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**THE SUCCESS CRITERIA OF EDUCATIONAL DESEGREGATION PROGRAMS IN MULTI-SCHOOL
SETTLEMENTS**

Doctoral (PhD) thesis

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Raising the question

The core issue of Hungary is the lack of the upward mobility among children of poor, unqualified, multiply-disadvantaged families due to their failure in school. The Roma children's underperformance and failure in school predetermines their segregation in the field of employment. They usually face social exclusion and the intergenerational transfer of disadvantaged status is in most cases a fact. It is important to state that defining the problem is not only possible and necessary from the aspect of equality and equity but we also have to take into account the economical aspect of social integration. In the aging Hungarian society to ensure the economic activity and productivity of disadvantaged groups with positive reproduction indicators is the interest of all. To reach this goal the average level of education of disadvantaged groups must be increased since the demand in the labour market for employees with elementary education has been minimised, the lower level of education demanded is vocational education.

The fact and contraproductivity of desegregation have been proved by international and national social researches that influenced educational policy decisions to withhold segregation. Currently, only a few attempts for the desegregation process have been successful and remarkable. The local decision-makers and educational experts often resist desegregation in public or try to boycott a more integrated educational system within legal frames. The settlements for a conscious desegregated educational policy deal frequently with the lack of professionals, thus only a 'rigid integration' can be realized. Therefore, the numbers of inclusive pedagogies in local educational systems are merely present.

1.2 The structure of the paper

In my dissertation I examined the success criteria of a successful public educational desegregation in case of multi-school settlements. I analysed the role of stakeholders, the methods of forming local social support, the relevancy of multiply-disadvantaged category, the result of the disadvantage-compensating programs supporting desegregation. I present the Szeged and Hódmezővásárhely desegregation processes, in which I personally took an active part. These processes due to their complexity and local effect are considered unique and experimental in Hungary.

The introductory part is followed by the first section in which I present the theoretical background of desegregation. After defining the basic concepts, I review the history of desegregation, the applied methods and results in the United States of America and the European Union.

After the review of the most relevant international processes I determined and defined the target group of my paper, I introduced the priority, methodology, financial and institutional background of the Hungarian desegregation education policy. Finally, I reviewed the literature of further complementary subject matters such as mentoring and teacher training in connection with the theme of my paper.

The fourth chapter is devoted to the empirical researches substantiating my dissertation. I listed in detail those quantitative and qualitative researches that support my theses. Beyond the research methodology I intended to highlight on the coherence and connection between the empirical researches.

The theoretical and methodological foundation is followed by three case studies. In the first case study I analysed the closure of the extremely segregated Móra Ferenc Elementary School, and the integration process of the pupils from Móra in Szeged. The next chapter is about the public educational desegregation program of Hódmezővásárhely, in this town the answer to the problem was not the closure of one school but the restructuring of the whole educational system. In both case studies I presented the attitude of the teachers towards integrated education. They are one of the most important stakeholders in the desegregation programs. The text is based on the interpretation of the results of the survey conducted in Szeged and Hódmezővásárhely among the teachers in schools maintained by the local municipality. From the survey we get information about the teachers' opinion on integrated education, desegregation, the profession of teachers" and teaching methodology.

The third case study is the analysis of the Student Mentoring Program in support of the Szeged and Hódmezővásárhely desegregation measures. Besides the introduction of the disadvantage-compensating program based on the mentoring work of pre-service teachers, I wrote about the relation system between teacher-training and educational integration.

In the eighth chapter I examined the opinion on desegregation of the local society of the towns presented in the case studies. I examined the groups of relevant stakeholders, characterised their standpoint and strategy. I highlighted on the difference between the attitude of teachers in Szeged and Hódmezővásárhely. I intended to provide usable knowledge to experts and decision makers by introducing the stages of desegregation process and the methodology of analysing stakeholders.

The paper is closed by the matching of theoretical preconceptions and empirical analysis. I summarized the answers to the questions raised in the theoretical preconceptions and based on my current knowledge I defined the success criteria of desegregation programs in multi-school settlements.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Theoretical preconceptions

I do not think of the quantitative and qualitative paradigm as contradictory but rather as complementary (SÁNTHA/A, 2006). I mainly followed the qualitative paradigm but also used quantitative research in the process of triangulation (SZABOLCS, 2001). In the paper I used circular strategy, I returned to certain research phases several times (SÁNTHA, 2006/B).

In most of the cases I applied theoretic sampling method. The research was based on inductive logic and according to my intentions created a grounded theory with the description of deliberative desegregation and the summary of success criteria (GELENCSÉR, 2003). Because of the methodological strategy and the inductive logic of the realisation of the research sequence, I did not state hypotheses but formulated the following theoretical preconceptions:

1. In case of the conscious desegregation intention of the local government, the key figures of local desegregation are the maintainers of the non-municipal schools.
2. Without the minimal social consensus the desegregation programs are doomed to failure or only temporal success.
3. The category of multiply-disadvantaged child/pupil is the adequate indicator for the promotion of the mobility of underclass groups only in the social context where integration is accepted.
4. The teacher training, due to the nature of teaching practise system, does not train the pre-service teachers for the education of multiply-disadvantaged pupils.
5. Without the professional operation of the Integrated Pedagogical Program and further supporting programs only the level of rigid integration is realised.
6. The methodologically better prepared teachers are more likely to support integrated education and are more likely to believe in its realisation.

2.2 The classification of the case studies

The case study involves holistic inquiry and the use of various methods such as participant observation, interviews and surveys. It is important, that the investigation is done in the natural setting of the phenomenon (HARLING, 2002). The case study is not only a method but also a methodological strategy (GOLNHOFER, 2001).

According to STAKE (1998) there are two types of single case study: intrinsic and instrumental. The main aim of the intrinsic case study is to learn about and understand a unique phenomenon. The instrumental case study describes a typical case although an unusual case may illustrate matters overlooked in a typical case.

The aim of the intrinsic type of case study is to get more information about the phenomenon in focus of the paper. It is important for its characteristics and quality. Among the case studies in my dissertation the one presenting the desegregation of Szeged is instrumental, while the case study of Hódmezővásárhely and the Student Mentoring Program is intrinsic.

According to another typology (YIN, 1991) there are three types of case studies: exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive. The exploratory is part of a preparation phase when it helps develop the methodology used and the statement of hypotheses. The aim of the descriptive case study is the detailed description of the case. The explanatory case study examines the causes and effects and therefore is suitable for creating new theories or checking old ones. From the aspect of utilization of the results we differentiate three theories: knowledge-driven, problem-solving and social interaction theory (TELLIS, 1997; GOLNHOFER, 2001). The case studies in the paper are most likely belong to the knowledge-driven theory.

2.3 The framework of the research sequence

In the process of writing my dissertation I had to count with the burden of my involvement. I am aware that my intense belief in the integrated education of disadvantaged and ethnic groups, and also my embedded personal network may distort my objectivity. I made clear my connections in favour of following the ethical norms and I intended to keep the principal of intersubjectivity.

In the phase of realising the empirical researches I intended to reach the maximal sinergy among them. The realisation and timing of the research sequence were made difficult by numerous external factors, and the problem of financing, therefore in several cases I had to differ from the optimal structure and methodology.

In the dissertation I detailed the realisation and methodology of the used empirical data collections. In the sub chapter of “complex researches” I presented two researches in which I applied more methods and also used triangulation in the research itself. The other phases of data collections, researches that can be also interpreted in their own are listed in the “interviews”, “surveys” and “equality analysis” sub chapters. The table below summarises the researches presented in the dissertation.

The list and summary of empirical researches

Number	Title of the research	Time of data collection	Place of data collection	Target group	Methodology	Product	Leader of the research	Finance
I.	The analysis of the stakeholders of the extremely segregated Móra Ferenc Elementary School	05-06. 2007.	Szeged, Móra Ferenc Elementary School	The teachers of Móra Ferenc Elementary School , pupils and their parents	Observation, interview, focus group interview	10 observation reports; 15 student focus groups , 8 parent focus groups, 2 teacher focus groups; 5 parent interviews, 5 teacher interviews	Norbert Szűcs	National Educational Integration Network
II.	Analysis of the 1993. LXXIX. 66.§. (2) about public education	12. 2007. - 03. 2008.	27 towns, the sample contained Szeged and Hódmezővásárhely	The actors in the educational system of multi-school settlements with a segregated school: notaries, leaders of the office of education, school principals, parents, members of the roma self-government	information sheet, interview	27 information sheets; ~ 100 interviews	Norbert Szűcs	Ministry of Education and Culture
III.1	Teacher research 2006		Szeged, Hódmezővásárhely	teachers	interview	interview	Norbert Szűcs	-
III.2	Teacher research 2007		Szeged, Hódmezővásárhely	teachers	interview	interview	Norbert Szűcs	-
III.3	Teacher research 2008		Szeged, Hódmezővásárhely	teachers	interview	interview	Norbert Szűcs	-
IV.1	Student Mentors 2008		Szeged	student mentors active in the academic year of 2007/2008.	interview	interview	Norbert Szűcs	DARTKE Association
IV.2	Senior student mentors 2009		Szeged, Hódmezővásárhely	student mentors active in the academic years of 2007/2008. and 2008/2009,	interview	interview	Norbert Szűcs	DARTKE Association
V.	Mentor teachers 2009		Szeged	mentor teachers in the receiving schools	interview	interview	Krisztina Bereczky, József Balázs Fejes	-

The list and summary of empirical researches

Number	Title of the research	Time of data collection	Place of data collection	Target group	Methodology	Product	Leader of the research	Finance
VI.	Junior student mentors 2009/2010.		Szeged, Hódmezővásárhely	student mentors started working in the academic year of 2009/2010.	interview	interview	Péter Csempesz, József Balázs Fejes	-
VII.	Szeged Study 2009	03-04. 2009.	Szeged	adult population of Szeged	survey	questionnaires, N= 2400	Dr. Gábor Feleky	USZ Department of Sociology
VIII.	Teacher research 2009	05-06. 2009.	Szeged, Hódmezővásárhely, Kiskunhalas, Orosháza	the teachers of the public educational institutions maintained by the local municipality	survey	questionnaires, N=2150	Norbert Szűcs	DARTKE association
IX.1	Szeged Public Education Equality Analysis	2007. 09. - 2010. 02.	Szeged	the educational system of Szeged, institution leaders, local decision makers, education officers	observation, interview, information sheet, content analysis	public educational equality analysis	Helga Andl, Norbert Szűcs	suliNova Kht.
IX.2	Szeged Region Public Education Equality Analysis	09. 2007. - 03. 2010.	Szeged Region	the educational system of Szeged Region, institution leaders, local decision makers, education officers	observation, interview, information sheet, content analysis	public educational equality analysis	Benkő Beáta , Kocsisné Norbert Szűcs	suliNova Kht.
IX.3	Hódmezővásárhely Public Education Equality Analysis	09-12. 2007.	Hódmezővásárhely	the educational system of Hódmezővásárhely, institution leaders, local decision makers, education officers	observation, interview, information sheet, content analysis	public educational equality analysis	Norbert Szűcs, Aranka Varga	suliNova Kht.
IX.4	Hódmezővásárhely Region Public Education Equality Analysis	09.2007. -02. 2010.	Hódmezővásárhely Region	the educational system of Hódmezővásárhely Region institution leaders, local decision makers, education officers	observation, interview, information sheet, content analysis	public educational equality analysis	Norbert Szűcs	suliNova Kht.

3. RESULTS

3.1. The review of the stakeholders in the desegregation process

After analysing numerous sources of data, it became clear that the key element of educational desegregation is the realisation of social consensus. In the support of local desegregation aspiration, there is a critical level. Without reaching this level the success of desegregation can only be temporal or administrative. There must be at least one group of stakeholders that is significantly involved in desegregation, is highly informed, has the skill of good interest enforcement and its strategy is proactive. The communication and activity of these supporting stakeholders affect other groups; as a result they may differentiate their opinion on the question, become less dismissive or even supportive. The process itself is dynamised from the point of view of the stakeholders.

The stakeholders supporting educational desegregation can be formal or informal. The group initiating the process is more likely to be formal, although desegregation can be generated from the “bottom” through the operation of a grassroots organisation, or can be conducted from “above” by the local political decision makers. In both cases a professionally planned strategy or an ad-hoc process can also be realised.

More segments of the local society support the process of desegregation more likely is the chance of the success. For this reason it is important to analyse the standpoint of stakeholders in connection with desegregation either in the planning or in the analysing phase. In the dissertation I characterised the standpoint of stakeholders in connection with desegregation both in Szeged and in Hódmezővásárhely in the academic year of 2007/2008. In the analysis I evaluated the 12 groups on the basis of the following aspects: (1) homogeneity, (2) information acquired, (3) interest enforcement, (4) activity, (5) tendency and (6) attitude. After developing the methodology of the analysis, on the basis of the results I also determined the idealtypical process of education desegregation.

Summarising the analysis of stakeholders in Szeged and Hódmezővásárhely, I may state that educational desegregation programs with real and permanent effects are reflective, proactive and most importantly deliberative: those who generate and/or conduct desegregation discuss, in the local society, with the members of the stakeholders the reason, the aims and methodology of the process. Their intention is the clear, less dogmatic, informal and argument based communication. Besides clearly defining the basic professional and ethical principles, they react sensitively and adoptively to the suggestions of the different segments in stakeholders.

3.2 The evaluation of the theoretical preconceptions

In case of the towns in the case studies the statement: “In case of the conscious desegregation intention of the local government, the key figures of local desegregation are the maintainers of the non-municipal schools” do not stand. In Szeged due to the number of population, the extensiveness of public educational system and the low ratio of the pupils going to non-municipal maintained schools these institutions did not affect the process of desegregation, despite the fact, that in case of cooperation they could significantly support it. In Hódmezővásárhely the church maintained and voluntary schools could easily become the key figures in the desegregation process. By starting a new segregation mechanism, they could turn into the beneficiaries of the intentions of the municipality. The conscious and committed town leadership could prevent and defend it by planning and pressure.

I do not reject this preconception only modify it. In multi-school towns smaller than the examined ones, in case of the conscious desegregation intention of the local government, the key figures of local desegregation are the maintainers of the non-municipal schools. In a smaller education system, where the number of the multiply-disadvantaged pupils is higher, the desegregation strategy of only one non-municipal maintained school could make the integration initiatives impossible.

The empirical researches confirmed the theoretical preconception which states the public education desegregation can only be successful where minimal social consensus is present. In the Szeged desegregation program the town leadership always stood by the values of public education integration.

The leader of the office of education internalised the desegregation norms even more obviously than the political decision makers. They could not pass on their values to the colleagues working lower level of the system. The school principals could not internalised the values of public education integration, therefore they could not adopt it on the level of teacher staff. The opposition and indifference of teachers entail the loss of potential cooperation of majority parents and students.

In Szeged the minimum level of the necessary social consensus was created by the local civil sector. The organisations presented in the case study, with the coordination of disadvantage-compensating program, not only helped the academic and social integration of the pupils coming from the segregated school, but also made it possible to the supporters of educational integration to get organized and to show their strength in the society.

The position of the government and city administration in Hódmezővásárhely was clear and consistent from the beginning: the educational desegregation program related to restructuring the school system was the key to solve the medium and long term social problems of the community, and to ensure a peaceful development and economic success of the local society. The mayor represented the true values of the integration, clearly internalized norms, therefore an important part of the Mayor's Office staff and heads of educational institutions became committed. They who did not agree with the main objective had to accept integration manifestly, because a strong consensus was present in relation to the rejection of segregation. Not only the schools, but the majority of teachers and parents also accepted it and on the contrary, they considered educational integration desirable. Significant policy debates have not occurred in the relatively unipolar local politics.

The desegregation program was not initiated because of external pressure on the town leaders, but rather they generated the process themselves. Since the program was well-prepared and well-communicated as part of a complex strategy, the relevant professional and social preparation was possible. The media communication made it possible to bring the news about the desegregation to people living in Hódmezővásárhely, and as a result they turned to the entire process and results with confidence. Not surprisingly, a significant proportion of local people did not agree at all with the integration of poor social status families, especially with children of Roma origin and the radical transformation of institutions. However, the communication was deliberative concerning quantitative and qualitative terms. Its effectiveness is comparable to a professionally organized deliberative public opinion survey: the local society was highly interested in the problem, they continuously received information on the topic through polemic arguments (ÖRKÉNY-SZÉKELYI, 2005).

The analysis of the Ktv. 66. § proved that preconception which states that “the category of multiply-disadvantaged child/pupil is the adequate indicator for the promotion of the mobility of underclass groups only in the social context where integration is accepted” is true. It is the interest of many own and settlements to manipulate the rate of multiply-disadvantaged pupils to hide segregation.

The analysis of the Student Mentoring Program showed that even the motivated, skilled student mentors were shocked by the burden of professional challenge and responsibility. Although they acknowledged the use of the theoretical training, they lacked the possibilities for practise. They had the feeling that they entered the school without methodological knowledge. Thus, the Student Mentoring Program reached its secondary aim: it was proved that during the mentoring work, the student mentors such knowledge and approach that makes them capable to give more adequate answer to the problems in connection with multiply-disadvantaged pupils.

In Szeged without the Student Mentoring Program desegregation would surely fail. In Hódmezővásárhely the use of Integrated Pedagogical System was the insurance for the implementation of integrated education. It can be stated that without the Integrated Pedagogical System and further disadvantage-compensating programs only the level of rigid integration could be reached.

The case studies presented in the dissertation and the analysis of the stakeholders showed several methods how to affect a desegregation program. Although there are no certain recipes, as the planning of each desegregation program depends on the local society and the characteristic of the education system. It has become evident that in long term the deliberative desegregation is successful. In the deliberation process significant part of the stakeholders become supportive of the educational integration, they internalise its norm system and become interested in the upkeep of the desegregation results.

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