# SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE – INVESTIGATING THE FIELD

# **Abstract of PhD Thesis**

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#### 1. Introduction

In the past two decades sport and other forms of physical activity have been used deliberately to reach social development goals and as tools in peace-building and peace-keeping operations across the globe, within the so-called 'sport for development and peace' (SDP) field. The present doctoral thesis investigates the global SDP field, with an outlook on the Hungarian SDP scene.

Both SDP practice and research have been continuously growing since the mid-1990s on the global scale, however, in Hungary, it is yet to be known and acknowledged. This dissertation attempts to introduce the SDP sector to its potential Hungarian stakeholders encouraging them to discover and benefit from its so-far untapped potential.

Pierre Bourdieu's 'field theory' (1978) is applied as an overarching theoretical framework of the research. A social field is an environment where different agents – organisations and individuals – exist and struggle for certain types of capitals, including economic, cultural and social capital. They do so according to their habitus, which is a set of deep-seated habits, dispositions and expectations based on former experience. Besides the field theory, four further concepts are employed in order to better understand the SDP sector. The concept of neocolonialism (Sartre 1964) explains the logic behind and the mechanism of many international development programmes, including sport for development and peace initiatives. The 'sport plus' and 'plus sport' concepts (Coalter 2007) are applied to illustrate the ways sport is being used in development projects. The sport for development programme theory (Coalter 2012) provides guidelines on how to properly construct an SDP programme. The 'development celebrity' and 'star/poverty space' concepts (Goodman and Barnes 2011) give a theoretical basis to understand high-profile athletes' involvement in SDP.

The application of the field theory and the four above-mentioned concepts allows me to describe SDP as a relatively self-ruling field in the social spaces of sport and development, to understand its agents, their actions and the power relations within the field. The concept of neocolonialism and the 'sport plus' and 'plus sport' concepts are helpful when investigating the habitus of SDP actors, especially the way they address developmental challenges using sport. The sport for development programme theory gives guidance on the

ideal habitus of actors to maximise the positive impact of SDP interventions. As high-profile athletes take advantage of their social capital when working in SDP as development celebrities, Goodman and Barnes' concepts fit well into the theoretical framework.

#### 2. Objectives

The main objectives of the present research are to get a better understanding of the SDP sector on the global scale; the geographical characteristics, the age and the types of its stakeholders; with the challenges they encounter; along with investigating high-profile athletes' involvement in SDP; with an outlook to the SDP context in Hungary.

# 2.1 Research questions

- What is the geographical distribution of organisations operating in SDP worldwide?
   What are the patterns regarding the location of their headquarters (HQ) and the location of their field projects?
- What are the patterns in the growth of the SDP sector? Have there been any 'booms' in the establishment of organisations working in SDP? How did the establishment of the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace affect the development of the sector?
- What are the major challenges organisations in SDP encounter? Are there any links to the types of challenges and the types of organisations facing them?
- What are the key characteristics of high-level athletes' involvement in SDP worldwide?
- How can the Hungarian SDP scene be described?

## 2.2 Hypotheses

H<sub>1a</sub>: I assumed that organisations doing SDP are spread on every inhabited continent, with most organisations carrying out field projects in the so-called Third World.

H<sub>1b</sub>: I assumed that most of those organisations that carry out field projects in the 'developed world', have their headquarters in the 'developed world'. On the other hand, I supposed that the majority of those working on the field in the 'developing world', have their headquarters in the 'developed world'.

H<sub>2</sub>: I assumed that there have been several 'booms' in the foundation of SDP organisations worldwide, following some milestones in the policy context.

#### 3. Methods

Based on the objectives of the current research, a combination of different data collection and data analysing methods were used. The application of this triangulation is recommended in social science research in order to get more reliable empirical data than when using a single method.

#### 3.1 In-depth interviews

As a qualitative method, 15 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted on Skype and analysed later. Sampling was a two-stage process, and its objective was to include professionals in SDP in numerous positions and with geographical distribution. In the first round, convenience sampling was applied, based on professional connections, and it resulted in eight interviews. In the second stage, snowball sampling was introduced, and it resulted in seven more interviews. Two methods were used to analyse the data. Most parts of the interviews were analysed following a six-phase approach of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006), while the parts on high-profile athletes' involvement in SDP were analysed based on Goodman and Barnes' (2011) conceptual framework.

#### 3.2 Desk research

In order to get some quantitative data about SDP organisations on the global scale, desk research was carried out on the International Platform on Sport and Development

(IPSD). It is a social website dedicated to the field of SDP and since its launch in 2003, 975 organisational profiles have been registered there by 1 February 2019. After cleaning the dataset and removing closed organisations and the ones that couldn't fit the purposes of the research, 657 organisations made up the final dataset. (When it came to the examination of high-level athletes' involvement with these organisations, the database consisted of 697 organisations.)

Some more data was gathered on elite athletes' work in SDP on 'Look to the stars', the world's largest website about celebrity charity news. The site lists 4340 celebrities that support charities and 2289 charities with celebrity supporters. The site's internal search functions were used to filter those celebrity athletes who endorse SDP projects.

# 3.3 Survey

An English language online survey was published in 2014 on the IPSD and distributed through IPSD's communication channels, reaching over 5000 people interested in SDP. The survey was open for three month and altogether 30 answers came in. The survey was the first data collection method applied in this research, and the low response rate made it necessary to apply other methods as well. The survey contained 26 questions, and the answers to nine of them are analysed in this research. It contained mostly closed-ended questions (dichotomous questions, multiple-choice questions) and a few open-ended ones. The responses to the open-ended questions were coded using the same six-phase method of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006), which I used in the case of the in-depth interviews.

# 3.4 Participant observation

Participant observation is a widely used research method in anthropology and sociology and it was applied in this research as a complementary method. The objective with this method was to highlight some attributes of various SDP organisations that the candidate had first-hand professional experience with. These observations are presented in the format of 'micro case studies'.

# 4. Results

# 4.1 Geographical spread of SDP

Based on the location of SDP organisations' headquarters and of their field activities six categories were established. Table 1 shows these categories and the number of organisations in each category.

Table 1: Categories of organisations regarding the location of their HQ and activities and their frequency in the IPSD

Location of the HQ	Location of the activity	Name of category	Percentage of organisations (%)
Developed economy	Developed economy/economies	Pure First World	16.59
Developed economy	Developed economy/economies + Developing economy/economies	First World to Global	22.53
Developed economy	Developing economy/economies	Neocolonialist	12.79
Developing economy	Developed economy/economies	Reverse Colonialist	0
Developing economy	Developed economy/economies + Developing economy/economies	Third World to Global	46.58
Developing economy	Developing economy/economies	Pure Third World	1.52

There is a balance between organisations based in developed and developing countries. Organisations in the first three categories make up 51.9% of all organisations, while the ones with an HQ in a developing country constitute 48.1% of the total database.

Further analysis of the dataset revealed that there are 106 countries worldwide where SDP organisations' headquarters are located. 95 SDP organisations have their HQ in the United States, 70 have their centre in the United Kingdom, while India and the Republic of South Africa have 36 headquarters each. At the end of the list there are 36 countries that host the HQ of one registered SDP organisation only.

Organisations in the database have activities in 147 countries. The Republic of South Africa is the most populated with SDP organisations, 59 implement projects there. The second is India (53 organisations), while the third is the United States (52 organisations). On the other end of the list, in 37 countries there is one single organisation that implements SDP activities.

# 4.2 Some numbers about the growth of the SDP sector

In order to examine the growth of the SDP sector, firstly, five milestones in the history of SDP were identified. During the identification process, relevant literature was consulted – including United Nations documents – and major events in the institutionalisation of the sector were examined. Later on, the year of establishment of 608 organisations in the database were examined. Figure 1 illustrates the history of SDP with the aforementioned milestones and the number of organisations established in the historical periods of SDP.

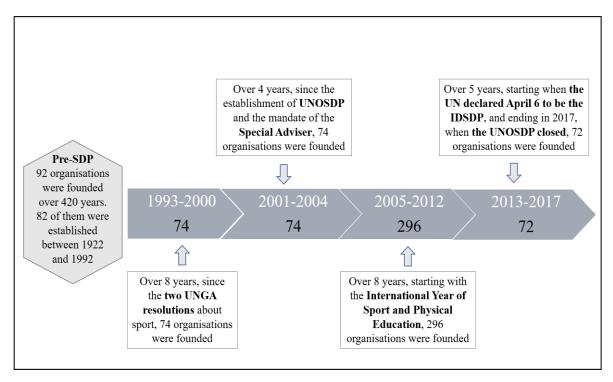


Figure 1: Periods in the history of SDP and the number of organisations established in them

Examining the establishment of organisations in the database chronologically, it is noteworthy that 92 organisations were founded before the first milestone year, 1993. In over 400 years of this pre-SDP era, mostly higher education institutions, international sport governing bodies and other major international organisations were established. The first examined period (1993-2000) saw the foundation of 74 organisations, which means a 9.25 yearly average.

The second period (2001-2004) was full of important steps in the institutionalisation of SDP, including the establishment of the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) and the foundation of the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group. The growing interest in SDP is palpable in the number of organisations founded: 74 organisations were formed these years, 18.5 on a yearly average.

In the third period (2005-2012) altogether 296 organisations were founded, 37 on a yearly average. A reason behind this rapid growth in the third era could be the publication of numerous practical documents that intended to support organisations that use sport in their development and peace-related activities. Another reason might be the establishment of

various funding schemes and awards within SDP. As more economic capital became available, more agents got interested in joining the field. A third reason for the increased interest in SDP could be that information have spread faster than ever via the internet.

In the last period in the history of SDP (2013-2017), 72 organisations were founded, which is a 14.4 yearly average. This slowdown in the growth of the sector could be the result of some uncertainties in the institutional structure which turned up by the end of the period. Another possible reason is that the IPSD – the research database – is not as attractive for new SDP organisations as it used to be, and founders do not register their new establishments on it with the same enthusiasm anymore. A third reason could be that the SDP field got 'saturated', in a sense that there are no – or limited – further funding opportunities for new organisations on the global scale.

# 4.3 Types SDP stakeholders and their challenges

The investigation into the types of agents in SDP resulted in a comprehensive list. Table 2 provides an overview of the types of stakeholders, their main goals and activities in SDP, the level of their operation and some example organisations are mentions in each category. The overview is based on the literature review, the research findings and the candidate's experience as a practitioner.

Table 2: Types of SDP stakeholders and their key qualitative attributes

Type of agent	Main goals in SDP	Primary types of activities in SDP	Level of operation	Example organisations
National Governments and Governmental Organisations	Use sport as a tool in policy domains other than sport and in international relations	Policy-making, Funding	National, International	Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Canadian Heritage

Type of agent	Main goals in SDP	Primary types of activities in SDP	Level of operation	Example organisations
International Non- Governmental Organisations	Develop, use and disseminate SDP methodologies and curricula	Implementation, Awareness- raising, Policy advice	Local, International	Right To Play, PeacePlayers International
Community- Based Organisations	Develop and use SDP methodologies and curricula	Implementation	Local	Hearts of Gold, Mathare Youth Sports Association
Inter- Governmental Organisations	Use sport as a tool in policy domains other than sport and international relations; Develop, implement and disseminate SDP methodologies and curricula	Policy-making, Implementation	International	Commonwealth Secretariat, UNAIDS
International Sports Federations	Use and disseminate SDP methodologies and curricula; Raise awareness about SDP in the world of sport	Implementation, Awareness- raising	International	FIFA, IOC
National Sports Federations	Use and disseminate SDP methodologies and curricula; Raise awareness about SDP in the world of sport	Implementation, Awareness- raising	National	Kosovo Olympic Committee, Turkish Football Federation
Professional Sports Clubs	Raise awareness about SDP in the world of sport; Use SDP methodologies and curricula	Awareness- raising, Implementation	National, International	Essendon Football Club, SV Werder Bremen
Transnational Corporations	Initiate and support SDP organisations/projects;	Funding Awareness- raising	National, Local	Nike Inc., The Coca-Cola Company

Type of agent	Main goals in SDP	Primary types of activities in SDP	Level of operation	Example organisations
	Raise awareness about SDP at large			
Research Institutions	Research SDP; Develop and use SDP methodologies and curricula	Research, Implementation	International, National, Local	International University of Monaco, University of Brighton
High-profile Athletes	Raise awareness about SDP at large; Raise funds for specific SDP organisations and/or projects	Awareness- raising, Funding	International, National, Local	Johann Koss, Yusra Mardini

Throughout the research, particular attention was given to the role of the UNOSDP, as it used to act as the entry point to the UN system with regards to sport, possessing great field-specific social capital. As the office was closed in 2017, and there has not been clear communication on its successor within the UN system, its closure still holds an uncertain legacy.

The connections among the identified agents are various. Most implementing organisations are NGOs that cooperate in project delivery, but also compete with each other for resources. These implementing organisations often play a subordinate role in their relationship with funding organisations, relying on their economic capital. Most of the missing connections in SDP derive from lack of communication, both within an organisation and among organisations.

Regarding the challenges in SDP, both the literature and this research identify the overly positive, vague statements of the power of sport as one of the most significant ones. These statements often come from implementing bodies that are competing for economic and social capital with each other and agents from other, related fields. This misconception goes hand in hand with the lack of knowledge about SDP within development circles. Lacking proper project management due to scarce financial resources is a complex and prevalent challenge. A crucial part of project management is monitoring and evaluation, and it often lacks in SDP

initiatives. Implementers face manifold challenges apart from financial scarcity, including lack of adequate human resources and poor infrastructure. These challenges can vary depending on the project structure, the location and the implementing partners as well.

#### 4.4 Star athletes' involvement in SDP

## 4.4.1 Figures about star athletes' involvement in SDP

The examination of 697 organisations that made up the dataset for this part of the research on the IPSD resulted in 62 organisations (11.2%) that work with high-profile athlete ambassadors. 21 of these organisations have one single ambassador (33.9%), 22 organisations work with two to five athlete ambassadors (35.5%), and 12 organisations are affiliated with 6-14 ambassadors (19.4%). Seven organisations use 30 or more athlete ambassadors (11.3%), out of which four work with 80 or more athletes (6.5%).

The other database used for this research was 'Look to the Stars', that lists 4340 celebrities that support charities and 2289 charities with celebrity supporters. 523 of these celebrities (12.1%) are working in the sport sector. Further analysis showed that 87 athletes are co-operating with at least one charitable organisation that does some sort of SDP activity. It means that 2% of the celebrities on the platform are athletes who are engaged in SDP projects. The reason for this relatively low ratio could be that organisations working in SDP compete for these high-profile people with organisations working for other charitable causes, such as building schools and hospitals and finding cures for diseases.

#### 4.4.2 Key characteristics of successful athlete ambassadors of SDP

Analysis of the interview questions regarding high-profile athletes' involvement in SDP was carried out based on Goodman and Barnes' development celebrity and star/poverty space concepts. Through the analysis, five themes emerged. It turned out that some of the key attributes of athlete ambassadors in SDP are credibility, authenticity and expertise. It was also found that famous athletes have an amplified voice due to their elevated position in society, and they can use it when talking about development as well. Furthermore, athlete ambassadors present their experience with SDP projects in their star/poverty space through

photos, videos and texts that are spread through traditional and social media platforms. It also turned out that there is a relationship between the reputation of the ambassadors and their organisation, therefore, a damage in the reputation of the ambassador might cause damage in the reputation of the organisation (s)he works with. Finally, the research revealed that it is vital to choose athletes that the beneficiaries know and acknowledge as role models. Fame is an essential feature of SDP ambassador athletes. Whether they are nation-wide famous and work with a domestic programme or are famous globally and active in development on an international level, the public and the beneficiaries must know and acknowledge them. Only in this case can they reach their potential as development celebrities.

## 4.5 Hungarian outlook

The review of the Hungarian SDP literature indicates that both practice and research are in their early stages in Hungary. So far, there have only been a handful of papers published in Hungarian on SDP, using the term, SDP, in journals as Physical Education, Sport, Science (Testnevelés, Sport, Tudomány), Civil Review (Civil Szemle) and Culture and Community (Kultúra és Közösség).

Although, numerous publications are available on the topic of SDP, even without using the term SDP. Several of them claim that participation in sport can have social benefits, while others discuss sport's role in the social inclusion of minorities and other disadvantaged groups.

Several Hungarian policy documents were examined, seeking reference to SDP. It turned out that neither the National Sport Strategy, neither the Hungarian National Convergence Strategy II., nor the national strategy of public health use the term SDP. However, they did suggest utilising sport's potential to reach several societal goals.

Through the desk research on the IPSD, one organisation was found. This is a Debrecen-based organisation, called Pro Cive Mobili Association.

Regarding high-profile athletes' involvement in SDP, one Hungarian reference was found. Ten-time kick-boxing world champion Zsolt Mórádi is involved with Peace and Sport as one of their Champions for Peace.

#### 5. Conclusions

#### 5.1 Answering the research questions

Answers to the first two sets of research questions will be given in Chapter 5.2, as hypotheses were formulated based on them. Regarding the research question about the geographical distribution of organisations operating in SDP, H1a was constructed. Based on the question about the location of these organisations' headquarters and of their field projects, H1b was formulated. Based on the research questions about the patterns in the growth of the SDP sector, H2 was formed. All these hypotheses will be checked in Chapter 5.2.

The third set of research questions were about the challenges in the SDP sector. It turned out that the prevalence of overly positive, 'evangelistic', claims about SDP in the public discourse is one of the biggest challenges for the whole sector, along with the lack of knowledge about SDP within development circles. Inadequate project management is challenging for practitioners and funders alike. Challenges typically encountered by practitioners include lack of funding and lack of adequate human resources, along with poor infrastructure. Representatives of academia find it challenging for the sector that there is a substantial gap between academic research on and practical work in SDP.

The next research question was about the key characteristics of high-level athletes' involvement in SDP. The results show that around 11% of SDP organisations work with elite athletes as ambassadors. One-third of these organisations work with a single ambassador, another third works with two to five athletes, while the last third works with more than five ambassadors. The results also show that around two percent of world-class celebrities that work for charitable causes are high-profile athletes involved in SDP. Regarding the qualitative characteristics of these athletes, it turned out that credibility, authenticity and some expertise is needed from them to fulfil their role. Nonetheless, credibility is fragile, as it can be lost if the athlete gets embroiled in a scandal. It is important that the athlete

ambassadors keep their positive reputation, as a damage in that can affect the reputation of the organisation they work with. Finally, it is essential for these athletes to be well-known by not only the public, but the direct beneficiaries – often young kids – as well.

The last set of research questions was about organisations in Hungary operating in SDP. It turned out that that are no organisations in Hungary that are purposefully carrying out SDP initiatives, using the term of SDP. However, there are organisations that carry out activities that can be qualified as SDP, but they are not part of the global SDP network. One Hungarian organisation was found on the IPSD, but it does not use the term SDP in its communication, neither does it refer to any UN policy regarding SDP. Additional research resulted in some more organisations that implement projects that could be qualified as SDP – such as Orczykerti Farkasok and the Hungarian Midnight Sports Association. It turned out that these organisations are not connected to the global SDP community; neither do they use the term SDP in their communication.

# 5.2 Checking the hypotheses

H<sub>1a</sub>, which assumed that organisations doing SDP work are spread on every inhabited continent, with most organisations carrying out field projects in the so-called Third World, is accepted. The desk research found organisations carrying out SDP activities in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Australia and the Pacific region and Europe. It was also found that 83.42% of the organisations in the database implement SDP activities in the Third World.

H<sub>1b</sub> presumed that most of those organisations that carry out field projects in the 'developed world', have their headquarters in the 'developed world', while the majority of those working on the field in the 'developing world', have their headquarters in the 'developed world'. This hypothesis was partly accepted. It turned out that 267 organisations in the database implement projects in the First World, and 96.25% of them have their headquarters there as well. Therefore, the first part of the hypothesis is accepted. 548 organisations in the database work in the 'developing world', and 316 of them (57.66%) have their headquarters in the 'developing world' as well. It means that the second half of the hypothesis needs to be rejected.

H<sub>2</sub> assumed that there have been several 'booms' in the foundation of SDP organisations worldwide, following some milestones in the policy context. This hypothesis is partly accepted. The first three periods of SDP history saw a continuous dynamic growth in the number of organisations founded yearly. However, in the last period, there was a significant drop compared to the yearly average of the previous era. It happened despite some developments in the policy context, such as the introduction of the International Year of Sport for Development and Peace.

#### 5.3 Personal reflections on SDP

- Throughout the dissertation, all findings were critically examined following the rules
  of research in social sciences. However, as the candidate is an SDP practitioner as
  well, some personal reflections are made on the research findings, based on her
  experience as a practitioner.
- There is a substantial gap between research and practice in SDP. Practitioners are barely aware of the resources that are developed by academics to support project delivery and even if they are, research findings published in academic journals are barely accessible for them.
- SDP programmes are oftentimes delivered under circumstances that are unimaginable for someone living in the First World, including researchers. Therefore, researchers and funders are advised to first understand why a project element is delivered in a particular way.
- There is a discrepancy within the funding structure of SDP programmes in general. Funders often ask beneficiaries to make long-term impacts with short-term interventions. It is particularly difficult given the challenge of proving the impact that SDP projects on individuals and communities in the first place.

- Oftentimes there are poor monitoring and evaluation practices in SDP, meaning that reports are written solely because they are compulsory elements of the project, but are not used to develop the project any further.
- Circulating information within an organisation is a regular challenge in SDP. Many
  times, the highest-level representatives of organisations take part in networking, but
  it is questionable how much their presence at these events can spin off to the level of
  action in their respective organisations.
- Organisations based in English speaking countries have a clear advantage in communication, networking and the global competition for funding over those that do not use English in their communication. English language competence is an important component of the field-specific cultural capital, and using the specific SDP-language means an advantage in the competition for various other forms of capital, such as economic and social capital.

## 5.4 Recommendations for the promotion of SDP in Hungary

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations were formulated for the promotion of SDP in Hungary:

- The introduction and promotion of SDP in Hungary could happen through raising awareness about the sector among the key governmental stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Human Capacities – especially the State Secretariat for Sport and the State Secretariat for International Affairs – and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
- Likewise, as a top-down approach, awareness about SDP could be raised among national sport umbrella organisations, such as the Hungarian Olympic Committee, the Hungarian Competitive Sport Federation, the Hungarian Paralympic Committee

and the Hungarian School Sport Federation. These organisations could further promote the concept within their networks, reaching down to local-level organisations.

- The members of the corporate sector are still yet to become integral partners in SDP initiatives worldwide. In Hungary, multinational companies could be reached through their international parent companies that are already involved in SDP, for instance, Microsoft Hungary and Coca-Cola Hungary.
- Higher education institutions could include SDP in the curricula of all sports professionals, raising awareness about the concept among future sports professionals.
- Civil society members could also benefit from the SDP concept, therefore, awareness-raising among them is also recommended. They could work with the concept within cross-sectoral partnerships.

## List of publications by the author

# **Publications in the topic of the PhD thesis**

**Bardocz-Bencsik M**, Begović M, Dóczi T. (2019) Star athlete ambassadors of sport for development and peace. Celebrity Studies. DOI: 10.1080/19392397.2019.1639525

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