Running for democratization

A study of how sports contribute to human rights achievements for refugees in Sweden

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Abstract

In 2015 Sweden received a vast increase of asylum seekers and the prolonged waiting times since then could create stress and risks to cause a troublesome integration for the refugees. Moreover, previous research show how refugees are at risk of denials of civil, political, economic and social rights. Discrimination on account of gender, religion or race could cause exploitation and abuse, making them extremely vulnerable and marginalized. A more and more popular method to promote peace, justice and tolerance is to use sports. However, there is a research gap on the relationship between sports and human rights achievements. This study aims to examine the relationship between sporting activities and human rights achievements in Sweden and to understand how becoming a part of the civil society through sports, is able to help vulnerable people, such as refugees, achieve their rights. Theories connecting social development, democracy and human rights are used to explain how sporting activities could lead to democratic human rights achievements. It is concluded that sports do contribute to human rights achievements by letting people being a part of the civil society, creating social capital, teaching norms and values, and creating trust and solidarity. However, social and economic barriers, as well as racism, needs to be defeated.

Keywords:

Democracy, Sports and human rights, Refugees’ human rights, Social capital, Civil society
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To the members of the associations in this study- keep believing in yourselves, “obstacles don’t have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don’t turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it.” – Michael Jordan

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“Sport has the power to unite people in a way little else can. Sport can create hope where there was once only despair. It breaks down racial barriers. It laughs in the face of discrimination. Sport speaks to people in a language they can understand.”

- Nelson Mandela

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1. Introduction

2015 was the year when several countries across Europe, including Sweden, received an enormous increase of asylum seekers. During 2015 roughly 162,800 people applied for asylum in Sweden, and approximately 34,000 people were approved. Of all the asylum seekers more than 70,300 where children, half of them unaccompanied.

Since then, the number of asylum seekers per year has gone down significantly. However, the war in Syria, the country of which 54% of the refugees who were granted protection status in 2015 originated from, is still continuing (along with several other humanitarian crises across the world) with a not so positive outlook for the near future.

Since the fall of 2015 the time of the procedure for asylum cases has increased in all European countries. The extended times of waiting together with not knowing what will happen next, creates stress and risks to cause an even more troublesome integration. There is also research pointing to that temporary residence permits could lead to a greater insecurity and complicate long-term integration efforts. Refugees are for example, compared to other immigrants across Europe, seen to have greater difficulties to receive a job in their “new country”. The asylum process also includes limited access to health care, education, housing, work and social development.

Due to the asylum process, but also language difficulties and cultural differences, refugees often feel isolated. They are in highly abnormal and unsafe situations without a social network which could lead to misunderstandings, dissatisfaction and discrimination.

Ideas of how to work with these issues are many. One approach, which both the United Nations (UN) system, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governments, armed forces

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3 Eurostat, *Asylum decisions in the EU EU Member States granted protection to more than 330 000 asylum seekers in 2015 Half of the beneficiaries were Syrians*, 20 April 2016, p. 3
4 *Migrationsinfo.se*
5 Ibid
6 *Eurostat, 2016*
8 Ibid, p. 8
9 Ibid, p. 7
10 *Socialstyrelsen, Psykisk ohälsa hos asylsökande och nyanlända migranter. Ett kunskapsunderlag för primärvården*, 2015, p. 8
11 Ibid
and development agencies, have started to use is sports as a tool to strengthen social networks and to promote peace, justice, tolerance and non-violence.\textsuperscript{12}

Marginalized groups and populations have increasingly begun to raise their voices and claim their human rights through the use of sports. The right to participate in sports, as well as the achievement of human rights through sports, can come together in different campaigns by different classes of people.\textsuperscript{13} Peter Donnelly says there is one major example of a campaign where sports is widely acknowledged to have been involved in human rights achievements, namely the campaign against apartheid in South Africa.\textsuperscript{14} However, he means there is a need of much more systematic evidence of the circumstances under which opportunities to participate in sports could affect motivation and learning skills to gain success in the struggle for human rights for different classes of persons.\textsuperscript{15}

This leads to the question of sports on a smaller scale in the Swedish society. What are the circumstances under which participation in Swedish sports associations affect motivation and learning skills? Could sports be used as a tool for achievements of human rights for marginalized, vulnerable groups, such as refugees, on a smaller, individual scale?

1.1 The problem

It has been proven that refugees suffer from psychological problems while both waiting for the asylum process to proceed, as well as afterwards when integration in the society is stalling. Refugees is a marginalized group of people which too often end up at the edge of society and may experience difficulties to exercise their democratic rights.

Previous research has also shown a strong connection between the use of sports and development, as well as how sports is a great activity for integration in the civil society. However, there is a gap in the research concerning if and how sports can contribute to democratic human rights achievements. There is a need of more research regarding how the connection between sports and human rights take place.

This paper will make an empirical contribution to the existing research regarding development and integration through sporting activities. Further, it will fill the existing gap by using

\textsuperscript{12} United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace [UNOSPD], Why Sport?/Overview, 2014(a), <https://www.un.org/sport/content/why-sport/overview>, accessed 20 February 2018
\textsuperscript{13} Donnelly, 2008, p. 387
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid, p. 386
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid, p. 391
development theories to explain the relationship between sporting activities and human rights in a liberal democracy.

1.2 Research questions

The main research question that will be answered is: how do sporting activities help refugees in Sweden achieve their human rights?

To be able to answer the main question, the study first needs to answer two sub questions, which reads; in what way are team leaders in Swedish sport associations working to assist refugees? and; how could the efforts of team leaders in Sweden lead to human rights achievements for refugees?

To answer the questions a qualitative research design is chosen and interviews have been carried out with team leaders of Swedish sport associations that are including refugees in their teams, as well as a representative from the Swedish Sports Confederation. This will be explained more in section 4.

1.3 Aim of the study

This study aims to examine the relationship between sporting activities and human rights achievements in Sweden and to understand how becoming a part of the civil society through sports, is able to help vulnerable people achieve their rights. The purpose includes to support existing research, as well as to provide new contributions, concerning refugees and their integration in civil society as well as human rights achievements through the help of sporting activities.

1.4 Disposition

Chapter one of this study contains an introduction and background to the subject of refugees’ integration and how sports have started to have a greater impact on development. Chapter one also establishes the research problem, the aim of the study, as well as the research questions that will be answered. Chapter two continues to first provide background material to the ongoing work on how to use sports for global development. Next the chapter gives an overall picture of the previous research on the vulnerability of refugees, the field of sports as a development tool and the connection to human rights, to demonstrate the relevance of this paper. Chapter three explains the theoretical framework which the study is based on and defines
The fourth chapter addresses the methods used to collect both primary and secondary material, as well as the reliability and validity of the paper. The paper then continues, in chapter five, to present the results and analysis of the collected empirical material. The sixth chapter concludes the paper with a discussion of the analysis, answers the research questions and provides recommendations for further research. You will find the reference list in the last chapter, and as an appendix the interview guide is included.

2. Background

During the past years the segregation and social gaps in Sweden have increased. The number of people that during a very short period of time has come to Sweden have made the Swedish social system facing new challenges and opportunities. Challenges in the form of giving these people somewhere to live, to quickly learn the language and to become a part of the Swedish civil society, and possibilities in the form of more labor and people who in other ways could contribute to the creation of a better country.

To decrease the segregation the government wants to enable an increase of activities in social vulnerable areas. The Swedish government see sports as so much more than just a recreational hobby or pastime, it creates a sense of community and builds bridges in our society. Few actors in the society have as low thresholds to activity as sports. Often, no special previous knowledge is needed and it makes no demands except for a few common rules and to be a good friend.

But the Swedish government is not the only one noticing the positive possibilities that sports can create. The UN is behind the idea of using sporting activities to confront both development and humanitarian questions. Defined by the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, sports in a development context includes “all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organized or competitive sport, and indigenous sports and games”. The United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) explains how sports

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18 Regeringskansliet, 2017
19 Regeringskansliet, 2016
20 UNOSPD, 2014a
has been more and more recognized and used as a low-cost but high-impact tool within development, humanitarian and peace-building challenges. Sports should no longer be considered a luxurious activity, but rather an important investment, especially in developing countries. It plays a significant role as a promoter of economic development and social integration in all kind of cultural and political contexts.\textsuperscript{21}

Sports has also proven to have played a vital role in enhancing each of the eight Millennium Development Goals according to UNOSDP\textsuperscript{,22} which is why in the Declaration of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Agenda 2030), the role of sports for social progress is recognized further. It is stated that the growing contribution of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect influence the empowerment of women, children and communities, as well as social inclusion and education.\textsuperscript{23} The UN envisions sports to tackle challenges in each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Four of these goals are emphasized in this study and has a clear connection to democratic human rights; goal 4, “Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning”; goal 3, “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”; goal 5, “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”; and goal 10, “Reduce inequality within and among countries”\textsuperscript{24}

\textbf{2.1 Previous research}

\textbf{2.1.1 Vulnerability of refugees}

Along migration paths, human rights violations multiply for victims such as women, children, and even entire families. They are exposed to, among many other violations, robbery, extortion, rape, murder, sexual exploitation, social exclusion and insecurity. The place for human rights of migrants and refugees is marginal, despite the serious situation\textsuperscript{25}

Refugees leaving their homes to seek refuge in another state are often at risk at denials of civil, political, economic, and social rights, making them extremely vulnerable. Discrimination on

\textsuperscript{21} UNOSPD, 2014a


\textsuperscript{23} Ibid

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid

account of gender, religion, ethnicity or race could cause exploitation and abuse. According to Gil Loescher, since people who are persecuted and deprived of their homes and means of livelihood are forced to flee across borders to seek safety, refugees are prima facie evidence of human rights abuses and vulnerability. Migrants and refugees are not only subject to substantial risks and danger, but also to permanent exposure to precariousness and exclusion in the country they arrive to. Moreover, they are often subjected to criminalization and racist and discriminatory policies and practices that leaves them marginalized and vulnerable, which endangers their lives.

Refugees kept in refugee camps in countries often close to the country from which they fled, are exposed to a trend called “warehousing”. A prolonged encampment of refugees leads to a number of rights being violated, including freedom of movement and the right to wage-earning employment. This in turn leads to deprivation of the freedom to pursue normal lives and to integrate and become members of their new society. The people facing such restrictions become dependent on subsistence-level assistance and consequently lives in poverty and unrealized potential. This is a discussion that could also be argued in western societies where refugees might not be put in closed camps, but still have trouble integrating in the society and lead a life in poverty and exclusion.

2.1.2 Positive effects from physical activities

Through sports one gets the chance to feel solidarity, develop new acquaintances, and to create social norms and attitudes. But except from the social benefits, there are also many health benefits coming from physical activity. In a sporting context ‘health’ can be defined as subjective (such as feeling good), biological (for example to not be ill), functional (to be able to perform), and social (for example to be able to cooperate).

In a report compiled of research on physical activity and social benefits, the Swedish Sports Confederation states that sports are able to lead to many positive effects such as psychosocial

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28 Wise, Covarrubias, Puentes, 2013, p. 435
29 Loescher, 2013, p. 219
30 Faskunger, J, Sjöblom, P (red), Idrottens samhällsnytta: En vetenskaplig översikt av idrottsrörelsens mervärden för individ och samhälle, FoU-rapport 2017, Riksidrottsförbundet, 2017, p. 27
31 Ibid, p. 28
development for both young and old, personal development, a postponed alcohol debut and less alcohol consumption, and more knowledge concerning diet, training and health.\textsuperscript{32} There is also strong scientific evidence that physical activity is associated with a good physical and mental health. It, for example, leads to decreased sleep disorders and reduced concern, depression and stress,\textsuperscript{33} as well as improves the quality of life and strengthens self-esteem and social competence.\textsuperscript{34}

Anders Hansen, chief physician in psychiatry at Sophiahemmet in Stockholm, argues that in times like these where we are exposed to stress in many ways, both in school and the workplace, physical activity is extremely important to increase our tolerance towards stress symptoms.\textsuperscript{35}

Hansen explain that the hormone cortisol is released through physical activity and regulates the activity of the body’s stress system. By being physically active you are teaching your body to not react so strongly to stress.\textsuperscript{36}

The Swedish Sports Confederation points to research to give physiological explanations on the relationship between mental health and physical activity, which indicate an increased brain volume and greater perfusion, as well as reduced inflammation in parts of the brain. More specifically, increased release of growth factors, endorphins and signal molecules linked to physical activity, are contributing factors to improved mental health and capacity.\textsuperscript{37} Hansen mentions the protein BDNF, which the brain increases the production of, which stimulates increased nerve cell survival. The protein is important for one’s memory and learning, and recovery from depression, stress and anxiety.\textsuperscript{38} He affirms that physical activity is by far the best way to help the brain to produce BDNF.\textsuperscript{39}

2.1.3 Human rights, development and sports

The Declaration on the Right to Development was adopted in 1986 and defines development as a “human-centered process” that leads to the realization of human rights.\textsuperscript{40} Sakiko Fukuda-Parr

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid, p. 21
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid, p. 23
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid, p. 27
\textsuperscript{35} Fagerström, N, Motion är till stor nytta för din hjärna - förbättrar minnet och stresstålighet, Svenska Yle [online journal], 20 August 2017, \url{https://svenska.yle.fi/artikel/2017/08/19/motion-ar-till-stor-nytta-for-din-hjarna-forbatrar-minnet-och-stresstalighet}, accessed 1 May 2018
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid
\textsuperscript{37} Faskunger and Sjöblom, 2017, p. 27
\textsuperscript{38} Fagerström, 2017
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid
\textsuperscript{40} Fukuda-Parr, 2013, p. 164
defines rights to development as a right to a particular process of development that is people-centered and requires meaningful, active and free participation; fair distribution of benefits; non-discrimination; respect for self-discrimination and sovereignty over natural resources; and a process that will improve other human rights.41

Article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948 shows that development and social progress are indispensable for the realization of human rights, according to Brigitte Hamm.42 Hamm states that the preconditions of the realization of human rights are adequate political and socio-economic conditions, which imply that the relationship between development and human rights is beyond question.43 She also suggests that the chances for a continuance of a human rights approach to development, cross-sectoral perspective for problem solving, where both development policy and human rights are freed from bloc thinking, is desired.44 One example of this was the strengthening of women’s rights where the repercussion is on the strengthening of the economic and social rights due to women’s rights only could be promoted by the participation of women in the development process and the improvement of the socio-economic position.45

Fukuda-Parr continues to link development and human rights by stating that poorer people from politically marginalized communities are often vulnerable due to no guarantee of their human rights. He claims that in these ways human rights and development are intrinsically connected.46 The central point in linking the two phenomena, is that development is in fact a process that could help fulfil human rights, even if only certain types of development has the possibility to do so. But the struggle for human rights must for that reason also include a struggle for a process of development, which is positive for the promotion of human rights.47

Then how could sports be connected to these phenomena? Donnelly lists three ways in which human rights are achieved in and through sports: the right to participate in sports; the possibility that human rights may be achieved with assistance from sports; and a combination of the two where the use of sports achieve rights for specific classes of persons.48 However, according to

41 Fukuda-Parr, 2013, p. 165
43 Ibid
44 Ibid, p. 4
46 Fukuda-Parr, 2013, p. 163
48 Donnelly, 2008, p. 384
Donnelly there are very few examples of human rights campaigns where sport was acknowledged to have been involved in its achievements.\textsuperscript{49} Instead there are more evidence of sports and its relationship to development.

Douglas Hartmann and Christina Kwauk have found both challenges and positive results concerning sport and development, where one of the challenges is how ‘development’ should be conceptualized. It can mean many things to many people, it can refer to philosophical ideas such as the progress of humankind, or practical such as the social engineering of evolving nations.\textsuperscript{50} They believe that the diverse and vague conceptions of development is one of the most important challenges for understanding and theorizing the sport and development field. Different conceptions of development have often led to miscommunications and misunderstandings regarding sport-based initiatives.\textsuperscript{51} But Hartmann and Kwauk also argues for the positive effects sports could bring. By bridging and bonding communities, sport opens access to resources, information, social networks and economic opportunities that marginalized groups and individuals used to be separated from.\textsuperscript{52}

MacIntosh, Couture and Spence agrees by stating that sport, as an international language, creates bridges between people, helps to overcome cultural differences and spreads an ambiance of tolerance.\textsuperscript{53} They also quote the International Olympic Committee by stating:

\begin{quote}
"Beneficial effects of sport for development are still not exploited to their full extent […] sport can help bridge cultural and ethnic divides, create jobs and businesses, promote tolerance and non-discrimination, reinforce social integration, and advocate for healthy lifestyles”\textsuperscript{54}
\end{quote}

Sports could also assist in development as a part of the civil society. As the Lisbon Treaty of the European Union were introduced in 2009, the role of civil society in shaping Europe received much greater recognition. The treaty was inspired by a great need for a stronger voice

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid, p. 386
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid, p. 288
\textsuperscript{53} MacIntosh, E, Couture, A L, Spence, K, Management challenges in delivering an international sport and development program, \textit{Sport, Business and Management: An International Journal}, Vol. 5, No. 3, 2015, pp. 276-296, p. 277
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid
and influence for citizens.\textsuperscript{55} As shown in examples from history, as well as today, one of the pillars of the house of democracy is a strong civil society.\textsuperscript{56}

\textbf{2.1.4 Summary of previous research}

The previous research clearly identifies refugees as a vulnerable group with troubles knowing and achieving their rights, and also shows the positive effects sports could bring to vulnerable people. Moreover, it points to there being a connection between sports and development, as well as development and human rights. However, except for the three ways Donnelly believes sports could be connected to human rights, there is a research gap on the relationship and how sports could help vulnerable people in achieving their rights. This study starts out in that gap with the aim of filling it by using development theories and looking at the vulnerable group of refugees.

\textbf{3. Theoretical framework}

To guide this study, the theoretical framework consists of theories which demonstrates the connection between social development, democracy and human rights. The first element of the framework is a theory of civil society and social capital. This section will help the study to understand how the work of associations could develop both complete societies as well as individuals, and how this is the basis of democracy. The second element is a revised modernization theory, which focus on the connection between socioeconomic development, self-expression and democracy. It can be seen as the next step in the move towards democracy and equal enjoyment of human rights, after a civil society and social capital is achieved. Throughout the study, the two theories are used closely together to receive a full understanding of the relationship between sports and human rights.

Since this study aims to examine the democratic human rights, a third part will demonstrate how this study defines the term ‘democracy’ and what human rights that could count as democratic rights. The section is a complement to the theories presented and presents democracy’s link to human rights. From this section, the four clusters of fundamental human rights are taken and used as guidance of the human rights that might be achieved through the use of sports.

\textsuperscript{55} Von Sydow, E, \textit{Civil society and democracy: The citizens’ shortcut to the EU}, European Economic and Social Committee, 2013, p. 4

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid, p. 7
The last section of the theoretical framework describes the three ways in which human rights might be achieved through a connection to sports. These three categories are used to analyze in which ways the empirical material could be seen as achieving human rights, and to structure section 5 of the paper.

The theories of section 3.1 and 3.2 were established aimed at institutions or societies which are not yet democratized, however this study will use them as an analysis tool for individual development of one’s own human rights and democratic enjoyment. A “democratization” of the person himself and his closest surroundings.

3.1 Civil society theory and social capital

Civil society theory validates the primacy of civil society over economic and political spheres. It is not just a theory of civil society, but a theory that privileges civil society and raises it as a special domain.  

Robert D. Putnam argues that a solid network of secondary associations both embodies and contributes to effective social collaboration. A civil society, which he calls the basis of democracy, includes the values of participation, political equality, trust, tolerance and solidarity. The concept of civil society has played a central role in recent global debates concerning preconditions for democracy and democratization, both for newer and already established democracies. His theory asserts that civic context is essential for the way institutions work. A given socio-cultural context, rooted in a historical causality, will explain institutional performance. It is argued that the effectiveness and stability of democratic government is affected by civil associations, both of their external effects on the wider polity, but also due to their internal effects on individual members. Associations introduce to their members the behaviors of cooperation, solidarity and public-spiritedness. Putnam points to evidence where members of associations display more political sophistication and participation, social trust, and subjective civic competence. When individuals belong to cross-cutting groups

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including diverse members with different goals, their attitudes tend to moderate as a result of group interaction.\textsuperscript{61}

Putnam emphasizes the importance of “social capital”, which refers to networks, norms, trust, or other features of social organization that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit.\textsuperscript{62} Stocks of social capital tend to be both self-reinforcing and cumulative.\textsuperscript{63} “Trust lubricates social life”, he states, and means that a society which relies on generalized reciprocity is more efficient than that of a distrustful society. Networks of civic engagement would foster strong norms of a generalized reciprocity, but also facilitate coordination and communication, and thus strengthen information about the trustworthiness of other individuals.\textsuperscript{64} Citizens of a region with high civic engagements are found to be happy and satisfied with life.\textsuperscript{65} On the contrary, citizens of less civic regions often feel powerless, alienated and exploited.\textsuperscript{66}

Social capital is a public good, often a by-product of other social activities. It typically consists in ties, norms, and trust, transferable between different social settings. Members of a social organization, for example a choir society, participate since they like to sing, and not because their participation strengthens the social community structure. Only that in the end, it does.\textsuperscript{67}

While Putnam does not mention any specific social activities that could lead to a strong social capital, this paper count sports associations to include the values of participation, political equality, trust, tolerance and solidarity. Hence, it is included as a part of the civil society and could lead to an increase in social capital.

3.2 A revised theory of modernization

While the civil society has an impact on democracy and democratization, there might be a need of individual development to reach full enjoyment of one’s rights. Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel offers a theory which will help people to use their social capital and be a part of the civil society through their autonomous choices. They provide a revised modernization

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{63} Ibid
\bibitem{64} Ibid
\bibitem{65} Putnam, Leonardi, Nanetti, 1994, p. 113
\bibitem{66} Ibid, p. 109
\bibitem{67} Putnam, 1993
\end{thebibliography}
theory where human development is the integrating theme of a three-piece puzzle. The three pieces, rising self-expression, socioeconomic development, and effective democracy, the authors propose work closely together, providing the values, means, and rights which cause people to be able, willing, and entitled, to shape their lives according to their autonomous choices – more or less free from external constraints. This process establishes human development since the emphasis is on the most specific human ability, namely the ability to take action and decisions based on autonomous choices. Democracy provides civil and political rights, enabling freedom of choice in private and public actions to people. Human development is specifically linked with the liberal aspect of democracy that institutionalizes human choice.

Human development advances with the growth of the three pieces in Inglehart and Welzel’s puzzle, using a common focus on autonomous choice; number one, objective capabilities, that based on socioeconomic resources enable people to act consistent with their own choices; number two includes subjective motivations that are based on self-expression values, which will emphasize people to act according to their autonomous choices; and the third element is legal entitlements, which based on civil and political liberties entitles people to act consistent with their autonomous choices. The self-expression values can especially be connected to participating in sporting activities as people are able to express themselves through an activity, to possibly find an identity, and to act according to the person they are in a social environment.

Inglehart and Welzel asserts there is a powerful logic that links high levels of socioeconomic development with cultural changes that emphasize human autonomy, creativity and self-expression, and democratization. Any objective constraints on human autonomy, creativity, or choice, can be reduced by socioeconomic development in three ways; a reduction of poverty which reduces material constraints on human choice and encourage a sense of existential security; the levels of people’s formal education which provides a greater access to information; and the increase of occupational specialization and social complexity, which leads to

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69 Ibid, p. 47
70 Ibid, p. 149
71 Ibid, p. 152
72 Ibid, p. 21
diversifying human interactions and thus reduces social constraints on human choice and nurtures a sense of social independence.\textsuperscript{73}

Socioeconomic development opens up the understanding of people’s own possible actions, increasing the priority of self-expression values.\textsuperscript{74} In turn self-expression values motivate people to seek the civil and political rights that define liberal democracy.\textsuperscript{75} A rise in self-expression values puts an increasing pressure on institutions to provide freedom of choice, abolishing the legitimacy of authoritarian rule.\textsuperscript{76}

An increase in people’s sense of autonomy leads them to place a stronger emphasis on freedom of choice, which eventually would lead to a demand of civil and political liberties that constitute democracy. This even so if people so far have no experience with democracy at all.\textsuperscript{77}

This freedom of choice includes to be able to choose from social activities, such as sports, which in turn will lead to effective social collaboration and participation in a civil society of political equality, trust and solidarity.

\subsection*{3.3 Democracy as human rights}

Both Putnam and Inglehart and Welzel emphasizes democracy and democratization. Then, what does ‘democracy’ mean in the context of this paper?

The meaning of democracy has ever since the eighteenth century been evolving constantly and is still seen as an unfinished concept.\textsuperscript{78} The theory of Democracy as Human Rights (DHR) starts at the core democratic principles of freedom and equality and defines democracy as a political commitment to universal liberation through ensuring the equal enjoyment of fundamental human rights for everyone.\textsuperscript{79}

Fundamental human rights structure the substantive core of DHR\textsuperscript{80} and can be grouped into four clusters of rights. Rights concerning \textit{fairness} entitle people to equal and fair treatment under the law in politics and society, including legal procedures and access to public benefits

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{73} Ibid, p. 24
  \item \textsuperscript{74} Ibid, p. 164
  \item \textsuperscript{75} Ibid, p. 152
  \item \textsuperscript{76} Ibid, p. 164
  \item \textsuperscript{77} Ibid, p. 164
  \item \textsuperscript{78} Goodhart, M, \textit{Democracy as Human Rights}, New York: Routledge, 2005, p. 163
  \item \textsuperscript{79} Ibid, p. 5
  \item \textsuperscript{80} Ibid, p. 141
\end{itemize}
and services.\textsuperscript{81} \textit{Liberty and security} related rights concern the integrity and physical safety of individuals, their freedom of movement, choice, and activity.\textsuperscript{82} Rights that are necessary for an \textit{adequate standard of living} concern the basic needs and living conditions of people, including food, shelter, education, affordable access to health care and a living wage.\textsuperscript{83} The last cluster, \textit{civil and political rights}, cover rights concerning the social and political activities of individuals. This includes freedom of assembly, conscience and expression, the right to choose one’s own lifestyle, as well as rights of access to, and participation in, government.\textsuperscript{84}

The extensions of democracy, in DHR, come about as liberation for all through the securing of fundamental human rights. According to Goodhart there is a close connection between securing fundamental human rights and demolishing structures of oppression. Democratization is the elimination of, and protection against, subjecting structures through extending the enjoyment of fundamental rights.\textsuperscript{85}

### 3.4 Sports and human rights

The three theories explained above have provided concepts on how democracy can be reached and what the democratic human rights actually involve. To strengthen the connection between human rights and sports, this paper uses Donnelly’s model of the three various ways in which human rights are achieved in, and through, sports.

The approaches are classified by Donnelly in three categories; the right to participate in sports; the possibility that human rights may be achieved with assistance from sports; and a combination of the two where the use of sports achieve rights for specific classes of persons.\textsuperscript{86}

The right to participate in sports is advocated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) through Article 24, “Everyone has the right to rest and leisure”,\textsuperscript{87} as well as Article 27 §1, “Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community”.\textsuperscript{88} Later in the 1970s European nations developed the European Sport for All Charter (1975/76), where Article 1 stated; “Every individual shall have the right to participate in sport”.\textsuperscript{89}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid, p. 143  \\
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid  \\
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid  \\
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid  \\
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid, p. 157  \\
\textsuperscript{86} Donnelly, 2008, p. 384  \\
\textsuperscript{87} Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UDHR] (1948), art 24  \\
\textsuperscript{88} UDHR, art 27 §1  \\
\textsuperscript{89} European Sport for All Charter (1975/76), art 1
\end{flushleft}
International Charter of Physical Education and Sport, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 1978, followed stating in Article 1; “The practice of physical education and sport is a fundamental right for all”.

The achievement of human rights through sport has only been proven in one major case, the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. The isolation of the pro-apartheid sports federations in the state by the international sport community produced a powerful message. In 1985 the United Nations Human Rights Commission established the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports (1985). As apartheid came to an end between 1989-1994, it was widely acknowledged that the bans on sporting contacts with South Africa had a significant role.

Sport and the human rights of specific classes of persons includes the right to participate in sports, and the achievement of human rights through sports. In terms of human rights, equity and sport participation, social class is the greatest barrier to participation. The higher the income, the higher the rate of participation. The second-class status of women was increasingly recognized during the twentieth century and became a focus, although a minor one, of the 1960s and 1970s second wave of feminism. The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) (CEDAW), endorses specifically in Article 10 the right of girls and women to participate in sports. Women’s participation has been assisted by gender equity campaigns and legislation in several countries, as well as lobby groups advocating for women’s rights in sports, pushing for patriarchal organizations, such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC), to handle gender equity issues in sports.

3.5 Summary of the theoretical framework

The theory of civil society and social capital by Putnam demonstrates how the civil society is the basis of democracy and how sport associations contribute to political participation, social trust and subjective civic competence. In addition, Inglehart and Welzel display the connection between democracy, socio-economic development and self-expression values. Sports as self-expression together with socio-economic development to be able to participate in associations,

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90 International Charter of Physical Education and Sport (1978), art 1  
91 Donnelly, 2008, p. 386  
92 Ibid, p. 387  
93 Ibid  
94 Ibid, p. 389  
95 Ibid, p. 387  
96 Donnelly, 2008, p. 387. See also Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), art 10  
97 Ibid, p. 388
are in a linear relationship with democratization. By connecting these theories with Donnelly’s categories of how human rights could be achieved through sports it is clearly shown that sports are a matter of democratization and does have direct bearing on human rights issues.

3.6 Key concept definitions

3.6.1 Refugee

The United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, adopted in 1951, defines a refugee as “someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion”.

A person is recognized as a refugee when there is a too big of a danger for them to return to their homes and they desperately are forced to cross borders to seek protection in another state. At the end of 2015 there was, according to UNHCR, 21.3 million refugees across the world.

3.6.2 Sports

The definition of sports that will be used for this study is collected from the Swedish Sports Confederation. They define sports as: “Physical activity that we perform in order to have fun, feel good and perform more. Sport consists of training and play, competition and display. The sport gives physical, mental, social and cultural development.” The term “sporting activities” hence refers to activities including a physical activity of training, play or competition.

4. Methodological discussion

For this case study, two types of data collection were used. One part of the empirical evidence was collected through semi-structured interviews and as a complement to those results, previous research and secondary sources are used to strengthen the arguments and the connection to the theoretical framework, to complete a thorough analysis.


100 Riksidrottsförbundet, RF:s Stadgar I lydelse efter RF-stämmans 2018, 2017, p. 2
The study and its empirical analysis is guided by theory, structured by a conceptual framework. A theory-guided case study research design was selected with the aim of explaining how refugees’ human rights can be achieved through civil society and social development.

A qualitative method is used as the material from interviews, as well as secondary data, is interpreted and compared. Due to the number of interviews performed, a quantitative result will not be relevant.

4.1 Collection of primary data

Due to the large number of refugees in Sweden, together with previous research presenting them as a socially vulnerable group, this research chose to focus on refugees living in Sweden. As sports is more and more recognized by large international actors in the development field, this was the chosen research context.

The field studies were conducted in two major cities in Sweden in April 2018, where three teams from sport associations and one non-profit organization focusing on two different team sports were interviewed. This way primary data could be collected through qualitative semi-structured interviews, to provide material that could fulfil the aim of the study.

The teams were selected by reason of their choice of target group. This way the research received a mix of gender, origin and type of sport. A total of seven interviews took place where two were players in a team. These two informants were selected randomly with the help of the team leader. Four team leaders were also interviewed, all whom had been with the team since the start and thus had great insight in aims and objectives of the teams. All of the informants, as well as the sport association they are a member of, are anonymous in the study and will not be introduced. In the analysis the informants are labelled with numbers from 1-4, making it possible to identify them in the study.

The last interview was conducted with a representative of the Swedish Sports Confederation, Lillemor Lindell. She was chosen due to her involvement in the project ‘Activity, Sport and Play for the Inclusion of Refugees in Europe’ (ASPIRE), a project by the European Non-Governmental Sports Organization (ENGSO). ASPIRE is an international collaborative project

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that seeks to find how to best support refugees and migrants through sports and other forms of physical activity. The main aim is to offer suitable participation opportunities for refugees in and through sports by providing training and coaching for organizers across Europe. The specific objectives of ASPIRE includes; increasing the knowledge and evidence-base of working with vulnerable people, especially refugees; supporting sport organizations with help of innovative educational approaches; enhancing intercultural dialogue between host communities and refugees; and to raise awareness of the value of sport in promoting social inclusion of refugees. Due to Lindell’s involvement in the ASPIRE project and knowledge of the sports movement in Sweden, she is an ideal source to this study.

Since the study needed several examples and hence a certain degree of structure to be able to make comparisons, the semi-structured method for the interviews was chosen. As a result of the chosen method the interview process was flexible and left room for new upcoming themes or matters of interest. Both follow-up and probing questions, as well as specifying and direct questions, were asked to receive a wide qualitative result. Due to the informants having different backgrounds and experience of associational life, the interviews required this form of flexibility.

Alternative methods such as focus group interviews or in-depth interviews were considered. However, due to difficulties in finding informants, and thus a limited amount of time, in-depth interviews were deselected. Focus groups may have resulted in a larger sample of respondents and saved time. Yet, in order for the informants to feel comfortable to speak about sensitive subjects concerning development and social integration, semi-structured interviews with each informant were selected as the best option.

All of the interviews were tape recorded which made it possible to have a fluent conversation without a focus on writing. The possibility to miss specific words or expressions were also eliminated, and nuances of languages could be noticed. This method also creates respondent validity and enhances the overall validity and reliability of the research. The interviews in

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103 Ibid
105 Ibid, p. 422-423
106 Ibid, p. 353
the study also follow research ethical principles and the four general key requirements for basic individual protection, namely; information requirement, where the informants are informed of the purpose of the research and the conditions of their participation; consent, which involve the consent of the participants to partake; confidentiality, meaning information about all persons included in the research shall be given the highest possible confidentiality, and recorded data shall be stored and reported in such a way that individuals are not able to be identified by third parties; and the utilization requirement, which encompass the requirement of individual data only be used for research purposes.

The method assists in fulfilling the aim to generate empirical material as representative and qualitative as possible, in order to create a study that gives an illustrative picture of how sports can contribute to the enhancement of human rights.

4.2 Secondary material

In addition to the primary data, secondary data has been collected to gather background information and to complement the primary data in the analysis. The secondary material in this study mainly consists of research papers, but also reports. Papers and reports older than ten years have been sparingly used and used only if they are able to give central information where the year of publication is not relevant.

The UNOSDP, the Swedish Sports Confederation and the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare, have provided this study with background information and material. It is transparent, public reports and material which are unbiased and provides reliability to the information. Other research papers used are published in well-known journals such as the Journal of Sport and Social Issues and Journal of Democracy.

As the secondary sources are either reports from well-known institutions or scientifically reviewed papers, the reliability of the secondary material is strong.

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108 Ibid, p. 9
109 Ibid, p. 12
110 Ibid, p. 14
4.3 Content analysis

Primary data from interviews and secondary data were both examined through content analysis with the aim of finding central themes connected to the theoretical framework. By sorting the material in categories derived from theory, related patterns, connections, and similarities, as well as differences, were easily found. The identifiable patterns are valued and measured through the theoretical framework and presented in the paper following Donnelly’s three categories of how human rights are achieved in and through sports. The key concepts are assessed as of their definitions in section 3.6, which enhances the validity of the paper.

Since the qualitative result will be presented in the analysis directly, the interview narratives will not be presented in the paper. This way repetition of the results will not occur.

5. Results and analysis

5.1 The right to participate in sport

The first connection between human rights and sports, according to Donnelly is the right to participate in sport. Since it is stated in several international conventions that everyone has the right to participate in sports, there are obstacles that needs to be addressed to be able to fulfil this right. Economic obstacles and knowledge of the social and civil society in Sweden are two major difficulties that can be noticed in the context of refugees’ right to participate in sports.

5.1.1 Economic obstacles

Economic conditions are a huge limitation for many people to be able to participate in sporting activities. Team leader 3 asserts there are children and youths that are disqualified early on in their lives from associations due to not having good enough conditions when it comes to economic issues. This often also leads to these children or youths leaving associational life if there are no leaders making sure material such as training clothes, shoes and membership fees are taken care of. As economy in sports is a social class issue, and Donnelly have found a linear relationship between income and sport participation,\textsuperscript{111} the problem is also very much clear among refugees.

All of the teams interviewed are addressing the economic issue in several ways. They are applying for grants from either the Swedish Sports Confederation or the municipality. This way

\textsuperscript{111} Donnelly, 2008, p. 389
the members are not obliged to pay a high membership fee. Team Leader 2 explains how other members are “support members”, so that the players who are not able to pay the fee can take part for free. It should be as easy and as small thresholds as possible to participate, where, for example, one can borrow training gear. Team Leader 3 also tells how other sport associations did help to collect training gear for the first year, but how companies the last years have been contributing and sponsored the team, so that they are able to continue.

Team Leader 4 emphasizes that they are an association for everyone, no matter the origin, gender or social class. The association has therefore offered free memberships to attract more members and to create an interest.

Fighting the obstacles of economy will clear at least one part of the path towards the right to participate in sports. As Inglehart and Welzel puts it, a reduction of poverty will reduce material constraints on human choice. In this case, instead of looking on a macro level like Inglehart and Welzel, this can be seen on a micro level and interpreted as how economic aid will help people with their ambitions. Subsequently, human autonomy, creativity and choice will be encouraged as socioeconomic barriers are removed. The right to participate in sports will thus at least be a choice for people, and not only a wish or aspiration.

5.1.2 Social obstacles

Team leader 3 clarifies further obstacles the refugees faced concerning their participation in sports when arriving in Sweden. Even though they could be in the municipal system to receive grants, they were disqualified in other ways. Not having experience from organized sports and not knowing the language made it difficult to join teams or associations that did not have a focus on including refugees or migrants. When the players did not act in the way they should be in the position they claimed to know, they were rejected and referred to the bench. Team leader 3 stating: “The players had a too high self-image to be able to perform in that position. There was not one single defender that had fled from either Eritrea, Somalia, Syria or Afghanistan.” Team leader 3 acknowledged the problem of the youths not being allowed to join teams due to little experience of associations and organized sport. They needed training and education in the specific sport, as well as of social norms in associations. Team leader 3 mean that to practice in a safe environment in a safe organization will help them find their identity within the sport. Therefore, they started a team in an already established association to help the refugee youths develop, to find their strengths and weaknesses, to learn the language by only speaking Swedish, and discussing what is being expected from you when you arrive at practice.
Once these segments were improved, the members had the ability to continue to another established team, if they would want to do so.

This points to already established sport associations having trouble knowing how to handle youths wanting to join their team with different conditions as a Swedish youth in the same age. It clearly shows obstacles for refugees to claim their right to participate in sports, even though it is possible. It just needs a different setting and approach.

This obstacle moreover hinders refugees to be a part of an association that could strengthen their social capital. As Putnam also states, that associations introduce to their members the behaviors of cooperation, solidarity and public-spiritedness. This is now something that the refugees refused to participate might miss out on. Moreover, since social capital very much relies on trust, people who are shut out from social life might lose even more trust to the society. If you are shut out from one place, why trusting others that might end up treating you the same way.

5.2 Achievements of human rights through sports

The second category of Donnelly’s model is achievements of human rights through sports. The achievements will be analyzed below using the rights found in the theory of DHR; fairness; liberty and security; civil and political rights and adequate standard of living.

5.2.1 Fairness

Human rights concerning fairness includes equal and fair treatment under the law, both in politics and society, and includes legal procedures and access to public benefits and services. In this context, the equal and fair treatment in society is what is the most relevant and noticeable in this study.

Team leader 4 emphasizes the values of the association, that sport should be accessible to everyone and no discrimination. The association was established in an area that could be classified as socially vulnerable. Hence, they did not only focus on refugees, but everyone in the area wanting to perform sports but not had the ability to join a team. Team leader 3 is on the same track and highlights the importance of having the same conditions as everyone else. Associational life often requires parents that are available to give a ride to and from practices or competitions and to be a part in supporting the team in one way or another. Plus, the already mentioned issues regarding the economic and material conditions creates difficulties, as stated
by team leader 3. The socio-economic conditions are once again very apparent to be able to have the same fair treatment in society. The right to participate in sports is very much connected to the democratic rights of fairness. Everyone should be treated fair, everyone should have the right to participate. The question for teams and associations is then concerning how to solve the problems of members with different socio-economic conditions.

But fairness also takes the form of equal value. In the start of the team, team leader 3 had to discuss with the members regarding equal value of all people no matter the religion or skin color, and the fundamental principles of democracy in Sweden. The team also had a cooperation with a team of LGBTQ members to talk about homosexuality. Now, the youths in the team have been able to leave prejudices and images of stereotypes behind, and the borders between black and white, Muslim and Orthodox have been erased, according to team leader 3. Through a common interest and common goal, they are able to remove perceptions that could lead to unfair treatment and discrimination. This shows that a civil society with social associations teaches the values of cooperation and solidarity, but also trust, which Putnam highlights. The social capital is shown in the way that it is acceptable to associate with people that are different than yourself. As prejudices are removed, doors to greater social interaction and creation of larger social capital are opened.

Inequality and rights concerning fairness is evident on a larger scale as well. The Agenda 2030 goal 10, “Reduce inequality within and among countries”, is a development goal that is strongly connected to these democratic rights. The goal can be tackled by the help of sport as it is able to advocate for diversity, equality and inclusion of all regardless of sex, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or other status. UNOSDP means that sports can be a successful tool for challenging inequality in hard-to-reach areas and for empowerment of both communities and individuals.\textsuperscript{112} The work and achievements of the teams in this study are examples of this succeeding as religious beliefs, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender are no longer an issue according to the team leaders.

Lindell explains how the Swedish Sports Confederation is also acting to achieve equality as their work is aimed at both girls, boys and people with other sexual identity. The work of ASPIRE is aimed at educating leaders and representatives to create a tool that helps them

\textsuperscript{112} UNOSDP, 2014b
change their operations and structure by a higher knowledge and awareness. Hopefully, by spreading awareness, equal and fair treatment in society will increase, Lindell states.113

This ability to participate, the equality and tolerance are included as values of a civil society, according to Putnam, who also means that the participation will strengthen the social community structure, even though this was not the aim from the start. As Putnam asserts that civil society is the basis of democracy, this indicates that sports, through the equality and tolerance aroused from participation, contributes to democratization.

However, what was clear in the interviews was the perceptions the society had towards them, according to the team leaders. Even though the teams learned to erase differences among them and society, a few of the team leaders noticed other teams still perceived them as different. Racism were legitimized by yelling and screaming through the frame of the sport, and coaches and leaders made explicit comments about the players. This is a sign of negative social capital where the social capital is destroyed. To build a society based on trust and solidarity, the commitment and will for this to happen has to come from all members in that society. Otherwise it will generate distrust and the social capital will decrease.

Team leader 4 is frustrated how the debate regarding refugees is taking place in Sweden. He stresses how you have to take in consideration that these people, are just people like everyone else. They have been through incidents extremely difficult for people in Sweden to imagine, where some have seen their family members’ destinies coming to an end. “And from that perspective it is horrifying the way they are being welcomed in society”, team leader 4 states.

Team leader 3 also clarifies that they have been able to contradict the perceptions of refugees not having respect towards women. The question is not about what gender one has, but who you are as a person and how you handle your leadership. This was rather taught to Swedish people with prejudgments. Once again, for the civil society to live up to its core values, the commitment regarding equal value has to have a greater role. The responses given by the informants shows that prejudgments and perceptions are evident among both immigrants and residents in the society, and social capital will only grow if there is trust from both parts.

One could say there are contradictions concerning how the civil society and social capital through sports is treating rights concerning fairness. On one side, the refugees coming to Sweden are taught respect and cooperation regardless the gender, ethnicity or religious beliefs. On the other side, the Swedish society watching these people from outside, still holds

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113 Lindell, L, the Swedish Sports Confederation, Interview 23 March 2018
perceptions and prejudices. That the teams are working to achieve rights of fairness, is evidence that sports are able to achieve human rights of fair and equal treatment in society. That other teams do not work in the same way is evidence of prejudices existing in society that are possible to be erased by the help of sports, if awareness is spread. This confirms how important the work of organizations and projects such as ASPIRE is. Awareness raising is essential for both the groups of newly arrived as well as the current residents of the country.

This complex situation, if following Putnam’s theory, is a risk to democratization, as the effectiveness and stability of democratic government is affected by civil associations. In this case perhaps there are associations and a complete society which is not very including. A clear contradiction to the work of the associations welcoming refugees.

5.2.2 Liberty and security

The rights included under ‘Liberty and security’ relevant for this study, is the freedom of movement, choice, and activity of individuals. No great results regarding these rights were found during the research, however team leader 4 gives a hint regarding the importance of liberty.

Team leader 4 speaks about security in the way that participating in activities creates a sense of safety. Several of the players travelled by train to arrive to practice, which is a sign of maturity and a feeling of security in society. This freedom of movement is extremely important for everyone and is connected to the freedom of choice and activity. Once you feel secure in the society, the liberty one has to be able to choose where you want to go and what you want to do increases. Team leader 4 also points to that once you possess this security in society you will grow even more within the sport you are pursuing, which in turn creates an even greater self-confidence. The two goes hand in hand.

The liberty rights of freedom of movement, choice and activity of individuals has a strong connection to Inglehart and Welzel’s three-piece puzzle where human development advances with a focus on autonomous choice. Both socioeconomic resources and legal entitlements are, of course, two important pieces to the players being able to act consistent with their own choices. But what is very obvious in this case, is the piece of subjective motivations based on self-expression values that will motivate people to act according to their autonomous choices. As the participation in sporting activities has led to a rise in security, liberty and self-confidence, the sense of autonomy will lead to a stronger emphasis on freedom of choice. As explained in
the theory, the self-expression values that increases as a person feels more secure, both within society but also with one self, will motivate the players to seek the civil and political rights of a liberal democracy. Thus, the liberty rights are rights in itself, but also an instrument which leads to further achievements of other rights.

The liberty and security rights could not only be connected to Inglehart and Welzel, but also to Putnam. According to Putnam members of associations feel public-spiritedness and display more social trust and subjective civic competence. As members of the team feel secure moving freely in the society, it is a sign of social trust, public-spiritedness, and perhaps even civic competence.

5.2.3 Civil and political rights

Freedom of assembly, conscience and expression, and the right to choose one’s own lifestyle, are the social and political activities of individuals incorporated in the civil and political rights of people.

Freedom of assembly is achieved by the refugees being able to take part in the sporting activities they choose. All of the team leaders in the study agree on the fact that the central theme is that everyone is welcome to participate and should be able to be in which ever association they would want. However, that is not always the case. Team leader 3 explain how some associations do not accept the fact that the players might be undocumented or at risk of expulsion. Even the other senior team in the same association is not too eager to work together with the team taking in refugees. Team leader 4 however has more positive experiences as they are able to cooperate with other teams. This benefits the language skills of the newly arrived, but also skills of cooperation with people of different background and socioeconomic status. Similarly, team leader 2 has the wish of getting more members with a Swedish background to ease the integration process and language skills for the refugees in the team. The power of sports as a tool for integration is according to team leader 2 that you are forced to be a strong and secure person at the same time as you have to cooperate with others. And this is not just relevant to refugees or immigrants. Thus, the freedom of expression is then able to grow and extend as you are growing stronger and more secure as an individual.

The objective for the ASPIRE project is to develop manuals and bring out different suggestions on activities and operations, and how to develop and create knowledge. This will lead to operations on associational level to develop along with the knowledge of immigrants and
refugees being in the country. This could contribute to both an easier and more healthy way in to the society for the refugees in their new country.\(^\text{114}\) Hence, the freedom of assembly will improve for the refugees in Sweden as associations gain more knowledge. As seen in the informants’ answers above, this is something that is truly needed.

Player 1 do also emphasize the difficulties of integrating in the society if not knowing the language. However, they are also a witness of the possibilities the sport associations create by assisting in learning the Swedish language. After an increase in language skills together with a better confidence and sense of security, freedom of expression could take a larger place. The self-expression values and subjective motivations that comes from being a part of a sport association will emphasize the players to act according to their autonomous choices, and use their freedom of expression.

A problem that both team leader 1 and 3 highlight is the fact that it is very easy for vulnerable people such as newly arrived refugees without a secure network, to be used and abused by dishonest persons and there is a chance they are lured into criminal activity. By having practices at Friday nights, team leader 1 mean that they keep them out of trouble at the same time as improving their health and creating bonds. The right to choose their own lifestyle is thus improved. Team leader 3 accentuates the similarities of integration in society and what you learn through sporting activities. You are forced to cooperate and to follow the rules. Quoting team leader 3: “If we do not follow the rules and do not cooperate with those around us, we are put on the bench. The bench is the exclusion. Then we still have to sit and rethink on how to get back in.” Accordingly, the right to choose one’s own lifestyle do exist, and some might say that you always have a choice. For socially vulnerable people this choice however might need some guidance and help in going the right direction. This paper demonstrates that sport associations are capable to provide that guidance.

It can be seen as the sport associations help to provide abilities which leads to a creation of social capital. By keeping the members away from criminal activity and by teaching what is expected from each member, making connections between behaviors in the team and in society, they offer a chance to create social capital. The work of ASPIRE hence also contribute to chances to create social capital through an increasing knowledge and in turn develop democratization.

\(^{114}\) Lindell, 2018
5.2.4 Adequate standard of living

An adequate standard of living involves the basic needs and living conditions of people, including food, shelter, education, affordable access to health care and a living wage.

Two of the Agenda 2030 goals are related to these democratic rights. Agenda 2030 goal 4, “Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning”, can be influenced by sports and physical education as it is able to motivate children and youth to not only attend and engage in formal education, but also informal, as well as improve academic performance and learning outcomes. Tolerance and inclusion are two examples of transferrable life skills and key values that sports can teach and shows that it can lead towards learning opportunities beyond school.\(^{115}\) This points to the education-piece of an adequate standard of living being affected in a positive way by sports and is also confirmed by the informants.

Except for tolerance and inclusion being taught through sports, as already mentioned, all of the informants confirm the picture of language skills being improved through participating in the activities. As the Swedish language is a very important part of developing in school, it shows evidence of not only contributing to goal 4 of Agenda 2030, but also the democratic right of quality education. It has also been proved in several studies that physical activities affect learning abilities. Studies points towards the same answer – physical fitness does have an effect of brain cognition. Mechanisms, physiology and anatomy work together for an improved function which also affects our ability to learn.\(^{116}\)

What Inglehart and Welzel argues for are the levels of people’s formal education that offers a greater access to information. This way the understanding of people’s own possible actions will increase, as well as the priority of self-expression values, according to the two. Hence, as learning abilities improves at the same time as the language skills advances, participating in sporting activities could lead to a rise in self-expression values, which, as stated by Inglehart and Welzel, in turn motivates people to seek the civil and political rights of a liberal democracy.

Aside from these confirmations, the rights included in an adequate standard of living is difficult to find evidence about via the team leaders. But one can speculate that through a greater learning

\(^{115}\) UNOSDP, 2014b

ability and good results in school, a job is more easily attained which could lead to a better living standard.

The second relevant Agenda 2030 goal is goal number 3, “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”. It is a goal that needs health education and awareness raising towards healthy lives, which sports can be a successful tool for. This especially among vulnerable and hard-to-reach individuals and communities, including refugees.

Studies have shown that Sweden is one of the countries which receive the most refugees with injuries from torture, and people who bring war experiences and memories of how society collapses. This can cause vulnerability and helplessness, especially to groups as women and children, and could lead to depression and apathetic states. In this context, insurance of healthy lives and promotion of well-being is extremely important. As the democratic right of ‘adequate standard of living’ includes access to health care, it is valuable to pair it up with sporting activities. Lindell emphasizes the research pointing to that movement and sports will lead to a healthier lifestyle, wellbeing and a more positive self-esteem, which in turn leads to a will to effect and change their lives. The mood, stress, sleep, and social interaction are all affected positively by physical activity, according to Lindell. Studies have shown that physical activity can have the same effect on patients that are medicated for depression, as antidepressant medications. Furthermore, depressive symptoms often increase if one removes physical activity. Hence why it is important not to neglect the access to participation in sports for vulnerable people, such as refugees. Moreover, it confirms the views of Agenda 2030 and the importance of sports as a tool towards healthy lives and well-being.

5.3 Sport and the human rights of specific classes of persons

Sport and the human rights of specific classes of persons includes the right to participate in sports, and the achievement of human rights through sports. This third category realized by Donnelly could be found in two specific classes relevant to this study; refugees; and persons of a specific gender. As the human rights of refugees as a specific class are discussed throughout the whole paper, gender is the next to discuss more thoroughly.

117 UNOSDP, 2014b
118 Socialstyrelsen, 2015, p. 13
119 Ibid, p. 7
120 Ibid
121 GIH, 2018
Agenda 2030 goal 5, “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”, is a development goal that can be tackled through sports as it is able to contribute to elimination of discrimination against women and girls through empowerment and provide them with skills essential for personal growth. UNOSDP argues that sports advocates for gender equality, can address restricting gender norms, and provide for inclusive and safe spaces.\(^\text{122}\)

Team leader 4 sees a need of change in focus where society needs to invest more in girls when it comes to sporting activities, both girls born in Sweden and immigrants. Team leader 2 mentions instead the big noticeable difference between girls coming from Sweden and girls from another country with a different culture and experience of associational life. They mean that there are many ways of how things work that someone from Sweden take for granted, and most of the people raised in Sweden have sometime somehow been a member of an association and performed sports. Team leader 2 also discuss the view in society of it being more acceptable for boys to be frisky and to take place, while it is not as acceptable for girls. By participating in a sporting activity, you can get an outlet and practice on taking more place in society. This way sports might fill a larger function for girls, team leader 2 speculates. In other words, it can lead to empowerment. This is a view that Lindell shares. Lindell means that when it comes to wellbeing through physical activity, there is no difference in boys, girls or people with other gender identity. However, there is a possibility to develop faster if you are a girl coming from a country where the tradition is not the same concerning her role in society. “Through physical activity she might be able to make her trip faster compared to boys.”\(^\text{123}\) This is nonetheless something which is not always obvious, and the society has to play a part and make sure it is possible, she adds.

The views of the informants are in the position of knowing the importance of sports for girls, not only but especially, girls with foreign background. As CEDAW Article 10 specifies the right of women and girls to participate in sports, this category by Donnelly is achieved as there are associations who focus on inclusion for girls, which in turn leads to a faster development, gender equality and empowerment. Moreover, empowerment could also be seen as a step towards human autonomy. As someone is empowered to make their own choices and express themselves in a certain way, autonomous choice is arising; an important piece in a democracy according to Inglehart and Welzel.

\(^{122}\) UNOSDP, 2014b

\(^{123}\) Lindell, 2018
5.4 Why sports?

So, what differs sports from other social activities in a civil society when it comes to human rights achievements?

Team leader 1 suggests that there is another environment, another feeling. People of different backgrounds with one interest and one common goal creates a team and great chemistry. Traveling for competitions and sharing experiences forms joy and companionship. They also highlight the physical contact with each other, which is something team leader 3 agrees to. The players have to show respect to younger, smaller players, at the same time as you can get an outlet for frustration and push a little bit harder in close combat.

Another positive outcome of sports is the body awareness one is taught. To join a team not knowing how to run effectively and then to grow to run like a professional and to be in sync with your body, generate self-esteem and self-confidence according to team leader 2. Refugees coming to Sweden might have been forced to do things with their body and been exposed to frightful incidents. Therefore, to take control, to get to know your body and to learn to approach others is extremely important, according to team leader 3. To learn about hygiene and to take care of your body which have been violated is vital. Team leader 3 also explains how the low body awareness has been clear in situations where a player is hurt. If you are coming from a country with poor healthcare you might believe the injury is more severe than it actually is. As it might have been in the country they left.

Furthermore, all of the team leaders argue for the release of endorphins, to clear your thoughts, wear out the body, and concentrate on something else than the asylum process. This is confirmed by scientific research where a relationship is found between an increased release of endorphins and signal molecules, and physical activity which improves mental health and capacity.124

In the theory of civil society and social capital, Putnam does not make any emphasis on a specific social activity. However, he points to evidence that members of associations display more social trust, which could be found in sport associations. He discusses that networks of civic engagement would facilitate coordination and communication, and thus strengthen the trustworthiness of other individuals. When refugees might be having trouble trusting other people, especially regarding physical contact, sports are activities that could foster the trust of

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124 Faskunger and Sjöblom, 2017, p. 27
others as well as create happiness and joy. As Putnam also says, citizens of high civic engagement are found to be happy and satisfied with life.

6. Concluding discussion

The impact of sports has been discussed in this paper along with situations and obstacles that hinders human rights achievements and development of refugees in Sweden, with an outcome showing that Swedish sports associations could contribute to human rights achievements. The study has shown a clear pattern of how the team leaders work to help their members in several different circumstances. First, they take notice of a situation and identifies a problem; second, they act to relieve this problem; third, they identify results from the acts. Whether or not they are aware of their acts contributing to human rights achievements, they are involved in the success. The results indicate that Swedish sports associations could contribute to human rights achievements for refugees and that social capital is built up by the associations. But, also that barriers such as racism could tear it down.

The purpose of the research was to examine the relationship between sporting activities and human rights achievements in Sweden, as well as to understand how becoming a part of the civil society through sports, could help vulnerable people achieve their rights. The research questions asked prior to the study was:

1. How do sporting activities help refugees in Sweden achieve their human rights?
2. In what way are team leaders in Swedish sport associations working to assist refugees?
3. How could the efforts of team leaders in Sweden lead to human rights achievements for refugees?

Answering the sub questions two and three first will help to see the answer to the first main research question.

The first direction of the analysis, the right to participate in sports, includes results that points to obstacles for refugees to achieve this right. The obstacles included economic and social hindrances, which led to the youths not being able to participate. But as the associations applied for grants to the team, they could offer training material and membership fees, which assisted the participation. Hence, the team leaders are taking measures to cope with economic issues that could hinder the right to participate. It is clear evidence of how socio-economic development is important for human choice and how human autonomy (and in turn participation) could increase as an effect. The team leaders are therefore contributing to social
capital possibly being attained. The social obstacles could however be more difficult to address, as they also will decrease as the persons become members of a sports association. The social capital one could acquire is hence endangered if they are not allowed to be a part of the civil society. In this case one team leader provides information regarding both the sport in itself as well as social norms, to aid overcoming the social obstacles and, perhaps unwittingly, contributing to participation in the civil society.

The second direction, the democratic human rights achieved through sports, points to results of how human rights are achieved in several ways. The informants provide information that shows a link between both fairness, liberty and security, civil and political rights, and an adequate standard of living, to the sporting activities.

A fair and equal treatment in society could be achieved through a civil society with associations teaching norms and values. The informants highlight the importance of equal value and that everyone should be able to participate. The socio-economic obstacles are again very apparent, but as the team leaders are overcoming this and letting everyone participate they show examples of solidarity, trust and cooperation, which are core values of a civil society. One team leader even went about and cooperated with a team of LGBTQ members, and results have shown how prejudices and partialities are erased. The social capital through the civil society is growing as one learn to cooperate and trust people of different background and cultures. The members are not only being treated fair by the association but learns how to treat other diverse groups and people with equal value.

A problem still present however, is the racism and prejudices the society holds towards the refugees. The racism occurring is a sign of negative social capital, it is breaking down the social capital built up and hinders the refugees to develop further and integrate even better in society. Racism could lead to lower trust and solidarity in the community, and as it does not equate to fair and equal treatment, it does not support democracy.

One informant draws connections with the participation in the association with the rights of liberty and security as the participation creates a feeling of safety. As the members feel more secure in society, self-expression values will increase and motivate them to seek their democratic civil and political rights. The feeling of security is also a sign of social trust, which comes through being a part of the civil society, the basis of democracy. In regards of the rights of liberty and security there is not much for the team leaders to do, except for providing a safe and secure environment, which at least one team leader points out and also ensures the outcome.
A strong and more secure individual will also develop the freedom of expression. This right is moreover encouraged by the self-expression values developed through being a part of the civil society and an association, and could also lead to persons acting according to their autonomous choices. The sport associations and team leaders accordingly help to provide abilities which leads to a creation of social capital and human autonomy. Additionally, the associations support to keep the members away from criminal activity and teaches expectations, which creates a chance to the members to create social capital.

Furthermore, all of the informants confirm how language skills are improved by participating. By speaking Swedish to the members and working together with teams or single members with a Swedish background, the team leaders are contributing to this being achieved. Improved language skills, along with studies proving the effect on learning abilities through physical activity, an adequate standard of living including quality education could be achieved. Consecutively, people will understand their own possible actions and the priority of self-expression values and autonomy. The language skills learnt through the civil society could also lead to further, and an improved, participation within the civil society, such as other activities or employment. This in turn could initiate further steps towards democracy.

Health and wellbeing in the right of an adequate standard of living could be achieved as research points to sports leading to exactly this. This is also emphasized by Lindell, as well as the informants who argue for the release of endorphins. Just by allowing the refugees being members of the association, the team leaders are contributing to a healthier lifestyle.

Once again, this study is proving how democratic rights are achieved by taking active part in the civil society, developing social capital, expressing self-expression values, and proving their human autonomy and independence. All of the democratic rights established in the theoretical framework have somehow been achieved through the participation in sports.

As Inglehart and Welzel claims, socioeconomic development is a very important part of extending human autonomy. And as shown in the results, it can also be seen as socioeconomic development and sporting activities go hand in hand assisting each other. Sports promotes education by improving language skills and reducing stress, together with teaching life skills such as social norms and expectations. This could in order lead to improving socioeconomic statuses. Then again, socioeconomic development will also in turn lead to more participation in sports.
The third part of the analysis, sport and the human rights of specific classes of persons, discuss the gender equality. Especially one informant is able to distinguish the differences of the effects from sports on a girl born in Sweden and someone coming as a refugee. Similarly, Lindell means that the development journey one can make could appear faster if you have a foreign background and different traditions concerning girls and sports. This points to how sporting activities can contribute to empowerment for girls, and thus develop autonomous choice. At least two team leaders stress how beneficial sports can be for women and girls and focus their teams on simply including women and girls. By doing so, they contribute to them being able to develop their social capital, to be able to create trust and networks, and to develop social norms. In cases where girls might be powerless or exploited, their stock of social capital will self-reinforce them to claim their rights. Hence, this contributes to the achievement of gender equality.

The information given by the informants is in line with the theories of how civil society and social capital leads to democratization and achievements of democratic human rights, as well as the connection between democracy and self-expression values. It also shows some differences of sports and other social activities, such as getting control of your body and learn how to approach others in a physical way. Creating trust is essential for refugees who might have been physically abused and exposed, but also an essential part of the civil society and social capital. This is one evidence of how sports differ from other activities and could be useful, if not alone, as an additional social activity.

Furthermore, the results of the research allow this paper to say that there is strong evidence that sports is a good tool for addressing human rights issues. The sporting activities help refugees achieving their rights by being a part of the civil society, creating social capital, teaching norms and values, and creating trust and solidarity. However, it does set requirements on sports associations and leaders within them to allow this to happen. By focusing on overcoming social barriers, economic and gender issues, sports associations have the ability to make a change. It also points to the important work of organizations and projects spreading knowledge and awareness regarding these issues. ASPIRE is only one that could make a huge contribution to the human rights achievements.

In a liberal democracy such as Sweden it might be easy to overlook the fact that there are vulnerable groups that might not have the abilities to achieve their democratic rights. In this case the awareness of what the civil society is able to provide, is essential. This paper demonstrates that it is possible to have discussions in terms of sports and human rights.
achievements, and not just development. In times when there are several humanitarian crises occurring, contributing to millions of people being evicted from their homes, it is imperative to be able to combine the concepts of development and human rights, together with social activities such as sports. Instead of focusing on development matters when talking about contributions from sports, it is important to take it one step further and discuss the democratic human rights everyone should enjoy.

The contributions of this study include the empirical evidence with a civil society perspective of how sports could contribute to human rights achievements. The paper shows how development theories that connects development and democracy can explain the relationship between sporting activities and human rights.

### 6.1 Further research

This is a small-scale study that illustrates a picture of how sporting associations could help refugees achieve their democratic rights. There is a need of further research on the benefits of sports, and what the actual effects in terms of human rights achievements are. Larger qualitative studies and in-depth interviews could show the effects of sports over a longer period of time and provide more details. Even large-scale quantitative studies could be a step forward, to receive statistics on refugees and sports, and develop a measurable connection to the participation in sports and democratic rights.

Further, a greater focus on gender in relation to sports and human rights achievements is an interesting direction. This study hints to sports having a large impact on women and girls, which creates an opening to further research on the subject.
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Appendix 1

Interview guide

The questions in the interview guide were used as the main pillars during the interviews. In the interview with Lindell the questions varied slightly since she did not represent a sport association, but a national confederation.

1. Tell me about how the team/association started
   a. Aim and target group
2. Why did you choose this specific target group?
3. How do you work/interact with other teams, within or outside, of the association?
4. What are your thoughts regarding integration and inclusion in the Swedish society through this type of activity?
5. Why do you think sports could be different than other social activities regarding integration/inclusion?
6. Do you have any perceptions about what being a part of the team means to the members?
7. Can you give any example of something you believe they can learn from participating?
8. Have you seen any personal changes of the members since they started in the team?
   a. Any effects that could stretch to society outside the field?
9. Do you believe sports could have a different effect on girls compared to boys?
10. Do you believe there could be a difference in effects on girls with a foreign background?