

Marita Kaipainen

Integration of disabled and able-bodied sport activities in
badminton. A case study of the Finnish Para-badminton

University of Jyväskylä

Department of Sport Sciences

Social Sciences of Sport

Master's Thesis

Spring 2013

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ
Department of Sport Sciences, Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences

KAIPAINEN, MARITA:

Integration of disabled and able-bodied sport activities in badminton. A case study of the Finnish Para-badminton.

ABSTRACT

Master's Thesis in Social Sciences of Sport, 2013, 55 pages, 2 appendices.
Social Sciences of Sport
Spring 2013

Sport for people with disabilities is still in early stages when compared to able-bodied sport. Paralympic sport is also relatively young field of study with a high potential for development. The purpose of this research is to find out how sport federations for disabled people could collaborate with the able-bodied federations, and how disabled athletes could be provided better and more equal possibilities for training and professionally organized competition systems. This study examines how disabled sport, especially para-badminton, while being relatively small sport among disabled sport, could be organized in a more professional manner. Also the existing possibilities for integration and/or co-operation between the disabled and able-bodied sport organizations are examined.

This study was conducted by using mostly qualitative research methods and only small part of the information gathered via email questionnaires represent quantitative research methods. Primary information was gathered by qualitative, semi-structured interviews of main players from federations relevant to Finnish para-badminton. Secondary data such as literature and internet sources were also used. In order to obtain comparable information, the sport systems of other countries were studied via email questionnaires. Following transcription, the data was segregated and analyzed by using thematic content analysis.

The results illustrate the real need for co-operation with able-bodied federations in order to gain more equal and comprehensive possibilities in disabled sport. One example of the co-operation is Finnish Para-badminton group governed by the Finnish Badminton Federation. Negotiations of this organizational change rose many questions about what would be the most satisfying solution for both sides and if integration is the best option. Similar trends were observed across Europe. The study shows that integration with National Sports Federations is essential for unlocking potential synergies and to acquire more financial and communicational resources. That does not however mean that co-operation with National Sport Governing bodies for people with disabilities would be blocked. In order to achieve the best results of the integration processes, co-operation with the two main players is vital, and communication is the core that needs to be developed on those projects.

Key words: equality, integration, para-badminton, disabled sport

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION.....	4
2 CURRENT STATE OF PARA-BADMINTON	9
2.1 FEATURES OF PARA-BADMINTON	10
2.2 PARA-BADMINTON IN FINLAND	11
2.3 FINNISH SPORT ASSOCIATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (VAU)	12
2.4 INTEGRATION IN SPORT	13
2.4.1 <i>Forms of integration</i>	15
2.4.2 <i>Integration and sport management</i>	16
2.5 INTEGRATION PRACTICES	17
2.5.1 <i>Different models of integration</i>	18
2.5.2 <i>Integrations examined internationally</i>	20
3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS	22
3.1 QUALITATIVE APPROACH AND A CASE STUDY	23
3.2 CASE STUDY AND CRITICAL ORGANIZATION THEORY	24
3.3 DATA COLLECTION	26
3.3.1 <i>Data collection methods</i>	27
3.3.2 <i>Selection of research material and interviewees</i>	28
3.4 DATA ANALYSIS	32
4 RESULTS	35
4.1 CURRENT SITUATION OF DISABLED SPORT AND PARA-BADMINTON IN EUROPE	35
4.1.1 <i>Provision of para-badminton</i>	36
4.1.2 <i>Governance of para-badminton</i>	37
4.2 INTEGRATION WITHIN PARA-BADMINTON	38
4.3 MAIN PROBLEMS PREVENTING INTEGRATION AND CO-OPERATION	40
4.4 FUTURE NEEDS AND SPORTS STRATEGIES FOR PARA-BADMINTON	41
4.4.1 <i>Communication and sport strategies between different associations</i>	42
4.4.2 <i>Situation in Finland</i>	44
4.4.3 <i>International strategies</i>	45
5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	47

1 INTRODUCTION

“The struggle, for example, within professional cycling as a result of doping scandals is grounded in the fear of losing credibility within a sport that already enjoys a worldwide popularity. Disability sports start with a lack of popularity (and credibility) and have, in this sense, not much to lose. The Paralympics are not considered to be “truly” interesting by the larger portion of the general public since disabled sportsmen (defined as an impaired deviance of normality) are not the best athletes in the world from the perspective of “normal sports”. For many people in disability sport, the athlete is still a “patient combating their limitations”, instead of an elite athlete with specific talents or virtuosity.” (McNamee 2012, 239)

About 15% of the world's population lives with some form of disability, of whom 2-4% experience significant difficulties in functioning. The global disability prevalence is higher than previous WHO research estimates, which date from the 1970s and suggested a figure of around 10 %. (World Health Organization 2012) The term “disability sport” refers to any form of organized physical activity that is aimed specially for people with disabilities. On the contrary the sport organized for people without disabilities is widely called abled-bodied or mainstream sport. (Nixon 2007) Attitudes towards people with disabilities and disabled sport have changed over last few decades and people with disabilities have become more accepted by society. On 20th century, we are witnessing the shift from sport and disability into disability sport. (DePauw & Gavron 2005 as cited in Shapiro et al 2012)

The first sports club for disabled people, on that case for deaf people, was founded in Berlin 1888 and few decade later amputees also gained the opportunity to enjoy sport. One of the first organized sports for people with disabilities was golf, and today there are plenty of golf and other sporting opportunities for disabled athletes throughout the world. Within World War I and II, the sport rehabilitation for the war-disabled veterans was the next form of disabled sport. In 1952, Guttman organized the first international competition for wheelchair athletes. Since those games at Stoke Mandeville, wheelchair sports has expanded and become an international entity. (DePauw 2005 as cited in Fitzgerald 2009) While the number of sporting opportunities are increasing that sets many challenges for facilitation of those sport provisions. As stated in Fitzgerald (2009)

“For example, the multitude of local, regional, national and international organizations supporting disability sport can be a source of confusion for potential participants or other associated support workers” (Fitzgerald 2009, 20). With increasing number of sporting opportunities, also the questions of equality, top-level sport, integration and inclusion are emerging. In their normal lives, people with disabilities are forced to adapt themselves in to everyday life of “normal people” so why it could not happen also in sport by providing them equal possibilities also in that area of life. In media, you hear talking about the equality in every level so why people with disabilities could not enjoy equal opportunities also in their professional sporting careers, training opportunities and competition systems.

Currently 28 sports are represented in the Paralympic Games, five of which are in Winter Paralympics. At the Paralympic Games in London 2012, there were 4200 athletes across 160 countries competing and after 12 years break, intellectually disabled athletes were also included. (International Paralympic Committee 2012) Para-badminton is not yet included in those 28 represented sports in Paralympic Games. However the mission of the Para-badminton World Council is to promote and develop badminton for people with disabilities in a non-discriminatory manner and their aim is to achieve a Paralympic status by 2020 and maintain it for constant development purposes (Para-badminton World Council 2012). Para-badminton World Council has 35 member federations of which 23 countries have voting power (Badminton World Federation 2011). The number of players varies from country to country from a few dozen to several hundred. In Asia (e.g. Thailand and India) and in most of middle European countries, there are para-badminton players playing at international level, but in many countries para-badminton is developed at the moment only nationally and has not reached international level yet. Finland is in that stage at the moment with increasing interest in international competitions. In order to achieve that point, classification system in Finland needs to be organized with a commitment from all parties to be able to reach the necessary level essential to join the international parties.

As Para-badminton World Council’s aim is to get closer to the able-bodied federations in order to achieve maximum global recognition and develop facilities, few years ago similar discussions about co-operation between Para-badminton Finland and Finnish Badminton Federation were also arising. Since then, negotiations have gone forward

and Finnish Para-badminton group moved from being part of VAU¹ to under the governance of Finnish Badminton Federation at the beginning of 2013. This arrangement is new and nobody knows how integration will work in practice as only few months have passed since then. Therefore I was contacted by Para-badminton Finland and was asked to do a comprehensive research about the current state of para-badminton in Finland and in Europe and if it were possible, to find solutions or different models to take this sport a step further. That would mean the direction where governance and division of responsibilities would be more clear and effective; a way that would provide framework for disabled people to enter the sport as well as reach the international level one day.

Sport for people with disabilities has received more attention during the last decades and positive public awareness has increased. Also more research has been conducted in the area of sport with disabilities. There is large amount of existing research on the physiology of disabled sport, psychology of disability sport, therapeutic use of sport and access for all, e.g. “Multidimensional Physical Self-Concept of Athletes With Physical Disabilities” (Shapiro & Martin 2010) and “Short Term Effects of Riding Therapy on Gait in children with Cerebral Palsy” (Honkavaara 1997) . “Sport for all” is a current issue internationally and increasing emphasis has been laid on integration. Good example of it is a research made by Saari (2011a): “Inklusioni nostetaan ja esteet liikuntakulttuurissa: tavoitteena kaikille avoin liikunnallinen iltapäivätoiminta” (Promoters and hindrances of inclusion in sports and physical activity – aiming at open-for-all after-school activities). However it seems that still relatively less emphasis has been put specially to the elite sport and its integration into able-bodied sport system.

While doing this research, Finnish Para-badminton group separated from VAU, was organized as national para-badminton club and started to operate under the Finnish Badminton Federation. This study began from my interest in disabled sport and willingness to examine some practical problems that might be preventing the development of para-badminton in Finland towards more organized direction. My main interest lies mostly on top-level para-badminton and competitive sport but I acknowledge also recreational side of it. It cannot be forgotten as by being relatively small and new sport that is not developed so much yet, the recreational side of para-

VAU¹ =Suomen Vammaisurheilu ja- liikunta ry / Finnish Sport Federation of Persons with Disabilities

badminton plays important role in its development processes. After the constitution of the Finnish Para-badminton, I have been sitting on its board and have in that way gained more insight into how things are on that field, how the things have been done and how they are expected to be done in the future. Para-badminton Finland would like to be developed in the same direction than the other more popular disabled sports have been developed in Finland. The problem is that para-badminton is still a relatively young and unknown sport in Finland and resources to develop it are small. The core thing is that more consultancy and financial help is needed and first the right approach to do things should be examined and find those parties with whom the co-operation could be the most effective. This study drills into those problems as well as examines para-badminton as a general phenomenon and its integration with non-disabled federations. On one part, this study is based on the comparison with those countries where para-badminton is more developed and has been taken further than in comparison to Finland but also the countries that are in the same situation in the development process as Finland. This study aims to produce important information for para-badminton nationally and internationally as well as for other comparable small or unknown sports (disabled or non-disabled) on their “road to success”.

This study will be mainly qualitative as the main purpose is to find out the explanations for the current state of para-badminton, possible difficulties in its development and possible solutions for the problems. Qualitative approach was ideal for my research purposes as it not just search information but also links variables by looking at the explanations of those involved. Qualitative research does not necessarily focus on and pre-define the variables that might be important but it also allows respondents to point out those issues which are meaningful to them (Barbour 2008). Case study was chosen as a research type because it is flexible in the way that many kinds of research and data collection can be used in it. Interviews were chosen in order to get accurate and exact data for specific questions from the main players of para-badminton and badminton federations. Foreign para-badminton federations were approached by email questionnaires to which they could answer freely with their own words. According to Barbour (2008) flexibility is one of the main characteristics of qualitative research and the focus of the research can even change during the data gathering process and preliminary analysis. That aspect was important concerning this study as the subject was still rather uncovered and it needed possibility to change and develop. (Barbour 2008)

To narrow down the subject for this study, badminton for disabled people in Finland was chosen as a case study for this research. It was chosen mainly because of the demand from Finnish Para-badminton side as well as author's long time interest in disabled sport and its development processes. Case study of this research is examined from embedded point of view as a single case which means that different actors of the case are "tested" as subparts of the Finnish Para-badminton case. For example, European Para-badminton Federations or different disability sport federations in Finland and those subparts connected together offer the most relevant part of the information.

This study will begin with a research of the current state of para-badminton putting emphasis on the situation in Finland and differences between other countries as well as different models of integration that have already been done. This is followed by presentation of the research methods and full findings of the interviews and examined literature. Finally the future of the sport will be discussed and proposals and suggestions about what should be done for the development of the relations between badminton and para-badminton federations worldwide could be made.

2 CURRENT STATE OF PARA-BADMINTON

Disability sport in Finland has been changing over the years. When before Second World War disabled people were helped with their special actions of everyday life, now they are enjoying more or less full participation and equality. However it would be good if instead of only participating in organized activities, people with disabilities could also participate in to the planning and organization processes. (Suomen Invalidien Urheiluliitto 1996) Physical activity of special groups is defined in Kummu (2006) as follows: "Sport for special groups refers to sport for those in population, who has injury, illness or other disability or difficult social situation, and they have difficulty to participate in general available sport and physical activity because of their sport requires special skills and different applications." (Kummu 2006, 11)

Disabled athletes have currently got more recognition than before both nationally and internationally. That can be seen for example nationally in government's athlete grants. In 2012, more Paralympic athletes got the biggest possible grant from the government than a year before. The amount of granted athletes was more or less the same than in the previous years but the size of the grants were bigger than before. (Finnish Paralympic Committee, Syke 1/2012b). Even if Paralympic sport is developing in many ways, the recognition of Paralympic athletes could be much more than it currently is and in case to achieve that, more publicity and media coverage is needed. That is, however, difficult before the interest of audience is reached and that cannot be reached without more coverage of media. As Ari Pusa from Helsingin Sanomat (Finnish Paralympic Committee, Syke 5/2011) stated the media would like to have more stories and advance information of elite athletes with disabilities. However on the other hand the media broadcasts the news according to normal criteria so common interest determines how much and what news will be published.

But why media activity is so important for the development of disabled sport? The situation that the media does not recognize the athletes with disabilities affects also to the athletes and their self-perception. One of the main findings in Hardin & Hardin (2003) is that disabled sport does not get as much media coverage as mainstream sport even though people's attitudes towards disabled sport are changing. As stated in Hardin & Hardin (2003) "While sport is a microcosm of the larger culture, reflecting its values,

norms, and standards, there is also an interactive, constructive element to the relationship between sport and society. Because of the link between sport and cultural hegemony, there is also the opportunity for resistance and change". (Hardin 2003, 256)

Elite sport for the people with disabilities refers to the high-level sport for adults and in some cases also systematic operation of national teams for 16-18 year old whose goal is the success at international competitions, above all at the Paralympics and for the non-Paralympic sports at the world championships or similar competitions. Sport for the people with disabilities, in turn, refers to the training camps and national and international competition operations for different age groups with different levels of disability. In 2002 Finnish Paralympic Committee together with its member organizations planned the elite sport strategy for the people with disabilities. Its main goal is to ensure Finnish disabled elite sport to success internationally on a broad front. This means sustainable operating model for as many sports and athletes as possible, ethically and economically. (Finnish Paralympic Committee 2012)

2.1 Features of para-badminton

Para-badminton was presented first time worldwide in 1995 at Stoke Mandeville Games. Since then the number of nations participating in the tournaments and competitions have risen remarkably. Especially after the appearance of Asian countries the number of participants has doubled and standard of play in some classes has improved significantly. Worldwide para-badminton is governed by Badminton World Federation (BWF). These two parties co-operate in order to be accepted into the Paralympic Games Program for 2020. The Badminton World Federation (BWF) in its annual general meeting in 2012, made the necessary changes to the BWF constitution to allow the integration of Para-badminton into the BWF governance and management structure. This happened after two years work and negotiations by both organizations. As a result the Badminton World Federation have been responsible for the following:

1. governance of Para-badminton
2. day-to-day management of Para-badminton and
3. development of Para-badminton on behalf of the world wide community of badminton players with a disability

According to Para-badminton World Council, it would be important that its member countries would seek to construct a similar relationship with their National Governing Bodies in order to get access to improved facilities and qualified training systems. (Para-badminton World Council 2012)

Finnish Badminton Federation is the governing body for the badminton in Finland and it is responsible for the national promotion and development of badminton. The organization operates on three fields of activity which are specified by the Ministry of Education: children and youth, recreational badminton for adults and high performance. First time in Finland, badminton was introduced in the mid 40's and Finnish Badminton Federation was established in 1954. Nowadays there are about 120 clubs with 7000 members throughout Finland and an approximate number of 169 000 those who play badminton as a hobby. (Finnish Badminton Federation 2012)

2.2 Para-badminton in Finland

Para-badminton could be classified into two different categories: standing and sitting classes (leg/arm amputees). Para-badminton players are playing in smaller size courts but the net is set to the same level than in normal badminton rules. When organizing badminton, it is also important to remember accessibility for disabled people. Players need help with building the badminton court and there should be the storage for the wheelchairs in changing rooms according to the safety laws. According to Juntunen & Mustonen (2011), some athletes have been competing in able bodied competitions at least since 1960's and these athletes were mainly amputees. As of 2002, Finnish Paralympic committee started emphasizing the role of sport federations and disabled sport federations in top-level sports for the athletes with disabilities. That project received financial backing from the Ministry of Education and it was mainly budgeted for the integration processes from 2005-2007. The amount was a total of EUR 155 000. Before the start of the project, shooting was already integrated into mainstream sport but during the project, athletics, judo, swimming, sailing, judo, alpine skiing and Nordic skiing were added in. The second major development phase started from 2008 and has since been so far quite successful. (Juntunen & Mustonen 2011)

According to the Finnish Paralympic Committee, there are various different kinds of models of action for national and international Paralympic sport and its organizations.

The aim is to ease the difficulty of the definition for elite disabled sport, as well as to alleviate the difficulty of the relations with mainstream sport organizations. The main responsibility of the practical work for the disabled sport lies with the sport specialized federations and disabled sport organizations, and the main goal of the Finnish Paralympic Committee is to secure the future of disabled sport with these specific organizations. (Finnish Paralympic Committee 2012)

2.3 Finnish Sport Association of Persons with Disabilities (VAU)

The Finnish Sport Association of Persons with Disabilities (VAU) is a national sport and recreation association which has 208 member association with 68 000 members (situation 9/2011). VAU is planning, developing and implementing possibilities and conditions for physically and visually impaired as well as mentally handicapped and transplant people to engage in sport activities and participate in competitions on various levels. VAU was established after few years' negotiations and planning in 2009 as there was a need for one sole disability sport organization. VAU encompasses four former sport organizations for disabled people; Sport Federation for Transplant people, Finnish Federation for Visually Impaired, Finnish Federation for Invalids and Finnish Sport Federation for Mentally Handicapped. It is financed by Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish Paralympic Committee, Slot Machine Association and some other fundraising organizations.(Finnish Sports Association of People with Disabilities 2012)

VAU's vision for 2020 is to foster accessible sporting culture for all in Finland and at the same time give people an opportunity to choose where, how and with whom they do sport and recreation. One of the main tasks of VAU is to coordinate integration processes of disabled sport together with mainstream sporting organizations. The main means of achieving the goals are education, development partnership, monitoring and evaluation. National co-operation plays important role in its strategies and it has close contacts with the Ministry of Education and Culture and other organizations for disabled people. (Finnish Sports Association of People with Disabilities 2012) Within the VAU, different sports are categorized according to their priority principles, and the higher the sport is, the more funding it receives. VAU houses a separate sport division which prepares the budget and the plan of action for Para-badminton within the framework of VAU. (Lindblom, personal communication 2012)

Co-operational practices of former individual disability groups and federations will now be handled from a broader and more comprehensive perspective. The objective is to improve communication and the co-operation agreements between the national sport federations and the Finnish Paralympic Committee. Co-operation includes only Paralympic sports and Paralympic classes and generally speaking, national sport federations do not have any particular interest of non- Paralympic sport with no additional recourses from VAU or Ministry of Education. One exception is Finnish Judo Federation that took the responsibility for the Special Olympics judo but with VAU's separate funding. Tripartite negotiations are a step towards a new kind of co-operation and long-term development. These negotiations have helped dismantle the "self-evident" and general assumptions, and helped to see the things that make easier to operate on a common ground. At the simplest, they agree on common events, information and competitions. From the VAU's point of view, the most challenging areas are the Special Olympics activities and non-Paralympic sport involvement in able bodied federations. Sports federations have been surprised of the fragmentation and diversity of disability sport's field as well as its recruitment and communication challenges. Disability athletes may have previously been imagined as a single broad mass, from which the disabled athletes would be selected and included in the training groups but it is not so easy in practice. (Saari 2011b)

2.4 Integration in Sport

Through the history of the Paralympic movement, Riordan (1999) examines how the integration of disability sport events in to the able-bodied athletes' sport events in the past has worked and what kind of trends could emerge in the future. According to Riordan there are also nationally made efforts to integrate disability sport in to able-bodied competitions. She states as following: "These developments may increase the level of public awareness and acceptance of athletes with a disability and thus lead to changes in the sports world both on national and international level" (Riordan 1999, 193). On the contrary it is also questioned whether it is beneficial for the athletes with disabilities to be integrated in the able-bodied system or do they lose their identity by doing that.

Integration is intended to ensure an equal and fair treatment for every individual. Integration means respecting the right to the full participation and equality by taking

into account the individual needs of persons with disabilities as well as those needs in societal decision-making process. Integration means that the individual or in this case a group, join and- /- or merge with another individual or group. The main principle of integration is that the individual is not classified as belonging somewhere else because of his special needs or services. Services should be accessible to all regardless of the disability level and the assistance needed by the individual as it would be in a normal environment so that they do not have to isolate themselves from normal functions. Diversity and individuality of disabled individuals, however, should be taken into consideration and try to keep it as it is. (Ollqvist 2001)

Integration is a complex concept and its central problem is the deliberate nature of the self because its only goal is to mix people without any consideration for individual choice. When the integration is shown as a place or physical space like for example integrated sport inside the sport organization (like in this study, para-badminton in Finnish Badminton Federation) the needed support is determined only for that particular function as a form of special arrangement, which in turn does not lead to any other or wider “sport for all” and accessibility projects. (Saari 2011a) Inclusion-scene differs from the integration the way that integration requires that the person has already been outside the system. On the contrary in inclusion all are within same system already from the beginning. (Ollqvist 2001) Inclusion refers to the services and condition which is open for everybody and where each person counts. In that way, when talking about the change in inclusion or preventing inclusion, it is not only disabled people but all minorities. Inclusion is also subject to changes from recipient and it needs accessibility, support and behavioral changes. The core idea is that both parties learn from each other. (Saari 2011b)

The concepts of inclusion and integration are often used as synonyms for each other as they are quite similar. Integration can be seen as negative use of power if it is only a transfer to general culture, the opinion of transferred is not asked and if a major culture is seen as superior and more valuable. (Saari 2011b) In Nixon (2007), it is argued that athletes with disabilities need to be seen as athletes regardless of their impairment and that this requires a radically different notion of athleticism to challenge traditional ideas about the sporting body. However, integration as a concept in this research has not been taken so far that disabled athletes would be competing together with able-bodied

athletes, but more towards management and organizational level integration which consist of utilization of common facilities, events, contacts and economic resources.

2.4.1 Forms of integration

In Kumpulainen (1997), integration is divided into the following forms; physical, functional and social integration. Integration relationships are generally presented in such a way that physical integration is necessary but not a sufficient condition for functional integration and functional integration is necessary but not a sufficient condition for social integration. Physical integration means the reduction of distance between individuals. The functional integration means that, for example, special education and general education may be engaged in the planned co-operation, in which case the functionality between integrated, is increasing. Social integration requires already more; the intention is that everybody would be able to accept diversity and create positive social contacts. This means, at best, a solid interaction and a sense of belonging. (Kumpulainen 1997) When talking about para-badminton, it would need the co-operation and support of different organizations, especially with the Finnish Badminton Federation and in that way this possible integration would include both physical and functional integration. If integration would be a necessary option, that would mean in practice that the gap between able bodied and disabled athletes would narrow and there would be more co-operation with able bodied federations. In perfect situation of course, disabled athletes would gain the full acceptance and merge with able bodied athletes. That could be called social integration.

In general, it has been experienced that just placing disabled and able-bodied athletes together does not necessarily lead to genuine integration. According to Nixon (1989), “Genuine interaction of disabled and able-bodied persons implies interaction between them that is unaffected by disability stigma or the disadvantaged status of disabled people. It implies interaction in which disabled people do not feel pitied, scorned, different, deviant, morally inferior, or even specially favored because they are disabled.” (Nixon 1989, 17) Genuine integration in sport can be seen as communication between disabled and able-bodied athletes without being stigmatized or handicapped. Appropriate integration means that both disabled and able-bodied individuals with their backgrounds and personal differences as well as abilities fit to a common sport situation

without any difficulties. However important variables have to be taken into consideration in these situations. Those variables are the type of sports, amount of adaptation to disability and degrees of competition. (Nixon 1989)

The most common form of integration in mainstream sport has been integration of people with disabilities into the so called normal sport setting. This naturally decreases considerations of special needs of disabled people. The success of this kind of integration is usually measured by how people with disabilities have adapted themselves to the norms, the rules and the expectations of able-bodied environment. Therefore it would also be useful to have programs where able-bodied people would be integrated into the special programs of disabled people, like for example wheelchair sports. (Brasile 1990)

2.4.2 Integration and sport management

According to Mika Kojonkoski (Finnish Paralympic Committee, Syke 1/2012a), the member of Finnish National Elite Sports Development program, there are many good experiences of integration of Paralympic sport in to the able bodied sport federations, for example in shooting, athletics and swimming. It has led to more efficient training systems and that way to better results. Kojonkoski believes that in that kind of integration also disabled athletes have plenty to give to the able bodied athletes. One good example about the integration is athletics. Para-athletics and integration with able-bodied federation has been done in Finnish Sport Federation (SUL) during one Olympiad. Para-athletics works as one part of the training board, as independent sporting group for example throwing disciplines and sprints. Finnish Sport Federation is working intensively with Finnish Paralympic committee but integration with VAU is still in its early stages. (Finnish Paralympic Committee, Syke 4/2011)

This research is intending to demonstrate not only how the state and integration of disabled and able-bodied sport should be, but also lays special focus on the existing advantages or disadvantages, when analyzing the situation from both aspects, however mainly from disabled sport point of view. It is also important to list all the factors that are playing a significant role in inclusion and integration. As Juntunen & Mustonen (2011) see it, Finnish Paralympic Committee funding for disability sport is one of the most important factor in the future and they also list various reasons for it. Funding

raises equality and diversity in Finnish sporting life, efficiency and that way better results and success in sport internationally. That again, increases media coverage and grows the respect. It is important to find out how things could be done in a more efficient way and how to diminish the existing gap in integration and funding that there is between different sports.

In several sporting fields, sport for people with disabilities is developed in Finland through triple co-operation of VAU, Finnish Paralympic Committee and sport specified sport organizations. The report about that co-operation, “Kaikille avoimen liikuntakulttuurin esteet ja nosteet” (Opportunities and Obstacles of Sporting culture for all) was completed 2011 by Aija Saari. Some of the sport specified sport organizations are responsible for the disabled sport of their sport (e.g. Judo) and some of them only, for example, for disabled elite sport. In some sport organizations, the connection to the disabled sport is organized by junior level adaptive sport (e.g. football) and in some others co-operation is starting by supporting clubs to open their doors to the disabled people (e.g. taekwondo). (Finnish Sport Association of Persons with Disabilities 2012) The Sport Federation integrations 2005-2007 related mainly to the disabled elite team activities. The project was implemented with the support of the Ministry of Education so that the Finnish Paralympic Committee received each year between EUR 50,000 - 55,000 to support the work of integration sport federations. (Saari 2011b)

2.5 Integration practices

The scholars of the sport industry have extensively researched disability sport and athletes with disabilities. The research has mainly focused on skill development, self-esteem and adapted physical education but not so much research can be found on sport management, especially disabled sport management. (Humms, Moormann & Wolff 2003) Provision of sport for people with disabilities requires much emphasis put on considerations of the structure, choice, fairness, differences and capacities of different disabilities and different people. It requires a lot of understanding from the management and the organizational level. (Nixon 2007) Two main terms on disabled sport integration are “disabled sport” and “mainstream sport”. When talking about integration, one of the biggest debates is, what would be the best approach and on what level disabled people could participate in “mainstream sport”.

“Sport reflects society and culture, its social patterns and its values. Sport is an area where social inequalities, abundant elsewhere in society, are reinforced. Sport not only reflects and reinforces social inequalities but is a setting in which disadvantaged groups will sometimes resist those with power and social advantage”. (McPerson et al 1989, 5) However Nixon (2007) argues that integration gains more visibility and recognition for disabled sport. It could be seen that disabled athletes who have succeeded in mainstream sport as well as in Paralympic sport can positively transform negative stereotypes about disability, sporting body and disabled people. When developing and constructing the models of integration within sport organizations, disabled athletes should not be disadvantaged by their disabilities. Disabled athletes may need extra facilities and equipment or changes in the rules and that has to be taken under consideration. It is also important that sport is inclusive the way that disabled athletes can earn respect of other athletes and mainstream society. (Nixon 2007)

2.5.1 Different models of integration

When considering the management of sport for disabled people, in previous case studies one question has been above all; how? How disabled sport should be managed and governed in the most effective and proper way? In the past, the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) was not directly involved in the coordination and organization for elite disabled athletes, and disabled sport belonged under the disabled sport organizations (DSO) (e.g. Wheelchair Sports USA, Disabled Sports USA and United States Association of Blind Athletes). The situation remained essentially unchanged until 1998 when the Amateur Sport Act was updated to Olympic and Amateur Sport Act and existing provisions regarded now also disabled athletes. Since 1998 the Act includes recommendations for the governance of Paralympic sport in USA. This basically means that USOC is responsible for the governance of disabled amateur sport in USA and it coordinates the US governing bodies of sport (for example USA Triathlon and USA Basketball). In theory, it means that disabled athletes should be integrated into programs of able-bodied athletes and that vertical information would move the governance of elite disabled athletes from Disabled Sport Organizations (DSO) to National Governing Bodies of each sport (NGBs). (Hums et Al 2003)

Examining similar situation in Norway, a longtime goal of Norwegian Sport Federation was to become an organization for all by organizing also disabled sport through able-bodied sport federations. Integration of both in USA and in Norway was vertical from top level organizations to bottom level organizations. Australians are embracing a multicultural approach to people with disabilities from different perspective. Their aim in individual and organizational levels and the development of activities was made in such a way that people with disabilities can equally participate in their local club, exercise and sports, as well as in the provision of other common sports programs in various actor roles. The difference in Norway was that the entire disability sport was reorganized as an administrative decision under the general sports organizations. In Australia the process of change was left for voluntary organizations. (Saari 2011b)

In the 1990s, Norway made the decision on "full integration" of disabled athletes in to the mainstream sport and sport federations. The process was carried out in stages. First, a diagnosis based disability sports organizations were merged into one disabled sports federation 1997, which served as the coordinator for the integration process and disabled sports umbrella organization for the interim period. Next, disability sports and athletes, as well as financial support for disabled sports associations were transferred to the different sport organizations. The last stage of Norway Sport for the Disabled Association (NFI) came to an end in 2007 and from the beginning of 2008 the Norwegian sport umbrella organization, Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee (Norges idrettsforbund olympiske og paralympiske komité - NIF) has been responsible for the development and coordination of disabled sport programs. Now national sports federations (total of 56 organizations) are responsible themselves for the development of disabled sports. (Saari 2011b) In Norway, integration was the decision made by general assembly and it was stated that "the ultimate goal is equality, acceptance and understanding of all participants, improved participation and belonging in the local environment". The sport organizations generally run with lot of help from the volunteers so in order to solve financial problems, sports federations were asked to take some responsibility for disability sport and they were given financial support in order to accomplish that. (Sorensen & Kahrs 2006)

2.5.2 Integrations examined internationally

In the case of USOC, within the Act, there were at least three conditions that must have been met in order to integrate. Those conditions were: “Integration is authorized where feasible, when such designation would serve the best interest of the sport and with approval of the affected national governing body”. Before the revised Olympic and Amateur Sport Act 1998, Disabled Sport Organizations (DSOs) played the same role for disabled athletes than National Governing Bodies (NGBs) are playing for nondisabled athletes. After the recommendations for the integration for disabled sport, DSOs did not know anymore what their role is in disabled sport provisions. The Act did not provide any guidance on how to implement the new Act and it was confusing to all parties, USOC, DSOs and NGBs. None of the organizations really knew their role and rights in the newly presented system and it was not really known whether disability sport will really be integrated in nondisabled sport or not. (Hums et al 2003)

Where USOC and all integration parties of disabled sport experienced uncertainty and confusion at the beginning of the process, the results of Norwegian model indicated also that the process was slower than expected and there were still unresolved problems at the organizational level. As in the case of USA, organization members were unsure about their role and organizations needed more relevant competence for disabled sport. The goals described by NIF were not specific enough to give clear directions for the practice and both researches showed that one possible mistake for the slow process and uncertainty was “top-down initiative” of the integration processes from top level of the organizations. However all organizations in the case study of Norwegian Sports Organizations reported that people’s attitudes towards disabled people had been changing to positive direction and integration was seen more as a positive than a negative thing. (Sorensen & Kahrs 2006)

According to Saari (2011b), even if the development programs are worked up towards inclusion, there are still many things to do before people can enjoy equal access at the grass-root level in Norway. From both the case studies above, it can be concluded that the most important aspects to consider in integration processes are adequate information about the integration as well as education on integration and disabilities, good communication between organizations, financial support in order to be able to complete the integration well enough and capacity issues of the people. In other words, as

Sorensen and Kahrs (2006) concludes: “It would be better to combine a top-down intention with a bottom-up building of the prerequisites for fulfilling the criteria for a successful integration.”

3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

Research task:

What is the current situation of the development of para-badminton in Finland and how it could be developed for more organized direction in the future?

- What is the current state of para-badminton in Finland and internationally?
- What kind of needs there are for more organized and integrated training and competition systems?
- What are the main problems (if any) that prevent the models of integration and co-operation between disabled and able bodied sport federations?
- What are the future sports possibilities for para-badminton in Finland?
- What could be learnt from the other countries in terms of integration and governance of para-badminton?

Theory is useful for guiding researchers in the search of new information and at the same time it also structures and systematizes the gathered information. There is a need for two different kinds of theories in qualitative research. First, the researcher needs some theoretical background against which the material is examined and secondly, nearly unlimited interpretation opportunities require that the researcher has questions in her mind what she wants answers to. These kinds of questions require interpretation theory that guides researcher's choices and what she is looking for from the material. (Eskola & Suoranta 1998) Theories help us examine things from a new perspective and with a good theory it is easier to understand more comprehensively the relationship between sports and social life and therefore make decisions about sports and sport participation in our lives, families, communities and societies. Relationship between sport and society is always changing. Therefore, critical theorists study sport in connection with society that is changing constantly in many areas of life as for example religion, government, education, the media, the family and other parts of social life. Study consists of also the changes in cultural definitions as race, ethnicity, masculinity and femininity, sexuality and physical (dis)ability (Coakley 2009).

3.1 Qualitative approach and a case study

Hirsjärvi & Hurme (2004) state that empirical research has always entirely involved many phases and those phases are interdependent to each other (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001, 14). According to Silverman (2000), qualitative research methods provide a “deeper” understanding of social life and its aspects than quantitative data used alone. Qualitative research is based on inductive processes: it is advancing from individual to general and it focuses on number of concurrent factors that influence the outcome. Theories and regularities are developed in the hope of a greater understanding and the accuracy and reliability are achieved with the verification (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001).

The thought that qualitative and quantitative research can after all work together as research method, has increased during the last decade. For example sometimes the results of the qualitative research can be used to explain the results of a quantitative research. As comparable information from other European countries was required and especially certain already known topics needed to be covered, in addition to qualitative interviews and materials, partly quantitative email questionnaires were also used in this study. Qualitative research originates from very common concepts that changes along the research process. Quantitative research on the contrary pursues its objectives by manipulation of variables and laboratory based experiments. Quantitative research also examines components and parts and looks for a norm while qualitative research searches diversity and regularities. Researchers who are writing about integration of qualitative and quantitative research can be categorized into two groups: to those who see that these tendencies are representing two different kind epistemological views about what is valid, and that is why it is difficult for those to integrate. And to the researchers who think that those two research types are based on different kind of data collections, and that is why they could be integrated. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001)

Integration of disabled sport into able-bodied sport is mostly dealing with organizational change and development and therefore problems concerning the subject have to be studied. Along the way, those problems need to be solved and / or some suggestions for improvement should be made. That is one of the reasons why Action research is a suitable model for this certain research. As described in Greenwood (1999) “Action research refers to a specific way of understanding and managing the relationship between theory and practice, between the researcher and the researched.” (Greenwood

1999, 9) Action research goes much further than just investigating and explaining the situations, it wants to improve it (Greenwood 1999). The core thing in action research is the ever changing situations and the fact how much power we have over it. Action researchers act as they are insiders of the research situation and that way they gain knowledge that might not be otherwise available to traditional researchers who come from outside. Action research process reflects the role of the self and that affects the entire research process. As stated in Somekh (2005) “Action research starts from a vision of social transformation and aspirations for greater social justice for all. Action research is not value neutral; action researchers aim to act morally and promote social justice through research that is politically informed and personally engaged.” (Somekh 2005, 7)

3.2 Case study and critical Organization theory

A case study is defined as “An empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” (DePoy & Gitlin 1998, 142). Case study is a natural approach to researches where the practical problems are analyzed and described comprehensively, and what cannot be done separately from the context. It is easier to understand all the actions of all participants more profoundly by using case studies. (Syrjälä, Ahonen, Syrjäläinen & Saari 1994) Case study is flexible and its purpose is to make predictions, examine relationships or describe phenomena. That is why, triangulation is much used and it is a basic strategy in case study designs. Case study approach is a correct approach to use when it is not possible or desirable to randomize or examine the population as a group with similar characteristics and when research is wanted to make in a cost efficient way. (DePoy & Gitlin 1998)

As this study focuses on equality and change in sport, critical Organizational Theory focusing on people, ideologies and universal organizational structures, was chosen as a base theory for this study. According to Coakley (2009) theories often help for forming research questions and revealing deeper meanings and thoughts dealing with sports. Critical theorists believe that sports are stages where culture and social relations are produced and changed. Critical theory can be considered in variety of forms and one of its main ideas is that groups and societies are characterized by shared values and

conflicts of interest. Social life involves continuous processes of negotiation and compromises because agreements about values and social organization are never permanent. It also means that values and social organizations change over time and there are shifts in the power balance between groups of people in society. Critical theory focuses on diversity and changes that shapes social life as it is lived and experienced by people who communicate together and it emphasizes the need for the diverse forms of sport participation in society. Critical Theory can be seen in many different forms but it focuses mainly on the processes through which culture is produced, reproduced, and changed as well as on power, social inequalities in cultural production and the ideologies of people forming identities and transforming people's lives. This study therefore reinforces the idea of the Critical Theory that as a result, sport would become more humane and democratic and less subject to the exclusive control of any particular category of people. (Coakley 2009)

Because of the general nature of the case studies and my background in sporting field, it is appropriate to use triangulation in this study. Triangulation is an action plan that assists researcher to overcome her personal prejudices because in triangulation she cannot commit to just one point of view. Triangulation simply means use of combinations of different methods, researchers, information sources or theories (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002). According to DePoy & Gitlin (1998) "Triangulation is a basic aspect of data gathering that also shares the action process of data analysis. It is an approach in which one source of information is checked against one or more other different types of sources to determine the accuracy of hypothetical understanding". (DePoy & Gitlin 1998,283-284) According to Patton (2002), triangulation and its reflexive inquiry involve three sets of questions: self-reflexivity, reflexivity about those studied and reflexivity about the audience. In this case, I had to be careful about what shapes my perspective and how my perceptions affect the data, its analysis and perceptions of the interviewees.

By broadening the use of methods it is possible to elicit broader views and hence increase the credibility of the research. Methodological triangulation can mean two things: same method is used in different situations or different methods are used in same study. This kind of use of the different methods is justified by the fact that with single research method it is difficult to have comprehensive picture of the whole research

object. It is believed that when one single research method describes the object only from one point of view, by several methods it is possible to correct this reliability error. (Eskola & Suoranta 1998) In this particular study, use of triangulation has brought out the best possible way by using both qualitative and quantitative research methods, manner in which the obtained information is supplementing each other. Subject of the study requires also pushing the researcher's own perceptions in the background and concentration equally on opinions and perceptions of all parties involved in the research.

3.3 Data collection

When designing the research and choosing the suitable method for its implementation, it is important to consider the validity and reliability of the chosen method for a certain research. According to Robson (2007), "Data collection is reliable if you get essentially the same data when a measurement is repeated under the same conditions". (Robson 2007, 71) But he also clarifies that when you are working with people, getting an exact repetition result of a measurement is virtually impossible. Validity indicates whether or not something actually measures what it is claiming to measure. A measure can be reliable and not necessarily valid while on the other hand if it is not reliable, it cannot be valid (Robson 2007). When choosing the data collection method, the most important and influential factor to consider is the research problem. That way it is easier to make decisions about the study design, materials and how that material could be obtained.

Even if interviewing is suitable for many kinds of research purposes, its use has to be always considered carefully in relation to the research problems, phenomena and its nature, the alternative ways to gather the material and economic resources in use. Interviewing is a very flexible method and it is suitable for many different kinds of research purposes. In interviewing situation, the interviewer is in a straight linguistic interaction with the interviewee and that situation creates a possibility for direct information gathering process. At the same time in ideal situation it is also possible to reveal motives behind the answers. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001)

3.3.1 Data collection methods

As research area is fairly unknown and as the deeper understanding about the subject is needed, most of the information was gathered by semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because the answers to certain specific questions and problems were required. Semi-structured interview is a data collection method between questionnaires and unstructured interviews. The questions are formed in the same manner for everybody but interviewer can change the order of the questions as well as their phrasing. Even if the questions are the same, the answers are not tied to the certain answer option and the interviewees can answer with their own words. During the interviews the interviewee has an active and creative role in the study and the use of interviewing as research data collection method has lot of advantages in certain situations. Those situations are for example when the subject of the study is unknown and less studied, when clarifying answers are needed and if it is already known in advance that the subject of the study produces complex answers. Interviews are also useful when extra questions and arguments are wanted. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001)

The one part of the data in this research was collected with semi-structured interviews. In the semi-structured interviews generally, questions and topics were prepared in advance and when needed, follow-up questions were asked during the interview. Those kinds of interviews aim to balance the organization and composition of the structured approach with impulsivity and flexibility of the unstructured interview (Salmons 2010). Para-badminton is still quite unknown sport in Finland and in most part of Europe, hence plenty of information was needed in order to develop a comprehensive research. To achieve that, the first step was to contact the Finnish Para-badminton and Finnish Badminton Federation. In order to get reliable and valid information from all parties, five interviewees were deliberately chosen from different organizations in the field of badminton. As a base to the research some secondary sources were also used mainly to check on the status of development and integration, in Finland or in other European countries. In this study, those secondary sources include literature about sport for the people with disabilities, electronic documents from several sports organizations (Para-badminton Finland, Finnish Badminton Federation, Finnish Sport Federation of Persons with Disabilities, Badminton World Federation and Para-badminton World Council) and questionnaires from five national badminton federations and four Finnish Sport

managers via email. While this study matured and advanced the network of the people who were involved in integration processes internationally, I finally found it a useful idea to contact the Badminton World Federation (BWF) as well. This was important because of the recent integration of BWF and Para-badminton World Council and to obtain relevant information about the integration process. However I did not get any answers to my questions and I had to rely solely on the information gathered from secondary sources.

3.3.2 Selection of research material and interviewees

The interviewees were selected on such a basis that each examined association related to the development of para-badminton would have one or two representatives. This would ensure that the saturation point of the information in this study would not be exceeded. Therefore, I selected two Para-athletes, two main representatives of Para-badminton Finland and representative of Finnish Badminton Federation (see Figure 1). My intention was to interview also the representatives of VAU but they preferred to answer the questions by email. The questions were sent ahead to all interviewees and they had one week time to get familiar with them. Four out of five interviews were done face to face during the Para-badminton Finnish Championships on April 2012 and one interview was done over the phone. All interviews were recorded and the language used in interviews was Finnish.

<u>Interviewed people for the research</u>
1) Juhani Pippuri – Director of Para-badminton Finland
2) Jyry Loukiainen – Vice director of Para-badminton Finland, Athlete
3) Kauko Oksanen – Athlete
4) Kimmo Sirviö – Athlete
5) Olli Pulkkinen – Responsible for recreational activities, Finnish Badminton Federation

Figure 1. List of people interviewed for the research

Semi-structured interviews suited well to the subject and to the nature of the research because they brought out the opinions and the experiences of all parties. The interviews consisted of different themes, which were born during the consultations with representatives of disabled sports. Those themes were formed on the basis of different questions, which were, however, quite open, and when circumstances required, additional questions were also asked. Depending on the situation and interviewee, questions were not necessarily asked in the same order or in the same form.

Rest of the data in this study was gathered by email questionnaires from chosen national badminton federations (see Figure 2) and by investigating the online material on disabled-sport. Since the research relates to the current situation of Para-badminton and its future, from many points of view, structured multiple-choice form did not come to the question. According to Hirsjärvi & Hurme (2001) well designed questionnaires can be used when they are trying to clear out quite concrete and explicit phenomenon. Questionnaires can also be handled relatively fast if compared to recorded interview material. With open-ended questions it is easier to explore sensitive issues and at the same time the meaning of the questions to the respondent can be identified. Also the issues that are salient to respondent can be identified but it is also possible that respondents may not want to address sensitive issues directly. (DePoy & Gitlin 1998)

Email questionnaires:

- 1) Harri Lindblom – Badminton Coordinator, VAU
- 2) Pekka Sarasjärvi – Consultant of Para-badminton Finland
- 3) Aija Saari – Research Manager - VAU
- 4) Hannele Pöysti – Sector Manager - VAU
- 5) Walter Joren – Para-badminton Belgium
- 6) Tom Webster – National Disability Manager of England
- 7) Alexander Bird – Disability Officer, Badminton Scotland
- 8) Sonja Hässler – Para-badminton player, Switzerland
- 9) Günter Klütze – Para-badminton Germany

Figure 2. List of people interviewed via email questionnaires

The questionnaires for the foreign badminton federations were sent mainly to the European para-badminton or badminton federations because their cultural base would be closer to Finnish culture than for example Asian countries where para-badminton is however far more popular than in Europe. European norms and values differ from the values in other continents and it might have been more difficult to use topics touching political issues for Asian or South-American countries than it would be for Europeans and the west. After long consideration I also contacted the Indian Para-badminton Federation in order to get a good comparison from countries where Para-badminton is quite developed and internationally recognized but after the email exchange I could not get answers to my questions. Therefore I gathered information on the Asian countries mainly from their websites.

I was informed that most of the European Para-badminton Federations are struggling with similar problems as Para-badminton Finland but different kind of projects for the development and integration were underway and that is why they were a good comparison for this study. Those European countries were chosen by random sampling. I sent an inquiry of questionnaire to eight different nations where I knew they played

para-badminton and five of them responded right away expressing their willingness to participate in this study and therefore those nations were chosen. When conducting interviews I had to keep in mind also the language differences of each country as there is always the possibility that words can take a different meaning in different countries. Keeping that in mind, if there were some unclear answers, people were contacted again and requested clarifications. As mentioned in Patton (2002), "You don't have to be a woman to interview women, or a sumo wrestler to interview sumo wrestlers. But if you are going to cross social gaps and go where you are ignorant, you have to recognize and deal with cultural barriers to communication. And you have to accept that how you are seen by the person being interviewed will affect what is said." (Patton 2002, 392)

I started my research with the Badminton World Federation and moved from there to smaller units, different countries and federations. I aimed to choose some of those countries where para-badminton is more or less at the same stage as that in Finland but also the countries where the integration processes are further advanced. That way I could examine best practices and practices that could have been done differently. In the European countries that I examined, para-badminton has been taken more forward than for example in Finland, their athletes are competing in international competitions and their training system is more developed. However for example in Switzerland the rise of para-badminton started remarkably well but now there are signs of regression at certain levels. Still few years ago Switzerland had a training group of approximately 30 people meeting regularly and participating in national and international competitions. Currently there are approximately 40 wheelchair players from which only 15 are playing in national tournaments and 2 in international tournaments. There are also some standing players but they play mostly with able-bodied players. (Hässler, personal communication 21.4.2012)

Within the Europe, I chose Belgium, England, Scotland, Switzerland and Germany and in all of those countries the development of para-badminton is much advanced than in Finland. When examining worldwide situation, Asian countries are performing remarkably well in para-badminton world cups and World Championships. That is the reason why I wanted to interview also one Asian country, India, as an example of worldwide success.

3.4 Data analysis

The aim for the analyzing the collected data was to show clearly the current situation in the field of para-badminton and be able to answer the question what would be the best or at least efficient way to carry out the integration processes. According to Eskola & Suoranta (1998), by using analysis, material should be summarized without losing its information. On the contrary the use of analysis is aiming to increase information by creating from incoherent information clear and meaningful. It was important to make sense of various kind of planning and implementation processes for the integration of para-badminton at the international level as well as that of other Paralympic sports by comparing, interviewing and exploring sport organizations of different countries. That way it was possible to learn from previous cases and to find out what has been done right or wrong and whether those processes could be applied to para-badminton in Finland. During the interviewing process I remarked that it just did not only create additional information but also the several discourses between different interviewed parties provided more complex ideas for specific research questions.

According to Patton (2002), the risk on qualitative analysis lies mostly on making sense of great amount of data. It involves the reduction of raw information and decision making of what is important information for the research. In this study analysis started as described above, already during the interview phase. During the interviews new questions and ideas were raised and I could already start to form a model of basic ideas and if needed, ask extra questions. Total length of the interviews was three hours and one interview lasted approximately 34-40minutes. After the interviews the gathered data was transcribed but not word by word because in this kind of research wording, phrasing and pausing are not so relevant than interviewees' thoughts and point of views. Especially on the interviews made face to face, I tried to pay attention to the gestures and facial expressions of the interviewees and that helped me to form extra questions on right topics as certain colloquial expression and gestures can reveal easily some interviewees' attitudes and opinions related to the studied subject. Transcribed text was total of 12 pages.

According to Hirsjärvi & Hurme (2001) analysis often begins already at the interviewing situation when researcher can make observations and sketch models from risen observations. Reasoning that researcher usually uses, can be inductive or

abductive. Inductive reasoning is material oriented and on the contrary in abductive reasoning researcher has already some theoretical core ideas that she aims to verify with the help of her material. In qualitative research there are only few standardized analyzing techniques and there are many different kinds of ways to work with them. One way of analysis is the analysis by theme as done in this research. Analysis by theme means that in the stage of analysis those features that are common to many of the interviewees, are explored. They can be based on starting point themes and addition to that, usually during the analysis, other themes that are often more interesting than those starting point themes, are emerging. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001)

The real need for change was noticed from all parties; both disabled and non-disabled sport. Para-badminton and its current state in Finland is novel as it is the first non-Paralympic sport integration with its non-disabled sport federation in Finland. Therefore I wanted to find out what it takes for that kind of project to happen, why it is needed and what kind of outcomes there could be. However because there are no previous cases in Finland, I needed to make a comparison with other countries to see if the change is needed and to explore how things have been done during the integration and what is the situation now. Therefore it was essential that I chose to examine para-badminton federations that have already passed integration project and also para-badminton federations that are in the same stage with Finland or not even started the integration process yet. The cases of integration in different countries were all different and for example in the case of Switzerland I noticed that the situations are not unambiguous and that the cooperation does not necessarily last even if there were a good start. Therefore I started paying more attention to the reasons behind the failures. To my surprise, those reasons were extremely complex (e.g. personal power interests) and at the same time very common (e.g. attitudes towards disable people) in disabled sport.

Both the questionnaires and interviews were divided into the two main themes; current situation of para-badminton and future plans. However, when the information and knowledge of the subject increased as study progressed, the main themes did not seem to be clear enough and sub-themes were formed. Those sub-themes were: comparison between Finland and other countries, main factors influencing the integration and the problems in the integration processes. The problem areas of the research were formed more deeply after the interviews when new ideas, suggestions and research directions

were raised. Therefore I undertook also more interviews and questionnaires in to the research than I originally planned. After transcription, the texts were categorized according to those certain themes and same categorization was made for the questionnaires. However the first step was to look for the relevant information across the data and consolidate them together. That way it was easier to categorize them into sub themes. After that I needed to examine the differences and all the similarities in each category. That helped me to find out which information is relevant and what information can be just touched upon if needed.

Information and analyses showed that integration is needed widely across the Europe in several sports but it is however complex and time consuming operation. According to Gibson & Brown (2009) analysis involves finding the key factors and relationships among them because the analysis as a whole is about the relationship between data and conceptual problems. So even if there are some researches done on integration in sport and especially the case studies of Norway (Sorensen & Kahrs 2006) and USA (Hums et Al 2003) provided lot of useful information, the interviews provided still the latest and the most relevant information related to my research.

From the interviews of the Finnish organizational players, I found out that mutual frustration of Para-badminton and VAU was very visible. But there were also strong belief for possibilities of positive changes. However to be sure that I did not misinterpreted the gestures and comments wrong, I needed to gather also written facts about current situation in Finland and operations of National Badminton Federation and VAU. Interviews were not necessarily the best way to gather information about this subject as interviewed people were reserved about what they could say and reveal. It was clearly easier to answer by the questionnaires and that way explain also the difficult and sensitive topics. The responders were also free to choose what topics and answers they wanted to emphasize and it was easier to see what aspects they thought were the most important.

4 RESULTS

Elite disability sport is recognized as elite sport. Attitudes have changed and disability sport is nowadays an equal part of top sports development processes in Finland. (Pöysti, personal communication 11.9.2012) Para-badminton has increased its success steadily around the world and it has a growing profile among the badminton and wider sporting communities. In many countries and regions, in Scotland for example, open days are organized in order to get more interested players into the clubs and that way in to the national team (Bird, personal communication 19.4.2012). The number of players has grown during last few years in several countries. For example in Finland the growth has been from six players at the Finnish Championship level in 2010 to 20 players in 2012 (Vammaissulkapallo 2012).

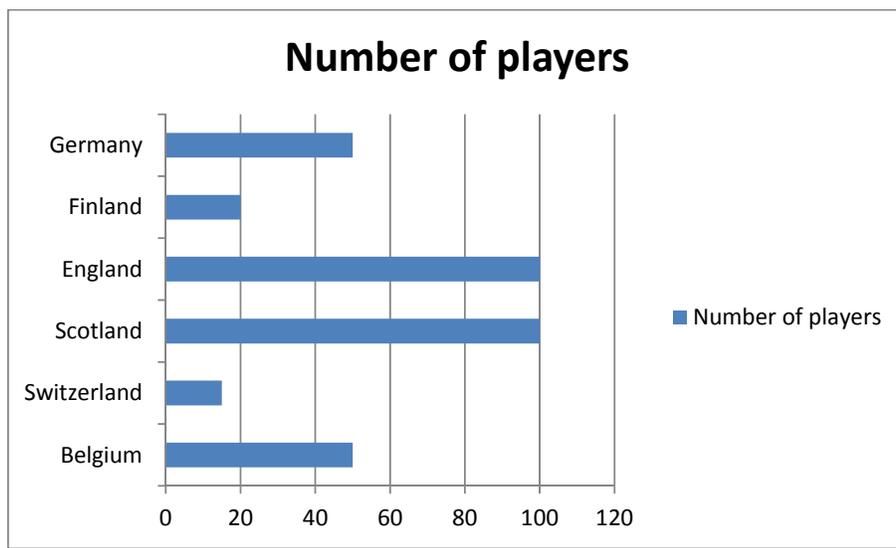


Figure 3. Number of players competing in tournaments at the national level in each researched country. (Klützke, Pippuri, Webster, Häsler & Joren 2012)

4.1 Current situation of disabled sport and Para-badminton in Europe

Current situation of disabled sport has remarkable differences between Finland and some other European countries but still there are similar problems in each of them. Number of para-badminton players who are classified and are competing on national level tournaments across Europe and especially in those countries that I studied, differs between 15-100 players per country (see Figure 3). However, the number of recreational

players is higher and therefore it is difficult to estimate. Most of the countries that I examined (except Finland) have players playing at an international level including those from Germany, Great Britain and Asian countries being most successful so far. According to Sirviö (personal communication 21.4.2012) there are few sports clubs in southern Finland with active operations for para-badminton but more resources for that kind of activities are needed. Para-badminton is however more or less an individual sport and other sports, e.g. wheelchair basketball and other team sports, as also in able-bodied sports generally, attracts more athletes and audience than individual sport. The communities may not fully understand the needs and operations what are needed for the sport provisions for disabled people, plus on the other hand it is very high threshold to go out and participate in sport with able bodied people. Thus, the facilities and general sporting attitudes need to change and make as accessible and welcoming as possible for the disabled athletes.

4.1.1 Provision of para-badminton

In Finland there are differences in provision of para-badminton depending on the geographical areas. Also in other European countries, for example even in Switzerland, being geographically far smaller country than Finland, general provision of sport depends strongly on which part of Switzerland you live and therefore travelling times for para-badminton trainings can be rather long. (Hässler, personal communication 21.4.2012) In Belgium, in the region of Flanders, there are few badminton clubs that are offering para-badminton training within each province. However for example in the region of Wallonia they have not reached the same point yet. (Joren, personal communication 29.4.2012) Different kind of situation can be seen for example in Scotland where the population is quite the same than in Finland but there are several clubs based across the country for disabled players. Those clubs are good starting and developing points for athletes to reach national squad level. (Bird, personal communication 19.4.2012) Situation in Finland is that provisions in local badminton clubs for disabled players do not really depend on the region, but the distances set up some difficulties with training camps and tournaments. Therefore strong and well organized regional operations would be needed so that players could have enough tournaments per year.

According to Pulkkinen (personal communication 2.5.2012) especially those training camps have been really important door openers for new players. Via these training camps they can get to know the sport and players better as compared to the training camps that are 500-600 km further from you which makes the threshold to participate much higher. According to Pippuri (personal communication 21.4.2012), training camps are also rather expensive for disabled athletes who do not have any sponsor support and the provision for wheelchair suited accommodation is limited so it is important to take advantage of the sports institutes and other places where badminton court payments are cheaper or included in accommodation rates.

4.1.2 Governance of para-badminton

Within provision of para-badminton and its governing board, there are differences between nations. There are countries where para-badminton belongs under the governance of national badminton federation (e.g. England - Badminton England), but still quite many countries are still governed by some Omni sport federations for disabled people (i.e. Switzerland – Swiss Paraplegic Organization). There are also countries where Para-badminton and National Badminton Federations co-operate on some level, but in those cases there are usually a lot of communication problems and difficulties concerning the task allocation. It seems to be a common problem that regions or nations with written cooperative contract with the National Badminton Federations, do not necessarily work in practice.

Finnish Para-badminton council moved under VAU in 2011 and at that point the funding according to VAU priorities was quite sufficient for Para-badminton. However in 2012 as the operations grew and the number of players increased, the funding was no longer sufficient. At that point according to Lindblom (personal communication 3.5.2012), Finnish Badminton Federation would act as “a saver” in case of integration. October 2012, Para-badminton Finland (VammaisSulkaPallo ry) was registered and started operating under Finnish Badminton Federation in 2013 following which some financial support from the government via federation is secured. Para-badminton group is hoping that within the integration, they could get more help for the organizational aspects of the tournaments (administrative staff and referees), more funding to be able

to maintain the basic functions of Para-badminton Finland and in addition to that, increased visibility to be able to attract more disabled people to join them.

4.2 Integration within para-badminton

When examining the other para-badminton countries, it was observed that the integration process in Finland was faster when compared to several other countries with similar needs. In Europe only Para-badminton England and Scotland councils officially sit under their National Badminton Federations. Of these, England's operations are so far the most advanced. Badminton England has a strategic body for the development of badminton for disabled people. That committee includes representatives of Badminton England's Board of Directors, Badminton England staff, representatives of the EFDS and key NDSOs, and representatives of English Para-badminton groups (Badminton England, Disability strategy 2012). Below is an example of their strategic plan for para-badminton.

- To grow badminton as a sport for disabled people in England from all impairment groups, whatever their involvement in the game.
- To improve the standard of play of disabled players in England across impairment groups, by implementing a suitable competitive play system at all levels supporting the development of competitive badminton in the BWF-recognized impairment classifications.
- To be considered a “fit for purpose” organization for disability badminton.

(Badminton England, Disability Strategy 2012)

Other countries and regions, for example Belgium have a cooperative function with their national federations but belonging to National Badminton Federation does not necessarily guarantee the clear and effective organization of para-badminton. As for example Bird (personal communication 19.4.2012) comments: “Para group want to see BadmintonScotland taking ownership of the performance programs and providing funding to enable this to happen in a similar fashion to the able bodied athletes. Disabled athletes are at the top of the world game yet not receiving the same level of support as their peers.”

German Para-badminton group belongs to German Wheelchair Sport Organization as well as Swiss Para-badminton group to theirs with some minor cooperation with able bodied National Badminton Federation. It should be noted however that none of these countries organize training camps or tournaments together. As in Finland, those countries cooperate also with other disabled organizations (Wheelpower UK, The Dwarf Sports Association UK, Swiss Paraplegic Association) and that is helpful for assistance with the wider development of the sport.

Why integration is required? According to Lindblom (personal communication 3.5.2012), there was a clear and visible need for integration and therefore many of the integration projects have been taken further, but money is basically the only factor now in Finland that is preventing the bigger changes in para-badminton and disable sport generally. Pöysti (personal communication 11.9.2012) emphasizes the following points when justifying the need for integration. Integration of para-badminton to the Badminton Federation clarifies the division of tasks between disabled sport organizations, Para-badminton group and National Badminton Federation. (Pöysti, personal communication 11.9.2012) Disabled Sport Federations, also internationally, have many sports to govern and therefore the percentage of funding for the small non Paralympic sport like Para-badminton is relatively small. Therefore Para-badminton Finland gets more resources from Sport Federation, in this case from Finnish Badminton Federation, compared to what VAU can give.

When talking about cooperation and integration, the funding is one of the most important factors. Through the examined countries across Europe, funding is organized partly or wholly by National Badminton Federation, Disabled Sport Organizations or Insurance companies. However in all of these countries personal funding (athletes and coaches themselves) is remarkable and as Hässler (personal communication 21.4.2012) stated: "Without huge personal and financial effort from athletes and coaches, it's very hard to reach a high level." The results are showing that there are clearly two main factors why para-badminton organizations feel that integration could support and improve their situation. One was the recognition of their Para-sport and that they could have the same equal opportunities than their counterparts. Second was finance. With integration into Badminton Federations, it was expected that para-badminton could get more money and more support for their administration and competitions.

4.3 Main problems preventing integration and co-operation

Still few years ago, it was important for para-badminton groups to co-operate with Badminton Federations in order to be able to compete in the international tournaments sanctioned by Badminton World Federation (Badminton World Federation 2012). BWF had a rule that each competitor has to belong to their member federation (Klützke, personal communication 9.8.2012). As of 2011, BWF also accepts associate members. For example Para-badminton Finland could now join as a member of BWF without the Finnish National Badminton Federation. However BWF recommends players and para-badminton groups to join to their national Badminton Federations (Badminton World Federation 2012).

One of the biggest problems noticed during the research was that even if the National Badminton Federations would be willing to get para-badminton groups under their governance, they retain the right to have the main say in the equation and dictate terms. For example in Germany, their National Badminton Federation has signed a co-operation agreement but does not provide any financial support, and at the same time does not want to include any other players to their para-badminton program except those with physical disabilities. In which case, the deaf and mentally challenged people are left out of the agreement (Klützke, personal communication 9.8.2012). Money might be the biggest issue when talking about integration. Within all researched nations, the money was one of the biggest problems and that might cause the most hesitation from National Badminton Federations side. National governing bodies are afraid that they might need extra money in order to maintain their para-badminton programs (Klützke, personal communication 9.8.2012).

On the other hand with the recognition of Para-sport, the money is the most important factor why para-badminton groups would like to merge with the Badminton federations. As for example Bird (personal communication 19.4.2012) commented: "A Scottish Para-badminton group exists which sits out with Badmintonscotland, the group links with the NGB and an employee from the NGB sits on the Para-badminton committee. The hope is that the group merge with the NGB but as yet this has been prevented to enable greater access to grant funding. The Para-badminton group feels that a far greater ownership of disabled programs should be had by the NGB and discussions are ongoing to try and ensure this occurs in the near future." The financial resources of multi-sport

organizations for disabled are not enough for para-badminton groups so they feel it would be better to co-operate with governing bodies of badminton.

Money is not the only affecting factor for para-badminton groups wanting to integrate with their National Badminton Federations. Beside the finance, they are also looking for the specific badminton expertise, the sport specified know-how and more people to work for the group. In Finland, for example, it has been a problem that decisive parties have not realized, for example, how much help the wheelchair athletes would need to build up the courts and set up the nets. It is understandable that from the existing small group of para-badminton players in Finland, it is difficult to find enough hands to get all the operations running smoothly and effectively, and hence the logical need for administrative and operational support. (Pippuri, personal communication 21.4.2012)

Sometimes it is not easy to understand that one of the biggest problems of the development of Para-badminton is in the end connected to people's attitudes, perceptions and knowledge. It is more difficult for non-disabled people to understand what kind of special needs disabled people and disabled athletes can have. It is difficult to understand those needs in normal life level; so therefore it could be even harder to understand it at the sports level. On the basic level, people have to understand that disabled people have the same kind of rights to operate than non-disabled people. They have right to play badminton in their home town the same way than their able bodied counterparts. It needs to be understood that in order to provide those kinds of rights and opportunities, it is just not enough to merely offer regular playing slot in the timetable in sports halls but also to provide the basic facilities including accessible showers and toilets. It would be important to take into account these aspects when building new sporting facilities to prevent future problems.

4.4 Future needs and sports strategies for Para-badminton

According to Lindblom (personal communication 3.5.2012), integration requires flexibility from both parties and clear spheres of responsibilities indicating who should be doing things, how things are to be done and how funding will be carried out to ensure future sport development. Integration is a complicated process but as mentioned earlier there is a clear need for it in many countries and regions. Even if the disabled athletes are competing and succeeding at the top world level, they are not receiving

same level of support and recognition as able bodied players. As Pöysti (personal communication 11.9.2012) states, the directors of the National Sport Federations should commit to the project. “Even sports organized for people with disabilities may not fully or appropriately accommodate those who might want to participate, it is important for people who construct and administer sports to understand the diversity of individuals with disabilities and of the types of sports and sports settings needed to accommodate the differences among these people” (Nixon 2007, 418).

This research shows clearly that even if the para-badminton group of each country or region is in different situation, their core need is the same: They need the co-operation with their national Badminton Federation in one way or another. Para-badminton groups need more recognition and co-operation with mainstream sport which is not limited to financial support. As the most important co-operation areas Hässler (personal communication 21.4.2012) points out are advertisement in Badminton news, training camps and events together with able-bodied players, assistance with the international events and referees for the tournaments. The help of National Sport Federations is important for the regional development work. For example in Finland, where long distances cause real need for more affective regional operations, Finnish Badminton Federation could be a good administrative partner. With its help would be easier to make the badminton clubs all over the country open their doors to para-badminton players and pursue regional co-operations. Also the accessibility of the badminton sport facilities should be examined and developed if needed.

4.4.1 Communication and sport strategies between different associations

As the co-operation with National Badminton Federation is important, the National Sport Federations for people with disabilities should not be forgotten. Their help and co-operation is needed as well. I would suggest that the most effective model of co-operation would be that the Para-badminton Finland sits under the governance of Badminton Federation while being still in contact with VAU. Classification is one good example of this kind of co-operation. For example in Belgium, where they are currently working with classification of all their athletes and their strong goal is to reduce that gap compared to their neighboring countries where more and more players are classified and are competing at the international level, Para-badminton group is closely co-operating

with their National Badminton Federation and they receive crucial expertise from their national sport federation for disabled people (Joren, personal communication 29.4.2012). This kind of example could be used also in communications and marketing. It is important to be able to do marketing and communication via the channels of National Badminton Federation and that is important way of communication to the sport clubs. However in order to attract new players, the publications of VAU and other organizations for disabled people are important communication channels. Also rehabilitation centers can be and are important “message forwarders”.

The BWF recently launched player profiles under a para-badminton section on World Badminton TV with a series of inspirational short stories from some of the players on the para-badminton circuit. Finland could use this as an example and start implementing a similar model as BWF:

- events for both men and woman
- single, doubles and mixed doubles
- all ages and all abilities
- para-badminton and badminton players training together
- para-badminton and badminton players competing in local leagues / regional events alongside each other
- World Championships every two years
- Continental Championships every alternate year
- International open events
- ONE SPORT – ONE TEAM

(Badminton World Federation 2012)

Integration with the Sport Federations brings more sport specified international contacts to the Para-sport and possibilities to compete in international tournaments. It provides more sport specified know-how of general operations for para-badminton, (i.e. referees and officials) and at the same time it releases more resources for the sports that are

governed only by VAU. Sport Federations on the other hand, benefit from it as they get more added values for their functions. For the development of the sport, it is important to cooperate with sport clubs and start the operations from the grassroots levels. That way each sport is made easier for people to reach. (Pöysti, personal communication 11.9.2012) It is easier for Para-badminton Finland to reach sport clubs together with Finnish Badminton Federation. If sports clubs are not accessible for all, it is almost impossible to expand to the international level with wide range of top players.

Currently situation with Para-badminton Finland has changed dramatically since its first few years. It took time to get the wheels of change in motion but now when it has started, things are developing and moving at a fast pace. It can be seen, when comparing Finland to other European countries, that para-badminton is being played in Finland for a relatively shorter period than for example in Great Britain and Germany but still it took also shorter period to change the situation for better and more professionalized way. The question is that have attitudes towards disabled sport changed or have organizations just become more efficient and more familiar with integration processes? That would definitely need further research and investigation.

4.4.2 Situation in Finland

When interviewing people involved with para-badminton in Finland, it was clearly observed that they had received no or very little support and assistance from VAU. There has been no assistance in the organization of Para-badminton events and competitions, and funding was very less and could not cover the budget for a entire year. According to Pippuri (personal communication 21.4.2012) it was felt from the Para-badminton side that badminton in VAU was “forgotten” and the differences in assistance between Olympic sport and non-Olympic sport was remarkably huge. However that is understandable these days with limited resources but little bit extra support and recognition was needed. Still it has to be remembered that as Lindblom (personal communication 3.5.2012) mentions, Paralympic sports have a priority and he admits that the resources, both financial and operational are limited.

During the integration process, now when Para-badminton Finland has been formed as specialized sport club, VaSuPa ry (VammaisSulkaPallo ry) working under the governance of Finnish Badminton Federation, a few questions have arisen: “How much

support and assistance para-badminton will get from Finnish Badminton Federation, will the situation improve and does the Para-badminton group have enough resources to grow and develop in a mature and professional manner?" At the moment the situation seems promising and the communication and flow of the information has improved.

4.4.3 International strategies

Within this research I could say that there are two main goals for the integration; the core thing is to provide equal and professional sporting opportunities for para-badminton players both at the national and international level and to achieve a Paralympic status for badminton. Internationally speaking BWF has Para-badminton 2020 vision which includes:

- Becoming on IPC (International Paralympic Committee) recognized International organization
- Integrating Para-badminton into the governance and management structure
- Renewing the Para-badminton rules and implementing new classification regulations
- Increasing funding for development

And

- Increasing activities to develop Para-badminton and integration Para-badminton into the BWF strategic plan 2012-2016

According to BWF (Badminton World Federation 2012) the above listed are necessary steps to prepare the sport for inclusion in 2020. European Para-badminton Federation has been exploring the possibility to organize open Para- badminton cup in Nordic Countries 2013. Currently Finland is the only Scandinavian country that has at least some kind of organization that could organize a tournament of this kind. With that it could be possible to organize also classification and classification training sponsored by BWF (Pippuri, personal communication 21.4.2012)

As in badminton, most of the competitive players can be found in Asia but European players and tournaments are developing fast. A suitable example to highlight the growing international tournaments in Europe, is the German International Open Para-badminton tournament in 2012 which received participants from across 19 countries or regions (Scotland, Wales, North Ireland and England represented separately). German international opens have been organized since 1996 in standing and wheelchair categories and also include events for dwarfs. The tournament initially started as a 3 nation event in 1990's but now it already includes 19 countries, plus some countries from South America and Asia. (Badminton World Federation 2012)

After interviewing several European para-badminton professionals, I found out that most of the para-badminton organizations cannot operate without the support of bigger organizations like for example national badminton federations. Para-badminton has a huge advantage if it has general Para-sport knowledge of disabled sport organizations but maybe even bigger advantage if they have managerial and financial support of national badminton federations. They have all the specialized sport related managerial knowledge and the important international contacts of badminton. As Para-badminton World Federation is now under the BWF it is also advantageous for national Para-badminton Federations / organizations to belong to their national badminton federations.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With this research it can be seen that para-badminton in Finland has been developing fast in the last three years. The speed of development might be faster than in most disabled sports but there are still lot of things to be done and many problems to be solved. Behind the Para-badminton Finland there are small but effective group of people who believe in what they are doing and are really enthusiastic. That is one of the strong points when talking about the future of para-badminton. The integration between Para-badminton World Council and Badminton World Federation is a good example of which direction this sport is going and how things could be done at an international scale.

As I mentioned above, there is a batch of enthusiastic players behind the para-badminton group in Finland, but the weakness is that there are less in number. Does this sport have a future in Finland if the work load of current organizers and promoters becomes too heavy? One of the biggest weaknesses in that development process is money. The situation might get better now with integration with Finnish Badminton Federation but cannot be taken for granted. Para-badminton is not Paralympic sport and both internationally and nationally, badminton is not among the most famous sports and therefore the possibilities to get more financial support is even less. It is also relatively a new sport in Finland so it takes some time, especially now, when governance of the sport has changed, before division of tasks will find their place. One of the main problems might be that the possible newcomers may stop or find some other sport if the sporting facilities are not accessible. It is important that every person with disabilities who wants to play badminton has an opportunity to do so regularly and in their local settings.

The future of para-badminton in Finland highly depends on how the division of tasks, finance and organization finds their place in the new governance structure. Development also requires more interested players and organizers. Attitudes and prejudices are deep in Finnish culture and the change in that area is needed. But there is still hope: the help of professional coaches and possible co-operation with able-bodied players and national squads can bring good results. It is important to ensure that within the clubs there are coaches who have at least basic understanding of delivering

badminton to disabled people. The number of para-badminton players might be still too small for comprehensive coach training program but one possibility is that the players themselves can coach and take information and knowledge forward to their own regions. Also the Association of Finnish Badminton referees could add para-badminton refereeing into their education programs and that way to foster the development of Para-badminton. Para-badminton is young sport and saturation point is not exceeded so there are many potential players out there. If para-badminton will become a Paralympic event 2020, it would mark as important milestone for the sport and make the future look brighter.

In most of the sports in Finland, integration includes only the international team operations (exception of judo, swimming and riding) and mostly only in Paralympic sports (Pöysti, personal communication 11.9.2012). Therefore para-badminton is some kind of pioneer with its integration. In this development process of para-badminton, communication is essential, maybe the most important factor. According to the disability strategy of Badminton England, it works in partnership with bodies such as the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) and various National Disability Sport Organizations (NDSOs) to develop badminton domestically for disabled people. Badminton England works also with the Badminton World Federation (BWF) and Badminton Europe Confederation to help support the development of badminton for disabled people internationally. (Badminton England, Disability Strategy 2012) That kind of cooperation is vital also for Para-badminton in Finland. Finnish Badminton Federation can help financially as well as in grass root level in the sport clubs but VAU is the right partner to cooperate with for example by disability education for sport clubs.

According to Pöysti (personal communication 11.9.2012) VAU can help with communicational and educational means and it takes general responsibility of the grass root level disability sport. That also helps Para-badminton as Badminton Federation with Para-badminton group can introduce their sport in the events of VAU. Together with both able-bodied and disability organizations, effective work in sport club level is easier to reach and Para-badminton World Council by its integration with Badminton World Federation is demonstrating a good example. Hopefully that starts plenty of lower level integration worldwide.

As stated earlier in the research, reasons for varying results of integration processes were extremely complex (e.g. personal power interests) but at the same time shared many common factors. Because of that, many of those reasons were left uncovered and therefore there is still a lot of ground to be covered and a huge potential for more research. The biggest areas and maybe the most important ones to investigate are economic factors of disabled sport and differences in media representation. It could be worth paying more attention to the big gap in support programs between Paralympic sport and non-Paralympic disabled sport because at the moment disabled athletes whose sport is not represented in Paralympic level yet, has to suffer from unequal financial support and operative assistance.

This study clarified few the most important aspects of the current state of para-badminton and its developing projects across the Europe. Para-badminton is however in the middle of the changing phase, especially in Finland and therefore it is difficult to present already tested arguments of the integration models that are working and efficient. Within this research I can only give some proposals and recommendations based on the current situation and only estimate the future aspects. If I could do something differently for this study I would definitely pay more in depth attention to the influence of attitudes and perceptions of different parties in para-badminton integration processes and how much those factors actually affect to the processes.

REFERENCES

- Badminton England, *Disability Strategy: The strategic vision for badminton in England for disabled people*. 2012
- Badminton World Federation, Retrieved June 10, 2012 from World Wide Web: www.bwfbadminton.org.
- Barbour, R. (2008). *Introducing qualitative research. A Student's Guide to the Craft of Doing Qualitative Research*. London, SAGE Publications.
- Brasile, F.M. (1990). *Wheelchair Sports: A New perspective on Integration*. Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly, 1990, 7, 3-11
- Coakley, J. (2009). *Sports in Society: Issues and Controversies*. (10 rev Ed), London: MCGraw-Hill Education.
- DePauw, K.P. (2005). *Disability Sport*. Encyclopedia of World Sport 2005, 2, 460-464. Berkshire. Retrieved November 10, 2007.
- DePauw, K. P. (1988). *Sport for Individuals with Disabilities; Research Opportunities*. Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly, 5 (2), 80-90. Retrieved November 12, 2007.
- DePoy, E. & Gitlin, L.N. (1998). *Introduction to Research; Understanding and Applying Multiple Strategies*. (2nd ed). Mosby
- Eskola, J. & Suoranta, J. (1998). *Johdatus laadulliseen tutkimukseen*. (2nd ed). Jyväskylä: Vastapaino.
- European Paralympic Committee. *White paper on sport in Europe: Contribution from the European Paralympic Committee*. Retrieved November 12, 2007, from <http://www.europaralympic.org/documentos/>
- Finnish Badminton Federation, Retrieved June 12, 2012 from the World Wide Web: www.sulkapallo.fi
- Finnish Paralympic Committee, Syke 1/2012 (2012a). "Pääkirjoitus: Vammaisyleisurheilu osana huippu-urheilua. Mika Kojonkoski", Retrieved February 24, 2012 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.paralympia.fi/index.php?id=370>

- Finnish Paralympic Committee, Syke 1/2012 (2012b). “23 Vammaisurheilijaa sai urheilija-apurahan”. Retrieved February 24, 2012 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.paralympia.fi/index.php?id=370>
- Finnish Paralympic Committee, Syke 2/2011 (2011). “Suomi meets Norja toi antoisia keskusteluja”. Retrieved February 24, 2012 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.paralympia.fi/index.php?id=306>
- Finnish Paralympic Committee, Syke 4/2011 (2011). “Pääkirjoitus: Olympiadi integraatiota yleisurheilussa”. Retrieved February 24, 2012 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.paralympia.fi/index.php?id=319>
- Finnish Paralympic Committee, Syke 5/2011 (2011). “Media toivoo tarinoita ja ennakkoinfoa”. Retrieved February 24, 2012 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.paralympia.fi/index.php?id=340>
- Finnish Paralympic Committee (2010). *Information about the Committee*. Retrieved December 2, 2010, from the World Wide Web: www.paralympia.fi.
- Finnish Sport Association of Persons with Disabilities, Retrieved June 12, 2012 from World Wide Web: www.vammaisurheilu.fi
- Fitzgerald, H. (Ed.) (2009) *Disability and Youth Sport; International Studies in Physical Education and Youth Sport*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Gibson, W. & Brown, A. (2009). *Working with qualitative data*. CA: Thousand Oaks.
- Greenwood, D. (Ed.). (1999). *Action Research*. Philadelphia: John Benjamin Publishing Company.
- Hardin, B. & Hardin, M. (2003). *Conformity and Conflict; Wheelchair Athletes Discuss Sport Media*. *Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly*, 20 (3), 246-260.
- Hirsjärvi, S. & Hurme, H. (2001). *Tutkimushaastattelu, Teemahaastattelun teoria ja käytäntö*. Helsinki: Yliopistopaino.
- Honkavaara, M. (1997). *Short term effects of riding therapy on gait in children with cerebral palsy*. Master's Thesis. University of Jyväskylä. Jyväskylä
- Houlihan, B. (Ed.). (2003). *Sport and society: a student introduction*. London: Sage Publications Thousand Oaks

Hums, M., A, Moorman, A., M.& Wolff, E., A. (2003). *The Inclusion of Paralympics into Olympic and Amateur Sports Act: Legal and Policy Implications for Integration of Athletes with Disabilities into the United States Olympic Committee and National Governing Bodies*. Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 27, 261.

International Paralympic Committee, Retrieved July 6, 2012 from World Wide Web:
<http://www.paralympic.org>

Juntunen, R. & Mustonen, K. (2012). *Integration in Finland: Finnish Integration and Inclusion: Two perspectives*. Suomi meets Norja; Disability sport, from integration to inclusion Helsinki 15.-16.3.2011. Retrieved February 24, 2012 (2012) from the World Wide Web, <http://www.paralympia.fi/index.php?id=370>

Kummu, L. (2006). *Kummajaisesta huippu-urheilijaksi ; Suomen vammaisurheilun historia 1960-2000*. Master's Thesis. University of Jyväskylä.

Kumpulainen, S. (1997). *Integraation Yläasteella: Liikuntavammaisen oppilas yleisopetuksessa*. Master's Thesis. University of Jyväskylä.

Lancaster, G. & Massingham, L. (1999). *Essentials of Marketing*. (3rd Ed.). London: McGraw-Hill.

McNamee, M. (Ed.). (2010). *The Ethics of Sports. A reader*. Oxon: Routledge.

McNiff, J. & Whitehead, J. (2000). *Action Research in Organisations*. New York: Routledge.

McPherson, B.,D., Curtis, J., E., Loy, J., W. (Ed.). (1989). *The Social Significance of Sport; an Introduction to the Sociology of Sport*. Champaign: Human Kinetics

Nixon, H., L. II. (2007). *Constructing Diverse Sports Opportunities for People with Disabilities*. Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 31(4) 417-433.

Nixon, H., L. II. (1989). *Integration of Disabled People in Mainstream Sports: Case study of partially Sighted Child*. Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly, 6, 17-31.

Ollqvist, P. (2001). *Integraatio ja opettajat: Peruskoulun opettajien käsityksiä erityisoppilaiden sijoittamisesta yleisopetukseen*. Master's Thesis. University of Jyväskylä.

- Parabadminton World Council, "About us", Retrieved March 29, 2012 from World Wide Web:
http://www.parabadminton.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=45&Itemid=34
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. (3rd Ed). London: Sage, Thousand Oaks.
- Riordan, J. (ed.), (1999). *International politics of Sport in the 20th century*. London: Spon Press.
- Robson, C. (2007). *How to do a Research project: A Guide for Undergraduate Students*. Oxford : Blackwell publishing Ltd.
- Saari, A. (2011a). *Inklusion nosteet ja esteet liikuntakulttuurissa: Tavoitteena kaikille avoin liikunnallinen iltapäivätoiminta*. Jyväskylän Yliopiston kirjasto.
- Saari, A. (2011b). *Promoters and Hindrances of Open-For-All Sport and Physical Activity. Phase Report of Finnish Sports Federations*. Finnish Sports Association of People with disabilities.
- Salmons, J. (2010). *Online Interviews in Real Time*. California : SAGE Publications.
- Shapiro, D.,R. & Martin, J., J. (2010). *Multidimensional physical self-concept of athletes with physical disabilities*. *Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly*, 27, 294-307.
- Shapiro, D., R., Pitts, B., G., Hums, M., A. & Calloway, J. (2012). *Infusing Disability Sport into the Sport Management Curriculum*, *Sport Management International Journal*, 8 (1), 102-118.
- Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing Qualitative Research: A Paractical Handbook*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Somekh, B. (2005). *Action Research: A Methodology for Change and Development*, Berkshire: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Sorensen, M. & Kahrs, N. (2006). *Integration of Disability Sport in Norwegian Sport Organizations: Lessons Learned*. *Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly*, 23, 184-202.
- Suomen Invalidien Urheiluliitto. (1996) *Vammaisliikunnan Perusteet*, SIU, Helsinki

Syrjälä, L., Ahonen, S., Syrjäläinen, E. & Saari, S. (1994). *Laadullisen Tutkimuksen Työtapoja*, Rauma: Kirjayhtymä.

Tuomi, J. & Sarajärvi, A. (2002). *Laadullinen tutkimus ja sisällönanalyysi*. Helsinki: Tammi

Vammaissulkapallo (2012). Retrieved April 10, 2012 from Worldwide Web:
<http://www.vammaissulkapallo.fi>

World Health Organization (2012). Retrieved July 11, 2012 from Worldwide Web:
http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/report/en/

Personal communications:Interviews:

Juhani Pippuri 21.4.2012

Jyry Loukiainen 21.4.2012

Kauko Oksanen 21.4.2012

Kimmo Sirviö 21.4.2012

Olli Pulkkinen 2.5.2012

Questionnaires:

Pekka Sarasjärvi – Fysio ja Valmennus Sarasjärvi Oy- 15.8.2012

Harri Lindblom –Badminton Coordinator, VAU – 3.5.2012

Walter Joren – Belgian Badminton Federation – 29.4.2012

Tom Webster – Badminton England -30.4.2012

Alexander Bird - Badminton Scotland -19.4.2012

Sonja Häslar – Para-badminton player, Switzerland – 21.4.2012

Günter Klützke – Fachbereich Badminton im Deutscher Rollstuhlsportverband -
9.8.2012

Hannele Pöysti- Sector Manager, VAU-11.9.2012

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. An Example of questionnaire for European Para-badminton federation

Towards more professional way: Co-operation and integration between disabled and able-bodied federations

Case study Para-badminton and Finnish Badminton Federation
Comparison between Finland and other countries:

QUESTIONS:

Theme 1: Current situation

- 1) What is the current situation of disabled sport and especially Para-badminton in your country?
- 2) What is approximate number of Para-badminton players in your country?
- 3) Is Para-badminton separate organization or does it belongs under some other organization?
- 4) Is there co-operation with some other organizations?
 - If yes, in what extent and how it works in practice?
 - If no, what are the main reasons/actors that prevent the possible co-operation?
- 5) How Para-badminton is financed in your country? (Government funding, national organizations etc.)
- 6) Does Para-badminton and badminton have events or training camps together? If yes, how does it work in practice?

Theme 2: Future

- 7) Is there need for co-operation with National Badminton Federation or some other organization? Why and what kind of co-operation?
- 8) In your opinion, how Para-badminton should be developed in your country?
- 9) Are there any plans for the future development?

Appendix 2. An Example of questionnaire for disabled sport Sport managers in Finland

Towards more professional way: Co-operation and integration between disabled and able-bodied federations

Case study of Para-badminton in Finland &
Comparison between Finland and other countries

Teema 2: Nykytilanne

- 1) Mikä on taustasi sulkapallon parissa?
- 2) Millainen on mielestäsi sulkapallon tilanne Suomessa?
- 3) Millainen on mielestäsi vammaissulkapallon tilanne Suomessa?
- 4) Mistä Suomen Sulkapalloliitto saa rahoituksensa? Yhteistyökumppanit, avustukset, sponsorit?
- 5) Onko vammaissulkapallolla ja Suomen Sulkapalloliitolla yhteistyötä keskenään? Jos on, miten se toimii käytännössä?
- 6) Millainen on mielestäsi seurojen rooli vammaissulkapallossa? Onko se riittävä ja miten se toimii käytännössä?

Teema 2: Tulevaisuus

- 7) Onko Vammaissulkapallon integroituminen Suomen Sulkapalloliittoon tulevaisuudessa mielestäsi mahdollista?
- 8) Mitä muutoksia/toimenpiteitä vammaissulkapallon integroituminen Sulkapalloliittoon vaatisi Sulkapalloliitolta? Mitä muutoksia/toimenpiteitä se vaatisi Vammaissulkapallolta?
- 9) Millaisia tulevaisuudensuunnitelmia Suomen Sulkapalloliitolla on tuleville vuosille?
- 10) Miten vammaissulkapalloa mielestäsi voisi kehittää Suomessa?
- 11) Mitä muuta haluaisit tuoda esille?

Nimi:

Organisaatio:

Toimenkuva: