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**THE REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF SPORT ORGANIZATIONS
AS A FUNCTION OF POLITICAL CLEAVAGES**

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Regional variation is observed in the distribution of social activity which is manifested not only as quantitative accumulation but also as qualitative differences. In modern sport the quantitative regional variation in industrialized societies is connected with the regional variation particularly with the degree of industrialization (Euler 1953, 175-180). This means for instance in Finland the quantitative relative accumulation of all kinds of sport activities in the cities and urban areas of the industrial southern Finland (Kiviahol1970b, 1971). Besides quantitative accumulation, sport has undergone qualitative regional differentiation. In a study dealing with the relative support of national central sport federations the Finnish Central Sports Federation (SVUL), the Workers' Sport Federation (TUL), the Central League of Workers' Sport Clubs (TUK), the Central Federation of Swedish Sports Organizations in Finland (CIF), and the Finnish Football Association (SPL) within economic areas (Kiviaho 1970b, 25) it was found that the support varies fairly much between the different economic areas.

A detailed examination of the various central organizations' support areas which has been done at the level of communes, indicates that the relative support of the different central organizations is almost entirely independent of the distribution of the membership density¹⁾ of all organizations and can be explained by a different kind of approach.

A more detailed examination revealed another fact, which has a relevant bearing on the present study, namely that the municipalities in which the different organizations are strongly or weakly supported are regionally grouped into separate areas, and each is a stronghold of some one of the organizations. SVUL is most strongly supported in southern, western and southwestern Finland, TUL in the urban areas of southern and central Finland and in the rural communes of eastern and northern Finland, TUK in the urban areas of southern and southwestern Finland, CIF in the Swedish-speaking coastal areas, and SPL in the towns and urban areas of southern and central Finland and the adjoining municipalities (Kiviaho 1971).

The present study is based on the notion that the changes of social structure and the features of social structure are related to the spreading and organizing of the sport movement. The study will concentrate on those factors that cause regional differences in the support of different central organizations. The purpose is to create a descriptive model in which certain features of social structure and behavior can be related to features which describe the support of central sport organizations.

1) In the whole country the membership density correlated with SVUL $-.15$, with TUL $.17$, with TUK $.14$, with SPL $.16$ and with CIF $-.05$.

Factors affecting the choice of sport organization

The birth of separate sport organizations is also in Finland linked with the differences between linguistic and social groups due to social circumstances. At the end of the last century sport spread first among the middle and upper social classes through their own associations, youth and pupil organizations. The labour sport movement also became part of political labour movement towards the end of the 19th century through clubs which were established by workers' associations and trade unions (Halila 1959, 73-87).

The organizational division of Finnish sport movement into the Workers' Sport Federation (TUL) and the Finnish Gymnastic and Sports League (SVUL, from 1961 called the Finnish Central Sport Federation) dates back to the civil war of 1918. SVUL was officially established in 1906, and TUL 1919 through the initiative of 56 clubs expelled from SVUL, because they took an active part in the civil war on the red side. In addition to these two central organizations Finland has a separate Swedish organization the Central Federation of Swedish Sports Organizations in Finland (CIF) formed in 1912, a central organization for soccer and bandy called the Finnish Football Association (SPL) set up in 1907, and the central League of Workers' Sports Clubs (TUK) which was formed in 1959 by the clubs that were expelled or withdrew from TUL.

Historically, the organizational division of the Finnish sport movement into several central sport federations is thus connected with linguistic and social group differences caused by social circumstances, which differences still appear to affect the regional support of central sport federations. The support of sport organizations

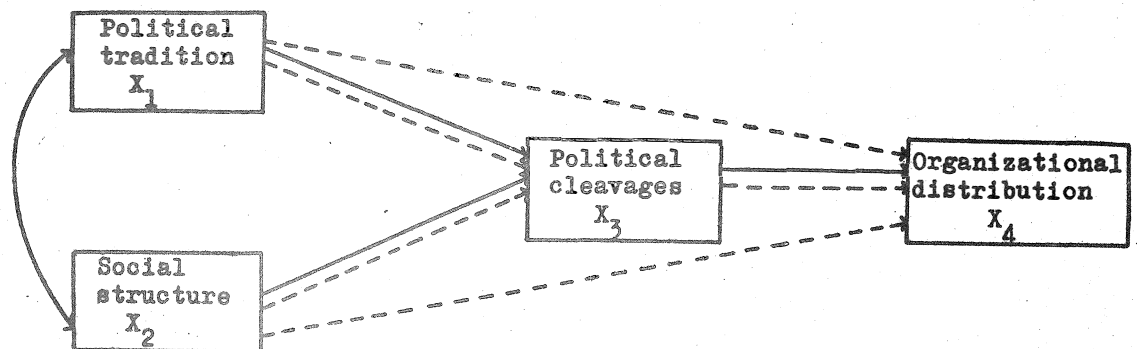
appears to have a close connection with the support of political ideologies and with the regional differences between the two linguistic groups, as is shown by charts which illustrate the distribution of political support and the location of the different organizations' support and core areas (Rantala 1971) and by preliminary analyses and by interview questionnaire results (Kiviaho 1970, 138-143, 1971, 1972). Historically it is evident that the birth and stabilization of the Finnish political system and the birth and stabilization of sport organizations are related events both in terms of time and substance. The social set-up as it was shaped at the beginning of the century, i.e. the differences between linguistic and social groups, is reflected in and affects both present political life and the organizational activities of sport (see e.g. Lipset & Rokkan 1967, 50). In fact, it has been found in many connections also in Finland that political tradition is one of the most central factors that determine and account for political behavior (Allardt & Pesonen 1967; Sänkiahö 1968, 112-173) together with certain structural variables (Allardt 1963; Sänkiahö 1958, 173). Therefore, it appears natural to assume that political tradition has a great effect also on the present support of sport organizations. It is equally obvious that neither political or organizational tradition nor political and organizational support can survive in a situation in which the structural preconditions, i.e. the social basis of support, are totally lacking (Allardt & Pesonen 1967). The political cleavages of a given period measured, for instance, by means of the support of the left and the right are the result of different kinds of structural and traditional factors, as is the distribution of organizational support. Thus political tradition and social structure influence organizational distribution both directly and through political cleavages. In Figure 1 these connections are indicated by dotted lines. One

may, however, alternatively assume that while a suitable political cleavage has been necessary at the initial stage of different organizations, it still ultimately determines organizational distribution and precedes it. These relationships have been indicated by unbroken lines.

If the assumptions incorporated in the model are valid, the correlation between political cleavages and organizational distribution should be higher than the correlations of political tradition and social structure with organizational distribution, in other words $r_{34} > r_{14}$ or r_{24} .

FIGURE 1.

The effects of political tradition, social structure and political cleavages on organizational distribution.



Similarly, the control of political cleavages should account for the correlations between organizational distribution and political tradition or social structure i.e. $r_{14.3} = 0$ and $r_{24.3} = 0$. Further, the political cleavages should account for a larger proportion of the variance of organizational distribution than political tradition and social structure combined and approximately as much as all the factors together, i.e. $R_{4(3)}^2 > R_{4(21)}^2$ and $R_{4(3)}^2 \approx R_{4(321)}^2$.

The purpose of the study is, therefore, to examine to what extent political cleavages can be regarded as the mechanism through which the effects of political tradition and social structure on organizational distribution are reflected, and what are the direct and indirect relations between these factors and organizational distribution.

Research material and variables

The research material covers all Finnish communes (with the exception of the communes of the island of Ahvenanmaa and four minor municipalities according to the commune division of 1960. The material consists of 73 towns, 455 rural communes, or the total of 528 communes. The data concerning the support of sport organizations have been obtained from the club-wise information collected and filed by central sport federations and their district organizations. The variables that describe the number of organization members by commune are mainly from 1965, but in some cases the data had to be complemented with the corresponding data of 1964 or 1966. A more detailed description of data collection and its reliability has been presented elsewhere (Kiviaho 1970b, 2-5).

The study is limited to organized sport activities of central sport federations and their members, and only the Finnish Central Sports Federation (SVUL) and the Workers' Sport Federation (TUL). The other smaller central organizations have been omitted from the analysis: The Central League of Workers' Sport Clubs (TUK), the Finnish Football Association (SPL) whose member clubs represent all central organizations, and the Central Federation of Swedish Sports Organizations in Finland (CIF) which is the sport organization of the Swedish-speaking population only. The omission of these central organizations naturally makes it more difficult to obtain

a general idea of the role of political factors in the organizational life of sport. The decision can, however, be motivated by the simplification of the methods of analysis and by the fact that the combined membership of SVUL and TUL covers c. 85 % of sport organization membership and their district organizations cover roughly the whole country. There were a total of 344 communes or 67 % of all communes, in which only SVUL and/or TUL were represented. Since the analysis contains only such communes in which only SVUL and/or TUL are represented, the dependent variable - organizational distribution - has been measured with the proportion of TUL supporters from the total number of sport club members in a commune.

Voting behavior has been chosen instead of party membership to describe political tradition and cleavages, because participation in party activities varies in different social classes. Thus, for instance, the supporters of the leftist parties have generally been found to be more active in party affairs than the supporters of the rightwing parties who in turn are more active in voluntary organizations (Blom 1971).

Political cleavages have been measured with the proportion of the votes for the leftist parties the Social Democratic Party (SDP), the Social Democratic League (TPSL), the Finnish People's Democratic League (SKDL) from the total amount of votes in the national election of 1966 (SVT XXIX A:29) or a year later than the data of organizational distribution. Political tradition has been measured with the proportion of the votes for the leftwing parties from the total amount of votes in the national election of 1929 (SVT XXIX A:14). The election of 1929 has been chosen as the indicator of political tradition mainly because a second leftist party (the present SKDL) in addition to the Social Democratic Party took part in the national election.

The selection of the factors of social structure is difficult because it has been found in several studies that the social background of organizational and party support is heterogeneous and complex (Allardt & Pesonen 1967; Kiviaho 1970a, 140; Sänkiaho 1968, 173). Earlier it has been found, however, that the support of SVUL is connected with agricultural predominance and the support of TUL with industrialization, and the correlations between the variables of organization support and structural factors indicated that other structural variables have clearly lower correlations with organizational support (Kiviaho 1970a, 138-143). Similarly, social class has been found to be significant in the selection of sport organization, SVUL being mainly the organization of farmers and middle or upper classes and TUL almost exclusively the organization of industrial workers and the lower class (Kiviaho 1972). On the basis of these studies social structure has been measured here with variable which shows the proportion of the population employed in industry (SVT VI, C:103, IV).

Methods of analysis

At an earlier stage of the present study (Kiviaho 1970b, 1971) the chartogram technique has been mainly used to describe regional differences, since compared with statistical methods it has been found to simplify and illustrate better the observed phenomena. In this part, however, the relations between groups of variables are analyzed by statistical methods. The purpose of the study is to account for the regional differences in the support of central sport organizations by analyzing how organizational distribution is related to political factors. The relations of organizational

distribution to political cleavages, political tradition and social structure are first examined on the basis of correlation coefficients. In further analyses, however, the statistical methods must be such that they make it possible (1) in the analysis of the relationship between organizational distribution and political cleavages to control or partition off other factors which affect organizational distribution in this case political tradition and social structure and (2) to examine the mediating role of political cleavages in the relations of political tradition and social structure to organizational distribution. The former problem is examined with the partial correlation method by controlling the effects of political tradition and social structure and the latter problem - the causal relations between variables - using the same technique by controlling political cleavages (see e.g. Blalock 1962; 1964, 61-94). In addition, the proportion from the total variance accounted for by the variables is analyzed by means of multiple correlation coefficients, and the variables' relative direct and indirect effects on organizational distribution by means of path analysis (see e.g. Duncan 1966)¹⁾.

1) Path analysis is a method which enables the testing of causal relations between variables. It makes it possible to estimate the direct and indirect effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable by means of path coefficients. Where the correlation coefficient expresses how much of the relationship between variables has been explained, the path analysis expresses the nature of the relationship.

Results

The intercorrelations of the variables are presented in Table 1. They indicate that all correlations are positive and rather high. It appears that organizational distribution is more closely connected with political cleavages than with political tradition or social structure. Besides, political cleavages account for one third of the variance of organizational distribution. On the other hand, the result indicates that the variables are not only related with organizational distribution but also interrelated. On account of this, the connection between political cleavages and organizational distribution must be examined in a situation in which political tradition and social structure are controlled separately and at the same time. The results are presented in Table 2.

The control of political tradition and social structure weakens the connection between political cleavages and social structure the proportion of explained variance dropping from 28 per cent to 14 per cent when tradition is controlled, to 19 per cent when structure is controlled and to 10 per cent when both factors are controlled. However, the partial correlation and the amount of explained variance remain fairly high and indicate that political cleavages have a significant direct effect on organizational distribution.

TABLE 1. Intercorrelations of the variable (N = 344)

		1.	2.	3.
1. Political tradition	(→ left)			
2. Social structure	(→ industr.)	.31		
3. Political cleavages	(→ left)	.76	.64	
4. Organizational distribution	(→ TUL)	.40	.33	.53

TABLE 2. The correlations and partial correlations of political cleavages with organizational distribution when political tradition and social structure are controlled separately and simultaneously (N = 344).

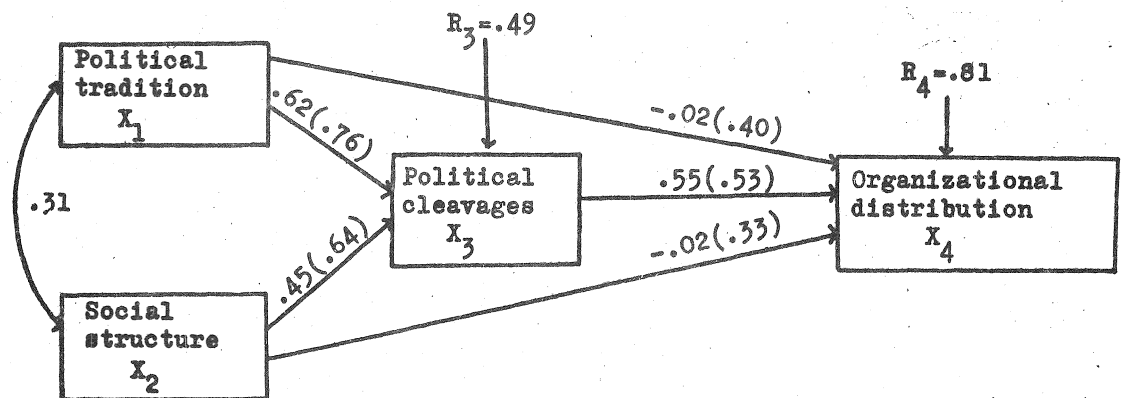
Independent variable	Dependent variable	Controlled variable	Partial correlation	Explained variance (%)
Political cleavages	Organizational distribution	-	.53	28
Political cleavages	Organizational distribution	Political tradition	.38	14
Political cleavages	Organizational distribution	Social structure	.44	19
Political cleavages	Organizational distribution	Political tradition and social structure	.31	10

The correlation .08 and .12 are significant at the 5 % and 1 % level of confidence, respectively, with a sample of 344 (one tail test)

So far the analysis has not clarified the position of political cleavages in the explanation to organizational distribution in relation to political tradition and social structure, which is the second purpose of the study. On the basis of the arguments presented above it was assumed that the causal relation between the variables is such that political tradition and social structure affect organizational distribution directly and/or through political cleavages.

In the latter case it was assumed that $r_{14.3} = 0$ and $r_{24.3} = 0$. The computed value of the first equation is .00, and that of the second equation -.02. Therefore, at least in the present material the effect of political tradition and social structure on organizational distribution seems to be channeled entirely through political cleavages. In addition to testing the validity of the model, it is worthwhile to examine the relative strengths of the various variables' direct and indirect connections with organizational distribution by means of path coefficients (which in this case are partial regression coefficients) (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2. Path analysis concerning the effects of political tradition, social structure and political cleavages on organizational distribution (correlation coefficients within brackets and path coefficients without brackets).



$$R_3^2(21) = .76$$

$$R_4^2(321) = .28$$

The model makes no assumption about the relation between political tradition and social structure, although political tradition might well be assumed to influence the social structure of the commune e. g. through the encouragement of industrialization which is typical of the political left.

The result supports the above correlational analysis and indicates that the effects of political tradition and social structure on organizational distribution are mediated entirely through political cleavages. The same result is obtained in the multiple correlation analysis, because as assumed political cleavages alone account for the same amount (28 %) of the variance of organizational distribution as together with political tradition and social structure (28 %). The latter, in turn, account for less (20 %) of the variance of organizational distribution than political cleavages alone, but as much as 76 per cent of the variance of political cleavages. In addition to the fact that path analysis confirms the presented causal interpretation and shows the various distribution, the size of the last-mentioned residual path coefficient as well as the smallness of the explained variance of the multiple correlation show that the employed variables can account for only part of the variance of the dependent variable. This may be due to several factors. First, it is possible that the reliability of the variable measuring organizational distribution is not very good, which, however, is difficult to check, because it represents the data obtained from the central sport federations' files collected by local sport clubs. The data may contain both erroneous and incomplete observations. Second, the model may lack some factor or factors which have significant effects on organizational distribution, which have not

come up in previous analyses containing several explanatory variables (Kiviahho 1970a). Such factor might be, for instance, the fact that in some commune or area there may be active club officials whose influence may be so great that in partly cancels the effects of political-ideological and structural factors.

Summary and discussion

The initial stage of industrialization in Finland which dates back to the middle of the 19th century, created the material conditions necessary for the organization and spreading of the international sport movement in Finland. Also the differentiation of sport organizations based on the then prevailing political-ideological circumstances is linked with the same social situation, though at a later stage. The clash of interests between the working class and the bourgeois led to a situation in which the working class and the middle class became self-sufficient in sport as well as in many other fields of social life. The effect of social situation on the birth of sport organizations and the effect of political situation on their differentiation has been essential. The purpose of this study was to examine to what extent sport organizations at the moment reflect social and political reality and to what extent they represent "the past in the present", i.e. are out of touch with the present situation (Kekkonen 1971).

The starting point of the present study has been the assumption that political factors are essential in sport organization policy. The material was gathered from all Finnish communes (both urban and rural) with the exception of the communes of Ahvenanmaa island

and four small rural communes, but final analysis contains only those communes in which only SVUL and/or TUL were represented. Although the purpose was to make causal inferences about the effects of political factors on organizational support, the dependent variable does not represent a longitudinal variable but a cross section variable of one period, because a longitudinal material concerning sport organization activities is not easy to collect due to the lack or inadequacies of local data and to the differences in the data of different central sport federations, and the difficulties in tracking down missing data over a longer period of time.

The results indicate that the political cleavages of a region have an essential role in accounting for the distribution of the region's sport organizations support. Political cleavages have, in the first place, a rather great main effect on organizational support, but at the same time they seem to mediate practically all the influence of political tradition and social structure. However, it is to be noted that these variables account for approximately only one third of the total variance of organizational distribution, which means that some factor or factors have been omitted which are central factors in explaining organizational support. However, the main purpose of the present study was to examine specifically the position and effects of political factors rather than to give a thorough account of all factors involved in organizational alignment.

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