

Review paper

SPORT, DISABILITY, AND WOMEN: A STUDY OF ORGANISED SWEDISH DISABILITY SPORT IN 1969-2012

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Abstract

Introduction. The purpose of this article is first to provide a picture of disability sport in general and second to increase knowledge of sport for women with disabilities. **Material and methods.** The study method is a qualitative text analysis of organised Swedish disability sport and of media reporting of the Paralympics. The study begins in 1969, the year when the Swedish Sports Organization for the Disabled (SHIF) was formed, and continues until the Summer Paralympics in 2012. The theory is based on three conceptual pairs: integration and inclusion, the medical and social models, and the traditional and progressive models of media coverage. **Results.** The results show that SHIF strove principally not for inclusion but for integration. Further, women in SHIF led a hidden existence, except for the period between the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, when initiatives were taken to improve their position. In other respects, this was a non-issue. Moreover, the medical model was dominant, and sport was viewed above all as rehabilitating. Finally, mainstream media reporting was traditional, namely Paralympic participants were portrayed first and foremost as people with disabilities and secondarily as sports practitioners. **Conclusion.** Swedish disability sport during this period was not included in the sports movement in general and integration work was, for the SHIF board, superordinate to the gender aspect.

Key words: disability sport, women, integration, inclusion, medical and social model, media