

Sport and inclusion. The case of Tam Tam basketball

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Nowadays, in Italy, sport is officially recognized as a significant social and economic phenomenon that plays a pivotal role in achieving the strategic goals of the European Union. In 2023, the Italian Constitution recognized sport's social and educational importance for the first time in Article 33. The extensive literature has already established that sport is an effective tool for promoting inclusion (Schaillee, Haudenhuyse, Bradt, 2019).

This paper examines the inclusion practices of Tam Tam Basket, a youth basketball club based in Castelvoturno. The team was established to provide opportunities for underprivileged youth and children of second and third-generation immigrants who cannot afford membership fees in other clubs. To delve into the reality of the situation, we employed a qualitative approach (Corbetta, 1999) consisting of two distinct phases, each utilizing different data collection techniques to gather information on the team's life experiences, inclusion practices, and conveyed values. The initial phase involved a Focus Group (Acocella, 2001) with the team players, followed by a case study (Feagin, Orum, Sjoberg, 2016) featuring an interview with the team's president and founder.

The study found that sports play an essential role as a social aggregator. To fully integrate migrant children into sports, multiple agencies (including educational institutions) need to intervene. Additionally, the study revealed that sports can be an effective tool for integration when used in an educational context rather than just in a competitive or sporting context.