

## **Embedded Expectations and Embodied Knowledge – A New Perspective on the Use of Sport Facilities**

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In Norway sport facilities are considered an important political measure in order to get the population more physical active. "Sport for all" is the main vision in Norwegian sport politics. One political goal is to build facilities that are adjusted to the activity profile in the population. The sport politic in Norway also seems to rest on an assumption that building more sport facilities will result in more sporting activity. There seems, however, to be a difference between the ideals and the realities. Research reveals that there is a discrepancy between the amount and type of sport facilities and the people's use of these facilities. Why is this so? What factors determine which facilities are planned and built? What are the mechanisms that determine the population's use of sport facilities? This paper will discuss these questions.

I will present some results that show what kind of sport facilities that the population actually use. This will in turn be compared to what kind and amount of sport facilities that the government have financed and built. In sum, the results indicate that the facilities built are not what the population wants or needs. Therefore the political means have not work as intended.

In my presentation, I will shortly discuss possible reasons for this situation. I will show that factors like the international sport federations hegemonic power to define how facilities should be constructed, how different public, private and commercial interests strive to get the upper hand in the decision process, how the municipalities and the sport federations go where the money is, strongly influence the planning and construction of a sport facility in Norway.

One reason, however, stands out as particular important. This reason is my main concern to discuss at this conference. This is the lack of awareness among the politicians and planners of the function and meaning of facilities within the sport system and how the population observes and interprets the meaning of the facilities. Even among some researchers on this field there seems to be a naïve and superficial understanding of the relationship between the sport facility and its user. Both politicians and researchers seem to be more concerned about the accessibility of the facility, how far away from the houses they are located, the cost of using them and so fort. More critical and philosophical contributions from well known scholars like John Bale, Knut Dietrich, Søren Nagbøl and others are ignored or overlooked. My own contribution falls within this category. There is a need of more thorough discussion of the sport facility's function and meaning within the sport system and how the population observes and reacts on this facility as a construction of meaning.

Therefore, in this speech, I will present my view on the function and meaning of sport facilities and the population's use of them from a sociological and system theoretical perspective. Based on the work of Niklas Luhmann I will in particular analyse sport facilities as a structure of expectations; embedded expectations. These expectations define and regulate the particular communication that shall take place, whether it be football or tennis. Such expectations are beneficial to the communication partly because it reduce possible actions and partly because they points to other possibilities. In a football stadium one is expected to play football, not sun bathing. The stadium also indicates that football shall be played here in the future. As such, sport facilities functions as a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion. Only actions that are in accordance with the expectations will be accepted. Actions that are not so, will be excluded. If you try to take a sun bath on a football stadium you will soon be removed by the groundsmen. The embedded expectations in the facility can be met or rejected. The decision to use a facility or not, is determined on the level of the individual. The individual will be more or less able to meet the embedded expectations. This ability can be termed embodied knowledge. If the expectations are met, for example if a person manages to throw a ball in the basket up on the wall, the individual will experience happiness and pride. If not, a feeling of failure and embarrassment can be the result. Over time, the experience with sport and its facilities will be embodied as some sort of unconscious emotional-motional memory as Bråten terms it. Later on, when the same individual observes the embedded expectations of a sport facility, emotions will be triggered on an unconscious level and determine the decision to use the facility or not. Based on findings from Campbell, Damasio, Lachoff and Johnson, Roth and others, I will argue that emotions play an unconscious, but very important, part in the decision to use sport facilities or not.

Through the years the expectations embedded in the sport facilities have been more and more complex and demanding. The population's ability to move and be physical active is said to be diminishing due to less daily physical activity. There seems to be an increasing gap between the embedded expectations in the sport facility and the embodied knowledge in the individual. More and more people seem to be unable to meet the embedded expectations. Unconsciously, they realize this and abstain from physical activity and sport. This situation rise important practical and political issues. How should sport facilities be built so that the embedded expectations are more in accord with the populations embodied knowledge? Is the cooperation and division of labour between the government, the local municipalities and the national sport federation suitable for planning, financing and building sport facilities in order to reach the goal of "sport for all"?