limited extent. In the census research of the Central Statistical Office,

the results on the lack of accessibility in the community life indicate the leisure and sporting habits of the population concerned. During the census in year 2011 questions connected to disability examined where the affected population experiences lack of accessibility (KSH, 2015). According to the respondents they are the least likely to find barriers in the family life (4.4%) and in the community life (8.7%) (KSH, 2015:26). Disabled groups think, however, there are differences, and in the community life persons with autism (22.2%) deaf persons (17.6%), mentally (psychically) disabled persons (16.6%) face barriers to the greatest extent.

Sáringerné (2014) pointed out, based on her research results, that almost half of the grown-up persons with disabilities did some sort of sporting activities, but one-third of those who did not do any sports would like to engage in a sporting activity too (Sáringerné, 2014). The respondents doing sport, similarly to those who are non-disabled, said that the biggest motivating factors are health promotion, recreation and the preservation of physical performance. There are also differences in the motivation of the two groups. Respondents living with disabilities considered it more likely that sporting activities promote the building and maintaining of social relationships, as well as the social integration. It supports the fact that the social role of sport has more significance in the life of the group concerned. Nevertheless, only one-third of them does this activity within integrated frameworks, and despite the fact that the National Disability Program (2015-2025) regards the availability and accessibility of sports facilities as an important goal, the respondents are only slightly satisfied with it or have positive experiences (Sáringerné, 2014:100). All of which query the possibility whether persons with disabilities could pursue sport within integrated frameworks and if non-disabled people could meet the members of the group concerned and get to know their abilities and performance. Laoues and Co. (2019a, b) studied the leisure and sporting hab-

its of disabled children (N =283). They found that passive leisure activities (watching TV, listening to music) are more dominant in the leisure consumption of both boys and girls, more than half of the children claimed to engage in leisure sports. The greater activity of boys was proved, which is also shown by research on sporting habits of the non-disabled youth. The main motivations for sporting activities are staying fit, trying out new things and in their case community experiences.

DATABASE AND METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

The research aimed at revealing the awareness of the Hungarian population regarding the sport of people with disabilities. As such research has never been carried out in Hungary before, it can fill in a niche. The importance of the topic is given by the fact that thanks to the sport the focus is on the outstanding performance of the social group concerned rather than their limitations and deficiencies, which thus reinforces the positive and accepting attitude of citizens. Previous research results (Balázs-Földi, 2018, 2019) suggest that the nature of disability-related knowledge influences the way the members of society think about persons with disabilities, that is, when it is possible to provide information and gain experience focusing on the existing abilities and strengths of the above mentioned group, attitudes become more positive as well.

According to Szilágyi (2009) everybody has specific attitudes. Previous research results suggest that gender, academic qualification, age, previously gained specific knowledge, personal experiences can contribute to different attitudes (Balázs-Földi, 2019). There are a number of techniques to measure attitudes, such as observation, Pencil and Paper Interview, i.e. a survey using a questionnaire (Forgács et al., 2010). We applied Indirect Observation as observational technique and carried out a

survey using a questionnaire, which contained mainly scale questions. In the course of direct observation the behaviour and reaction of the person concerned is observed, whereas the indirect observation can be used to examine the interest subsequently, for example by analysing the person's web search results. Therefore the sociodemographic data of the respondents of the online questionnaire are suitable to draw conclusions regarding their attitudes.

Applying an online questionnaire the research was carried out in June 2019. The advantage of the online questionnaire is behind the fact that it can reach relatively many people in a fast and cost effective way, on the other hand the disadvantage lies in the fact that the willingness to respond depends on the topic, i.e. those people are more likely to fill it in who are attracted to, affected by or interested in the topic. In general, topics connected to disabilities are not so attractive for the public, but school qualification, age, professional knowledge, personal experiences can all positively influence the attitudes (Csizmár, 2007; Balázs-Földi, 2019).

Apart from the fact that subjectivity had greater importance in the data collection, it had to be taken into consideration that the results were also influ-

enced by the circle, and characteristics of Internet users. After all, Internet is mainly used by the highly qualified urban population under the age of 50. This technique is, however, suitable to conduct an exploratory research.

The questionnaire consists of 3 parts. In the first block sociodemographic factors (school qualification, age, place of residence, etc.) were asked from the respondents. Questions in the second block were intended to explore the respondents' attitudes towards and knowledge about disability. The third question block measured knowledge about the sport of persons living with disability.

Characteristics of the research sample

The survey was conducted among 100 persons. 57 women and 43 men completed the questionnaire, which proportionally follows the gender distribution of the total population. Regarding the age distribution the biggest group of respondents was 41-64 year-olds (47%), but the proportion of the 31-40 age group was also significant (36%). 12 % of the respondents fell into the 18-30 age group, and 5% were over 65. In summary, the topic attracted mainly the middle-aged, 31-64-year-old people (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Age distribution of respondents (%). Source: researched by the authors, 2019

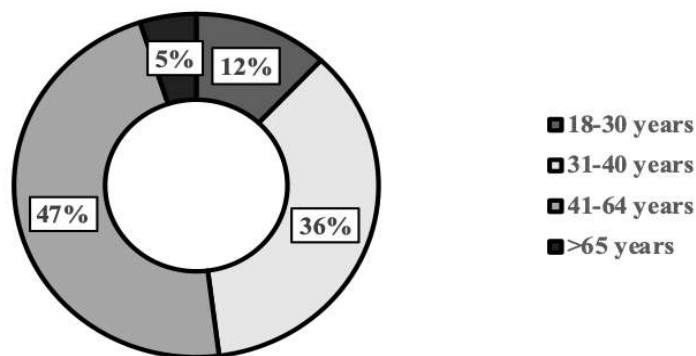


Figure 2. Distribution of respondents based on school qualification (%). Source: researched by the authors, 2019

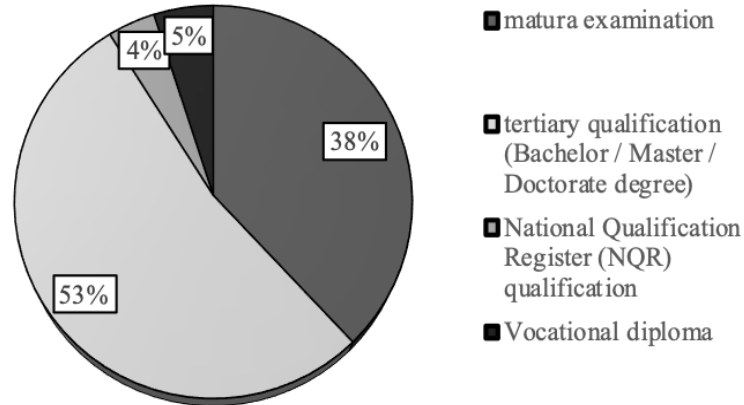
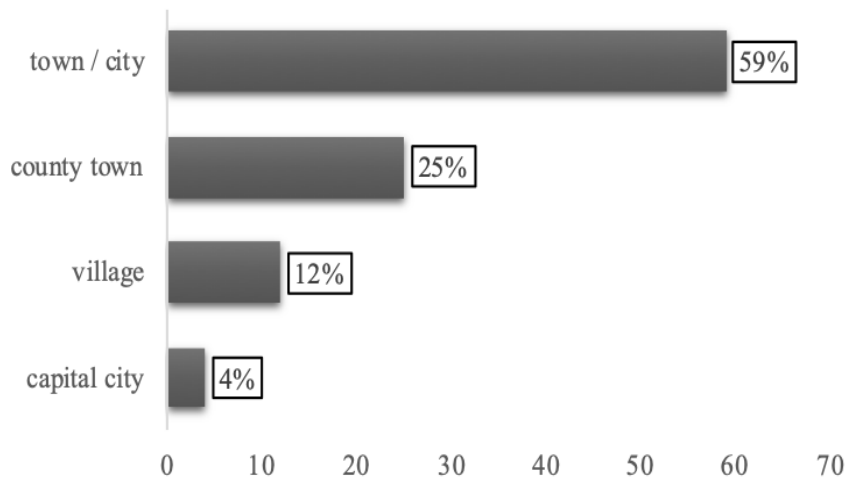


Figure 3. Distribution of respondents based on their place of residence (%). Source: researched by the authors, 2019



Regarding school qualification more than half of the respondents (53%) have tertiary qualification. 38% of the respondents have matura examination, 5% have a vocational diploma and 4% have a qualification by the National Qualifications Register (NQR).

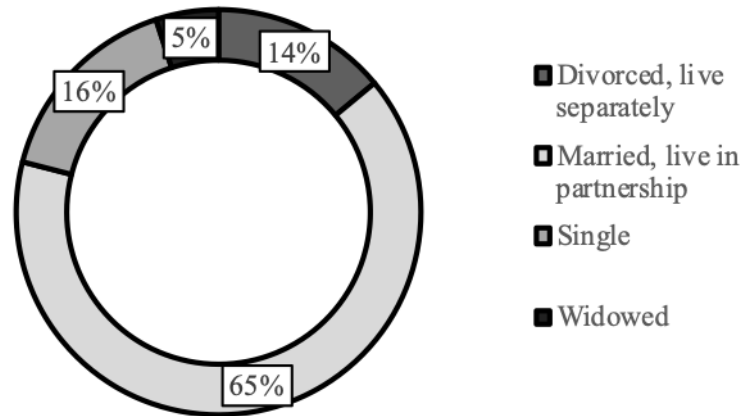
Based on the results of the research on school qualification, it can be concluded that 92% of the respondents have a matura examination or a university degree, so they are highly qualified (Figure

2). Regarding the research, further important demographic features of the sample were the place of residence and the marital status.

Regards the place of residence 59% of the respondents live in town or city, 25 % live in a county town, and 4% live in the capital city.

On the whole, the proportion of the respondents living in a village is 12% whereas 88% live in a town or city (Figure 3).

Figure 4. Distribution of respondents based on their marital status (%). Source: researched by the authors, 2019



In the questionnaire we examined the proportion of the respondents who raise a child or children, as we assumed that their attitude can be different to those who do not yet have the importance of parenting. We found that 69% of the respondents raise children and only 31% have not got children. With respect to the marital status respondents living in marriage or partnership have a significantly higher proportion (Figure 4).

89% of the respondents have already had personal experience with a disabled person, but 11% have not yet. The demographic research showed that the questionnaires were filled in most likely by persons who live in a town or city, are married, middle-aged, have secondary or tertiary qualification, raise children and have already had some experiences with a disabled person. The sociodemographic features of the respondents reflect the social sensitivity of the respondents to the topic.

RESEARCH RESULTS

In the course of the research we have also examined how close connection the surveyed persons

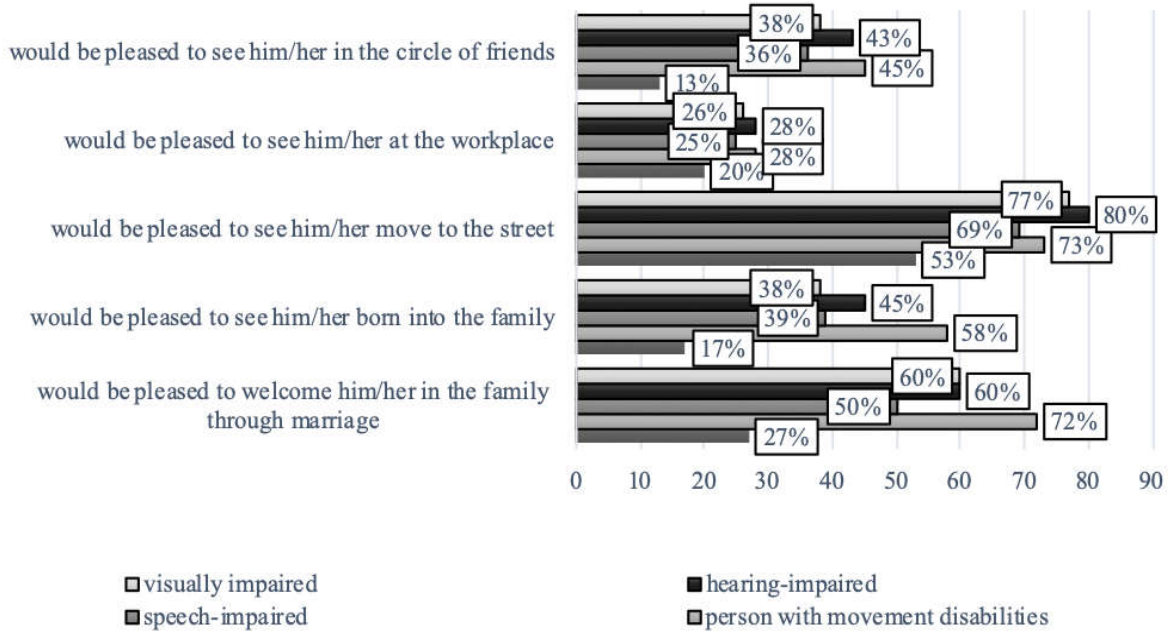
are willing to accept with disabled persons. The results allowed us to rank the acceptance of different social relationships. In case of persons with disabilities the option with the highest rejection is being born in the family and it comes before marital relationships in precedence.

On that basis it seems that for people apparently the biggest challenge is to accept a person with disabilities in the family as blood relation, or as an own child. On the third place among the hardest acceptable social relations with a disabled person is the collegial relationship, it is followed by the friendship, and at the very end comes the neighbourhoodship.

Attitudes reveal differences according to the type of disability, therefore there is a rank in the acceptance of the different disabled groups as well.

Persons with intellectual disabilities have the highest level of rejection in all social relationships, and persons with speech impairment and sensory (sight and hearing) impairment are in the middle section, whereas persons with movement disabilities enjoy the highest acceptance (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Social acceptance of persons with disabilities by disability groups (%). Source: researched by the authors, 2019



Results suggest that factors such as social relationship or the nature of disability may also influence the attitudes of the survey group with a higher level of sensitivity. The conclusion can be drawn that the respondents, based on their own experiences and assumptions, rank barriers in society according to the way they make life difficult for persons with disabilities and for those who are in contact with them. It can also be stated that the closer the social connection, or as they suppose, the bigger trouble a certain type of disability may cause, the less they would like to get in touch with the disabled person concerned and the harder they find it to cooperate with them.

More detailed information on the disability perception of respondents can be obtained by analysing the following questions (Figure 6). On a 5-point scale respondents had to rate statements concerning persons with disabilities and their situation (1: I do not agree at all, 5: I totally agree). Based on their responses two statements seem to

be above the average value (3), i.e. the survey respondents largely agree with them. One of the statements: „School integration of persons with disabilities is important for everybody” (average of 3.27), the other one is „Persons with disabilities make people feel uncomfortable” (average of 3.67). Agreeing largely with the first statement is a sign that people approve of the disabled person’s integration and equal opportunities in education and its significance is recognised, whereas the second statement points out that it can be hindered by the fact that people feel uncomfortable towards the group concerned. So they feel ill at ease and do not really know how it fits to behave around them or how to get in touch with them.

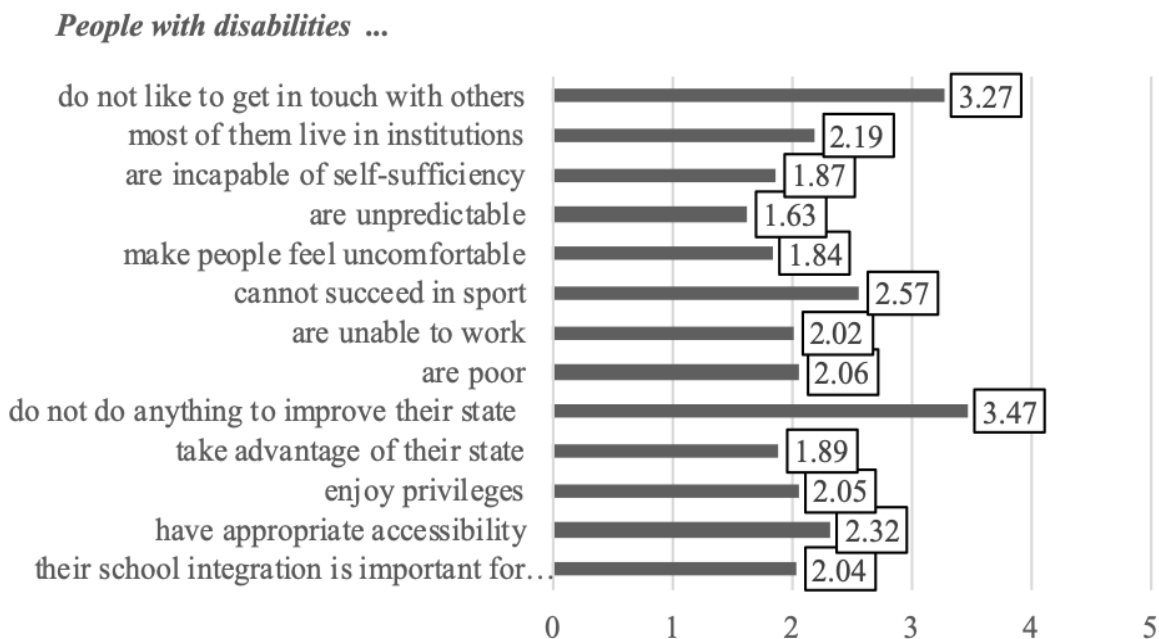
Based on the responses we can claim that respondents rejected (average of 1 to 2) the negative characteristics of disabled persons for example that they would enjoy privileges, take advantage of their state, wouldn’t do anything to improve their state, or would be unpredictable. It was also rejected,

however not in the former extent (average of 2 to 2.2) that they are unable to work, they cannot succeed in sport, they are incapable of self-sufficiency, they do not like to get in touch with others, or they have appropriate accessibility. On the other hand statements regarding their social situations produced other results (average of 2.5-3). Presumably, they find it possible that poverty may affect persons with disabilities more (2.57) and they consider most of them live in special institutions (2.67). These two former statements highlight the fact that the respondents may believe that disability considerably limits the social and economic possibilities of the group concerned as they have to face disadvantages. Examining the average of the answers given to each question, it can be concluded that the respondents have a positive attitude towards persons with disabilities, they value their abilities positively, but they consider their everyday life difficult

(Figure 6).

The next part of the questionnaire examines the attitudes towards the sporting activity and sports skills of persons living with disability. The survey respondents could select „yes” if they agreed with the statement, „no”, if they disagreed and „I do not know” if they were uncertain. The majority agreed with the following statements: „Athletes with disabilities also participate in official international competition” (85%), and „Athletes with disabilities have their own national official competitions” (65%). In case of the latter statement the proportion of uncertain respondents was higher (32%). These two statements are very general in terms of sporting activities of persons with disabilities, since the news of Paralympics gets to almost every citizen during the Olympic Games. It allows us to assume that this is the reason why the respondents show higher level of awareness in this question.

Figure 6: How persons with disabilities are seen based on the average values of a 5-point. Source: researched by the authors, 2019



The number of those, however, is significantly lower (22%) who agree that „Competitions of athletes with disabilities are regularly broadcasted by a TV channel”, almost half of the respondents (49%) disagree with that statement, and one-third (29%) is unable to tell. The conclusion can be drawn that reports on this competitions are omitted from the media so most people do not see them or know about them. Regarding the integrated sporting activity of persons with disabilities opinions are mixed. More than half of the respondents (54%) disagree with the following „Athletes with disabilities do not like to pursue sport with others” although 41% of them agree that „Disabled and non-disabled athletes do not compete in the same

team”, and 32% think that „It is beneficial for persons with disabilities to compete in a separate team from the non-disabled”.

However, it is positive that 40% disagree with the latter statement. It can therefore be stated that the respondents find integrated sporting activities important, but they also see advantage in the segregated sport and competition and they feel that integrated sporting activities are not typical of persons with disabilities.

In terms of financing we found that most of the respondents, above 50%, feel that the state aid is not enough and they think there are financing differences in the field of sport among groups of persons with disabilities (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Awareness of sports of persons with disabilities (%). Source: researched by the author, 2019

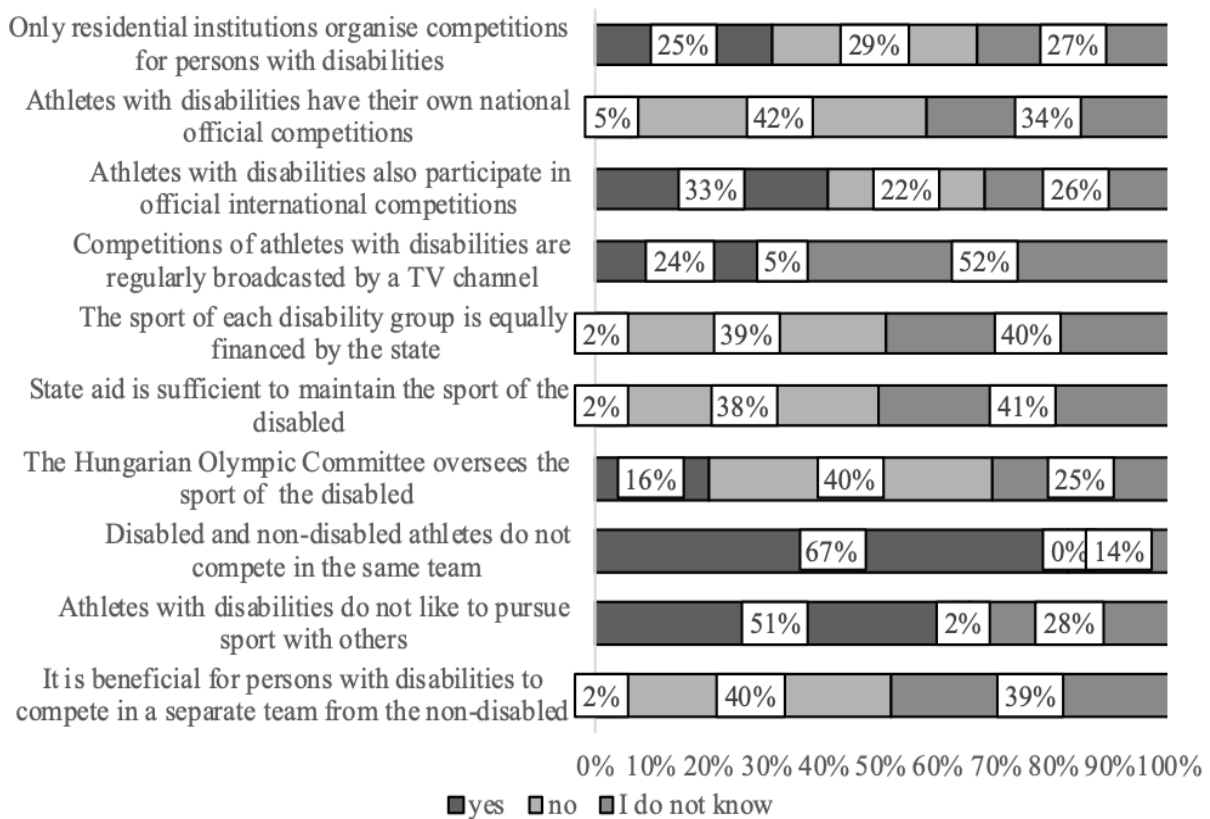
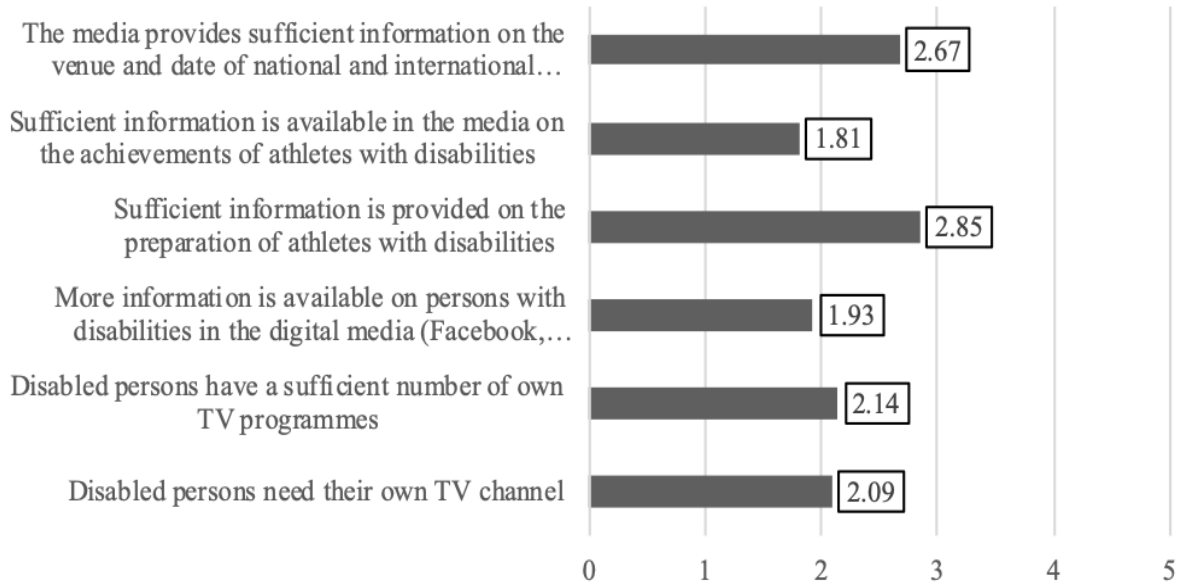


Figure 8: Views on the role of the media coverage of the sport of persons with disabilities, based on the average values of a 5-point scale. Source: researched by the author, 2019.



The final part of the research examined the role of the media in providing information on the sport of persons with disabilities. Not only did we examine whether the respondents see or hear anything about the sporting events organised for persons with disabilities, but also if they are informed by the media about the results or preparation of the disabled persons. The survey respondents had to rate the statements made in this regard using a five-point scale (1: I do not agree at all, 5: I totally agree) (Figure 8).

According to the respondents the media coverage of achievements in sport competitions of persons with disabilities is perceived as low level, the average was only 2.14. In their opinion especially news about the disabled athletes' preparation for competitions is excluded from the mass media.

The surveyed respondents do not agree (average of 1.81) with the statement that persons with disabilities have sufficient amount of own sports pro-

grammes, and it was rated higher (average of 2.67) that sport of persons with disabilities should have an own channel.

Based on the answers the conclusion can be also drawn that the respondents find the role of the Internet media more dominant compared to the traditional mass media (average of 2.87).

A peculiarity of the results is that none of the statements reaches or exceeds the average of 3. Therefore the averages spread between the 'I do not agree at all' and 'I partially do not agree' values

The average values of only two statements are near the value 3 (agree and disagree as well).

It sheds light on the fact that the respondents see the information on the sport of persons with disabilities as low level, but it also shows their overall uncertainty with regards to the topic and they do not feel it should be a key area in the lives of persons with disabilities.

CONCLUSIONS

The social involvement of persons with disabilities is significantly behind that of the non-disabled persons. Increase in the social involvement is positively influenced by integrated participation at leisure, cultural and sports events. Both national and international decrees point out the role of sport in enhancing social inclusion, and they set common goals in this regard. Tolerant social approach and unprejudiced attitudes promote inclusion. Mass media plays a significant role in informing and shaping public attitudes. The media can contribute to raising the public's awareness and sensitivity to social issues through news on sports achievements of persons with disabilities.

Demographic characteristic of the research sample support previous research results according to which school qualification, age, personal experiences positively contribute to people's tolerant and accepting attitudes. The survey respondents were typically middle-aged, urban citizens with higher level of education and have already had experiences with disabled persons. Based on the findings of the survey the following conclusions can be drawn:

- It can be ascertained that factors such as social relation or the nature of disability can also influence the attitudes of the survey group with a higher level of social sensitivity. The acceptance of the closest emotional connection enjoys the lowest level. Accepting a person with disabilities as blood relation or as an own child is the biggest challenge for people to have.
- Attitudes reveal differences according to the type of disability. The bigger trouble a certain type of disability may cause, the less they would like to get in touch with the disabled person concerned and the harder they find it to cooperate with them.
- They approve of the integration of and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

- The social integration can be hindered by the fact that people feel uncomfortable towards persons with disabilities. So they feel ill at ease and do not know how it fits to behave around them or how to get in touch with them.
- Disability is believed to significantly limit the social and economic possibilities of the group concerned.
- Integration in sport is considered to be important, but segregated sporting activities and competitions can also have advantages.
- It is thought that integrated sporting activities are not typical of persons with disabilities.
- Compared to the mass media, the Internet media plays a more dominant role in conveying information on sports achievements of persons with disabilities. The media coverage of achievements in sports competition of persons with disabilities is perceived as low level. Especially news about the preparation of athletes with disabilities is excluded from the mass media.
- The respondents perceive the information on the sport of persons with disabilities as low level, but the research results also shed light on their overall uncertainty with regards to the topic and they do not feel the sport should be a key area in the lives of persons with disabilities.

According to the above, more frequent media coverage of sports news about persons with disabilities would be essential. Previous research has also confirmed that the youth mostly volunteer in the field of competitive sport (67.5%) and leisure sport (48.5%) and they are less likely to take a role in the sport of persons with disabilities (15,6%) and that of the elderly (13,5%), which is also due to the fact that media coverage of the sport of these two target groups is significantly lower than that of the

competitive and leisure sport of the non-disabled (Bácsné et. al. 2018). Information should be provided regularly on events such as unified sports (I1). Unified sports involve teams made up of athletes with intellectual disabilities and athletes without disabilities. The organisation, Special Olympics Hungary helps coaches and teams with methodological publications in order to increase inclusion. Unfortunately, this technique is barely or not at all present in the sporting system of other types of disabilities, although it could be utilised anywhere and it could bring the two “worlds” closer together. This method enables not only sports professionals dealing with persons with disabilities, but also their family members and acquaintances to get familiar with this spirit and the special athletes themselves. All this will result in a change in social attitudes towards persons with disabilities.

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