"Sowing Seeds" and Its Efficiency.
Case Study about the *Tanoda* Programme of the Greek Catholic Church in the Huszár District in Nyíregyháza (Hungary)

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Abstract. The general laws of the school career of disadvantaged students have been studied by Hungarian researchers for decades (Kozma 1975, Papp 1997, Liskó 2002, Imre 2002ab, etc.). In Hungary, there are several remedial education programmes for the disadvantaged and talent development programmes for the gifted. Many *tanoda*s (special afternoon schools offering extra-curricular activities) were established in Hungary when the country's accession to the European Union brought about an increase in the number of grant opportunities. Scientific interest in the effectiveness of compensatory/ remedial education programmes, and thus *tanoda*s, increased enormously (Lányi 2008, Krémer 2008, Fejes 2014, etc.). Our case study examines the operation of a church-run *tanoda* in one of the most disadvantaged regions of the country, in an area with Roma majority population in a county seat. Local children from 12 elementary schools go to this institution, primarily for remedial education and talent development. We conducted our research in the autumn of 2014 at the request of the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development (OFI), as members of the CHERD-Hungary research group. Our findings are based on the content analysis of the operational documents of the *Tanoda* (Organizational and Operational Regulations, House Rules, Pedagogical Programme), the analysis of the interviews with the teachers at the *Tanoda* (English teacher, Hungarian language and literature teacher, identity development coach, personal development coach, teacher of self-knowledge-spiritual guide, and the professional supervisor), and on the data from a focus group interview with 9 children from the *Tanoda*. Everyone expressing their opinion about the operation of the *Tanoda* confirmed that the complex activities of the *Tanoda* do not only help children to catch up, avoid dropping out of school, and even form plans about further education, but they also provide spiritual,

psychological, and mental support to the children. The environment provided by the *Tanoda* enables students to realize their human dignity and shape their everyday life, relationships, and future.

Keywords: talent development, *tanoda* programme, church-run schools

Introduction

There are several programmes and forms of support providing remedial education for disadvantaged children in Hungary, such as the Sure Start Programme, the School Integration Programme, the Tanoda Programme, the Útravaló (Provisions) Scholarships, the Arany János Programme, second chance programmes, etc. (Varga 2014). The need for remedial education programmes are substantiated by the findings of Kelemen (2003), namely that from the countries analysed in the PISA studies in 2000 one of the countries where the cultural capital of the families had the greatest influence on the performance of students in the study was Hungary.

*Tanoda*s (Hungarian terminology, representing a programme for the remedial education of disadvantaged children) became widespread about 10 years ago (Fejes 2014). Although there had been programmes with similar aims earlier, such initiatives have increased significantly after Hungary joined the European Union and the number of grant opportunities increased (Lányi 2008, Krémer 2008, Fejes 2014). The operation of the majority of *tanoda*s depends exclusively on grants (Németh 2009).

In our study, we briefly examine the relationship between disadvantage and education, describe the origins of the disadvantage compensation mission of the Greek Catholic Church, then we describe a church-run *tanoda* that was established in the spring of 2013 in the Huszár district in Nyíregyháza, Hungary.

Disadvantage and education

Disadvantage as a concept has several aspects, but this study focuses on disadvantage from the aspect of education. As a result of changes implemented in 2013 and of the parallel harmonization of law, disadvantage, as used in education policy, was defined in the Child Protection Act (Section 67/A of Act 31 of 1997 on child protection and guardianship administration as amended by Section 45 of Act 27 of 2013), but it also applies for the education sector (Varga 2013). As a result of the amendment in 2013, several disadvantaged students and students with multiple disadvantages were excluded from this category, and as a result of the exclusion from benefits the probability of dropping out increases, and these students cannot take part in programmes aimed at disadvantaged children (Varga 2014).

In the sociology of education, there are several approaches to disadvantage. The fundamental work by Kozma (1975) played a major part in the spread of this concept in Hungary. The Child Protection Act (Act 31 of 1997) lists only the low qualifications and unemployment of the parents and insufficient living conditions (Varga 2013); as opposed to this, sociological and/or pedagogical literature also consider the following as disadvantage: the low social status of the parents (e.g. Boudon 1981, Andor-Liskó 2000), geographic disadvantages (e.g. Imre 2002a, Papp Z. 2011, Süli-Zakar and Lenkey 2014, Garami 2014), belonging to a linguistic, cultural or ethnic minority (e.g. Papp 1997, Imre 2002a, Torgyik 2005, Papp Z. 2011), the lack of a stable family background (e.g. Papp 1997), disadvantages resulting from the characteristics of the educational system (e.g. Imre 2002a, Fejes and Józsa 2005), problems with socialization and related problems, e.g. learning difficulties (e.g. Weiss 1986), the lack of access to culture (e.g. Báthory and Falus 1997), and other, unlisted factors.

The lack of a socialization medium preparing children for social integration and the lack of an inter- or intragenerational network to support school performance also lead to disadvantage and may result in learning difficulties (Pusztai 2004a, b, 2009; Kozma et al. 2005). In order to fight this, it would be essential to establish proper teacher–student relationships, but the lack of that makes dealing with problems very difficult and it may also be related to the inappropriate social behaviour of children (Weiss 1986; Pusztai 2004b, 2009; Györgyi-Imre 2012). It is not only teacher–student relationships that are decisive in school performance, there is also a correlation with teacher–parent relationships (Coleman et al. 1982; Lannert and Szekszárdi 2015). According to some interpretations, social inequalities are reproduced in school (Bourdieu 1978), and it is doubtful whether schools can do anything to contribute to the success of disadvantaged children in school.

A study by Imre (2002a: 64) provides a multidimensional approach to disadvantage. The first segment of the model described by the author consists of factors called "inequality dimensions outside the educational system": these are factors that are present in a student's life even before entering the educational system, such as social background, place of residence, gender, being a member of a minority and demographical features. The second segment includes attributes that lead to inequalities in the educational system and the third segment consists of output characteristics.

Research conducted by Liskó (2002) among teachers suggests that they consider the attitude of parents towards education and learning, and the lack of equipment and proper learning conditions at home as the main underlying problems behind the school performance of Roma children. This attitude of the parents may be explained by the theory of Boudon (1981), who contends that disadvantaged social groups tend to attribute success to luck and their own lack of success to bad luck, meaning they do not consider their future as something they can influence, and

therefore education is not really important to them. The theory of Boudon (1981) is confirmed by empirical data by Imre (2002b), who showed that a significantly lower proportion of parents with lower qualifications consider generating motivation to learn as a major task of schools than parents with higher qualifications.

The disadvantage compensation mission of the Greek Catholic Church

Several international studies exist about the mission of the Catholic Church that represents the commitment to disadvantaged children, which are based on a document by the Second Vatican Council. The Declaration on Christian Education (1965: 1) in the first point contends that:

> All men of every race, condition and age, since they enjoy the dignity of a human being, have an inalienable right to an education that is in keeping with their ultimate goal, their ability, their sex, and the culture and tradition of their country, and also in harmony with their fraternal association with other peoples in the fostering of true unity and peace on earth. For a true education aims at the formation of the human person in the pursuit of his ultimate end and of the good of the societies of which, as man, he is a member, and in whose obligations, as an adult, he will share.

Following the Second Vatican Council, the focus of Catholic education evidently shifted towards marginalized groups (Denig and Dosen 2009). There has been a perceivable change in the mission of Catholic schools as a result of the Catholic Church turning to the outside world, which was inspired by the documents of the Second Vatican Council. Instead of educating only the Catholic youth, the Church concentrated on a much larger group, and instead of protecting the faith, the focus shifted towards reaching out to the poor. Catechism became a religious and moral instruction, with a great emphasis on evangelization, community, holistic education, and prayer. Schools committed themselves to social justice and service (Denig and Dosen, 2009).

Studies have shown that all denominational institutions, "in addition to training, put great emphasis on education as well, and as a result they consider extracurricular activities, such as community building and leisure activities, very important" (Imre 2005: 475). Previous studies on denominational schools have shown that the religious commitment, the commitment to the specific denomination and the uniform values and norms of the teachers are essential to the successful operation of denominational schools (Pusztai 2005, 2009; Bacskai 2008). However, for the effectiveness of denominational schools, it is also crucial that schools and parents who enrol their children there have shared values (Coleman and Hoffer 1987, Dronkers 1996, Pusztai 2004).

The background of our study

In the administrative district of the municipality of Nyíregyháza, approximately 8-10% of the population is Roma, who mostly live in two large residential areas (Huszár District and Keleti District). Huszár District is only about 3 km from the centre of Nyíregyháza, but there is only one public transport route to this area, with infrequent service. Residential buildings are partly one-storey row houses converted from former military buildings (Viola Street, Dália Street), and there are some blocks of flats (Huszártér). According to data from a flash survey by the Child Welfare Centre (Gyermekjóléti Központ) in 2010, one fifth of the population have not even completed the 8-year elementary school (21.8%). More than half of the population have only completed the 8-year elementary school (56.4%). 18.6% of the population have completed their secondary education and have some vocational qualification. Crime and illegal money-making are prevalent in this district. Approximately 90% of the population live below the poverty line. According to the authors of the study, the hopelessness of the situation of those living here is made even worse by the prejudices of the majority population and usury.

The present study is based on the research we conducted in the autumn of 2014 at the request of the Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development (OFI),[1] as members of the CHERD-Hungary research group. In the course of our research, we analysed the content of the operational documents of the *Tanoda* (Organizational and Operational Regulations, House Rules, Pedagogical Programme) and conducted interviews with the teachers at the *Tanoda* (English teacher, Hungarian language and literature teacher, identity development coach – personal development coach –, teacher of self-knowledge-spiritual guide, and the professional supervisor), while also carried out a focus group interview with 9 children from the *Tanoda*. The length of the interviews vary; there are interviews of 30 minutes and of 90 minutes, and the focus group interview with the children is about 40 minutes. Most of the interviews were conducted in the elementary school building that hosts the *Tanoda*. In the course of the field work, we had the opportunity to observe the teachers, some of the children from the *Tanoda*, the classrooms, the chapel, and part of Huszár District, where the *Tanoda* is located. In a subsequent phase of our research, a documentary film was shot for educational purposes. In addition to the above, parents were also interviewed for this documentary.

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Description of the programme

According to the pedagogical programme of the *Tanoda* analysed in the study, "the primary target group of the project is children with multiple disadvantages living in Huszár District in Nyíregyháza (...) The secondary target group consists of the families – parents, grandparents, and siblings – of these children". Interviews and observations confirmed this, while it has to be added that according to the interviews the target group sometimes also included children in secondary school:

> This programme was planned for elementary school children in grades 5–8 and for students in grades 1–2 (grades 9–10) of secondary grammar schools, secondary schools, secondary vocational schools, and vocational schools, and the grant application was submitted accordingly. We have children from the 5th grade to the 9th grade. (Professional supervisor)

Geographically, the programme focused only on Huszár District in Nyíregyháza, even though people from other areas expressed their interest after the programme started, as a result of the high reputation it gained. Before the application was submitted, a preliminary needs assessment had been conducted, when 50-60 persons expressed their interest and wish to participate. In the course of the needs assessment and determining the range of would-be participants, the organizers had to fight the objection and reservations stemming from some negative experiences with a *Tanoda* which had formerly been operated in this area by another entity. In spite of this, the demand for this opportunity was substantial:

> We had to carry out a preliminary survey for the application, which meant we went through the district and assessed who would need this and who might have participated in similar programmes before. Since there has been another tanoda here, run by another organization as far as we know, and perhaps if people found that tanoda good, they would have liked to join, then they had... they would have the opportunity. So, first we assessed the environment, and we found that people were really interested in the tanoda, 60-70 children applied, not 30, so there are a lot... a lot of applicants. (Professional supervisor)

As the maximum number set in the application was 30, then 30 children needed to be chosen from the applicants. Selection was mostly based on the order of applications received, but there was also a preliminary meeting or talk between the organizers and the applicants to align possibilities with expectations and to explore motivations. Naturally, the intention to identify with the aims of the programme and co-operation were among the conditions. It was mentioned in the interviews several times that it was mostly the more motivated children that came to the *Tanoda*. However, interviewees also considered developing and maintaining the motivation of children as an important task.

The schedule of the programme is as follows: 4 times a week (from Monday to Thursday), from 4:15 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. children, divided into groups, take part in classes in 5 subjects: Hungarian, Mathematics, English, identity development, and self-knowledge development. Children are supposed to come to the *Tanoda* twice a week, but there are variations; most often children would like to come more frequently. However, according to the staff of the *Tanoda*, this is not good because one of their aims is for the children to learn individually at home, to experience that with the methods they have acquired they can study for written and oral tests on their own. On every *Tanoda* day, children study in three groups, and they attend classes on a rotating basis. The professional supervisor said that the staff had been the same from May 2013 when the programme started. Neither the children nor the teachers initiated a change, even though in the first few months finding a common ground and exploring the boundaries required a lot of effort from everyone, and according to the staff there were some problems, but children became more open and receptive over time. Development activities are conducted in small groups and individually, thus differentiated development is possible. Co-operative learning and the project method are considered the most important methods for organizing learning.

The objectives and functions of the *Tanoda*

Magvető Tanoda provides complex development with several objectives, most of which are determined by the grant announcement. Lannert et al. (2013) divided the main objectives of *tanoda*s in five main categories. In the following section, the operation of Magvető Tanoda is examined in the context of these objectives, then the special, additional objectives of this *tanoda* are described.

The first group is catching up programmes to fill knowledge gaps, which includes improving school results. The Pedagogical Programme emphasizes that providing catching-up programmes is not the primary objective, but improving school results is indicated among the objectives, and it is also supported by the House Rules, where help provided by specialized teachers is listed as one of the opportunities students have. In the *Tanoda* classroom, the development programme of the children is based on individual learning plans and is aimed at the improvement of their school results. Nevertheless, filling knowledge gaps and improving school results are accompanied by the increase in the children's motivation in relation to learning.

> (...) they also know, and they tell me, they boast and I am very happy, that I got a 4. There was an oral test in history. I got a 5, because we had prepared for it. (Identity development coach)

The Pedagogical Programme of the Tanoda lists the objectives of the institution, a key element of which is that children should consider learning as a value,

which indirectly helps decrease the drop-out rate and increase the children's intention to take part in further education. However, self-confident participation in learning activities is impossible without acquiring proper learning techniques.

General objectives in the second category include supporting regular school attendance and preventing dropping out, but children have many problems at school, most of which are a result of their socioeconomic disadvantages.

> Well, now, we can talk about how difficult is for them to integrate and what are the issues they have problems with, but from the lack of equipment or that their clothes are not as appropriate or as suitable as those of the children from the majority population, to what I think is the most serious, that while you don't need to confuse the problems of poverty with the problems of the Roma, but what I think the most serious is that they don't get help. (Hungarian teacher)

The lack of school equipment, problems with integration, patterns learned in the family, these are all factors of the children's motivation, which the staff at the *Tanoda* aim to develop and maintain. Our results are comparable to those of Liskó (2002), who says that teachers in her study consider the fact that Roma children are undermotivated as the main learning disadvantage besides insufficient learning conditions. When talking about the everyday problems of the children, several interviewees mentioned the problems between the teachers and students in the schools the children attend. The study by Györgyi and Imre (2012) analysing the conflicts between teachers and students found that students with less satisfactory results are more likely to get in conflicts with their teachers. Conflicts are also more common among those who feel there is no mutual respect in the teacher–student relationship and among those who do not perceive the school as an environment based on co-operation. Obviously, as the staff of the *Tanoda* deal with individual cases – at least on student level –, it may ease these teacher–student conflicts on the students' side, as they can discuss their problems, if not with the teacher concerned, at least with someone in a similar position, and the students at the *Tanoda* say that they cannot do this with their parents on the same level.

In the prevention of drop-out, maintaining contact with the parents is also important. In the course of our field-work, we saw that it is often the parents who take their children to the *tanoda*, so they are in daily contact with the staff, and there are also family programmes, as it is one of the aims to strengthen the role of the family, and they support co-operation in relation to finding solutions to the problems of the children and their families. It was considered important to get in touch with the families even before enrolment so that they could build a supportive relationship, which has been maintained ever since.

The third group consists of the development of social competencies, strengthening identity and establishing psychological balance, but Lannert et al.

(2013) do not use the term 'integration,' even though when dealing with this issue everyone involved and also all the documents considered socialization and improving integration as key issues in which identity development activities and different events are important. Activities which are life-like and are derived from conflict situations are considered important, as these help the integration of children and also stimulate their creativity.

Identity development in the *Tanoda* not only involves facilitated introduction to Roma culture and not only means embracing tradition, but children can share their everyday problems with the teacher they like the most, as they said in the focus group interview. This direct relationship is likely to stem from the fact that the identity development coach comes from a similar environment as the children, they share their culture, their place of residence, so this teacher can understand and identify with their problems, can give better advice and promote understanding, patience, acceptance, and perseverance. Crafts workshops are an integral part of identity development, where the skills and social competencies of the children both improve while they are working together.

Community programmes and the whole atmosphere of the *Tanoda* programme that supports community building make it possible to develop – often indirectly – personal and social competencies beyond learning skills. Programmes outside the regular schedule (e.g. going to the theatre, hiking, summer camps), which are apparently formative experiences for every participant, also contribute to community building. Parents and siblings can participate in some of these programmes:

> There was a kid from the tanoda; he went to the match with his father, and it was great for both of them, and on the bus they sang with the seminarians, made friendships, etc. So, this is again like there is an opportunity, and then we take these to... Because I think these are the things that can be more valuable than some lesson given, and then we tell them or we explain... They get something they couldn't get otherwise, something you can't teach in class, you have to experience it. (Spiritual guide)

Talking about these programmes, the external expert pointed out that without the *Tanoda*, these children would probably not be able to go on holiday, go camping or travel. The professional supervisor highlighted how motivated these children are when they go hiking or go to a musical, and how nicely they can behave, that they have never had any problem in restaurants, as now the children know how to order politely, for example. These programmes are important in the development of their social competencies, and it is important how they use the good manners they learned, which is an important part of integration.

In addition to remedial education, the programme of the *Tanoda* also involves talent development, which contributes to the achievement of the aims in the fourth group, namely the support for secondary or tertiary education. The *Tanoda*

strives to support the further education of the children, as several members of the staff put it: to bring out the best in the children, according to their skills. In relation to this issue, maintaining a relationship with the parents is also essential.

> There was a little girl, and, for example, when they are about to go to secondary school, and we are asked for help, and the parents come, together with their children, and parents sit in class watching how their children are doing. After that they go to the director, Kriszta, and they sit down together and ask for help, and ask about the opportunities, which school the children could go to, how they could bring out the best in them? (English teacher)

The fifth group consists of leisure activities and also the establishment of a "safe place". It is one of the special aims of the *Tanoda* to create a loving, inclusive and accepting atmosphere, as participants in the programme believe that it is in such environment where young people can develop effectively, and it is also ideal for the staff to perform their tasks.

> Although they told me that they don't like being at home. So this, that they don't have a small place of their own there where they could stay. Here they are together, and they have grown to like each other. And they look forward to this. That they are looked after here. They have things here, they have devices: a computer, a notebook. Then there is a large gym, where they can play football if they want. And there are people here who listen to them. This is what they are looking for here, this is what they want to hold on to. (Identity development coach)

A special sign of how attached the participants are to the programme is that when we asked the children if they would recommend the programme to others, they said no, and the real reason was only revealed after several further questions:

> Because we are jealous, I have got used to this, let it stay this way, don't let new people come. Honestly, I'm jealous, I don't like it when I have to share something this good, or share my friends. (Child from the Tanoda)

After further questions, they said that they would warmly recommend a similar *tanoda*, one they would not have to share.

> A: No one should come here.
> Q: I'll put it in another way. If a tanoda was to open, not here but in Debrecen, would you recommend it to other children?
> A: That one, yes.
> Q: Why?
> A: Because that's good, and this is not. This wouldn't be good for them... I would lie so that they wouldn't come here. (Interview excerpts from a discussion with a child from the Tanoda.)

It is important that the *Tanoda* is considered a "safe place" not only by the children, but also by their parents.

> They are comfortable when we are here, not (...) and wander around. They are happy that we are not at home. We aren't getting on their nerves. (Child from the Tanoda)

We consider elements related to the religious life of the *tanoda* as special objectives which cannot be included in the categories of general objectives above. These include the introduction to Christianity and Greek Catholic rites.

> (...) so that they have, they should have the feeling that they can turn to the church, and so that when they are grown up and have problems or spiritual conflicts, they will not be alone but think of Father András or other priests or seminarians and then maybe they will turn to them. (Spiritual guide)

As the *Tanoda* is sponsored by the Church, it was important for us to ask how the children feel when they are in the chapel, especially because the interviews with the teachers revealed that many children were not familiar with the teachings of the Church and the elements of religious practice before they joined the programme.

> We pray with Father András... and the singing. That's good. We love it. We learn prayers. Give your heart... And there is one, "we have come and we are going" (they sing). (Child from the Tanoda)

The other special objective of the *Tanoda* is that in order to provide complex social support – in addition to maintaining contact with the parents and the schools of the children – they get into contact with the social and healthcare sector if necessary, to support the children. This extended role was mentioned both in the documents and in the interviews, and it is also represented by the fact that participants are provided with a hot meal on the days they attend the *Tanoda*.

The effectiveness of the *Tanoda* and its measurability

Since the original objective of the research was to assess the impact of remedial education programmes, it was inevitable that interviewees should be asked about their opinion on the effectiveness of the *Tanoda* and also on the measurability of this effectiveness. Every expert asked considers the measurement of success important, but some of them doubt that real results are measurable and can be separated from other effects. Some even say that they do not have great results, only "smaller ones".

> Surely, it is possible. Maybe... you can tell how many of the children went to secondary school, how many of them went to college, and the like, you can cite numbers like this, but behind the numbers you will find people, and it is completely different. That in the life of a child who went to secondary school, and did so because he or she came here, and then got into a secondary school, you can start this way and measure things, but I don't know... (Spiritual guide)

Talking about measurement and effectiveness, several interviewees mentioned objective indicators that are included in the priorities of the grant application, such as going on to further education, decreasing class repetition and drop-out rates, and changes in school results. In the course of the interviews, we had the impression that even though experts often use the terminology of projects, they have real commitment towards the target group and the children in the *Tanoda.* However, it should be mentioned that objective indicators were never mentioned separately, but indicators considered subjective by recent research were mentioned in every interview, even with external experts. These indicators are difficult to measure, but are considered by the staff as great achievements of the *Tanoda.* Such factors that are difficult to measure but are considered real results, even success, include: the development of the social relationships, competencies, and openness of the children.

> There was a child who said, for example, "Hey, another glass of water!" – that was how he asked for a glass of water. And by now he has learned how he should ask, how he is supposed to behave for example in a restaurant or ask for something. (Professional supervisor)

The identity development coach can observe the behaviour of the children not only in the *Tanoda*, but also elsewhere:

> The way I see it that even here, in this district, a new layer has developed among the children, who say I don't swear, I don't destroy my environment, I say hello and I respect others. (Identity development coach)

As in the district where these children come from sanitary conditions and related standards are different from those of, let us say, the classmates of the children in the *tanoda*, the professional supervisor wanted to emphasize that the children have also developed in the area of hygiene since the programme started.

> I think that these children have learned a lot also in connection with hygiene. They have learned that they should wash their hands before they sit down to study and that they should wash their hands before they sit down to eat, and the like. (Professional supervisor)

Another area that is included in the objectives of the grant application is the development of learning methods, and the experts in the programme also mentioned this.

> First of all, the learning methods used by the children in our Tanoda are different, partly because they learn how to organize their homework. They learn how to learn the material they have to learn. The other group, I think, at least this is what we saw, that when children came here to the Tanoda, they didn't know which of their homework assignments they should do and how. How they should get down to learn history, for example. And, for example, they... their learning methods are now better than that of their classmates. (Professional supervisor)

The interview, the survey, and the test were mentioned among the methods. The professional supervisor of the *Tanoda* says it is anonymity that makes surveys successful. According to the personal experience of the professional supervisor, children are more honest if they can express their opinion anonymously, and that they voice their own opinions if their parents are not present. This is why students and their parents should be asked separately, when they are not together. In relation to the measurement of success, interviewees said that it takes at least a year before the effect of the *Tanoda* is visible.

The focus group interview revealed that children attribute their current school results mostly to the *Tanoda*, as teachers helped them to prepare for the retake exam when it was necessary or they did not have to repeat a grade due to their teachers' support. The children at the *Tanoda* say that the *Tanoda* provides them with the extra activities and extra attention they need to learn the material for which the explanation they got at school was not enough, for which they need more time, more patience, and individual explanation.

> They can explain it better than there [at school], as there are more children there, and here you go to a teacher and he or she explains it in a way that you understand. (Child from the Tanoda)

Experts in the programme said that they had plans for a follow-up programme for those who learned here, but these are only plans as no student has left the *Tanoda* yet. In this follow-up programme they wish to follow the path the students take and their life. It is not only the opinion of the students that is considered important but also the feedback from the parents.

> Yes, surely. Our sponsor, his Excellency, the Bishop, is our partner in this, that no... I would like to rethink it in a different framework... but we don't want to leave these kids alone. Especially those kids, and there are a lot of them, who, I think – I truly believe – could achieve something if they got support. (Hungarian teacher)

It is interesting that – even though it was mentioned in another context that the children at the *Tanoda* are greatly influenced by the school, they go to and by their teachers, classmates, and schoolmates when discussing how to measure success – it did not come up that the teachers of the children in the *Tanoda* should be asked, although according to previous research on *tanoda*s they maintain a relationship with the school of the children while they go to the *Tanoda* (Németh 2008). It would be interesting to examine whether these teachers have experienced some changes. When children go to secondary school, the former teachers could provide a more detailed profile of the children, and the profile provided by the old and the new school could be compared.

The *Tanoda* examined in this study, like many similar programmes, was established for a specific time period, which is usually the duration of the project – 2 years in this case. During this period, children get used to it, but once the

project is completed, they have to be left alone as there are no funds to carry on the programme. It might be different with this *tanoda*: what they are hoping for is another grant before the project is over.

> We definitely don't want to leave these children alone, so if there is no new tanoda programme – of course, we already know that we would like to apply again if it is announced... And when will it be announced? But when it is announced. We will develop an evangelization programme within the church, but we will not leave it alone, at least I won't. Really, as I said, we have the support of our sponsor, as it is very important to the bishop of our diocese. Remedial education, multiple disadvantages, deep poverty, people left behind – he is always dedicated and supportive. I have been promised financial support as well. I think I can be very hopeful about the future. Yes, definitely, we will be able to raise funds, either from the government or from our own sources. (Professional supervisor)

In his overview of the successful grant applications of several years, Fejes (2014) found that the majority of *tanoda*s only work for one project cycle. The effective operation of the *tanoda*s is hindered by the ad hoc nature of grant funding. Continuous operation is almost impossible without a proper financial background and it also affects pedagogical work (Lányi 2008, Fejes 2014). The sponsor of the *Tanoda* in our study, however, is dedicated to the issue, which makes the prospects for the future operation of the *Tanoda* brighter.

Summary

The present study was inspired by the fact that even though there are several programmes supporting disadvantaged students, their real effectiveness is yet to be measured. Although several studies have been written about the *Tanoda* programmes (Németh 2009, Fejes 2014, etc.), the effectiveness of these programmes have not been clearly proven or refuted. Perhaps the effectiveness of these programmes should not be examined without taking into consideration the local situation as every case is unique. Our study attempted to describe a unique case, highlighting the multiple interpretations of disadvantage, on the one hand, and the disadvantage compensation mission of the Greek Catholic Church, on the other hand.

Magvető Tanoda lays special emphasis on cognitive, social, and emotional development and on providing a safety net for the children. What makes the *Tanoda* significant is that it provides loving and individual care for children in the afternoons, something they not always get at home. The environment provided by the *Tanoda* enables students to realize their human dignity and shape their everyday life, relationships, and future. The importance of keeping in contact

with the parents should be mentioned as they are the primary caregivers with whom the *Tanoda* needs to find a common ground.

One of the priorities of the *Tanoda* is to enhance the integration of the children through the development of social competencies, their visions, and their intentions to take part in further education and through teaching how to achieve a spiritually balanced life. No student of the *Tanoda* had to repeat a grade, so the *tanoda* plays an important role in decreasing the drop-out rate of children. The *Tanoda* provides children with useful leisure activities, and the children themselves said that without this it is likely that they would just wander around in the district instead of learning.

Based on this research, it can be established that most of the expectations and objectives outlined in the documents were mentioned in the interviews and were observed in the field. As this was a study of an ongoing programme, naturally it was not really possible to gather data on the long-term success of the programme, but, on the other hand, it was possible to get to know the inner life of the programme directly and in depth, and explore, in detail, the positive points and the problems and points yet to be developed.

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