

Appendix 6:

An analysis on the types of school attended by GB athletes competing in the Special Olympics

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1.0 Introduction

This paper presents the analysis of the types of schools attended by the Great British athletes who competed in the most recent Special Olympics Summer Games for the 2011 National, 2010 European and 2011 World competitions.

2.0 Method

The information collected on the Special Olympics GB athletes was gathered from an online survey developed by the TOP Foundation, which was sent out to athletes by Special Olympics GB. This was part of a wider investigation into competitive school sport.

Competitor information was gathered for 3 Special Olympics competitions with a specific focus on the summer games. The data available to the study is summarised in the figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Summary of the Special Olympics athlete survey responses.

	Location	Age	Number of competitors sent the online survey	Number of competitors who completed the survey	Survey response rate
2013 National Summer Games	Bath, UK	Juniors and seniors	577	62	10.7%
2010 European Summer Games	Warsaw, Poland	Juniors and seniors	6	6	100.0%
2011 World Summer Games	Athens, Greece	Juniors and seniors	54	5	9.3%
	Total =		637	73	

Overall there were a small number of athletes who responded to the survey (11% response rate) and therefore any conclusions made should take account of this. Despite this, the data still provides a unique insight into a series of competitions for individuals with intellectual learning disabilities.

Collectively, the athletes who responded to the survey represented 11 different sports (aquatics, athletics, badminton, basketball, boccia, football, golf, gymnastics, powerlifting, tennis and ten-pin bowling) across the 3 competitions, and due to the numbers involved these have been analysed as a whole cohort.

Special Olympics overview

The Special Olympics provide sports training and athletic competitions across a variety of 32 Olympic style sports for children and adults within their communities. There are active programmes in over 170 countries engaging more than 4.2 million athletes with intellectual disabilities.¹

The games are not centred on elite performance, instead they provide individuals with intellectual (learning) disabilities opportunities to realise their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage and experience joy and friendship.

For athletes to be eligible to represent the Special Olympics GB squad at a national, European and world level, athletes must be between 8-80 years of age and identified as having one of the following conditions: an intellectual (learning) disability, cognitive delay/s, or significant learning or vocational problems. All of these conditions would mean that the person has an IQ of below 75.²

¹ Special Olympics (no date) Available at: <http://www.specialolympics.org>

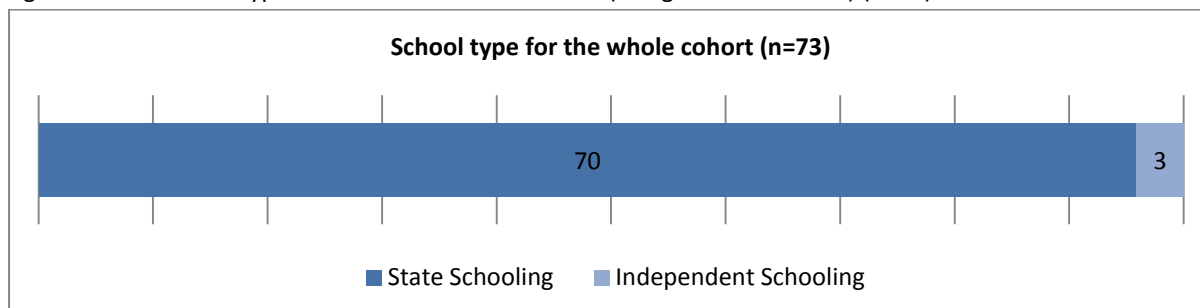
² Special Olympics GB (no date) Available at: www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk/faq/

3.0 Athlete data

3.1 School type

Analysis was completed on the type of school attended by all of the athletes. The results indicate that 70 of the 73 athletes were state educated, while 3 were privately educated (figure 1.1).

Figure 3.1 The school type for the whole athlete cohort (using actual numbers) (n=73)



Of the 70 state schools attended, 47 are classed as special schools, whilst 23 are not. Of the 3 independent schools attended, 2 are classified as special schools, whilst 1 is not.

3.2 School type by gender

Analysis was completed on the school type for the athletes, by gender. Forty two of the 45 male athletes were state schooled; the remaining 3 were privately educated. All 28 female athletes were state educated.

3.3 Ethnicity

Analysis on the ethnicity of the 73 athletes revealed that 69 athletes classed themselves as white, 3 categorised themselves as mixed/multiple and 1 athlete classified themselves as Asian/Asian British.

3.4 Free School Meals (FSM)

All of the athletes were asked about their eligibility for FSM³. Whilst 1 athlete did not know if they were eligible for them or not, 9 athletes answered that they were, and 63 answered that they weren't.

3.5 Scholarships

All of the athletes were asked if they had received a scholarship whilst attending their school. The results of the survey revealed that none of the athletes obtained a scholarship from their school.

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³ Free school meals data was self-reported by athletes. In the Ofsted athlete survey athletes were asked "were you/are you eligible for free school meals when you were at school? All answers are anonymous".