

An Opportunity for Sport or an Opportunity for Development: Is Special Olympics Perceived as
Contributing to Psychosocial Development and Social Inclusion?

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List of Acronyms

ALPs	Athlete Leadership Program
PYD	Positive Youth Development
SI	Social Inclusion
SO	Special Olympics
SOC	Special Olympics Canada
SOI	Special Olympics Inc. /International
SOO	Special Olympics Ontario
SOQ	Special Olympics Quebec/ Olympiques spéciaux Québec

Abstract

Sport is a cultural phenomenon that has spread throughout the world (Harvey & Houle, 1994). For youth, sport is perceived as a context that can play a major role in person's psychosocial development across their life-span (Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 2007). However, despite the increase in research in this field, very little work has examined how sport may play a role in the psychosocial development of youth with intellectual disabilities (ID). Moreover, an area of study that has also grown related to the lived experiences of individuals living with a disability including ID is social inclusion (SI). Similar to research related to psychosocial development, very little research has been conducted to examine whether the context of sport can foster social inclusion for youth with ID. Special Olympics Canada (SOC) is an organization "dedicated to enriching the lives of Canadians with an intellectual disability through sport" (SOC, 2010, "SOC Mission Statement", para.1) and may be an organization that has the potential to positively impact the lives of its youth participants. Thus, the purpose of this research was to examine whether stakeholders perceived SO as impacting the psychosocial development and social inclusion. The results indicated that SO, by all stakeholders, is perceived as an organization that is facilitating the psychosocial development of its athletes through the incorporation of strong social support networks and the development of life skills. In addition, SO was perceived as facilitating social inclusion for youth, particularly in the context of school and their surrounding community.

Introduction

Sport is a cultural phenomenon that has spread throughout the world (Harvey & Houle, 1994). Increased awareness of the importance and the values of sport in today's society have led people of various ages, gender, disabilities, and ethnicities to participate in sport. Within Canada, more than 51% of children aged 5 to 14, and 59% of children aged 15 to 19 participate in sports (Statistics Canada, 2005, 2006). For youth, sport participation has the potential to foster physical, mental, as well as psychosocial development (Côté & Fraser-Thomas, 2007), and is perceived as a context that can play a major role in person's development across their life-span (Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 2007). In recent years, an increasing amount of research has and continues to be conducted to examine the role sport can play in youth development (Danish & Hale, 1981; Fraser-Thomas, Côté & Deakin, 2005; Gould & Carson, 2008; Holt & Jones, 2007), and more specifically, how sport can play a role in the development of life skills (Camiré, Trudel, & Forneris, 2009; Holt, Tink, Mandigio, & Fox, 2008; Perkins & Noam, 2007).

Despite the increase in research in this field, there has been very little research that has examined how sport may play a role in the psychosocial development of youth with disabilities, and even fewer studies have focused on youth with intellectual disabilities. Currently, disability affects 10% of the world's population, including 4.4 million people in Canada. Of the 650 million people living with disability, 200 million people are estimated to have an intellectual disability (ID; Disabled World, n.d., 2008; Special Olympics Inc. [SOI], 2009d). According to Article 30 of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations [UN], 2006), all individuals with disability have the right to participate in activities in which persons without disability participate. Therefore, research examining how participation in sport may impact the development of youth with disabilities is warranted.

An area of study that has also grown in recent years related to the lived experiences of individuals living with a disability including ID, is that of social inclusion (SI). Bailey (2005) identified four dimensions to SI: 1) spatial (minimizing various distances); 2) relational (sense of belonging and acceptance); 3) functional (knowledge and skills improvement); and 4) power (change in locus of control) (Bailey, 2005). While discussions still exist to date on how the concept of SI emerged and what its true meaning is, these four dimensions provide a glimpse of the complexity of SI. However, to date, much of the research has focused on physical inclusion rather than the ‘social’ inclusion (Cummins & Lau, 2003). More specifically, within the field of education, studies on SI have shown both positive and negative outcomes (e.g. Baron, Phillips, & Stalker, 1996; Manetti, Schneider, & Siperstein, 2001; Hall, Healey, & Harrison, 2002; Wolfberg, Zercher, & Lieber, 1999). Although having youth with ID included in schools has led to changes in attitudes and behaviour amongst youth without ID, it appears that youth without ID are often unwilling to take part in social activities outside of the classroom with youth with ID, such as sports (Ash, Bellew, Davies, Newman, & Richardson, 1997; Low, 1996). Therefore, simply providing opportunity for inclusion in one particular setting does not necessarily lead to SI outside of that given setting (Siperstein, Parker, Norins-Bardon, & Widaman, 2007). As a result, despite increased opportunities to be ‘socially included’ in recent years, youth with ID continue to have limited opportunity for participation in sport and the developmental benefits that can be accrued with such participation.

Special Olympics Canada (SOC) is one organization that is “dedicated to enriching the lives of Canadians with an intellectual disability through sport” (SOC, 2010, “SOC Mission Statement”, para.1). Persons with ID of all ages participate in SO, however, in recent years, the number of young athletes participating in SOC has increased significantly. Between September

2010 and January 2011 alone there was a 14% increase in participation for ages 2-6, an 8.5% increase for ages 7-12, and a 1.5% increase for ages 13-21. In total, 9,939 athletes aged between 13 and 21 participate in SOC, in addition to 2,700 athletes between ages 2 and 12 (SOC, personal communication, April 27th 2011). In general, Special Olympics (SO) has a potential to provide youth with various benefits associated with sport participation. In fact, based on the framework by Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, & Jones (2005) that is used to develop and examine the effectiveness of sport programs in fostering psychosocial development for youth, it appears that SO programs are designed in a way that may have the potential to foster psychosocial development. However, to date there has been no research that has examined how participation in SO programs is perceived by its stakeholders (e.g., parents, coaches, athletes) as impacting the psychosocial development of its athletes and the SI movement.

Therefore, the purpose of this research was to examine whether participation in SO programs is perceived to facilitate the psychosocial development of youth with ID and whether participation in these programs is believed to facilitate or inhibit SI. This research was divided into two separate studies. The first study examined the perceived impact of SO on the psychosocial development of athletes with ID. The second study focused on SI, and intended to examine whether participation in SO is perceived as contributing to SI.

To date, there are numerous studies that have been conducted on persons with disability and sports participation. However, most of this research has focused on individuals with physical disability as opposed to ID. In addition, research in the field of PYD needs to expand to include research with vulnerable populations (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005), which needless to say includes youth with ID. Therefore, conducting this research will contribute to a number of gaps in the literature. Moreover, one of the most significant contributions of this present research is its

ability to give back to the Special Olympics community and to the larger ID community. By disseminating the results of this research, SOC and its chapters will have a better understanding of the impact its programs are having on their youth participants as well as insight into whether there is a need for any changes to current programming.

Review of Literature

This chapter is divided into seven sections. Definitions of key concepts will be provided in the first section followed by an overview of positive youth development. The third section examines the research on social inclusion and disability and the fourth section examines research on social inclusion and intellectual disability. The fifth section discusses Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory. The sixth section discusses the history and role of Special Olympics. Finally, this chapter ends with the presentation of the purpose of the research and the research questions.

Definition of Key Concepts

For the purpose of this study, life skills was defined as “skills [i.e. behavioural, cognitive, interpersonal, or intrapersonal] that enable individuals to succeed in the different environments in which they live, such as school, home and in their neighbourhoods” (Danish, Taylor, Hodge, & Heke, 2004, p.40). Life skills are one aspect that has been studied within the field of positive youth development (PYD) as it is believed that life skills help youth to succeed in life and can be learned through participation in sport (Camiré, Forneris, Trudel, 2009; Danish & Hale, 1981; Theokas, Danish, Hodge, Heke, & Forneris, 2008; Gould & Carson, 2008; Holt et al., 2008).

ID is diagnosed when two of the following characteristics are present: 1) intellectual functioning that is significantly below average, often an intelligence quotient (IQ) below 70; and 2) “impairment in carrying out varying aspects of daily life and adapting to the normal social environment” (SOI, 2009b, p.8). Such adaptive skills include communication, self-care, social

skills, leisure, health and safety, and community use and work (SOI, 2008). Persons with Down syndrome or autism are amongst the most well known of those with ID. ID was once more often referred to as “mental retardation,” however, with the current movement to eradicate the use of the word “retardation” (e.g. “Spread the word to end the word” campaign by Special Olympics and Best Buddies), the term “intellectual disability” has been more frequently used in research today.

Some researchers claim that disability is not an outcome of bodily pathology; rather, it is an outcome of social organization. More specifically, disability is a social production through systematic patterns of exclusion that have been built into the society (Hughes & Paterson, 1997). This is based on the understanding that disability is socially constructed (i.e. social model of disability; Oliver, 1990), rather than physiological dysfunction (i.e. medical model of disability; Swain & Trench, 2000). According to Weiner and Davis (1995), scientific research indicates that only 15 to 20% of intellectual disabilities have organic causes. Therefore, the medical model of disability does not provide explanation for majority of individuals living with an ID, particularly those with “mild” ID. Therefore, the social model is useful in understanding those with ID whose disability cannot be explained by an organic cause. The social model views disability as a socially generated category and as an experience external to the body. The ‘body’ of the person with impairment is being transformed by living in society, or defined based on the social attitudes and norms as ‘disabled’ (Edwards & Imrie, 2003). In other words, it is the social system itself that creates barriers to participation for persons with disability (Hughes & Paterson, 1997). In short, ID is a disability that is viewed by many as socially constructed.

SI has been a focus for researchers studying persons with ID, as persons with disabilities are one of the groups that participates in the SI movement. In order to define SI, it is important to

understand how the concept of SI emerged. Researchers to this day disagree about how SI came to be. Some researchers (e.g. Berman & Phillips, 2000; Pierson, 2002) argue it emerged alongside with the emergence of social exclusion while others (e.g. Donnelly & Coakley, 2002; Frazee, 2005) argue it emerged as a value based concept that evolved as a result of understanding where human beings want to be and how it should be achieved. In other words, SI is more than eliminating boundaries or barriers between us and them; rather, it is about minimizing various distances such as physical (e.g. gender, disability), and social (e.g. social status, sexual orientation) that exists between people.

While nothing conclusive has come out of these arguments, through a comprehensive review of literature, Bailey (2005) identified four dimensions of SI: 1) spatial (minimizing various distances); 2) relational (sense of belonging and acceptance); 3) functional (knowledge and skills improvement); and 4) power (change in locus of control). More specifically, Bailey offered the following definition by employing these four dimensions within the context of sport:

[B] ringing individuals from a variety of social and economic backgrounds together in a shared interest in activities that are inherently valuable (spatial); offering a sense of belonging, to a team, a club, a programme (relational); providing opportunities for the development of valued capabilities and competencies (functional); and increasing ‘community capital’, by extending social networks, increased community cohesion and civic pride (power). (Bailey, 2005, p.76)

As this definition incorporates all dimensions of SI and is specifically catered towards the context of sport, the above definition was used for the purpose of this study.

Positive Youth Development

Positive youth development (PYD) is a field of study that has developed over time as a result of increasing interest in developmental science (Lerner, 2005). Lerner (2005) identified three phases that help describe how the study of adolescence has evolved. The first phase viewed adolescents as having deficits and were either ‘broken’ or at risk to be ‘broken’ (Hamburg, 1997; Lerner, 2005; Shaffer, Wood, & Willoughby, 2002). The second phase viewed adolescents as those who develop as a result of influential relations between various levels of the surrounding social ecology (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2002; Lerner, 2005). Robust evidence of diverse adolescent development in particular has contributed significantly in maturing the study of adolescents, leading to the third phase which has been coined “positive youth development.” This evolved approach to studying adolescence can be seen as a “paradigm shift from deterrence to development” (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003, p.94). As a result, PYD is an area that places focus on understanding how youth can develop assets such as life skills, values, and knowledge to enhance their potential as opposed to focusing on deficit correction (Damon, 2004; Danish, Forneris, & Wallace, 2005; Gould & Larson, 2008; Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, & Lerner, 2005). In PYD, youth are essentially seen as resources to be developed, and not resources that need to be fixed or managed (Lerner, Alberts, Jelicic, & Smith, 2006; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003).

Over the years, researchers have identified attributes that are essential in fostering PYD, such as the five C’s (i.e. competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring/compassion) by Lerner, Fisher, and Weinberg (2000), the 40 developmental assets by Benson (1997), and life skills by Danish and Hale (1981). Within the context of sport, however, the majority of the research has focused on how youth can develop life skills through sport. Danish et al. (2004)

assert that sport is an optimal context for the development of life skills because life skills and sport skills are similar in that they can both be learned through demonstration, modeling, and practice. In addition, due to the importance and value placed on sport in today's society, more than 51% of children aged 5 to 14 and 59% of children aged 15 to 19 participate in sport in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2005, 2006). Therefore, sport arguably plays a major role in person's development across their life-span (Danish et al., 2007). As a result, an increasing number of researchers are examining the ways in which sport may help youth develop diverse competencies that will enable them to succeed in life (Gould & Carson, 2008; Holt, 2008).

Furthermore, Côté and Fraser-Thomas (2007) assert that youth sport has the potential for not only improving physical health and the learning of motor skills, but also psychosocial development (e.g. increased self-esteem, gaining leadership skills, and developing social skills). In fact, some researchers emphasize the importance of learning life skills more so than learning sport skills, and consider overall development to be the primary goal of sport participation (Perkins & Noam, 2007). A study by Camiré, et al. (2009a) examined how youth perceive life skill development within the context of high school sport. The results of this study showed that many of these youth athletes believed various life skills can be developed through school sport participation, such as development of time management skills, enhancement of personal dispositions such as self-efficacy, expansion of social network, and developing social skills. They also believed that these life skills can be transferred to other life domains, such as school. Similarly, a study by Holt et al. (2008) indicated that participation in high school soccer had contributed in developing life skills in youth even though such skills were not explicitly taught to the youth. In other words, it was through their involvement in sport that the youth learned life skills.

However, despite its potential for development, research has also shown that sport can negatively impact the physical, psychological, emotional, and social development of youth (Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 1993; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005). For example, research has shown that participation in sport has led to the stifling of physical and psychosocial as a result of early specialization in sport (Wiersma, 2000), the development of eating disorders as a result of an over-emphasis on body image (Sundgot-Borgen & Torstveit, 2004), and a number of physical and psychological difficulties as a result of hazing and violence, particularly in team sports (Fields, Collins, & Comstock, 2010).

A number of scholars assert that it is not sport itself but how the context of sport is developed that determines whether sport facilitates or inhibits the development of youth (Danish et al., 1993; Mahoney & Statin, 2000; Petitpas & Champaign, 2000; Petitpas et al., 2005). Petitpas et al. (2005) observed that despite the growth in youth sport programs, many fail to be structured in a way that facilitates development. In response, Petitpas et al. developed a framework to guide the development of youth sport programs that aim to foster psychosocial development. This framework was based on the belief that sport is “a vehicle to provide experiences that promote self-discovery and teach participants life skills in an intentional and systematic manner” (Petitpas et al., 2005, p. 66).

The framework is made up of four components: 1) context; 2) external assets; 3) internal assets; and 4) research and evaluation (Petitpas et al., 2005; Petitpas, Cornelius, & Van Raalte, 2007). In terms of *context*, the activity needs to occur in an appropriate environment, meaning the youth need to be participating because they have the desire to participate (*want to*) and not because they are forced to do so (*have to*). It is believed that participating in a voluntary or freely chosen action will enhance internal motivation, which in turn allows for one to work harder

towards achieving their personal goals. In addition, it is critical that the context be structured in a way that the youth feels valued (Petitpas et al., 2005).

Context is important; however, to foster psychosocial development in youth, it is also essential to have support from within the community, in particular, caring adults and/or older peers (e.g. parents, coaches, and volunteers). In other words, *external assets* also play a critical role in the development of youth. Petitpas et al. (2005) assert that what matters more than the program content itself is the quality of social interactions that take place within the program. Furthermore, it is important that these social relationships remain consistent and occur over a period of time (Petitpas et al., 2005).

The third component, *internal assets*, are also deemed essential in promoting PYD. Examples of internal assets include, but are not limited to, life skills, a sense of identity, a sense of purpose, and confidence. These internal assets can be gained through participation in sport as sport often provides youth with opportunities to feel important, set and attain goals, and encourages self-exploration. However, a number of researchers claim that it is not sufficient for such internal assets to only be taught within the context of sport (Catalano et al., 2002; Gould & Carson, 2008; Petitpas et al., 2005). These researchers assert that in order for internal assets, such as life skills, to be effective in enhancing overall development, the individual needs to be aware that the life skills learned within the context of sport can be transferred into other life domains. Therefore, in order to enhance the transferability of life skills to other domains, it is an essential that programs help youth identify transferrable skills, create opportunities to use those skills, and provide support and encouragement to use the skills in everyday situations (Petitpas et al., 2005).

Finally, the fourth component is *evaluation and research*, in which utilization of a comprehensive evaluation system will allow researchers and practitioners to gain an

understanding of the benefits associated with program participation. Efficacy of the program needs to be monitored and recorded, and be evaluated by using standardized instruments and methods (Petitpas et al., 2005). To date, there has been a lack of psychometrically reliable and valid instruments to measure outcomes of sport youth programs (Catalano et al., 2002; Gould & Carson, 2008; Holt & Jones, 2007; Perkins & Noam, 2007; Petitpas et al., 2005; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). However, this forth component cannot be overlooked, as evaluation and research is essential in grasping the impact of the program. It is only through such processes that the impact that a program can evolve and provide greater opportunities to enhance youth development (Petitpas et al., 2005). Therefore, one of the major contributions of this framework is that it provides a mechanism to evaluate whether ongoing programs are fostering psychosocial development. Programs that can be evaluated using and be benefiting from this framework can range from school-based programs, afterschool programs, to community-based programs. As stated above, in recent years, there have been numerous studies examining PYD through sport. However, very little research, if any, to date focuses on the psychosocial development of youth with disabilities through sport when almost 10% of the world population or roughly 650 million people are living with disability, including 4.4 million people in Canada (Disabled World, n.d., 2008). Therefore, research is needed to examine how the context of sport may enhance the development of youth with disabilities, in particular, intellectual disabilities by utilizing this framework.

Social Inclusion

As stated above, disability currently affects almost 10% of the world population and this number is expected to increase due to medical advances. Disability certainly does not only affect the people living with the condition, but also the society in which they live (Disabled World, n.d.,

2008). Similarly, SI pertains to all human beings. People represent either those being included, or those allowing others to be included (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002). Within SI research, persons with disabilities, specifically children and youth with disabilities are of particular interest to researchers, given that childhood experiences are a critical period in human development (Alexander & Entwisle, 1996). However, much of the research on SI has occurred within educational settings as school is an essential social institution that shapes the lives of children and youth.

Findings from research in the educational setting have revealed numerous positive outcomes. For example, research has identified that within schools there is minimal exemplification of exclusion or hostility towards students with various disabilities (Ash et al., 1997; Baron et al., 1996; Low, 1996) and that exposure to individuals with disabilities in school led to an increased willingness toward social acceptance of such individuals and a greater understanding of disability (Manetti et al., 2001). Although these positive outcomes may be significant considering the historical past of discrimination towards individuals with disabilities, what must not be overlooked is that research studies have also found negative outcomes related to SI. For example, there is evidence of impoverished social experiences of students with disability compared to non-disabled students. Non-disabled students have been found to perceive their peers with disability as not being competent in various domains (Ash et al., 1997). In addition, despite the willingness of non-disabled peers to move towards social acceptance, their attitudes and behaviour do not often reflect such willingness, leading to social rejection of peers with disabilities (Manetti et al., 2001). Therefore, it has been revealed that social exclusion does exist in schools. Perceptions of youth without disabilities influence how the peers with disability are treated, thus these exclusions are likely enhanced due to the perceptions youth without

disabilities have of peers with disabilities (Hall et al., 2002). What these negative outcomes may suggest is that as perceptions of youth without disabilities play a big role in the treatment of peers with disability, the concept of “disability” to non-disabled youth is rather socially constructed. In other words, disability is an artefact of those who see particular individuals as different, which ultimately is creating the barrier between youth without disabilities and peers with disabilities.

The unfortunate reality is that the research that has shown positive outcomes often gained attention in public, whilst the negative outcomes have often failed to be recognized. Yet, the increasing attention in the positive outcomes of SI has led the public to believe that the SI movement is successfully taking a step forward. This is not to deny that research studies showing positive outcomes are important and valid; rather, what needs to be understood is that these positive outcomes may not directly translate into “successful inclusion.” More specifically, despite the positive outcomes, SI cannot be considered entirely successful if negative outcomes continue to arise.

A study by Frazee (2005) revealed further complexity to the concept of SI. The study discussed definitions of SI as perceived by youth with physical disability themselves and the results suggest that the definitions are individualized, and are self-perceptive and self-determined. Moreover, although inclusion in terms of the physical proximity was noted as, a contributing factor for youth with physical disabilities, feeling a sense of acceptance and well-being by being accepted for who you truly are is more critical. As such, Frazee states, “inclusion arises from an ethic not of tolerance, but of active valuation of difference” (p. 114). This could be explained by what Thomas (1999) discusses as the duality of restrictive forces on individuals with disabilities. On one hand, numerous barriers and restrictions that persons with disabilities face can impact

their active social participation, and this is what, thus far, has been the center of attention in promoting SI by eliminating physical, structural, and systematic barriers to provide access. On the other hand, these individuals also face number of restrictions in feeling secure and self-worthy. Therefore, SI is also about the citizenship and about individuals being respected and valued as a contributor who have rights, knowledge, and power (Thomas, 1999).

Similarly in a research by Cummins and Lau (2003), inclusion was approached from two dimensions: physical and social. These authors advert to previous research on inclusion/integration and have also recognized that much has been written in terms of physical integration and not social integration. However, Cummins and Lau assert that it is the social dimension that contributes to positive effect on well-being of people with ID, not the physical. In conclusion, the authors suggest that the priority should be placed not on the physical integration of individuals; rather, it should be focused on increasing sense of connectedness to the community itself in order to achieve inclusion that promotes well-being of individuals with disability, particularly for those with ID.

As such, it has become evident that there are both physical and social dimensions of SI, showing its multidimensionality. Similarly, researchers to this day argue how the concept of SI itself arose, whether it is something that arose alongside with the emergence of social exclusion (e.g. Berman & Phillips, 2000; Pierson, 2002) or it is something that emerged as a result of understanding what and where human beings want to be (e.g. Donnelly & Coakley, 2002; Frazee, 2005). Bailey (2005) conducted a review of existing SI literature, and identified four dimensions of SI: 1) spatial (minimizing various distances); 2) relational (sense of belonging and acceptance); 3) functional (knowledge and skills improvement); and 4) power (change in locus

of control). More specifically, Bailey offered the following definition by employing these four dimensions within the context of sport:

[B] ringing individuals from a variety of social and economic backgrounds together in a shared interest in activities that are inherently valuable (spatial); offering a sense of belonging, to a team, a club, a programme (relational); providing opportunities for the development of valued capabilities and competencies (functional); and increasing ‘community capital’, by extending social networks, increased community cohesion and civic pride (power). (Bailey, 2005, p.76)

This definition by Bailey will be used for the purpose of this study since not only is this sport specific, but because it brings in all dimensions of definitions that currently exist.

Social Inclusion for Individuals with Intellectual Disability

Of all persons with disability, social exclusion of persons with ID has been a particular focus of research (Myers, Ager, Kerr, & Myles, 1998). One of the reasons why persons with ID have been a focus of research lies in the fact that life experiences of persons with ID are often different from individuals with non-ID disability, whose disabilities are often more physically visible. Research has shown that of all persons with disability, those with ID reported greater experiences of social exclusion (Myers et al., 1998). Furthermore, research by SOI (2009d) indicated a higher sense of full parity with peers without disabilities was perceived amongst individuals with non-ID disability than those with ID in the areas of access to education, school inclusion, and classroom inclusion. Therefore, this research suggests that because persons with ID experience things differently than persons with non-ID disability, to simply conduct research pertaining to persons with “disability” in general is rather hazardous as it may not be an accurate representation of the ID population.

As previously stated, several studies have identified various frustrations of persons with disability outside of school, due to unwillingness of students without disabilities to interact outside of this context, and limited opportunities to take part in sports or other social activities in general (Ash et al., 1997; Low, 1996). What this conflicting evidence shows is that although youth without disabilities understand the moral and societal messages of accepting disability, simply understanding its importance has not coincided with their attitudes and willingness to include their peers with ID outside of school. In other words, it has become evident that simply providing opportunities for SI in schools does not translate to successful inclusion outside of school or in the community at large.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory

As previously discussed, SI pertains to all people. The success of SI can vary significantly depending on the surrounding social ecology of the persons who are being 'included.' To understand how the surrounding ecology impacts the individual, ecological theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner may afford some systematic explanations. Ecological theory is a socio-cultural view of human development and a comprehensive model of environmental effects (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Emory University, n.d.). In this theory, the developing person is at the center of five distinct layers of environmental systems where the systems interact and influence individual development (see Figure 1). Each of the five layers is distinct in that it has specific sets of determinants that form the basis of the interaction with the developing person (Avan & Kirkwood, 2010; Shaffer et al., 2002). These layers are namely: 1) *microsystem* (immediate environment; e.g. family, peers); 2) *mesosystem* (connections between the microsystems; e.g. child's teacher and parents); 3) *exosystem* (the larger social system; e.g. neighbours, community); 4) *macrosystem* (cultural values, customs, laws, social class); and 5) *chronosystem*

(changes in environment over time; e.g. parent's death, aging of the child). Any changes or conflicts in one layer will affect other layers. In other words, this theory outlines the need to consider not only the immediate environment, but also environment in a larger context to gain a fuller picture of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Emory University, n.d.; McLeroy, Bibeau, Steckler, & Glanz, 1988; Paquette & Ryan, 2001).

Special Olympics

With an estimated 200 million people in the world with ID, persons with ID are one of the most marginalized populations, and have been discriminated against in many contexts (SOI, 2009d). For example, many individuals with ID who have communication and language-related disorders often find themselves being discriminated against or limited in their employment prospects, educational opportunities, social opportunities, and their overall quality of life (Warren, Brady, & Fey, 2004). Youth with ID, although they may be provided an opportunity to be educationally included in mainstream schools, often experience social discrimination outside of the school classroom (Siperstein et al., 2007). Despite the discrimination they face, persons with ID have the right to participate in activities in which persons without ID or any other disability participate. Such rights are acknowledged in Article 30 of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which was established in December 2006. This article outlines the importance to protect and ensure equal enjoyment of rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure, and sports for persons with disability at all levels (UN, 2006). Such rights need to be acknowledged and practiced in order for persons with ID to be fully included in society.

Fighting to contribute to the empowerment and overall improvement of the lives for persons with disability has been the causal force of the disability movement that began in the last

half of the 20th century (Oliver, 1990). Special Olympics (SO) is a world-wide organization that was founded in 1968 and uses sports to empower individuals with ID; however, SO not only focuses on the individual with ID, but also considers their surrounding social ecology and inclusion. Such are reflected in the mission:

“The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community” (SOI, 2010, para. 2.).

The SO movement has spread to 180 countries with over 2.8 million athletes, 750,000 volunteers, and 300,000 coaches. Approximately 30,000 competitions are held every year worldwide, as well as the World Games which takes place every four years (SOI, 2009a; SOI, 2009c). SO is also actively being practiced in Canada with more than 34,000 athletes, 16,000 volunteers, and 13,000 trained coaches nationwide. Mandates proposed by Special Olympics Canada (SOC) align with the overall SO mandate as SOC aims to change attitudes of people without disabilities regarding individuals with disabilities, increase community awareness, and to build a stronger and supportive community for persons with ID (SOC, 2011). In addition, SOC also hopes to “[b]e a change agent for social inclusion - advocating for and providing all athletes with opportunities for integration through sport” (SOC, 2010, “Opportunity & Accessibility”, para.1).

Needless to say, an organization such as SO provides sport activities to children and youth with ID who often find limited opportunities to take part in sport activities outside of school. Interactions with volunteers and coaches may provide opportunities which they otherwise

may not have in school, and may impact their psychosocial development. For example, Dykens and Cohen (1996) found that social competence increased as a result of participation in Special Olympics. However, other areas of psychosocial development need to be examined through the use of a comprehensive framework such as the one proposed by Petitpas et al. (2005). Thus, one purpose of this research was to examine the effectiveness of SO in fostering psychosocial development. In addition, although effort is being put forth by SO to be an agent for SI, no research to date has examined the perceived impact of SO on SI. Therefore, a second purpose of this research was to examine how SO is perceived as impacting SI. Consequently, there were two specific research questions: 1) Is participation in Special Olympics programs perceived as impacting the psychosocial development of youth with ID?; and 2) Is Special Olympics perceived as contributing to the social inclusion movement?

Method

Mixed Methods

The present study was a large scale study that intended to examine various aspects of psychosocial development and SI within the context of SO. Mixed methods were utilized for this research as mixed methods “combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration” (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007, p.123). Of the six primary mixed methods designs proposed by Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, and Hanson (2003), study 1 utilized concurrent triangulation strategy and study 2 utilized concurrent nested strategy.

In concurrent triangulation strategy, qualitative and quantitative data are collected concurrently, and the two methods are often integrated at the interpretation phase (Hanson,

Creswell, Plano Clark, Petska, & Creswell, 2005). The priority is equally given to both methods, and the two methods are used to confirm, cross-validate or corroborate findings. However, in practical application, priority can also be given to either one of the methods (Creswell, 2003). This strategy tends to be favoured by those researchers who aim to incorporate both qualitative and quantitative measures within a single study (Creswell et al., 2003; Morgan, 1998). Specifically in Study 1, the quantitative data (i.e. online survey) which reflected the perceptions of PYD by parents and coaches/volunteers involved in SO across Canada and the qualitative data (i.e. interviews) that reflected perceptions of PYD by athletes, parents, and chapter representatives involved in SO were used to interpret (in)consistencies of the two data sets and cross-validate. The qualitative data was also used to provide a more in-depth understanding of athletes, parents, and chapter representatives' perceptions of whether and how SO was contributing to psychosocial development.

On the contrary, researchers who use concurrent nested strategy (Study 2) understand that the single data set may not be sufficient to explain questions that arise within the large quantitative or qualitative study, and therefore use this design to gain broader perspectives by using multiple methods instead of one (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Priority can be given to either qualitative or quantitative methods; however, the method that is given less priority is embedded or nested within the predominant method (Muncey, 2009). The embedded method serves one of following two roles: (a) to pose a different question than the one posed by the predominant method (i.e. pose a question of secondary nature), or (b) to seek information from different groups, levels and angles. The integration of the two methods occurs at the analysis phase of the project (Creswell, 2003; Creswell et al., 2003). For Study 2, priority was given to qualitative method as quantitative data obtained through online survey was only used to gain an

overall sense of whether stakeholders across Canada perceive SO as a contributing organization in SI movement, especially from coaches/volunteers as they were not interviewed. Similar to study 1, the qualitative data (i.e. open-ended online survey questions and interviews) provided a more in-depth understanding of how individuals define SI and whether they perceive SO as contributing to SI, whilst providing insight into everyday issues they face regarding SI.

Pilot Study

Pilot interviews took place prior to the actual data collection process to finalize the interview questions, such as the clarity and the order of the questions asked. This process was necessary to ensure questions in the interviews, especially the athlete interviews, were asked in the most effective manner to extract quality and valuable answers. Two sets of pilot interviews were conducted with two athletes and their parent(s) who live in the Ottawa-Gatineau area and participate in SO programs in Ottawa. In addition, one interview was conducted over the phone with a chapter representative from Special Olympics Ontario (SOO). All interviews were transcribed verbatim, and based on the observations made during the interview by the researcher and feedback provided by an independent auditor based on the transcriptions, minor changes were made to the interview questions such as changing the order of questions, splitting a few questions into two separate questions and adding a question to the parent interview about what type of school their child attends.

Participants

Participants of this research included chapter representatives, coaches/volunteers, parents of athletes, and athletes involved in SO across Canada. However, because of the vast range of coaches/volunteers who are involved with SO, only those who met the following criteria were eligible to participate: 1) aged 18 years or older, 2) coaching/volunteering for at least one year,

and 3) in regular contact (i.e. at least monthly) with the athletes. Thus, one-time event volunteers such as regional, provincial, national games and/or fundraising volunteers were not eligible. The coaches/volunteers and athletes recruited were those who participate in the regularly offered SOC official sport programs (e.g., athletics, swimming, floor hockey, figure skating, and alpine skiing).

In total 317 individuals responded to the online survey. However, due to the inclusion criteria outlined above, 43 of the 317 responses were excluded. Six participants were under the age of 18 and therefore their survey automatically ended after the this first question, 12 participants reported not having at least monthly contact with the youth and therefore their survey ended after this question, 25 participants had been involved in SO for less than one year and the survey ended after they answered this question. In addition, 10 parent surveys were excluded because they had only completed the first few questions of the demographic questionnaire.

Therefore, 274 participants (139 coaches/volunteers, 135 parents) completed the online survey. One hundred and seventy-two participants completed the volunteer/coach survey. Sixty-four of respondents were male, and 75 were female, whose age range varied from 18 to 78. Respondents identified themselves as one or more of the following: coach ($n = 127$), volunteers ($n = 77$), and/or administrator ($n = 44$). Fifty-eight of the respondents also identified themselves as a parent of a SO athlete. The median years of SO involvement was 9.8 years.

A total of 135 responded to the parent survey. Thirty-three of respondents were male, and 102 were female, with age ranging from 33 to 80. Eight respondents had more than one child with ID participate in SO as an athlete. Responses of the type of ID of their child included Down syndrome/trisomy 21 ($n = 49$), autism/PDD/PDD-NOS ($n = 24$), developmental delay ($n = 21$);

and other ($n = 41$) such as, but not limited to ADHD, epilepsy, Phalen-McDermid syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome, Aspergers syndrome, and Fragile X syndrome. The most popular sports were aquatics ($n = 64$), 5 & 10-pin bowling ($n = 63$), and athletics/track & field ($n = 52$) which is consistent with participation across SO as the top three SO sports are 5-pin bowling ($n = 14,539$), athletics/track & field ($n = 9,572$), and aquatics ($n = 7,451$) which was followed by 10-pin bowling ($n = 4,789$) (SOC, personal communication, April 27th 2011). Parents were also involved with SO as a coach ($n = 51$), volunteers ($n = 81$), or administrators ($n = 42$).

For the interviews, 12 athletes, 12 parents, and four chapter representatives across Canada were asked to participate for a total of 28 interviews. Those chapters included British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia, allowing for a good representation of the population across Canada. More specifically, three athletes (ages 12-21) from each of the selected four provinces with varying levels of SO experience were asked to participate in the interview.

Procedure

In the present study, data for both study 1 and study 2 were collected concurrently through an online survey and in-person interviews. Once the online survey was created, the link to the online survey was distributed to potential participants through the e-mail by either SOC, chapter/regional representatives (see Appendix E) who had access to the list of potential participants. In addition, with assistance from SOC staff and chapter representatives, the online survey link was posted on the website in hope to increase the number of respondents.

For the athlete interviews, participants were required to be verbally competent to take part in a semi-structured interview; therefore, chapter representatives (e.g. sport managers) who are most familiar with the athletes who were verbally competent in their province were contacted

to each select three athletes (see Appendix D). Twelve parents, those of the athletes, were also interviewed. Finally, four chapter representatives were interviewed. SOC staff that had regular contact with numerous chapter representatives across the country were asked to suggest chapter representatives who are most familiar with the local programs (see Appendix C for recruitment text for SOC staff). The researcher had previous contact with SOC staff as well as chapter representatives across Canada because the researcher served on the Athlete Development Sub-Committee for SOC from 2009 to 2011. Therefore, there was confidence in the recruitment strategy as a relationship of trust had developed between the researcher and the staff who assisted in the recruitment of participants for the research.

A letter of information detailing the research project (see Appendix A & B), a consent form (see Appendix G & H), and an athlete assent form (see Appendix F) approved by the University of Ottawa's ethics committee were provided to the participants. The letter, consent form, and assent form were sent prior to the interview by e-mail, which allowed enough time for participants to review the details and ask questions if necessary. Duplicate copies were given to each participant upon signing at the time of the interview, so that both the interviewee and the researcher could have a signed copy for their records.

Measures

Online survey. Online surveys were posted on Survey Monkey in both official languages. Two versions of the survey were posted: one for parents, and another one for coaches/volunteers (see Appendix J & K). As explained above, the website link for the questionnaire was distributed to parents, coaches, and volunteers via e-mail through Special Olympics Canada chapters and regional representatives. The survey was online for a period of three months (December 2010-March 2011).

The survey for parents consisted of 6 sections: 1) Demographic profile; 2) Special Olympics involvement; 3) Impact of Special Olympics on the psychosocial development of athletes (for child 1 in case there is more than one child in the household participating in Special Olympics); 4) Impact of Special Olympics on the psychosocial development of athletes (– for Child 2 – if applicable); 5) Impact of Special Olympics on daily life; and 6) Impact of Special Olympics on SI. The survey for coaches and volunteers consisted of 3 sections: 1) Demographic profile; 2) Special Olympics involvement; 3) Impact of Special Olympics on the psychosocial development of athletes. These surveys were created based on the measures used in previous research examining whether the context of high school sport fosters youth development (Forneris, Camiré, & Trudel, 2010). The majority of questions were quantitative in nature; however, a few questions were open-ended, allowing participants to elaborate on their answers. The initial page of all versions of the survey explained the details of the project, qualification of the researcher, affiliation, contact information in case of questions, and informed consent.

Interviews. Semi-structured individual interviews took place concurrently with the online survey. Recommended athletes and their parents were asked by their chapter representatives to contact the researcher by e-mail or phone to schedule an interview (see Appendix P for initial e-mail response). For interviews conducted in Quebec, Special Olympic Quebec (SOQ; Olympiques spéciaux Québec) staff arranged all interviews as they all took place at SOQ office since many interviews were conducted in French or were bilingual, and were conducted with the assistance of SOQ staff while the researcher was present in the same room. Having a staff from SOQ to be the translator was essential as the person translating also had knowledge as to how to effectively communicate with individuals with ID. Prior to the interview,

parents were asked to fill out a pre-interview questionnaire (see below for details) to gain background information on the athlete.

The athlete interviews were approximately 30 minutes in length and the interview questions pertained to their experiences in SO and possible changes in their lives as a result of participation (See Appendix M). Athletes were asked to bring and share photographs taken during their participation in SO to the interview. It has been suggested that use of photography is also beneficial in that “images evoke deeper elements of human consciousness than do words” (Harper, 2002, p.13). When photo-interviewing is employed in social research, photography is used to provoke response (Hurworth, 2003). The approach taken in this study is called “reflexive photography”, in which participants provided photographs that they produced and discussed them with the researcher. In other words, reflexive photography provides an opportunity for participants to react and reflect on the deeper meanings of their own photographs throughout the interview (Parker, 2006). It is the image itself that generates data, and it is “reflexive” as the participants share their meaning of their photographs to reflect back on their experience (Harper, 1987). Therefore, using photographs taken during their SO participation, athletes were able to discuss the image with the researcher to reflect on the deeper meaning of their participation in SO. Interviews with the athlete took place prior to the parent interview, so that parents could be asked to clarify certain things mentioned during athlete interview, if necessary.

The parent interviews lasted between 45 minutes to two hours. Parents were asked questions pertaining to their perceptions regarding how SO has impacted the psychosocial development of their child and their perceptions of the role SO plays in SI (see Appendix N). Interviews with chapter representatives lasted between 45 minutes to 1.5 hours. They were asked questions pertaining to current status of youth athlete participation, issues surrounding

participation and recruiting youth athletes, and the role of SO in the SI movement (see Appendix O).

Pre-interview questionnaire. Upon scheduling an interview, a one page pre-interview questionnaire was sent by the researcher via e-mail to parents of athletes who had agreed to participate in a face-to-face interview. Questionnaires were asked to be returned to the researcher at least two weeks prior to the interview. The intention of this pre-interview questionnaire was to gain basic information of the athlete prior to the interview. Information asked included past involvement in SO and other sporting activities, as well as their participation in provincial, national, and/or world games. Given that the interviewee, the athlete, has an ID, this pre-interview questionnaire was critical to helping the researcher understand the basic background information of the athlete ahead of time and provided the researcher with an idea of how to build rapport with the interviewee. In addition, it was also beneficial as the researcher did not have to ask the athlete to clarify all details that may come up during the interview. It is not uncommon for persons with ID to be distracted and become off track from the main topic when they are asked to clarify little details.

Immediately following the interview, all English interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher. Two bilingual graduate students were hired to transcribe interviews conducted in French, and translate the interviews into English upon signing a confidentiality form (see Appendix I). After all interviews were transcribed and all French documents were translated, the data analysis for both study 1 and 2 were conducted using data from both the online survey and the interviews. Details of the data analysis procedures are outlined in the following subsection.

Data Analysis

Data analysis for the quantitative data obtained through the online survey was analyzed using the data analysis software SPSS18.0. The analyses in SPSS were primarily descriptive in nature (e.g. mean, standard deviation), as the purpose was to examine whether parents, coaches and volunteers perceive SO as contributing to psychosocial development and SI. In addition, t-tests were conducted to examine whether perceptions of SO differed across the different stakeholders. For the present study, qualitative data were coded and analyzed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith & Osborn, 2003, 2008) method. Given that the purpose was to gain an understanding of the perceptions and experiences of athletes with ID, it is important that the form of analysis was appropriate and consistent with this purpose. IPA is a phenomenological method which asserts that gaining direct access into a participant's life world is impossible, and focuses on exploring participants' perceptions of their experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2003, 2008; Willig, 2001). The IPA process is iterative and transcripts are read through multiple times. During the first two readings, notes were made alongside the left margin to highlight interesting or significant responses. In subsequent readings, the right margin was used to note any emerging themes that captured the essence of what the participant stated or reflected. A master list of themes was developed and then excerpts from the transcripts were provided to support the identified themes. The results were then reviewed by an independent auditor that is familiar with qualitative data analysis who provided feedback for theme integration, additions and/or clarifications (Smith & Osborn, 2008). The software program NVivo7.0 (QSR International Pty Ltd, 2007) was used to organize data and to help in identification of quotes that supported the emergent themes.

Presentation of the Articles

Given the size of the research, this research is presented in two separate articles. In the first article, perceptions of how SO participation fosters psychosocial development using the framework proposed by Petitpas et al. (2005). This article has been prepared for submission to the Adaptive Physical Activity Quarterly. The second article placed a focus on the qualitative data obtained to examine how various stakeholders perceive SO participation contributes to SI, using Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 2005) ecological theory. The second article was prepared for submission to the Journal of Sport and Social Issues. As stated in the previous sections, both studies utilized mixed methods approach, although taking slightly different approaches.

Article 1

Running Head: PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Sport as an opportunity for development:

Is Special Olympics perceived as contributing to psychosocial development?

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Abstract

Positive youth development (PYD) is a field of study that developed as a result of increasing interest in developmental science (Lerner, 2005). In recent years, a growing number of PYD researchers have examined the context of sport and have acknowledged that participation in sport has the potential to foster psychosocial development (Côté & Fraser-Thomas, 2007; Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005). As sport is now widely practiced by a variety of individuals, research in PYD needs to examine how sport can impact the development of different populations, including persons with disabilities. To date, research on youth with disabilities in general has focused on physical disability and very little, if any, research has included youth with intellectual disabilities (ID). Special Olympics Canada (SOC) is an organization that provides youth with ID the opportunity to participate in sport; however no research has examined whether such participation has an impact on the psychosocial development of its athletes. The purpose of this study was to examine whether participation in SO programs was perceived by stakeholders as fostering psychosocial development. A number of themes and subthemes emerged from the data including the meaning of Special Olympics, relationships with coaches, life skills, and quality assurance of SO programs and indicated that SO is not simply an organization that provides opportunities for sport participation but one that provides an opportunity for youth with ID to excel in life.

Introduction

Positive youth development (PYD) is a field of study that developed as a result of increasing interest in developmental science (Lerner, 2005). It focuses on understanding how youth can develop assets such as life skills, values, and knowledge to enhance their potential as opposed to focusing on deficit correction (Damon, 2004; Danish, Forneris, & Wallace, 2005; Gould & Larson, 2008; Lerner, 2005; Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, & Lerner, 2005). This involvement in the approach to studying adolescence can be seen as a “paradigm shift from deterrence to development” (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003, p.94). In other words, from a PYD perspective, youth are essentially viewed as resources to be developed, and not resources that need to be fixed or managed (Lerner, Alberts, Jelcic, & Smith, 2006; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003).

Sport is a cultural phenomenon that has spread throughout the world (Harvey & Houle, 1994). As a result, sport is enjoyed by people of various ages, gender, disabilities, and ethnicities. With respect to Canada, over 51 percent of children and youth ages 5 to 14 and 59 percent of youth ages 15 to 19 participate in some form of sport (Statistics Canada, 2005, 2006). In recent years, an increasing number of PYD researchers have conducted research examining youth development in the context of sport and have acknowledged that participation in sport has the potential to foster psychosocial development (Côté & Fraser-Thomas, 2007; Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005). Furthermore, sport is perceived as a context that can play a major role in person’s development across their life-span (Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 2007).

Attributes essential to what has been defined as PYD have been identified through years of research; for example, the five C’s (i.e. competence, confidence, character, connection, and caring/compassion) by Lerner, Fisher, and Weinberg (2000), the 40 developmental assets by

Benson (1997), and life skills by Danish and Hale (1981). Most of the research within the context of sport has focused primarily on the development of life skills. Life skills are defined as “skills [i.e. behavioural, cognitive, interpersonal, or intrapersonal] that enable individuals to succeed in the different environments in which they live, such as school, home and in their neighbourhoods” (Danish, Taylor, Hodge, & Heke, 2004, p.40). Sport can provide an optimal context for the development of life skills, as life skills and sport skills can both be learned through demonstration, modeling, and practice (Danish, Forneris, Hodge, & Heke, 2004). In fact, some researchers emphasize the importance of learning life skills more so than learning sport skills, and have argued that it should be the primary goal in sport participation (Perkins & Noam, 2007). Moreover, research in recent years has shown that youth can learn life skills through their participation in sport (Camiré, Trudel, & Forneris, 2009a; Danish & Hale, 1981; Theokas, Danish, Hodge, Heke, & Forneris, 2008; Gould & Carson, 2008; Holt, Tink, Mandigo, & Fox, 2008; Perkins & Noam, 2007).

As sport is now widely practiced by a variety of individuals, research in PYD needs to further examine how sport can impact the development of different populations, including persons with disabilities. Disability currently affects 10 percent of the world’s population, including 4.4 million people in Canada. Of the 650 million people living with disability, 200 million people are estimated to have an intellectual disability (ID; Disabled World, n.d., 2008; Special Olympics Inc. [SOI], 2009). Given this large number, research should unquestionably shed a light and importance on persons with ID as much as any other individual. To date, many studies that have examined the impact of sport on youth with disabilities have focused significantly on youth with physical disabilities and/or have focused on examining the health related benefits. For example, Johnson (2009) conducted a systematic review of studies to

analyze the benefits of physical activity for persons with developmental disability, which found that although health benefits may vary depending on the type of sport, benefits of physical activity include improved gross motor function and aerobic capacity, and higher levels of satisfaction amongst participants and parents. Other studies include research on quality of life as well as social factors such as differences in perceived physical competence and self-worth in variety of settings (e.g. segregated, adapted, integrated, sedentary) (e.g. Ninot, Bilard, & Delignières, 2005). Identifying such benefits have undoubtedly made great contributions in fostering the idea that sport participation is beneficial for persons with disabilities. Nevertheless, despite an increase in research on PYD as well as on the importance placed on disability sport itself, very little research has examined how sport may play a role in the psychosocial development, in particular the life skills, of youth with disabilities, and even less research has focused on youth with ID. Accordingly, research examining how participation in sport may be impacting the development of youth with ID is warranted.

Special Olympics (SO) is a global organization that provides sport programs for individuals with ID including youth. Special Olympics Canada (SOC), the governing body of SO in Canada, is “dedicated to enriching the lives of Canadians with an intellectual disability through sport” (SOC, 2010, “SOC Mission Statement”, para.1). The number of participants involved in SOC continues to increase with child and youth participants showing most growth. Between September 2010 and January 2011 SOC saw a 14% increase in participation for ages 2-6, an 8.5% increase for ages 7-12, and a 1.5% growth for ages 13-21. In total, 9,939 athletes aged between 13 and 21 participate in SOC, in addition to 2,700 athletes between ages 2-12 (SOC, personal communication, April 27th 2011).

A number of scholars assert that it is not sport itself but how the context of sport is structured that determines whether sport facilitates or inhibits the development of youth (Danish, Petitpas, & Heke, 1993; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000; Petitpas & Champaign, 2000; Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, & Jones, 2005). Upon discovering that many youth sport programs fail to provide programs in a structured manner that would facilitate development of youth, Petitpas et al. (2005) developed a framework to guide the development of youth sport programs that aim to foster psychosocial development, and to examine its effectiveness.

The framework is made up of four components: 1) context; 2) external assets; 3) internal assets; and 4) research and evaluation (Petitpas et al., 2005; Petitpas, Cornelius, & Van Raalte, 2007). Petitpas et al. (2005) assert in order for programs to foster psychosocial development that the sport *context* must be a safe environment in which youth are participating in an activity because they desire to participate (*want to*), and not because they are forced to do so (*have to*). The youth need to have *external assets*, meaning older adults such as coaches and volunteers who support them, appropriately challenge them to grow, and with whom they can develop a relationship that occurs and is maintained over an extended period of time. Youth also need to be intentionally taught *internal assets*, which include, but are not limited to life skills, a sense of identity, a sense of purpose, and confidence. Programs must also intentionally support and encourage the use of these skills in everyday situations in order to enhance the transferability of life skills from sport into other life domains. The final component, *evaluation and research*, simply recognizes the need to utilize a comprehensive evaluation system to understand benefits, impacts, and efficacy of the program. When these four components are fulfilled in a program it is likely that the program will foster the psychosocial development of its participants (Petitpas et al., 2005).

To date, no comprehensive evaluation or research has been conducted to examine the impact participation in SO programs may have on the psychosocial development of youth with ID. As such, the purpose of this study was to examine whether participation in SO programs was perceived to be fostering psychosocial development.

Method

Design

A mixed methods approach was the chosen for this research study. Mixed methods “combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration” (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007, p.123). More specifically, this study utilized concurrent triangulation strategy, which is one of the six mixed methods designs proposed by Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, and Hanson (2003). Qualitative and quantitative data are collected concurrently in this strategy, and often integrate at the interpretation phase (Hanson, Creswell, Plano Clark, Petska, & Creswell, 2005). Although priority can be given to a specific method only for practical application, usually no priority exist between the two methods, and the two methods are used to confirm, cross-validate or corroborate findings (Creswell, 2003). In this particular study a quantitative online survey and qualitative semi-structured interview were employed.

Participants

Online survey participants. Online survey participants included parents of SOC athletes, as well as volunteers and coaches of SOC programs. Due to the vast range of volunteers and coaches, inclusion criteria were set to include only those who 1) were 18 years or older, 2) had been volunteering/coaching for at least one year, and 3) had regular contact (i.e. at least monthly)

with the athletes. In addition, coaches being recruited were those who participate in the regularly offered SOC official sport programs (e.g., athletics, swimming, floor hockey, figure skating, and alpine skiing). Based on this parameter, one-time event volunteers such as regional, provincial, national games and/or fundraising volunteers were not eligible.

One hundred and thirty nine participants completed the volunteer/coach survey. Sixty-four of respondents were male, and 75 were female, whose age range varied from 18 to 78. Respondents identified themselves as one or more of the following: coach ($n = 127$), volunteers ($n = 77$), and/or administrator ($n = 44$). Fifty-eight of the respondents also identified themselves as a parent of a SO athlete. The median number of years of SO involvement was 9.8 years. A total of 135 responded to the parent survey. Thirty-three of respondents were male, and 102 were female, with age ranging from 33 to 80. Eight respondents had more than one child with ID participate in SO as an athlete. Responses of the type of ID of their child included Down syndrome/trisomy 21 ($n = 49$), autism/PDD/PDD-NOS ($n = 24$), developmental delay ($n = 21$); and other ($n = 41$) such as, but not limited to ADHD, epilepsy, Phalen-McDermid syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome, Aspergers syndrome, and Fragile X syndrome. The most popular sports were aquatics ($n = 64$), 5 & 10-pin bowling ($n = 63$), and athletics/track & field ($n = 52$) which is consistent with participation across SO as the top three SO sports are 5-pin bowling ($n = 14,539$), athletics/track & field ($n = 9,572$), and aquatics ($n = 7,451$) which was followed by 10-pin bowling ($n = 4,789$) (SOC. personal communication, April 27th 2011). Parents were also involved with SO as a coach ($n = 51$), volunteer ($n = 81$), or administrator ($n = 42$).

Interview participants. A total of 28 interviews were conducted: 12 SO youth athletes, 12 parents, and four chapter (provincial) representatives from across Canada. British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia were chosen as this selection provided good representation

across Canada. More specifically, three athletes (ages 12-21) from each of the selected four provinces with varying levels of experience were asked to participate in the interview.

Participating athletes with ID had to be verbally competent to take part in a semi-structured interview; therefore, chapter representatives (e.g. sport managers) who are most familiar with the athletes and their communication skills in their province were contacted to each select three athletes.

The average age of athletes who were interviewed was 16 but their ages ranged from 12 to 21. One athlete had already graduated from high school, while others were currently in special education schools or inclusion/integration schools. The diagnosis of the athletes varied, such as Down syndrome, autism, microdeletion 22Q11, or simply a learning, developmental, or intellectual disability. All but two athletes had participated in at least provincial level games, some as far as world games. Many athletes participated in more than one sport: some even participated in three to four SO sports per season. Parents who were interviewed were parents of the athletes completing the interviews. Finally, four chapter representatives were interviewed. These chapter representatives were recommended by a SOC staff. This staff member was asked to recommend those chapter representatives who had a good understanding of their local programs.

Procedures

The data from the quantitative online survey and in-person interviews were collected concurrently. For the online surveys, an e-mail was sent out to 12 chapter representatives containing the details of research and links to the online surveys on Survey Monkey. In this e-mail, chapter representatives were asked to forward a text to invite participants using the most

appropriate approach for their chapter, such as e-mail, newsletter, and/or website. Responses for the online surveys were collected over a three month period (December 2010- March 2011).

For the interviews, four chapter representatives from selected chapters in British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia, were initially recommended by SOC staff as those being most familiar with their local programs and athletes. The selected representatives were then contacted via e-mail, seeking for their assistance in recommending three athletes and their parent(s) for an interview, as well as their participation in an interview. The interviews were conducted in February and March 2011.

Measures

Online survey. An online survey was created based on research examining whether the context of high school sport fosters youth development (Forneris, Camiré, & Trudel, in press). Two types of surveys were created using Survey Monkey: the parent survey, and the volunteer/coach survey. Both surveys were offered in both Canadian official languages (i.e. English & French). The survey for parents comprised of six sections: 1) Demographic profile; 2) Special Olympics involvement; 3 & 4) Impact of Special Olympics on the psychosocial development of athletes (Section 4 in case there is more than one child in the household participating in Special Olympics); 5) Impact of Special Olympics on daily life. More specifically for sections 3 and 4 there was one question stem (“Participation in Special Olympics programs allows my child to...”) with 23 life skill items (e.g., effectively communicate with others, set and attain goals, develop a sense of teamwork) on a 5-pt likert scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). Section 5 consisted of two open-ended questions: “How has Special Olympics helped your child in daily life situations?” and “Briefly describe what Special Olympics means to you and your child” to allow participants to elaborate and provide specific

examples. The survey for coaches and volunteers consisted of 3 sections: 1) Demographic profile; 2) Special Olympics involvement; 3) Impact of Special Olympics on the psychosocial development of athletes. Section 3 was the same as the parents except “athletes” rather than “my child.”

Interviews and pre-interview questionnaire. The interviews conducted were semi-structured in nature, and were conducted in either English or French. As stated above interviews were conducted with athletes, parents and chapter representatives. The athlete interviews averaged 30 minutes in length and primarily asked questions pertaining to their experiences in SO. To facilitate the interview process athletes were asked to share photographs they had taken during their participation in SO. This approach is known as “reflexive photography” and provides an opportunity for participants to react and reflect on the deeper meanings of the photographs through the interview (Parker, 2006). When photo-interviewing is employed in social research, the photograph(s) is used to provoke a response (Hurworth, 2003). It is the image itself that generates data which is “reflexive” because the participants share their meaning of the photographs to reflect back on their experience (Harper, 1987). Research has shown that “images such as photographs evoke deeper elements of human consciousness than do words” (Harper, 2002, p.13). Therefore, it was believed that using photographs taken during their SO participation would allow the athletes to reflect on the deeper meaning of their participation in SO.

Prior to the interviews with athletes, parents were also asked to fill out a one page pre-interview questionnaire in order to gain background information about the athletes. Questions included past involvement in SO and other sporting activities, and past participation in provincial, national, and/or world games. This pre-interview questionnaire was considered a critical process

in order for the researcher to gain basic background information of the athlete ahead of time to build rapport with the interviewees. In addition, it was thought that this process would be beneficial to keeping the athlete more focused during the interview because it is not uncommon for persons with ID to be distracted when they are asked to clarify small details.

Parent interviews lasted between 30 to 45 minutes. They were asked questions pertaining to their perceptions regarding how SO have impacted the psychosocial development of their child. The interviews with chapter representatives lasted between 45 minutes to an hour, and the questions pertained to current status of youth athlete participation, and issues surrounding participation and recruiting of youth athletes. French interviews were conducted with the assistance of a bilingual staff from Special Olympics Quebec (SOQ; Olympiques spéciaux Québec). All of the interviews were audio-recorded.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data obtained through online surveys was analyzed using SPSS 18.0. The analysis was descriptive in nature, as the purpose was to examine whether parents, coaches, and volunteers perceive SO as contributing to psychosocial development of athletes with ID. T-tests were also conducted to examine differences in perceptions of life skill development for the 23 life skills. Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith & Osborn, 2003, 2008) method was used to code and analyze qualitative data obtained through interviews, which were transcribed verbatim following each interview. IPA is a phenomenological method which asserts that gaining direct access into a participant's life world is impossible, and focuses on exploring participants' perceptions of their experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2003, 2008; Willig, 2001). NVivo 7.0 (QSR International Pty Ltd, 2007) was used to organize data and to help in identification of quotes that support the emergent themes. Participant identification codes were

assigned for each participant (BC= British Columbia, NS= Nova Scotia, ON= Ontario, QC= Quebec; A= Athlete, CR= Chapter Representative, P= Parent). Furthermore, for identification and confidentiality purposes, numbers are employed in relation to the order participants were interviewed. For example, a third athlete interviewed in Quebec was coded as QCA3. The province was omitted for quotes from chapter representatives as only one person was interviewed from each province.

Results

The results are presented in two sections. The first section presents the quantitative results while the section presents the qualitative results.

Quantitative Results

Descriptive statistics for each of the life skill items for coaches/volunteers and parents are presented in Table 1. These results indicate that both coaches/volunteers and parents perceive SO as facilitating the development of life skills as the mean scores ranged from 3.98 (develop leadership) to 4.47 (foster social connections) on a scale from 1 to 5. Results of the t-tests showed significant differences ($p > .05$) on 14 of the life skill items. More specifically, parents scored significantly lower than coaches/volunteers for the following life skills: Effectively communicate with others, $t(276) = 3.313, p = .001$; Gain self-control, $t(275) = 2.506, p = .013$; Develop concentration skills, $t(275) = 3.875, p = .000$; Set and attain goals, $t(276) = 3.498, p = .001$; Develop a sense of fairness, $t(276) = 2.015, p = .045$; Develop a sense of sportpersonship, $t(275) = 4.635, p = .000$; Develop a sense of teamwork, $t(276) = 3.597, p = .000$; Respect others, $t(276) = 3.372, p = .001$; Develop leadership, $t(265.657) = 3.641, p = .000$; Develop self-confidence, $t(274) = 2.742, p = .007$; Foster social connections, $t(260.400) = 2.920, p = .004$; Develop a sense of purpose, $t(276) = 2.329, p = .021$; Develop a sense of

identity, $t(259.541) = 2.564, p = .011$; and Develop a positive view of personal future, $t(261.885) = 3.457, p = .001$.

No significant differences ($p > .05$) were found for the following nine life skills: Develop compassion, $t(275) = 1.137, p = .257$; Be honest, $t(275) = 1.594, p = .112$; Be responsible, $t(275) = 1.751, p = .081$; Accept criticism and feedback from others, $t(275) = 1.500, p = .135$; Effectively deal with winning and losing, $t(276) = 1.815, p = .071$; Working with people they don't necessarily like, $t(273) = .893, p = .373$; Be a team player, $t(276) = .272, p = .786$; Develop a good work ethic, $t(276) = 1.508, p = .133$; and Have a sense of right or wrong, $t(276) = 1.322, p = .187$.

Qualitative Results

A number of themes and subthemes emerged from the interview data. The overarching themes included: (1) The meaning of Special Olympics; (2) Relationships with coaches; (3) Life skills; and (4) Quality assurance of SO programs.

The meaning of Special Olympics. Within this first theme, a number of subthemes emerged and provide an understanding of what SO means to the athletes, parents, and coaches/volunteers involved in the organization. These subthemes included: A positive place to be; sense of acceptance and social support; and the earlier the better.

A positive place to be. All of the athletes expressed positive feelings toward SO such as "It's beneficial for health, but also to meet new people and make friends" (QCA1) and "I just have fun" (NSA2). When asked what they like about SO, an athlete stated:

Meeting new friends and achieving my goals, and winning some bling bling!...I suggest for those that aren't involved with SO to get involved because it's one of

the most incredibly fantastic programs to be a member of, as you learn a lot and have fun! (ONA3)

All parents also expressed positive feelings about SO. One parent stated “It means a whole new world. Friendships, socializing, athletics” (NSP2). In addition to parent networks, some parents noted SO also provides parents with a sense of pride: “it [SO] gives you a pride as a parent...that my daughter is a successful athlete” (BCP2). Similarly, a parent stated:

You don't think it [SO] is something that will be special, that will bring you something positive. It won't give you much but with SO, for the first time for us in 13 years, it did....The thing with SO, well, it's like a nice tap on the back.... For us, it's the first time in 13 years where we told ourselves, you know what, it's fun. (QCP1)

Consistent with these results, chapter representatives all identified SO as a place that provides a positive environment for athletes: “the very philosophy that we are built on takes care of ensuring that every athlete is successful at some level in the organization” (CR1). Another chapter representative stated,

For a lot of athletes, it's their chance to be in a positive environment because sometimes it's not easy at home. Sometimes it's not easy in school. But for once in their life, or for once in their week, they come to a positive environment. They come to a place where they are going to be able to grow and be themselves, and be accepted by everyone and be smiling. (CR2)

However, despite an overwhelming positive response, some participants also expressed that they initially experienced hesitancy when enrolling their child in SO. One parent stated, “Even saying it to my friends “my son is in SO”, first, it was almost like you are

embarrassed or afraid to say it... Well, even admitting that he had a disability” (BCP1). A chapter representative also conferred that parents often feel hesitant about SO in the beginning: “even with the societal change that it’s not a big deal anymore, but for a lot of parents, it’s still a very big deal” (CR3). However, it appears that overtime parents recognize the benefits of SO. One parent explained that working through this hesitancy really leads to benefits for the youth, “At the end of the day, who suffers? ...People are timid about coming forward and accepting. Think who’s really suffering. It’s not the parents. At the end of the day it’s the child because they’re losing a great opportunity” (ONP3).

Sense of acceptance and social support. The majority of participants discussed SO as a context that fosters a sense of acceptance and belonging. One parent stated, “in SO, he’s surrounded by people just like him and they’re all accepted. Nobody’s going to look at them funny, they can build friendships. Build lifelong connections” (NSP2). Other parents shared “There’s just that acceptance of everybody, regardless of ability or disability or where you fit...it’s a supportive building group no matter what spot you’re in” (BCP2). Similarly, although some athletes may be low functioning and non-verbal, it is perceived that such athletes are also accepted. One athlete shared: “I find that [having lower functioning athletes] gives me a chance to help that athlete... They just took me in as being their friends, and I want to do the same” (BCA3). Such acceptance by others was seen in matter of few weeks, according to one parent:

One thing that surprised me a lot, very quickly after 2-3 weeks, that there was an atmosphere between all these youth of different age, different ability. I even saw older ones wanting to help those that had more difficulty, everyone encourages everyone. (QCP1)

These statements were consistent with athletes' perceptions. Many athletes stated they were shy or nervous when they first started SO, but instantly felt comfortable: "they liked me right away and said 'You are on the team', and I said woohoo!" (NSA2) and "in SO, they almost don't look at your disability. It's just like a new friend...It is a community. We always celebrate our achievements together...So I find that it is more of a family than anything" (BCA3).

Many athletes also expressed social aspects of SO as their most favourite reason to be involved in SO. When asked whether they would recommend SO to other individuals with ID, which they all said yes to. The reasons included, "Let them have fun!" (NSA1), and "They can make lots and lots of friends" (QCA1). Another athlete stated:

There's a lot of stuff which we need a lot of help in this world like sports, and with SO, you can! And I think everyone should be in SO, and that would really help.

And you just meet a lot of people. It's playing, laughing, doing all that stuff.

(NSA2)

Prior to getting involved with SO, parents noted that their child was often not accepted; shy, non-social, very secluded, had low self-esteem, had no friends outside of school, and/or had emotional issues to name a few issues. One parent stated, "She's had difficulties being taunted and made fun of. It really affected her to where she was becoming emotional...I wanted her to be around other kids that are in the same situation as she is, that she make friends, lifelong friends" (NSP1).

In the interviews, all parents agreed that SO is not only beneficial for their child but also is beneficial for the parents as it provides them with social support and a circle of friends. One parent stated: "we all feed off of the knowledge of each parent, and the experiences like in education, day to day living, in what's available in communities...You learn from other parents

what else is out there for our children” (NSP2). Coach/volunteers and chapter representatives also discussed how SO is beneficial to the parents. One coach/volunteer wrote: “[SO] supports parents and caregivers in giving them a wider support network” (CVE83) and a chapter representative shared: “When our athletes get together for their weekly activity, the parents slowly get to know each other...There’s so much networking and cross referencing of information that happens amongst parents” (CR4).

Earlier the better. All chapter representatives agree that the earlier the athletes start, the better it is for both physical and social development: “If we can recruit them younger and get them involved younger, they are learning multiple sport skills. So they’re teaching them sport skills that they can use in a multiple sport, as opposed to having focus on just one sport” (CR4). Furthermore, many of chapter representatives discussed how programs aimed for younger participants such as Active Start and FUNdamental programs, which are part of the Long-Term Athlete Development model in Canada (SOC, 2007), can be beneficial as athlete are learning more general athletic skills rather than one specific sport skill. In one chapter, they see the critical time of athletes to develop skills are early as 2 to 6 year olds:

Getting them out at 11 and 12 is great, but it’s not the ideal... We based everything on the fact that that’s what we believe is we can get them in sooner and get them active and connected, and then we’ll have more athletes and they’ll be healthier and better athletes for sure. (CR1)

Many parents also agreed early participation is beneficial: “they have something to look forward to when they are older. They can go to the next level of SO, and that’s great” (BCP3). In addition, some parents how early participation in SO facilitates an easier transfer into a generic sport program as without SO and the opportunity to develop sport skills in generic sport

programs is more difficult, particularly as the youth age. “I would say when they hit somewhere between 6 and 16, which is a huge gap, but somewhere between there, depending on the ability level of those athletes, they start to fall off and not getting picked for the teams, and it’s hard for them to be included [in generic sport]. (CR3)

Relationships with coaches. A number of participants talked at length about the relationships the athletes developed with the coaches/volunteers and how these relationships were perceived as positively contributing to the psychosocial development of the athletes. In general, these coaches/volunteers were seen as very caring individuals who went the extra mile to help their athletes. For example, although several athletes identified coaches as teachers, a considerable number of athletes believed that coaches are like friend: “I like to be around them. They are my friends” (BCA2). Another athlete commented, “I think they’ve been my mentors. Sometimes, they’ve been my second parents or those ones that you can go to for backup. I have a few of those that have been very strong influences and are definitely my friends” (BCA3). Similarly, one parent also described coach as “extension of people that are like parents. Somebody she can trust” (QCP3). Other parents have described coaches as “role models” (BCP1), “people with a lot of love in their heart” (NSP2), and “a friend and a coach that allows her to be comfortable, feel welcomed” (NSP1). An athlete shared a story about a coach when she was training to go to the national games: “She [coach] contacts me by phone, maybe three, four times a week to make sure I have been in the pool and so forth...She is more like my friend, and she helps me set my goals” (ONA3). Speaking of the same coach, the parent described the coach as “the first person she picks up the phone to...It’s somebody that she can call if she wants to talk to somebody” (ONP3).

A chapter representative noted that coaches/volunteers themselves provide athletes the opportunity to see “themselves as a valuable individual...and the opportunity to interact with adults other than their parents” (CR1). Likewise, a parent pointed out: “I don’t think these kids get a lot of encouragement especially from average people. It has to be people from like them (coaches), because they are so accepting and they don’t care [about their disability]” (ONP1). Also when discussing the time and effort coaches put forth to help the youth learn and develop their skills one parent noted how much patience there is within the SO programs “tolerance level was much higher in SO than in mainstream...so you have a longer period of time to learn” (BCP2).

Life skills. It was evident that athletes, parents, along with coaches/volunteers perceived SO as helping the athletes develop a number of life skills. A parent shared “(SO) provided him the means to develop social and life skills through sport” (NSP3). However, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of participants’ perceptions of the life skill development, parents were shown a list of life skills (see Table I) to help them understand the concept of life skills and were asked to discuss the skills, if any, they thought their child had learned through SO. The life skills discussed most by the parents were ‘to work with others’, ‘to communicate with others’, ‘to push yourself to the limit’, ‘to set and attain goals’, ‘to make a commitment and stick to it’ and ‘to be organized’. In addition, a number of subthemes emerged under this theme including intentionally teaching life skills, transfer of life skills, impact of games participation and non-sport opportunities through SO.

Many participants perceived that participation in SO helps athletes to learn how to work with others. A parent stated, “When she first started, she would sort of hug the ball, and wouldn’t really look at people in the eye and stuff. Definitely working with others” (NSP1). A chapter

representative shared “Although it’s an individual sport [swimming], they have to work together to set up or clean the pool, encourage a team. It’s more working with each other or being assistance to each other. They definitely engage in a cooperative environment.” (CR4).

In relation to communication, one parent stated, “without SO and not having friends to learn these life skills, how to communicate with others, he wouldn’t know how to interact” (NSP3). Another parent stated, “gaining more social skills, getting more used to meeting new people and interacting with them, they brought him out of his shell a lot.” (ONP1).

Many parents also discussed how SO helps their child learn how to work hard and put effort forth. One parent explained “She really works hard at it. Like her swimming for the games...she was swimming three to four times a week and very dedicated” (ONP3). Similarly, many participants discussed how SO helped them develop the ability to set and attain goals. An athlete stated, “SO makes me feel good because I am constantly making goals for myself to improve my swimming and skiing skills for the next event” (ONA3). Another athlete stated, “I just really think that it [SO] has been one of the most positive life changes for me. It’s done a lot for me. It’s helped me to reach and set the goals for myself, and just keep doing that” (BCA3).

Finally, a number of participants talked about how SO helps athletes develop organizational skills. One athlete said, “I have a lot of medals and stuff, and I want to keep my room organized so I can invite people to come see them” (NSA2). Many parents also noted on how the athletes learn how to be organized and prepared for their practices “She gets all the gear ready the night before and she knows how to put everything on the body and not to lose it” (ONP3). A chapter representative added, “many of our athletes are in multiple sports, so they have to organize their schedule to accommodate all the sports and competitions, so that requires a lot of organization on their part” (CR4).

A Parent, reflecting back on the skills their child had learned through SO, stated “it makes my kid feel good. She’s feeling good about herself, she has good self-esteem” (QCP2). A chapter representative further stated, “You just need an hour in SO to see how the athletes grow, just even a practice session. It’s unbelievable. It has a major affect on them and their families.” (CR2).

Intentionally teaching life skills. While discussing life skills, many parents noted that these need to be intentionally taught and they discussed how that SO, compared to generic sport programs, is structured in a way that the coaches take the time to teach life skills to the athletes. One parent stated, “it’s almost like when you are in generic programs, it’s almost a given. They don’t teach these things. When you are in SO, it’s an opportunity to learn those skills” (BCP3). Furthermore, another parent stated, “[coaches have] more willingness to teach these skills and give time because they know it’s going to take time” (BCP2). In support of the parents’ comments, a chapter representative added “our volunteers will strictly engage in conversation to teach them skills.”(CR4)

Transfer of life skills. Participants also discussed how the coaches and the structure of SO can and does help facilitate the transfer of life skills learned to other contexts such as school. One parent shared “[SO] is adapted to the needs of the children, giving him [child] a chance to grow and mature, and practice those skills he needs in the world” (BCP1). Another parent stated, “The way he behaves in sport, there’s a good chance that it’s going to be the same in life, so if he’s able to play as a team, to consider others, he’ll do the same in his everyday life” (QCP1). An athlete explained:

It made me more confident and being able to achieve everything. It might take me a bit longer, but I have no reason to just give up now and quit...In school, not shying

away from the challenges of harder school work and stuff like that...So SO made me confident, and it made me believe that although I have that disability in me, anything is achievable. It may be a little barrier, but it's not going to stand in my way forever. (BCA3)

Another athlete, through the experiences in SO has decided to become a fitness instructor for persons with disability and is currently taking online courses to become certified. The athlete's parent stated, 'We don't know if that's something he can make a career out of, but he can help other athletes. So has definitely helped him in other ways like his job too- to stick with it, to respect others. Definitely helped' (BCP3).

In addition, two of the athletes shared their experiences participating in an Athlete Leadership Program (ALPs) through SO. It was perceived that such opportunities helped the athletes further develop life skills, such as communication and confidence, which they could transfer to other areas of their lives. One athlete shared "I just really wanted to voice my opinion on SO...I wanted to be the voice for the athletes that might not be able to, but I could be their voice...I was able to partake in big events and spoke in front of about 1000 people" (BCA3). The parent of another athlete who had taken part in the same program noted, "She can stand and she can write a speech. She can do that in school, and people are blown away" (BCP2).

Moreover, a chapter representative stated, "They can certainly engage these skills in their school or home environments, and sometimes even in generic environments. That helps them gain and earn respect in that generic sport environment as well because they've learned those skills in SO" (CR4).

Impact of games participation. All but two athletes who were interviewed have participated in provincial, national, or world games with SO. Similar to the everyday SO

programs, participation in games helped the athletes have greater social opportunities and again experience a sense of acceptance and social support. “It’s a great place to meet friends and new friends” (NSA2). Another athlete in particular stated “That’s where I celebrate the most and that’s where I get my enjoyment, and why I want to be in SO” (BCA3). Similarly, a parent also stated the social factors of games participation: “Competition is a small part of going to games. I would say the social atmosphere and the enrichment that comes of the games itself is benefiting...I think for the athletes, it’s the socialization part and feeling they belong” (BCP2). Another parent noted: “to be successful at something because at school, she’s never the one that’s successful at something” (ONP3).

Participants also perceived the opportunities to participate in games helped to enhance the life skills they were learning through SO. One chapter representative stated: “The development in a weekend of an athlete being away and having their own room, and having to take care of themselves, and pack and unpack, it can be life changing” (CR3). Similarly, a parent noted “every time my daughter goes away, she would come back more independent” (QCP3). Again a chapter representative stated “They [parents] couldn’t understand that when they [athletes] come home, they learned so many life skills and developed as individuals and became stronger as individuals although they may only be 13” (CR4). Aligning with this statement, a parent shared a story about her child when she first returned from a game:

The first games she went to, she’d never had taken a shower. She came home and she was taking showers. They only had showers there so she ended up learning to take a shower, which I hadn’t been able to achieve, but the coach did...So when she first came back and was in the shower, my jaw was on the ground! (QCP3)

A chapter representative also agreed that the games allow the athletes to strengthen their life skills “the fact is that with the bigger events, our athletes have better chances to improve on their psychosocial skills” (CR2).

Many athletes also mentioned opportunities to take part in mental training sessions or nutrition sessions as part of being on the team to go to the games: “They talk to us about if you are feeling a bit nervous, how do you make it go away or to keep yourself positive. This has helped me a lot in the last couple of years” (BCA3). Another athlete shared her experience of how she has lost significant amount of weight by being part of the team and is now has healthy eating habits. She keeps record of what she consumes such as “Fruits and vegetables are green, the yellows are the grain and pasta, and the blue ones are cheese and milk, and the red is the meat and steaks!” (QCA3).

Quality assurance of Special Olympics programs. When the chapter representatives were asked whether formal evaluations were conducted to assess whether their local/community program aligns and meets the mission of SO, they all shared how their programs are monitored or the ways in which they would like to see their programs monitored. Only one province incorporates a solid formal evaluation process where staff visit each program throughout the year in order “to ensure it is incorporating the seven components of a good program, that they’re incorporating the things that they learn within the NCCP [National Coaching Certification Program], that it’s a safe environment, that it’s a age appropriate etc” (CR1).

In another province, the chapter representative discussed that there have been past initiatives where meetings were held in town halls, allowing the athletes to share their thoughts about the various SO programs. In addition, some athletes in this province sit on the community

or regional council, where they are given the opportunity to discuss any concerns formally or informally.

If they [programs] are not meeting the needs of the athletes, then we review them and figure out what needs to be changed or adapted so it becomes more of an athlete focused environment. So the evaluation is ongoing...If our programs are not meeting the athlete's needs, we will certainly hear about it...they [stakeholders] have the opportunities to come and talk to us at any time. (CR4)

In another province, a formal evaluation has yet to occur. The chapter representative stated, "It's supposed to be being done...Our feedback on that is through regional coordinators, volunteers, and our coaches. And the other feedback is at the provincial games" (CR3). While the importance of evaluation in increasing the quality of the programs is acknowledged, a concern was raised that "People that are running the program are the best ones to be evaluating [all of the programs in the province] and they barely have time to do their own [evaluation of their own local program]" (CR3). Thus, they see the next step as the need to hire field staff who could then examine the quality of their programs.

Similarly, another province noted "we don't have formal evaluations of the different programs. I think it's just time that is missing to go and check what happens" (CR2). However, unlike the previous province, this province has Sport Coordinators who occasionally make field visitations but these sport coordinators only observe and do not conduct any formal evaluations. Nonetheless, frequent meetings and training sessions with coaches are being held to imbue philosophies and missions of SO in order for them to provide quality programs. Furthermore, it was stated that "when we see our athletes grow, when we see our athletes happy, when we see them, I think we have got proof that it's going fairly well" (CR2).

Discussion

It is questionable whether sport participation automatically prepares youth for the future; however, what has become apparent is the increasing evidence that sport participation can prepare youth for the future when it is appropriately structured (Petitpas, Van Raalte, Cornelius, & Presbrey, 2004). The purpose of the present study was to examine whether SO is perceived as fostering psychosocial development for athletes with ID. After examining the results from both the quantitative and qualitative data it was clear that stakeholders involved in SO perceive the organization as one that fosters the psychosocial development of athletes. With regard to the quantitative data both parents and coaches/volunteers agreed that participation in SO led to the development of a variety of life skills. However, it was also observed that parent's perceptions of life skill development were significantly lower than coaches/volunteers for many of the life skills. Although the reason for this discrepancy was not examined, a potential explanation may be that although both coaches and parents invest much time and energy in sport they may differ in their expectations based on their type of investment. Parents are the ones who choose to place their child in sport and spend a large amount of time and money supporting their child's involvement (Camiré et al., 2009b). Therefore, parents may have more heightened expectations of coaches and the sport to enhance their child's development (Jambor, 1999). Whereas, coaches are in a position where they have chosen, often times volunteered, to be involved in coaching and research has shown that coaches often have an ideal image of what sport should accomplish as it relates to positive youth development (Lacroix, Camiré, & Trudel, 2008; McCallister, Blinde, & Weiss, 2000; Trudel, Lemyre, Werthner & Camiré, 2007).

As introduced in the literature review, the framework developed by Petitpas et al. (2005) indicates that sport can foster the psychosocial development of youth when it is conducted

within an appropriate environment (context), includes opportunities to develop a variety of life skills (internal assets), has supportive individuals to oversee the youth (external assets), and incorporates a system of evaluation. The following section will discuss the themes that emerged from the qualitative data within the context of Petitpas et al.'s framework.

Context

Through the interviews, it was evident that SO is perceived as a welcoming environment for athletes with ID. The athletes perceived SO as a great place to make friends where they feel accepted, and parents also perceived SO as a safe place where their children can thrive and experience a sense of belonging. Past research has shown that individuals with ID experience difficulty being socially accepted and supported in everyday life, particularly within the school system (e.g. Ash, Bellew, Davies, Newman, & Richardson, 1997; Manetti, Schneider, & Siperstein, 2001), which was further supported by comments from parents in this study. Athletes also expressed that SO benefits them and others socially, and parents and chapter representatives recognized that SO provides a social network that they may not acquire elsewhere. In other words, the context of SO was perceived as one that is positive and therefore meets the criteria of appropriate context outlined by Petitpas et al. (2005) as a program that involves an activity that is voluntary, happens over time, is psychologically safe and one in which youth can find a valued role within a group.

Based to the results, parents and chapter representatives also urge early participation in SO. It is believed that the younger the athletes become involved the earlier they develop the necessary skills that will enable them to continue to enjoy sport later in life. Childhood and adolescence are critical time periods for human development (Alexander & Entwisle, 1996) and researchers have found that the first stage of sport participation for children and youth, also

known as the sampling years, is critical as in this stage the child develops identities and values related to sport in addition to fundamental motor skills (Côté & Fraser-Thomas, 2007; Côté & Hay, 2002). Thus, initiatives within SO such as Active Start and FUNDamentals may be ideal environments for youth to begin their sport participation (SOC, 2007).

External Assets

Many of the athletes identified their coaches as mentors and friends. The literature shows that having someone in a mentoring role and establishing quality relationships with the mentor plays a critical role in fostering positive outcomes for the youth (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2002). Parents also agreed that coaches are often role models and that they are quite patient and take the time to help the athletes enhance both their sport and life skills. Moreover, many of the parents recognized that a significant aspect of the coach-athlete relationship in SO is that the coaches are able-bodied individuals. In other words, with coaches, athletes have an opportunity to interact positively with non-ID adults. Research has shown that one of the effective ways to enhance the communication skills of persons with ID is likely acquired through interactions with non-ID individuals (Butterfield & Arthur, 1995; Parsons and Mitchell, 2002).

Furthermore, in the interviews, both parents and chapter representatives stated that SO was also beneficial for parents who are also external assets for youth. It was highlighted that SO provides parents with opportunities to network with other parents. Moreover, some parents expressed that, as a result of seeing their child grow so much through SO, they themselves become an active member in SO and advocate to get more people involved. In other words, the variety of networking opportunities that occur informally in SO was perceived as helping parents become stronger supporters (i.e. external assets) of the athletes. Therefore, it appears that the SO

environment has a number of external assets including caring coaches who take the time to learn from and develop relationships with their athletes, and parents who, through SO, further engage and can provide even more support for their child.

Internal Assets

Petitpas et al. (2005) state that sport programs that foster psychosocial development must intentionally teach life skills and develop the confidence to transfer the life skills learned in the sport to other life domains. From the analysis of both the online survey data and the interview data it was evident that all participants perceived SO as helping the athletes develop variety of life skills, such as, to work with others, to communicate with others, to push yourself to the limit, to set and attain goals, to make a commitment and stick to it, and to be organized. Participants discussed how SO coaches take the time to intentionally teach athletes the life skills and that these skills are being transferred by into other domains of the athletes' lives such as school and work. In addition, games experience and opportunities beyond sports through SO such as ALPs was also perceived as leading to the development of life skills and that the skills gained through such opportunities transfer into everyday life. Thus, overall SO is perceived as providing athletes the opportunity to develop life skills and transfer these life skills.

Evaluation

As identified earlier, no comprehensive evaluation has been conducted to examine the psychosocial developmental impact that SO programming may have on youth with ID. To gain an understanding of whether program evaluation is conducted and how it is conducted provincially, chapter representatives were asked to discuss whether their programs are monitored or evaluated in any way. Although efforts to evaluate the quality of programs have been made in each province, whether informal or formal, results showed that the emphasis placed on

evaluation significantly varied from province to province. Chapter representatives noted resources, both monetary and human (e.g., staff numbers), as major barriers to conducting ongoing formal evaluations, especially since there are a number of programs implemented at the local level in each chapter. Acknowledging that formal evaluation may indeed be hard to carry out, Cutt and Murray (2002) note that evaluation in not-for-profit organizations is the first step in improving its accountability, by showing the effectiveness of their programs and services to its stakeholders. As such, while efforts have been made in each chapter, no formal ongoing evaluation is being conducted on a nationwide scale to ensure programs maintain the quality needed to foster psychosocial development of youth with ID. Therefore, although SO appears to be an organization that can foster psychosocial development as it holds three components of the framework, the fourth component of evaluation needs improvement. Therefore, developing a comprehensive and systematic evaluation system at the national level is necessary.

Limitations and Future Directions

A number of limitations are to be noted for the present study. First, as the athletes interviewed were selected based on their ability to verbally communicate and comprehend the interview questions, many of them were higher functioning athletes. Although insightful thoughts were shared, these may not necessarily reflect the thoughts of all athletes, particularly lower functioning athletes participating in SO. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to reflect the entire ID youth population. Second, given the participants involved in the study are those who are and continue to be involved in SO they may have a positive bias towards the organization. Third, in this study only perceptions related to psychosocial were examined. Therefore, more research is needed that may provide further objective data such as observations and pre-post measures of psychosocial development.

Although this study provides insight into the SO organization and an understanding of how it may be fostering the psychosocial development of its youth participants, it also provides insight into directions for future research. First, more research is needed at the grassroots/local level of sport organizations with the local administrators who are operating the programs. This research is needed to examine challenges the programs are facing in providing ideal structured programs to foster psychosocial development for youth. Second, as the present study measured PYD were perceptions of those involved in SO, research examining PYD using more objective measures would add another dimension to the current research. Third, more in-depth research on how programs are being evaluated in different chapters across the country should be conducted in order to create an evaluation system that suits the need of all chapters. Finally, a longitudinal comparative study between with younger athletes involved in Active Start and FUNdamentals (SOC, 2007) and those just starting SO during their adolescent years is needed to examine the impact of early participation in SO given that SO is now focusing recourses into these programs.

Conclusion

Youth with ID unfortunately are still at risk of being bullied and being picked on in everyday life (Bramston, Fogarty, & Cummins, 1999; Sheard, Clegg, Standen, & Cromby, 2001); however, this is not to say that they do not deserve to develop just as youth without ID. From the PYD perspective, all youth are viewed as resources to be developed and not resources to be fixed or managed (Lerner et al., 2006; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). Research has shown that sport can facilitate psychosocial development provided the right environment (e.g. Côté & Fraser-Thomas, 2007; Danish et al., 2007) and this research showed that SO is an organization that is perceived as facilitating the psychosocial development of youth and supports the framework developed by Petitpas et al. (2005). SO appears to provide a safe and supportive

environment that has both the external assets needed to foster such an environment and intentional opportunities for the youth to develop internal assets that are being transferred into other domains of life. Although the evaluation component needs improvement, it should be acknowledged that the chapters understand the importance of evaluation and are beginning to develop initiatives to evaluate their programs to the best of their abilities. In sum, SO does not simply provide sport opportunities; it provides an ultimate opportunity for youth with ID to excel in life.

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Table 1: Development of Life Skills as Perceived by Parents, Coaches/Volunteers

Types of Life Skills	Combined		Coach/ Volunteer		Parent		t-test for Equality of Means	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
Effectively communicate with others	4.08	.826	4.24	.718	3.92	.897	3.313	.001
Gain self-control	4.25	.708	4.36	.658	4.15	.743	2.506	.013
Develop concentration skills	4.33	.668	4.48	.640	4.18	.663	3.875	.000
Set and attain goals	4.21	.832	4.38	.754	4.04	.875	3.498	.001
Develop compassion	3.97	.851	4.03	.881	3.91	.818	1.137	.257
Develop a sense of fairness	4.07	.834	4.17	.831	3.97	.828	2.015	.045
Develop a sense of sportpersonship	4.40	.734	4.60	.622	4.20	.785	4.635	.000
Develop a sense of teamwork	4.37	.771	4.53	.673	4.20	.830	3.597	.000
Be honest	4.02	.829	4.10	.798	3.94	.855	1.594	.112
Be responsible	4.16	.776	4.24	.764	4.07	.782	1.751	.081
Respect others	4.33	.731	4.48	.640	4.19	.788	3.372	.001
Accept criticism and feedback from others	4.08	.759	4.15	.789	4.01	.725	1.500	.135
Effectively deal with winning and losing	4.09	.757	4.17	.758	4.01	.750	1.815	.071
Working with people they don't necessarily like	3.94	.822	3.99	.816	3.90	.828	.893	.373
Develop leadership	3.78	.898	3.97	.795	3.59	.957	3.641	.000
Develop self-confidence	4.46	.646	4.57	.638	4.36	.639	2.742	.007
Foster social connections	4.47	.720	4.59	.623	4.34	.788	2.920	.004
Be a team player	4.29	.753	4.30	.727	4.28	.781	.272	.786
Develop a good work ethic	4.07	.832	4.14	.810	3.99	.850	1.508	.133
Have a sense of right or wrong	3.99	.819	4.05	.825	3.92	.811	1.322	.187
Develop a sense of purpose	4.25	.766	4.36	.690	4.14	.824	2.329	.021
Develop a sense of identity	4.33	.763	4.44	.660	4.21	.841	2.564	.011
Develop a positive view of personal future	4.03	.848	4.20	.751	3.85	.907	3.457	.001

Article 2

Running Head: SPECIAL OLYMPICS IMPACT ON SOCIAL INCLUSION

Can Special Olympics contribute to social inclusion?

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Abstract

Disability is no stranger to anyone in society as it affects not only the people living with the condition, but the society in which they live (Disabled World, n.d., 2008). More specifically, individuals with intellectual disability (ID) account for 200 million around the world (Disabled World, n.d., 2008). Similarly, social inclusion (SI) is an issue that has an effect on all human beings throughout the world as individuals are either the ones to be ‘included’ or allowing others to be ‘included’ (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002). Research in the early 1990’s showed that 98 percent of Americans believed that all individuals should have opportunities to participate in mainstream society (Wehman, 1993). As such, efforts have been made to promote SI throughout various institutions of society such as in schools, the workplace, and in sport and recreation programs. One organization that promotes the well-being of individuals with ID is Special Olympics (SO) and SO aims to “[b]e a change agent for social inclusion - advocating for and providing all athletes with opportunities for integration through sport” (SOC, 2010, “Opportunity & Accessibility”, para.1). However, no research has been conducted to examine whether SO contributes to SI. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine stakeholders perceptions of SO in the SI movement. Overall, the results indicated that stakeholders perceived SO as an organization that facilitates SI in a number of ways, including through the development of life skills and providing opportunities to participate in sport outside of SO.

Introduction

Disability is no stranger to anyone in society as it affects not only the people living with the condition, but the society in which they live (Disabled World, n.d., 2008). In fact, disability currently affects 650 million people accounting for approximately 10% of the world's population. In addition, this number is expected to rise due to the advancement of medical technologies. More specifically, individuals with intellectual disability (ID) account for 200 million around the world (Disabled World, n.d., 2008; Special Olympics Inc. [SOI], 2009c). Similarly, social inclusion (SI) is an issue that has an effect on all human beings as throughout the world as individuals are either the ones to be 'included' or allowing others to be 'included' (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002). Research conducted in the United States in the early 1990's showed that 98 percent of Americans believed that all individuals should have opportunities to participate in mainstream society (Wehman, 1993). As such, efforts have been made to promote SI throughout various institutions of society such as schools, work place, and sports and recreation programs.

The concept of "Social Inclusion" arose fairly recently. Some researchers (e.g. Berman & Phillips, 2000; Pierson, 2002) argue that the SI was a concept that appeared alongside the emergence of social exclusion. On the contrary, some researchers claim SI as a value based concept that evolved as a result of understanding where human beings want to be, and how it should be achieved. In other words, SI is not simply about eliminating boundaries or barriers between us and them; rather, it is about minimizing various distances that exist between people, such as physical (e.g. gender, disability), and social (e.g. social status, sexual orientation). As such, these researchers view SI as a proactive, human development approach to social well-being (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002; Frazee, 2005).

Research by Frazee (2005) revealed varying definitions of SI among youths with physical disability. What this research suggests is that the definition of SI is often self-perceptive and self-determined. Frazee concludes that although physical proximity may be a contributing factor in inclusion, inclusion for youth with disabilities is inseparable from their quest for identity and feeling a sense of well-being. To use her own words, “inclusion arises from an ethic not of tolerance, but of active valuation of difference” (p. 114). Such differences arise from what Thomas (1999) discusses as the duality of restrictive forces on individuals with disabilities. On one hand, persons with disabilities are faced with numerous barriers and restrictions that impact their active participation in the social world. This aspect has thus far been the center of attention in promoting SI, to provide access by eliminating physical, structural, and systematic barriers. On the other hand, persons with disabilities face numerous restrictions in feeling secure and feeling self-worthy. SI is also about the citizenship of those who are afflicted, and not just physical and structural access. This includes access to respect, access to identity and being oneself. It is about being respected as a valued contributor who has rights, knowledge, and power (Thomas, 1999).

Due to differing opinions regarding the concept of SI, various conceptualizations of SI appear in the literature. For the purposes of this study, Bailey’s conceptualization of SI will be used. Bailey (2005), through a review of literature on SI, found four dimensions of SI: spatial (minimizing various distances); relational (sense of belonging and acceptance); functional (knowledge and skills improvement); and power (change in locus of control). Employing these dimensions within the context of sport, Bailey offered the following definition:

[B] ringing individuals from a variety of social and economic backgrounds together in a shared interest in activities that are inherently valuable (spatial); offering a

sense of belonging, to a team, a club, a programme (relational); providing opportunities for the development of valued capabilities and competencies (functional); and increasing 'community capital', by extending social networks, increased community cohesion and civic pride (power). (Bailey, 2005, p.76)

This definition will be employed for the purpose of research as it incorporates all aspects of SI that are currently recognized, in addition to being sport specific.

Persons with ID have often been a particular focus of SI research as opposed to other disabilities, as the life experiences of persons with ID and non-ID individuals whose disability are often physically visible differ significantly. Persons with ID are particularly vulnerable to discrimination (Tsai & Fung, 2009). For example, a study showed that those with ID experience greater social exclusion than any other type of disability (Myers, Ager, Kerr, & Myles, 1998), while another study found that a higher sense of full parity with non-disabled peers was perceived more amongst those with non-ID disability than those with ID in the areas of access to education, school inclusion, and classroom inclusion (SOI, 2009c).

Given that childhood and adolescence are deemed critical time periods in human development (Alexander & Entwisle, 1996), much of the research on SI has been conducted within the educational setting, as school is an essential social institution that shapes the lives of children and youth. Results from the research have been mixed. At the positive end of the continuum some studies have found minimal exemplification of exclusion or hostility towards students with various disabilities (Ash, Bellew, Davies, Newman, & Richardson, 1997; Baron, Phillips, & Stalker, 1996; Low, 1996), while another study found that opportunities to be exposed to individuals with disabilities have led to increased willingness towards social acceptance of such individuals and a greater understanding of disability (Manetti, Schneider, &

Siperstein, 2001). However, at the negative end of the continuum, research has shown that students with disability have impoverished social experiences compared to their able-bodied counterparts, and that students with disabilities are often seen as not being competent in various domains by their peers (Ash et al., 1997).

In addition, various studies have found that persons with disabilities, although they experience a sense of inclusion while in school, experience increasing levels of frustration as non-disabled students are unwilling to interact with them outside of the school context which often limits opportunities to take part in sports or other social activities (Ash et al., 1997; Low, 1996). A study by Hall, Healey, and Harrison (2002) revealed that the perceptions of the able-bodied counterparts influence how individuals with disability are in fact treated. Similarly, another study found that although there is increased understanding and possible willingness to move towards social acceptance of persons with disabilities, such increased understanding and willingness are not reflected in the actual attitudes and behaviours of able-bodied counterparts (Manetti et al., 2001).

Therefore, although able-bodied youth understand the moral and societal messages of accepting individuals with disabilities, such understanding has not led actions to include peers with ID in social activities. It is one thing to accept inclusion as a philosophy, and it is another to practice full acceptance of that philosophy (Siperstein, Norins, Corbin, & Shriver, 2003). This evidence demonstrates that simply providing SI opportunities in school does not directly translate to successful inclusion outside of schools such as in the communities for youth with ID.

One organization that promotes the well-being of individuals with ID is Special Olympics (SO). SO is a global organization that provides sport programs at local levels as well as organized competitions from local to world level for individuals with ID. SO currently have 2.8

million athletes with ID as well as 750,000 volunteers and 300,000 coaches that spread through 180 countries (SOI, 2009a; SOI, 2009b). More specifically, Special Olympics Canada (SOC), the governing body of SO in Canada is “dedicated to enriching the lives of Canadians with an intellectual disability through sport” (SOC, 2010, “SOC Mission Statement”, para.1), has 34,320 athletes as of September 2010. Furthermore, participation rates for children and youth are increasing with a 14% growth for ages 2-6, an 8.5% growth for ages 7-12, and a 1.5% growth for ages 13-21 from September 2010 to January 2011 (SOC, personal communication, April 27, 2011). Recent research has shown that SO provides an environment that may foster the psychosocial development of youth with ID by developing life skills and facilitating the transfer of these skills into domains beyond sport (Inoue & Forneris, 2011). Therefore, SO may also be an environment that plays a role in SI, and SOC hopes to “[b]e a change agent for social inclusion - advocating for and providing all athletes with opportunities for integration through sport” (SOC, 2010, “Opportunity & Accessibility”, para.1). However, no research has been conducted to examine whether SO contributes to SI.

The ecological theory developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979, 2005) is the theoretical framework for this study. Using the ecological theory in SI is warranted given that success with regards to SI is dependent on the surrounding social ecology of those being “included”, thus ecological theory may afford systematic explanations. Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory recognizes that an individual’s biological makeup is a primary determinant in his/her development but that this development is also influenced by the social-cultural environment. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the developing individual is placed at the center of five distinct layers of environmental systems and each system interacts and influences the individual’s development (Avan & Kirkwood, 2010; Shaffer, Wood & Willoughby, 2002).

Namely, the layers are: 1) *microsystem* (immediate environment; e.g. family, peers); 2) *mesosystem* (connections between the microsystems; e.g. child's teacher and parents); 3) *exosystem* (the larger social system; e.g. neighbours, community); 4) *macrosystem* (cultural values, customs, laws, social class); and 5) *chronosystem* (changes in environment over time; e.g. critical life events, physiological changes during adolescence). Changes or conflicts in one layer affects other layers, thus this theory outlines the importance of considering biology of an individual combined with the surrounding social environment and the immediate environment to gain the fuller picture of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1992, 1995, 1999, 2001; Emory University, n.d.; McLeroy, Bibeau, Steckler, & Glanz, 1988; Paquette & Ryan, 2001). Thus, utilizing this theory in SI research is logical given that it not only does it consider the individual but also the surrounding environments in which the individual operates and the interactions between the ecological layers or environments.

Although there has been much work on promoting SI very little research has been conducted to examine the effect and success of SI, particularly in the context of sport. Bailey (2005) suggested that there is a need for more empirical research to support SI through sport participation in order to justify that SI is more than a simple theoretical aspiration. Furthermore, in a society where SI is heavily valued, what also needs attention is the role of non-inclusion sport programs in SI. How or can disability specific organizations such as SO play a role or contribute to the SI movement? As a result, the goal of this study was to empirically investigate perceptions of how SO impacts and plays a role in SI.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the perceived impact and role of SO in SI from the perspectives of all stakeholders. More specifically, the intent of this research was

to examine 1) how stakeholders define SI, and 2) whether they perceive SO as an organization that is contributing to SI.

Method

Design

For this study, a mixed methods approach was chosen as it “combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration” (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007, p.123). More specifically, of the six mixed methods designs proposed by Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, and Hanson (2003), concurrent nested strategy was employed. With this strategy, researchers use multiple methods to gain a broader perspective as they understand that one data set may not be sufficient to explain questions that may arise within the large quantitative or qualitative study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Priority can be given to either method, which in this study is given to qualitative method. The method that is given less priority (i.e. quantitative) is embedded or nested within the predominant method (Muncey, 2009), and serves to seek information from different groups and angles. The two data sets are integrated at the analysis phase (Creswell, 2003; Creswell et al., 2003). In this study, one question on SI was asked in a quantitative online survey within the context of a larger research study (Inoue & Forneris, 2011) whereas the qualitative semi-structured interview was the primary data collection method. Given that perceptions of individuals with disability are often ignored when studying SI (Frazee, 2005), utilizing this mixed method approach provided the opportunity to examine SI more in-depth from multiple points of view and also perceptions from a large number of

participants. This was especially beneficial as the SI may be perceived differently by parents, volunteers/coaches, and athletes.

Participants

Online survey participants. Participants for the online survey included parents of athletes and coaches/volunteers. Over three month period, a total of 274 (135 parents; 139 coaches/volunteers) participants completed the online survey. Inclusion criteria for coaches/volunteers were set to ensure the data received met criteria for ethics approval and was of high quality, which included the following: 1) 18 years or older, 2) coaching/volunteering for at least one year, and 3) regular contact (i.e. at least monthly) with the athletes. In addition, coaches being recruited were those who participated in the regularly offered SOC official sport programs (e.g., athletics, swimming, floor hockey, figure skating, and alpine skiing). Therefore, one-time event volunteers such as regional, provincial, national games and/or fundraising volunteers were not eligible based on the set parameter.

For coaches/volunteers, sixty-four of the respondents were male, while 75 were female. The age ranged from 18 to 78. Fifty-eight of the respondents also identified themselves as a parent of a SO athlete. For the parent survey, a total of 135 responded, which included 33 male respondents and 102 female respondents, whose age ranged from 33 to 80. Eight respondents had more than one child with ID that participates in SO as an athlete. The type of ID of their child included: Down syndrome/trisomy 21 ($n = 49$); autism/PDD/PDD-NOS ($n = 24$); developmental delay ($n = 21$); and other ($n = 41$) such as, but not limited to ADHD, epilepsy, Phalen-McDermid syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome, Aspergers syndrome, and Fragile X syndrome. While their child participated in variety of sports, the top three sports were aquatics ($n = 64$), 5 & 10-pin bowling ($n = 63$), and athletics/track & field ($n = 52$). These were consistent with the top three

participated SO sports, which are 5-pin bowling ($n = 14,539$), athletics/track & field ($n = 9,572$), and aquatics ($n = 7,451$) which was followed by 10-pin bowling ($n = 4,789$) (SOC. personal communication, April 27th 2011). Some parents also identified themselves as a coach ($n = 51$), volunteer ($n = 81$), or administrator ($n = 42$).

Interview participants. A total of 28 interviews were conducted with twelve SO youth athletes, fourteen parents, and four chapter representatives from British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia which were chosen specifically to allow good representation across Canada. From each province, three youth athletes with ID (ages 12-21) were chosen by chapter representatives to take part in the interview. The chapter representatives were asked to select participants who had varying years and levels of experience in SO and those whose disability does not limit them verbally so that they could participate in a semi-structured interview. The average age of the athletes was 16. Only one athlete had already graduated from high school while the others are still in school either in special education schools or inclusion/integration schools. Their diagnoses varied from Down syndrome, autism, micro deletion 22Q11, and/or learning, developmental, or intellectual disability. All but two athletes had at least participated in provincial games, some as far as world games. Many participate in more than one sport; some even participate in three to four SO sports per season. Only two athletes participate in generic sports (non-SO sport programs) along with peers without ID. Parent(s) interviewed were those of the interviewed athletes. The chapter representatives were selected based on the recommendations made by a SOC staff that had regular contact with numerous chapter representatives across the country, who was asked to suggest chapter representatives who are most familiar with the local programs

Procedure

The online survey and the semi-structured interviews were conducted concurrently. For the online survey, twelve chapter representatives across Canada were contacted through e-mail. This email explained the details of the research and included the links to the online surveys on Survey Monkey. In this email the chapter representatives were asked to distribute the information and links to the survey to potential participants in whatever way each chapter felt most appropriate (e.g., e-mail, newsletter, and/or website). Responses were collected over a three month period (mid-December 2010 to mid-March 2011).

For the interviews, SOC staff was initially contacted to recommend chapter representatives from the four selected chapters (British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia) who were most familiar with the athletes and programs in their own chapter. The selected chapter representatives were then contacted via e-mail to possibly recommend three youth athletes and their parents who met the criteria outlined above, in addition to their participation in an interview. All of the interviews were conducted by the first author; the French and bilingual interviews were conducted with the assistance of a bilingual staff member from Special Olympics Quebec (SOQ; Olympiques spéciaux Québec) to ensure participants felt comfortable and the correct terminology was employed during the interview. All interviews were audio recorded. All procedures for this research were approved by the Office of Research Ethics and Integrity at the University of Ottawa.

Measures

Online survey. The online survey used for this study was created for a larger study that examined the perceived impact of SO on positive youth development. Two types of surveys were created on Survey Monkey; one for parents, and a second one for coaches and volunteers, which were both offered in both Canadian official languages (i.e. English and French). There were six

sections on the parent survey and three on the coach and volunteer survey in the larger study; however, for this study, only the section on demographics and SO involvement and the section pertaining to perceptions of SI were used from the survey. Participants were asked using 1 item whether they perceive SO as contributing to SI in which they responded to a on a 5-pt likert-scale (totally disagree to totally agree). Following this question was an open-ended section that asked participants “to please provide an explanation to the choice you selected above. In addition, a second open-ended question asked parents to describe in their own words a situation where they believed SO has contributed to SI for their child.

Interviews and pre-interview questionnaire. The interviews conducted were semi-structured in nature, and were conducted in either English or French. As stated above interviews were conducted with athletes, parents and chapter representatives. The questions asked included topics such as general experience with SO, non-SO sport experience, school experiences and SI. Athlete interviews were approximately 30 minutes. In addition, athletes were asked to share photographs taken during SO to facilitate the interview process, also known as “reflexive photography.” Reflexive photography is a process by which participants share photographs they have taken that relate to the experience at hand with the researcher. This approach allows the participants the opportunity to react and reflect on the deeper meanings of the photographs through the interview (Parker, 2006). In social research, such photo-interviewing is employed to provoke responses from participants (Hurworth, 2003). The image itself is what generates the data, and it is “reflexive” as participants reflect back on their experience to share their thoughts about what is in the photographs (Harper, 1987). Hence, this approach was employed for this study as the researcher believed using photographs taken during their SO participation allow athletes to reflect and express deeper thoughts on their SO participation, as past studies have

shown that “images such as photographs evoke deeper elements of human consciousness than do words” (Harper, 2002, p.13). Furthermore, prior to the interview with the athlete’s parent(s) were asked to fill out a one page pre-interview questionnaire about their child’s past involvement in SO programs and SO games. The researcher deemed this information as vital for gaining an understanding of the athletes experience prior to the interview and to help build rapport early in the interview.

The interviews with the parents lasted between 30 minutes to 2 hours. In the interview, parents were asked questions pertaining to their experiences with SO, changes in child’s development, and about SI. Meanwhile the interviews with chapter representatives lasted between 45 to 1.5 hours. The chapter representatives were asked questions pertaining to the role of SO in SI and how they currently approach SI.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the online survey was analyzed using SPSS 18.0. More specifically, descriptive statistics and a T-test were conducted to examine whether there were differences between parents perceptions and coaches/volunteers perceptions with regard to the impact SO is having on SI. To analyze qualitative data, the interviews were transcribed verbatim. Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA: Smith & Osborn, 2003, 2008) was then used for coding and analyzing the data. IPA is a phenomenological method which asserts that gaining direct access into a participant's life world is impossible, and focuses on exploring participants' perceptions of their experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2003, 2008; Willig, 2001). The IPA process is iterative and the transcripts are read through multiple times. Following the procedure as identified by Smith and Osborn (2008), notes are made alongside on the left margin to highlight any interesting or significant responses that were found during the first two readings. The

transcripts were read multiple times afterwards, in which times notes were made on the right margin to note emerging themes that captured the essence of the responses. A master list of the themes was developed and excerpts from the transcripts were provided to support the identified themes. An independent auditor who was familiar with qualitative data analysis provided feedback for the theme integration, additions, and/or clarifications after reviewing the results.

To organize data and to help in identification of quotes that supported the emergent themes, NVivo 7.0 (QSR International Pty Ltd, 2007) was used. Participant identification codes are provided for each quote (BC= British Columbia, NS= Nova Scotia, ON= Ontario, QC= Quebec; A= Athlete, CR= Chapter Representative, P= Parent). Furthermore, for identification and confidentiality purposes for athletes and parents, numbers are employed in relation to the order participants were interviewed. For example, a third athlete interviewed in Quebec was coded as QCA3. The province was omitted for quotes from chapter representatives as only one person was interviewed from each province. In addition, participant identification codes for the online surveys were provided for each quote (CV= Coach/Volunteer, P= Parent, E= English, F= French) along with numbers to identify the order in which the responses were submitted.

Results

The results are presented in two sections. The first section presents the quantitative results from the online survey whereas the second section presents the qualitative results from the interviews and online survey.

Quantitative Results

Descriptive analyses indicated that overall participants perceived SO as contributing to SI. The mean score was 4.26 (SD = .92) on a 5 pt-likert scale.

Qualitative Results

Four themes emerged from the qualitative analysis: 1) ‘Social inclusion’ is hard to define; 2) The contribution of Special Olympics to the social inclusion movement; 3) Special Olympics serves as vehicle for inclusion in sport; and 4) Impact of Special Olympics on social inclusion.

‘Social inclusion’ is hard to define. When athletes were asked what they think SI means, most of the athletes had difficulty responding and so the researcher followed up by asking what made them feel included. The majority of athletes stated that they feel included when others invite them to participate in other activities, in other words, it was the social aspect that was the crucial aspect for athletes to feel included: “When people invite me over to activities is probably when I feel included... than I feel happy” (ONA1). Another athlete stated:

A lot through sports or if someone mentions that they are going somewhere and ask if I’d like to go or stuff like that. I find that’s a big way that I know I’m included in a group, not being left out. That’s the way I really notice that people are really liking me or trying to include things. (BCA3)

Similarly another athlete discussed feeling included when she was able to hang out with friends she had met through sport: “when I’m in a group with couple of the friends that I know in sports” (BCA2). When asked whether or not they believed that SO helps them feel included all of the athletes reported that SO makes them feel included: “Yes I do” (NSA3), “Yes!” (BCA2).

Although parents had similar ideas to the athletes, there appeared to be greater variations in the responses regarding the definition of SI. Some parents talked about the importance of having a social network: “to feel a part of a network that is like a family unit and comfortable to them” (ONP3), “Total acceptance of any disability” (NSP2). Others talked more about being able to function independently within society: “be able to get work with other people, to have an

apartment, to be autonomous” (QCP1), “being as close to normal as possible” (NSP3) and “to be accepted at the level that you are able to be included in the society” (BCP3).

One parent noted that SI is different for each individual, therefore is hard to define and to evaluate whether it is successful:

SI for some athletes from what I can see, it would be very different from what it would be for my daughter because SI to some who have very little communication, just sitting there may be very happy and just loving it, but they can't express it verbally. So it's hard to tell how you succeed other than the smiles on their face at the end of the day. (ONP3)

While many parents struggle to define SI or give criteria for what is successful SI, all parents agreed that SI goes beyond providing physical opportunities for athletes and have observed that a gap still exists between stating a program/school is inclusive and the reality of that inclusion. This finding aligns with the point made by athletes that social aspect is crucial. For example, a parent, speaking of the child's school experience stated:

As an ID child, you don't get invited to birthday parties, after school events, sleepovers. They're not included. So even though there's full inclusion [talking about the school being inclusive] and they may have friends, it doesn't mean they want to come over for a play date...I guess SI is being socially accepted regardless of your disability, whatever it may be. That would be a perfect world, wouldn't it? (NSP2)

Similar to parents, the chapter representatives did not appear to have one agreed upon definition of SI: “Well, I don't think we have a formal definition” (CR2), while another shared her perspective:

When we talk about SI, inclusion, we see it not specific to SO. We see that meaning anything that contributes to the athlete, being able to take part in physical activities, social activities, whether inside or outside of SO... So we look at inclusion as inclusion in society, so that there is nothing essentially their “disability” that prevents them from whatever they want to do. So it’s a broad broad...and so our focus isn’t inclusion is this, inclusion is being on a generic team. We just want them to be active, be involved. Do whatever they want to do. And whatever that takes, we’re okay with that. That’s our provincial mindset. (CR4)

The contribution of Special Olympics to the social inclusion movement. All parents who were interviewed perceived SO as an organization that is contributing to the SI movement. The parents talked about how the structure and opportunities through SO along with its name (i.e. brand) and the efforts placed on marketing and publicity were all factors playing a role in the social inclusion movement. Although it is stated on the SOC website that SOC “hopes to be a change agent for social inclusion” (SOC, 2010, “Opportunity & Accessibility”, para.1), only one parent had formally heard of this mandate. Most parents may not have heard it formally, but they certainly recognized that SO plays a role in SI. One of the parents shared: “By having this kind of criteria [consistent programming] and the expectation of what behaviour is [acceptable], it makes us acceptable to the mainstream” (BCP2). Another parent stated “Without SO, my child would not have had the chance to show people, so called ‘normal’, his sport and social abilities” (PF6)

In terms of SO being a well-known ‘brand’ one parent stated that the name ‘Special Olympics’ itself contributes to SI: “SO to me is a big name...I think having the label of SO in the

community, people may have heard of it, so they kind of know what to expect. I think it helps that way” (ONP3). Similarly, a chapter representative shared:

It’s not so much awareness of the overall organization, but it’s the awareness of the fact that our athletes are contributing individuals in the society and that they can compete in the highest levels with the generic sporting environment or the SO environment and be competitive, and be socially accepted because they have had to train as hard as the generic counterpart and have made same commitment as a generic counterparts. (CR4)

Another chapter representative mentioned a publicity campaign that took place as part of the 30th anniversary of SO in their province and explained that the purpose of this publicity campaign was to change how people see SO athletes in order to promote SI: “a lot of those [praises about the campaign] were from organizations that were all for integration, because our campaign was more about our athletes are athletes, and they should be recognized as athletes no matter what...slowly, I think it’s changing” (CR2).

On the contrary, several coach/volunteer responses from the online survey did not perceive SO as contributing to SI, as SO is exclusively for persons with ID. One coach/volunteer stated, “I agree that it helps athletes to be valued and respected for their efforts (people are always cheering athletes on because they are proud of their accomplishments) but it doesn't include them into mainstream sports, it segregates people with disabilities” (CVE59), while another stated:

I think that SO provides athletes with the opportunity to develop socially with their fellow athletes and coaches but also segregates them from the mainstream athletic and social world. There is good and bad to this as the SO program provides them

with a safe and supportive environment of like individuals which definitely supports development of social skills but it also labels them as "Special" and separate from "regular" programs and people. (CVE31)

Chapter representatives stated that they occasionally face parents who view SO as an exclusion or non-inclusive organization as it is catered only towards persons with ID. However, a chapter representative also noted that the number of such parents have significantly decreased in the last 15 years because “we’re educating them [parents] and they realize the opportunities that are available within the environment of SO” (CR4). As one parent described:

Although SO segregates people with developmental disabilities, it provides exposure to activities that the normal population enjoy, opportunities to work with 'normal' people, e.g. coaches, supporters, siblings, etc. and other people see our children in an environment they also enjoy so our children can develop a sense of community and others can recognize the skills and attributes of our children. (PE76)

In addition, another chapter representative stated that the fact that SO is a non-inclusion program can also be seen as a benefit:

For us in SO, having a program that is not as inclusive, for us, we were able to take any athlete no matter what their level of ability no matter how autonomous they were. We were able to get them in the sports club and get the moving, get them physically fit. So in that sense, it made us so much more accessible for everyone. (CR2)

Similarly, another parent stated:

I love that aspect of it that everybody is included, whether they are someone who walks the 400 or my daughter who runs it. They all have an equal chance. That part I love about, where as mainstream, everybody's bunched into one... That's one thing I love about SO, the way everybody gets a chance. Not just the top guys.

(QCP3)

As such, many parents have expressed problems with inclusion in schools. One parents stated: "the regular kids, they just don't integrate them no matter how much you try. The school doesn't do anything for them, and this [SO] is the venue for them" (ONP3). Another parent shared: "a lot of kids that don't have disabilities can be very cruel, so she had a lot of problems with that in some of the school areas" (NSP1). Parents discussed that full inclusion is not always positive and they value SO because it is an 'exclusive' program designed just for their children with ID. Perhaps one parent said it best by stating "exclusion with a bit of inclusion enhances that inclusion" (BCP3).

Special Olympics can serve as vehicle for inclusion in sport. Participants discussed how participation in SO has led to increased inclusion, particularly within the context of sport. A chapter representative explained how SO can help athletes participate in generic sport programs with non-ID youth:

The skills they've learned in the SO environment transgress into the generic sport environment. So they're socially accepted in that environment because they've learned proper communication skills, they've learned the respect, they've learned how to communicate with whether it be SO athletes or non-SO athletes. So that's helpful in that generic environment, being considered an equal athlete within that

environment but also being respected in that environment, being respected within that sport organization. (CR4)

Another chapter representative talked about young athlete programs such as Active Start and FUNDamentals, which are part of the Long Term Athlete Development model in Canada (SOC, 2007), contribute significantly to inclusion in generic sports: “they’re given the opportunity to learn the social skills that they may not be learned through the generic sport environment... [It] helps them gain and earn respect in that generic sport environment because they’ve learned those skills in SO” (CR4).

One parent talked about how her child has been able to participate in a generic sport program: “She’s with 11, 12 year olds although she’s 17. She’s very comfortable with that because intellectually, they are the same level, so when they speak, there is no barrier” (QCP2). Participants also discussed how SO athletes’ participation in generic sport programs helps to facilitate SI as it leads to increased openness on behalf of non-ID individuals. One chapter representative shared:

We have athletes going to Canada Games as part of Team (name of province) and our athletes are equal members of the team. Even though they are SO athletes, they are engaged as regular athletes...Our athletes are gaining the respect of those generic athletes, and I think that’s the most important part of that SI movement.
(CR4)

Chapter representatives also talked about the impact of SO athletes on the non-ID participants: “It’s very educational for the athletes on the team, especially young Canada Games athletes...it opens up or challenges their thoughts” (CR3). In addition, a parent shared how participation in

generic sports helps SO athletes be more acknowledged "Through [generic] competitions and in other ways, they [athletes] are more in the public eye in a positive way" (PE8).

Impact of Special Olympics on social inclusion. The participants also expressed a number of ways or experiences they have had in relation to SO positively influencing SI at various levels. In particular, participants discussed how participation in SO has had an impact on the individual athlete, their families, their schools and their communities. As a result four subthemes are presented below: impact on the individual, impact on the family, impact at school and impact in the community.

Impact on the individual. Many parents, chapter representatives, and coaches/volunteers discussed that participation in SO has helped their child develop a number of life skills which they perceive has helping the youth integrate into mainstream activities. One parent shared: "SO provided him means to develop social skills through sport...Without SO, he wouldn't know how to interact...So a little by little, he's socializing with the mainstream kids at school, not just special needs now" (NSP3). Another parent stated "It's given her confidence to have more confidence at school and to not keep herself sheltered in her learning class, and expanded the socialization with other students in school because she has some confidence"(BCP2). Similarly two chapter representatives shared similar observations. "They are given the opportunity, environment to learn at their ability level and their learning level, they can then take those skills and go back into and being competitive in the generic sporting environment" (CR4) and "The more life skills that you develop the more likely it is that you can do whatever you want...So I think that's how we help them...It's a pretty safe environment to build those skills" (CR3).

Many coaches/volunteers also agreed that impact of SO contributes to SI for the athletes. On the survey one coach/volunteer wrote "SO and all the learning opportunities and skill

development that it provides, both physical and social, strongly supports holistic SI. These skills are transferred to the many social interactions in the athlete's life" (CVE36). Another coach/volunteer wrote: "Many of the athletes I've known for years have gone on after graduating from school to becoming employable, responsible, contributing members of our community. I think our program has helped them become more self-assured and capable to pursue new activities" (CVE87). Finally, a third coach/volunteer shared:

SO contributes to the athletes' physical well being which helps them be healthier and more productive to be able to be included in society on all levels of abilities.

SO contributes to the athletes' social well being by giving them an avenue to make friends with coaches, volunteers and other athletes which leads to social interaction.

SO contributes to the athletes' mental abilities by stimulating all sorts of personal feelings, strengths and weakness which are faced daily by members of today's society. (CVE58)

Parents from the survey also stated that SO significantly contributed to SI: "She is learning how to use appropriate behaviour and what is expected of her in social situations. It is easier for her to practice these skills with people who won't judge her because of her autism" (PE18).

Impact on the family. Many parents discussed how SO has impacted their family, in particular themselves as parents. More specifically, parents discussed how SO provides social support and social networks that have led to increased knowledge on resources and activities outside SO for their child. As one parent stated: "we all feed off of the knowledge of each parent, and the experiences like in education, day to day living, in what's available in communities...You learn from other parents what else is out there for our children" (NSP2). Another parent further elaborated:

Also another extremely useful benefit is the parents and caregivers of these people get to network while they're athlete's are in the program. Much friendship and comrades happens at SO. Also, information about other programs besides SO like government sponsored things, local community events, and other school events, like a college class I just found out about at SO from other parents. Valuable information is passed around at SO programs... We connect, share, make friends too and share valuable information. (PE83)

Chapter representatives also discussed how they believe SO has an impact on the family. Many of them discussed their experience of seeing parents develop into stronger advocates for their child as a result of networking with other parents through SO. One chapter representative explained this well with the following statement:

When our athletes get together for their weekly activity, the parents slowly get to know each other... There's so much networking and cross referencing of information that happens amongst parents... Just the opportunity for word of mouth and networking gives them more power. It helps them empower each other, it empowers themselves because now they know more information, they're learning from each other. And they're learning from themselves, they're learning from the athletes, and they're learning from their coach. (CR4)

Impact at school. The participants discussed extensively about how their experience at provincial, national and/or world games made an impact on the school environment. Athletes and parents talked about how after a games competition the youth were given opportunities to speak about their experiences. For example, one athlete explained: "They [students at the school] were all really proud of me. They all see me grow and having some challenging times throughout my

school, they are all proud of what I do” (ONA3). Another parent shared a story about the time when her child had returned from a world games and the school had created a bulletin board for the athlete to show all her accomplishments to other students...those are good things to feel part of your school community” (BCP2). Similarly, another parent shared how her child’s participation in SO and the national games led to her child winning an award at school which led to greater acceptance and awareness: “She won Athlete of the Year in this regular school. It made the regular students aware that someone with special needs was able to accomplish something. It was benefit to both of them [athletes and their peers]” (QCP3). Through the survey parents also shared similar experiences. One parent wrote “My daughter now goes to school after a competition bragging about her ribbons/trophies just like the other kids. She even has classmates asking about how she did and wanting to come and cheer her on” (PE5) while a second parent shared: “My son has won several medals at the provincials, this has given his self-confidence a large boost and when he shows them to his classmates they are very impressed by what he can accomplish and look at him with respect” (PE91).

Impact in the community. SO was also perceived as having an impact on the larger community. For example, a chapter representative explained how the aforementioned publicity campaign that took place in one province resulted in praises from organizations that: “Giving them [athletes] those [life] skills will facilitate their SI. So in that sense now, we’re being used as an example by (name of provincial association for community living) as opposed to being completely almost rejected back 12 years ago” (CR2).

Through the survey coach/volunteers also expressed that SO is having an impact in the community and society in general. One coach/volunteer summarized the impact of SO on SI as the following:

I have witnessed the impact that SO has on not only the athletes, but the volunteers and family members and community. It absolutely fosters better social relationships and opens opportunities for a wide variety of people to get together and have fun.

(CVE16)

Another coach/volunteer “SO allows people to know the reality and existence of persons with disability and their great abilities. SO shows that these people have the same aspirations, the same dreams, and same concerns as the rest of the population” (CVF20). A parent similarly responded:

SO has shown what athletes with intellectual disabilities CAN do. They have supported each athlete to work hard and treated the athletes with respect as athletes, not as a do-good project. Because of the attitude of SO, society has seen these athletes in a different light. (PE88)

A number of parents also explained that through SO their child’s accomplishments have been acknowledged by their community, indicating that SO is having an impact beyond the individual. One parent shared how her son won an achievement award from the city after he won a medal at the National games.

In addition, several parents also stated that they have also observed an impact on the coaches/volunteers who are also crucial members of the community. The parents noted that the more the coaches/volunteers get involved, the more they understand what these athletes can do which opens their eyes. For example, referring to the high school age volunteers in her daughter’s program, a parent stated “Young volunteers are being made more aware of our athletes and some of the struggles that they have, so that becomes an acceptance” (BCP2). Similarly, a coach stated, “I believe it is more about the volunteers being exposed to these

amazing members of our society, having their lives touched and going out and teaching their friends and families about compassion and inclusion” (CVE35).

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to examine the perceived impact and role of SO in SI for youth with ID from the perspectives of all stakeholders. The results from the both the quantitative data and qualitative data indicate that stakeholders perceive SO as contributing to SI. Although the results showed that SI was not an easy concept to define and that various individuals had different conceptualizations of what SI means, it was clear that SI is considered multidimensional. The athletes, in particular discussed how to feel included means to be invited by others to participate in social activities. This finding is consistent with what Frazee (2005) found with research on youth with physical disabilities, although each perceptions varied, all youth placed more importance on social acceptance rather than physical opportunity to be included.

Definitions from parents, coach/volunteers and chapter representatives also varied but all of these stakeholders also talked about social acceptance as being an important aspect of social inclusion. As research by Thomas (1999) demonstrated, SI is also about the citizenship of individuals. It is about being respected as a valued contributor who has rights, knowledge, and power. This is consistent with the parents perceptions that SO has helped to prepare their child for the generic/mainstream world, that SO allows athletes to show able-bodied counterparts their abilities and become a subject of respect. Therefore, physical inclusion opportunities such as inclusion in schools and community sport alone do not necessarily translate into successful SI according to the participants in this study and particularly from the youth living with an intellectual disability. The parents’ discussed their concerns with the school system and

explained that although the school physically includes youth with ID into their institution, school was not an inclusive environment as the social acceptance amongst peers without a disability was not very present. A recent study by Graham and Harwood (2011) supports these perceptions as their results revealed that the struggle for inclusion in schools is still very present.

With unsuccessful SI within the schools, results from the present study suggest that many parents are grateful that SO provides an optimal environment where their child is socially accepted no matter what, and are provided with the opportunity to excel at their own level, to the best of their abilities. Thus, SO is perceived as a stronger and safer place for athletes to be than many school settings, and therefore perceived as providing what may not be available to them within the context of school. As a result, participants believed that SO was contributing to the SI movement as SO is a large organization that has gained recognition in Canada and as a result has provided opportunities for the youth to demonstrate their abilities to non-ID individuals, particularly within the context of generic sport. However, some participants also perceived SO as an exclusion organization and although they recognized that SO helps the youth develop skills and be socially accepted within the organization, SO programs separate youth with ID from mainstream activities. In addition, chapter representatives reported that they occasionally face parents who are hesitant to enrol their youth in SO because they are exclusive. However, a number of parents also valued having an exclusive program that was designed for their child which helped them develop the skills necessary to be able to engage in mainstream activities outside of SO. Therefore, the results from this study suggest that although participants recognize that SO is an exclusive organization, many parents value such a program for their child and perceive SO as contributing to the SI movement.

Results from the present study also suggest that SO may have an impact on SI at the various levels (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem) identified by Bronfenbrenner (1979, 2005) in his ecological theory. Parents and chapter representatives discussed that through participation in SO the athletes were developing a number of life skills and social skills that they believed enabled the athlete to socialize more effectively with other non-ID youth and to succeed in activities outside SO. In particular, parents and chapter representatives discussed that as the athletes gain the skills that allow them to participate in generic sports or competitions they have the opportunity for able-bodied individuals to see their ability which can impact on how they view the athletes with ID. Parents also shared that participation in SO competitions enabled their child to share their accomplishments with their able-bodied peers at school, which has also helped lead to greater respect from their non-ID peers. This is what Bronfenbrenner refer to as *bi-directional influences* in which the developing individual also affects others in this layer such as parents and peers (Paquette & Ryan, 2001). As such, SO appears to have a significant impact on the developing individual's microsystem and mesosystem with regard to SI.

Exosystem and the macrosystem, the third and fourth layers, do not involve the developing individual directly, but impact the individual through the larger social system such as community based resources and social forces such as cultural values, customs, and laws (Berk, 2000; Krishnan, 2010; Paquette & Ryan, 2001). The results of this study suggest that increased awareness of SO, inclusion into Canada Games and other generic sport programs and competitions indicative of how SO is contributing to SI at these levels. First, chapter representatives in this study explained that SO assists in the process of making these opportunities happen locally, nationally and globally. However, it is the athletes themselves who

entered into these situations, and proved their ability to the able-bodied participants which may have lead to increased opportunities for SI. Second, it was identified by chapter representatives that many generic organizations within their communities are now recognizing the impact SO has on the individual and now, after years of rejection have started to use SO as a prime example to promote SI. This is a clear reflection of how SO impacts the Macrosystem, by changing the mindset of other organizations by changing their values and policies which in turns have the ability to foster greater SI.

Finally, the chronosystem, which places its emphasis on the dimension of time as the child develops, is also relevant with regards to SI and the result of this study. The majority of parents recognized that as their child continued to be involved in SO over time, they had increased opportunities to participate in various competitions and non-sport programs such as the Athlete Leadership Program. These opportunities have enabled the athletes to develop a wider variety of life skills and to increase their self-confidence over a number of years which was perceived as enabling the athletes to succeed in other domains outside of sport in particular school and be able to interact more effectively with non-ID peers

Going back to the definition used for this study by Bailey (2005), the results provide support all four dimensions of SI. First, in terms of 'spatial' dimension, SO is perceived as minimizing the variety of distances that exist between athletes within SO, athletes in generic sport and non-ID peers, as well as between SO athletes and their non-ID coaches/volunteers. With regards to the second dimension of 'relation', all stakeholders perceived SO as providing its athletes with a sense of belonging and acceptance. Furthermore, SO was perceived as helping athletes develop a number of life skills and sports skills in a safe environment, which fulfills the third dimension of 'functional.' The development such skills lead to the fourth dimension of

‘power.’ Participants perceived that SO helps the youth and parents alike build social networks that extend that to the community by participating in generic programs or games and sharing their accomplishments with non-ID peers and community members. These opportunities ultimately lead to increased community involvement and capacity for change.

Although the results of the study indicated that SO is perceived as contributing to SI in a number of ways a number of limitations exist for the present study. First, as the athletes who were interviewed were selected based on their verbal ability to take part in a semi-structured interview with the researcher, most of the athletes are higher functioning individuals. Thus, their statements may not mirror what youth with ID who are of lower functioning may be experiencing. Second, the data collected are participants’ perceptions rather than an objective evaluation of whether SO is contributing to SI. Third, it is possible given that the participants in this study, are and continue to be active participants in SO that they may be biased with regard to how well SO is contributing to SI.

Based on the results and discussions in this present study, several future research recommendations can be made. First, as generic sport opportunities were said to be one initiative that many chapters set out to provide for their athletes, research should be conducted to examine the impact of such initiatives on youth with an ID and non-ID youth. Second, since the athletes interviewed in the present study were mostly higher functioning athletes, research needs to be conducted with lower functioning athletes with ID to examine what SI means for them. Third, as the present study focused on perceptions of the respondents, future research using more objective measures to understand the success of SI through SO is warranted. Finally, longitudinal research should also be conducted to examine how SO can indeed influence athletes’ lives over time in relation to SI.

Several recommendations can also be made for SO based on the results. First, if SOC in fact is trying to be a “change agent for SI” as its mission states, it is necessary to identify what they mean by SI, and to clearly illustrate what it is that they are trying to achieve. Second, if providing physical opportunities for generic sport is part of how SO wants to promote SI they also should place consideration on the social aspect of SI as that is what is deemed as an essential criterion for athletes. Third, SO Canada may want to consider incorporating Special Olympics Unified Sports®. This program matches athletes with ID and able-bodied athletes that are of similar athletic ability level to enjoy sports together (SOI, 2011). A study by Townsend and Hassall (2007) suggested that participation in Unified Sports® will likely lead to more peer social acceptance by able-bodied individuals and research conducted by Dowling, McConkey, Hassan, and Menke (2010) suggested that Unified Sports® leads to increased SI through changing minds of participating able-bodied athletes as well as the wider community. Lastly, SOC and its chapters should continue to work with government and communities to strengthen relationships and collaboratively work towards providing greater opportunities for all athletes.

Conclusion

Despite years of aggressively promoting SI especially in the education sector, the reality of SI is that it is complex. Although numerous studies have been conducted on SI for persons with disabilities, most studies placed its focus on the physical aspect of SI and not enough on the social aspect of SI (Thomas, 1999); however, this research has revealed the importance of the social aspects of SI (Frazee, 2005). Some parents consider SO as an “exclusion” organization as its programs are intended to serve only persons with ID. However, at this point, integration in the community at large is perceived to be extremely difficult to achieve (Cummins & Lau, 2003). Therefore, disability specific organizations such as SO may play an integral role in SI by

impacting persons with ID and their surrounding environments. The results of this study indicated that SO is perceived as having an impact on the various levels of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory (1979, 2005) and supports the four dimensions of Bailey's definition of SI. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979, 2005) change in one layer impacts changes in other layers and so it may be that the more athletes develop through their participation in SO, the greater the impact on their families, schools, and communities which then in turn can lead to greater SI and support for enhanced resources. These increased resources can then be allocated back to the developing athlete and the cycle continues.

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General Discussion and Conclusion

The intention of this research was to examine whether SO is perceived as providing programs that foster psychosocial development for youth with ID and whether SO is perceived as contributing to the SI movement. The first study focused on psychosocial development, while the second study focused on SI. Moreover, this research sought to provide a multi-dimensional view to the themes in question by compiling responses from various stakeholders of the organization including athletes, parents, coaches/volunteers, and chapter representatives across Canada through nationwide online surveys and face-to-face interviews. Both studies utilized a mixed methods approach as this approach “combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration” (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007, p.123), thus allowing for a more comprehensive understanding than utilizing only one method can provide. In both studies, Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; Smith & Osborn, 2003, 2008) was utilized to analyze the qualitative data since this method is based on the assertion that it is impossible to gain direct access into a participant’s life, thus focuses on exploring participants’ perceptions of their own experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2003, 2008; Willig, 2001).

As mentioned above, the first study intended to examine whether SO programs were perceived as fostering psychosocial development for youth using the conceptual framework proposed by Petitpas et al. (2005) for sport programs aiming to enhance psychosocial development. This framework identifies four essential components should a program aim to foster psychosocial development for youth: 1) context; 2) external assets; 3) internal assets; and 4) research and evaluation (Petitpas et al., 2005, Petitpas et al., 2007). The results indicated that SO is perceived as providing an appropriate context that allows athletes to participate,

voluntarily in sport, and most importantly feel a sense of belonging and acceptance. Athletes and parents also expressed that SO benefits them socially as it provides a social network that they may not achieve elsewhere.

With regards to external assets, the athletes and parents identified the SO coaches as friends and role models. The literature shows that having someone in a mentoring role and establishing quality relationships with the mentor plays a critical role in fostering positive outcomes for the youth (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2002). Furthermore, in the interviews, both parents and chapter representatives stated that SO was equally beneficial for parents. Parents expressed that as they watch their child grow through SO, they themselves became more involved and help to get more people involved, which in turn is perceived as helping parents themselves become stronger supporters of the athletes. As a result, it appears that the SO environment has a number of external assets including caring coaches and supportive parents.

All stakeholders also agreed that athletes with ID gain a variety of internal assets through participation in SO as the existence of the strong external assets such as coaches/volunteers take the time to intentionally teach life skills. In particular, participants perceived SO as helping develop life skills such as the ability to work with others, to communicate with others, to push yourself to the limit, to set and attain goals, to make a commitment and stick to it and to be organized. In addition, games experience and non-sport opportunities provided through SO were also perceived as leading to the development of life skills and that the skills gained through such opportunities transfer into everyday life.

With regard to program evaluation, variation in practices was observed across the different provinces. As the majority of the evaluations were not conducted in a systematic or

comprehensive manner, it is recommended that SOC work with the different chapters to improve their program evaluation activities. Overall, the results suggest that SO is an organization that is perceived by its stakeholders as facilitating PYD. In addition, the structure of SO appears to align well with Petitpas et al.'s (2005) framework and thus further supports the notion that SO, as an organization, has the ability to foster the psychosocial development of its athletes.

The second study intended to examine the perceived impact and role of SO for SI, especially for youth with ID. The results revealed that SI was hard to define. Most evident was that all of the participants, particularly the athletes, talked about the importance of being included socially to feel valued and accepted. Hence, successful SI appears to be more than just eliminating physical barriers to participation. In this study, the ecological theory by Bronfenbrenner (1979, 2005) was utilized. Results showed that as the athlete gets involved with SO, they develop a variety of competencies including various social skills and life skills. It was perceived by participants first positively impact the development of the athlete who is at the center of the systems and over time these skills impact other levels such as the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem. Changes at these levels in turn will impact the developing athlete and the cycle continues. As such, these bi-directional relationships in nature are synergistic (Krishnan, 2010).

The stakeholders in this study did perceive SO as contributing to SI on a number of levels. Reflecting back on the definition used for this study by Bailey (2005) that incorporates all four dimensions of SI (i.e. spatial, relational, functional, and power), the results from the present study demonstrate that SO fulfills and contributes to all dimensions of this definition. Although SOC aims to “[b]e a change agent for social inclusion” (SOC, 2010, “Opportunity & Accessibility”, para.1) it is clear from the results of this research that there is no one solid

definition of SI within the SO organization and therefore it is necessary that SO continues to recognize the multi-dimensionality of SI and develop a more strategic plan to enhance opportunities for increased SI with their athletes. It is important to note that not all participants perceived that SO contributes to SI as some participants argued that SO is an exclusion organization as it caters only those with ID. Nevertheless, it is also important to acknowledge that there were a number of parents who viewed SO as an exclusion program but they believed it was beneficial for their child as it was one of the only environments in which their child was thriving and developing psychosocial skills that enabled them to function in mainstream activities and/or generic sport. Consequently, SO can be identified as an organization that may contribute and play a critical role in the SI movement.

This research was divided into two studies; however, the results from the two studies build upon one another. First of all, both studies showed that stakeholders perceive a number of benefits through participation in SO programs. It was perceived that SO provides a safe and welcoming environment that includes strong external assets and develops a number of internal assets (i.e. life skills) which parents and chapter representatives strongly believed led to increased SI at many levels. In other words, stakeholders perceived that through SO athletes with ID have the opportunity to develop a variety of life skills. These life skills help them successfully navigate the challenges in their daily lives which then positively impact the perceptions, attitudes, and ultimately increased acceptance by members of their community. The researchers did not expect to find what now seems to be a clear link between life skill development and SI. This link became evident as the interviews progressed and emerged on its own as there were no questions on the survey or interview that asked the participants about the possible relationship between life skill development and SI.

Second, the importance of early participation emerged from this research. In the first study, early participation was specifically advocated for by parents and chapter representatives as it was perceived that early participation helped young athletes to develop the basic skills needed to participate in a variety of sports, in particular generic sport programs at a later age. Côté and his colleagues (Côté & Fraser-Thomas, 2007; Côté & Hay, 2002) assert that participating in a variety of sports at an early age (i.e. sampling years) is important as it is during this first stage that one develops important fundamental motor skills and psychosocial skills. If youth with ID develop such skills through sport participation at a young age, it was perceived that by the time they reach adolescence they are better prepared for their future which may impact the various levels of Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 2005) theory and could lead to increased SI.

A large contribution of these studies lies in the fact that to date, no comprehensive study that uses frameworks or theories to examine stakeholder's perceptions, including the athletes with ID themselves, has been conducted. Although SO, from the outset, may have seemed to be a positive environment for youth with ID and has the potential to contribute to SI, the results of this research indicate that it is indeed an organization that is perceived as fostering psychosocial development which ultimately is perceived as contributing to SI. Through my personal and professional involvement in SO around the world, I have observed that a number of skills, including both sport and life skills, can be fostered because SO has the resources and capability to fulfil the specific needs of those with ID. Nonetheless, to develop a greater understanding of how stakeholders perceive SO as contributing to both psychosocial development and SI through research as opposed to personal experience was exciting. These results can be used in creating greater awareness of the benefits of SO participation and hence have a positive impact on the lives of more youth with ID. In addition, many participants, especially the parents, noted that

until they were interviewed, they vaguely acknowledged how SO had impacted their child's development and SI, but by engaging in the interview, they were better able to reflect and understand the impact SO participation has had in their lives. As a result, it appears that this research may have also enabled stakeholders to reflect upon their own experiences which could lead to stronger advocacy for SO.

Through this research it was also observed that there are commonalities and links between Petitpas et al.'s framework (2005) that seeks to enhance psychosocial development through sport and Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 2005) ecological theory that was used to understand the processes related to SI. First, what Petitpas et al. (2005) discusses as internal assets relates to the developing individual at the center of the ecological layers (microsystem) and Petitpas et al.'s description of external assets is equivalent to the mesosystem in the ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 2005). Gaining internal assets is perceived as leading to changes in the other layers, in particular the mesosystem and exosystem. Second, Petitpas et al. emphasizes the social relationships between the individual and the external assets must remain consistent and occur over a period of time, while Bronfenbrenner (1995, 2001) especially in his later work, deemed time was an essential component and that these bi-directional relationships between levels need to occur over a period of time for optimal development. Therefore, these studies have not only theoretically provided evidence for contribution of SO in facilitating PYD and SI, but also provided a valuable, multi-dimensional perspective of how various theories and models may work together to help explain processes related to PYD and SI.

As with any research, the present research had several limitations. First, as athletes selected for the interview were selected based on the ability to verbally comprehend in a semi-structured interview, many of the athletes could be described as higher functioning. Therefore,

their perceptions and experiences may not accurately portray those of lower functioning athletes. Second, as all participants in the study are those involved and continue to be involved in SO, they may have a positive bias towards the organization. Third, this research only examined perceptions and did not include objective measures of PYD and SI. Fourth, although this is a nationwide study, the athletes selected for the interviews were mostly residing in or close to metropolitan/urban areas and their experiences may be different from those who live in the rural areas.

Based on the research and its limitations, the following are suggestions for future research. First, a study with lower functioning athletes such as non-verbal athletes should be conducted. Although this may be challenging, longitudinal case studies may allow an examination of changes and impact over time. Similarly, longitudinal research is needed to examine how youth with ID develop over time is necessary to understand the true impact of SO participation. Third, a comparative longitudinal study between participants who started at an early age and those that started during their teenage years will be beneficial in understanding the impact of early participation. Fourth, as games participation was repeatedly mentioned as a significantly contributing factor in both PYD and SI, studies focusing solely on the games experience may be beneficial. Fifth, a study with participants from rural areas whose resources and community structure may be significantly different from the urban population should be examined. Finally, as this present research was conducted with the stakeholders of SO, conducting a study with non-stakeholders such as able-bodied peers at athletes' schools and general community members to understand how they perceive the athletes with ID or changes in these individuals since participating in SO is warranted.

This research demonstrated that fostering psychosocial development for youth with ID may be directly linked to SI. However, in order to maximize the effects of both, work is needed to improve program evaluation to ensure optimal quality, and identification of the essential components in achieving 'successful' SI as it relates to SO. Furthermore, it has been discussed that early participation is perceived as being beneficial. If the individual becomes a stronger individual at an earlier stage of life, there is a greater chance of having an impact on the remaining ecological layers which may ultimately strengthen and contribute to SI earlier in life. As such, the current focus placed on young athlete programs such as Active Start and FUNDamentals across Canada by SOC and its chapters is warranted (SOC, 2007). In sum, although SO may be an organization that caters to only those with ID, its benefits are so significant that even able-bodied individuals, communities, and other organizations are starting to see SO as contributing factor to SI. Therefore, SO may be identified as an optimal organization that can foster both PYD and SI for youth with ID.

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**Appendix A- Information Letter for Online Survey
(E-mail for Chapter Representatives)**

Dear Special Olympics (chapter name) representative:

I am requesting your assistance in a research study examining the relationship between Special Olympics participation and psychosocial development of athletes and its impact on social inclusion. The proposed study is supported and funded by Special Olympics Canada and Research Centre for Sport in Canadian Society.

The purpose of the proposed study is to understand whether participation in Special Olympics programs is perceived to facilitate the psychosocial development of youth with intellectual disability and whether participation in these programs is believed to facilitate or inhibit social inclusion.

Findings from this study will provide a better understanding of the impact its programs are having, and by identifying any needed changes to current programming.

As part of the research, the researchers would like parents of athletes, Special Olympics volunteers and coaches from across Canada to participate and by agreeing to participate will complete an online survey that should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Your assistance in the proposed research entails forwarding e-mail to an appropriate personnel in your chapter (e.g. Regional Coordinator), and to ensure that they forward e-mail to possible pool of participants. This e-mail will include links to online survey for parents, volunteers, and coaches. Additionally, I would also like to ask if you can post the link on your chapter website to encourage participation in the study, if possible.

Participation in this research is voluntary, and anonymity is assured as participants do not have to identify themselves. All of the data that is collected will be stored in a locked office and will have no identifying information attached.

Should you have any questions with regards to the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa: [Contact Information Provided Here]

Sincerely,

Chiaki Inoue, MSc, MA Candidate	Dr. Tanya Forneris, PhD
Principal Investigator	Research Supervisor

**Annexe A- Lettre d'information pour sondage électronique
(Représentant de division)**

Chère représentant-e des Olympiques spéciaux (nom de division):

Je demande votre appui pour une recherche qui a pour but d'examiner l'impact de la participation des jeunes athlètes aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux sur leur développement psychosocial ainsi que sur leur inclusion sociale. La recherche susmentionnée est appuyée et financée par Olympiques spéciaux Canada et le Centre de recherche sur le sport dans la société canadienne.

Le but de la recherche est d'examiner si la participation aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux est perçue comme facilitant le développement psychosocial et l'inclusion sociale des jeunes ayant une déficience intellectuelle.

Les résultats de cette recherche permettront de comprendre l'impact des programmes tout en identifiant les changements qui devraient y être apportés (si c'est le cas).

Pour cette recherche, les chercheuses demandent la participation des parents d'athlètes, des bénévoles des Olympiques spéciaux et des entraîneur-e-s de partout au Canada. Cette participation comprend : 1) compléter un sondage en ligne d'une durée d'environ 15 et/ou 2) accorder une entrevue en personne avec l'un des membres de l'équipe de recherche.

Votre appui pour cette recherche comprend : transférer un courriel au/à la responsable de section approprié (ex : coordonateur-trice régional) et assurer qu'il-elle transfère le courriel aux participant-e-s potentiel-les. Ce courriel contiendra le lien pour accéder au sondage électronique pour les parents, les bénévoles et les entraîneur-e-s. De plus, j'aimerais également vous demander, si cela est possible, d'afficher le lien du sondage sur le site internet de votre section pour encourager la participation à la recherche.

La participation à cette recherche est complètement volontaire. L'anonymat est assuré en raison du fait que les participant-e-s n'ont pas à s'identifier. Toutes les données qui seront recueillies seront entreposées dans un bureau verrouillé et aucune information qui pourrait servir à les identifier n'y sera jointe.

Si vous avez des questions quant aux procédures éthiques de cette recherche, vous pouvez communiquer avec les Responsables de la déontologie en recherche de l'Université d'Ottawa: [Coordonnées fournies ici]

Sincèrement,

Chiaki Inoue, MSc,
Candidate à la maîtrise
Chercheuse principale

Dr. Tanya Forneris, PhD
Superviseure de recherche

**Appendix B- Letter of Information
(E-mail for Parent Interviewees)**

Dear (Name of parent interviewee):

My name is Chiaki Inoue and I am a Masters student at University of Ottawa, currently conducting a research that examines the relationship between Special Olympics participation and psychosocial development of athletes and its impact on social inclusion. The proposed study is supported and funded by Special Olympics Canada and Research Centre for Sport in Canadian Society.

The purpose of the proposed study is to understand whether participation in Special Olympics programs is perceived to facilitate the psychosocial development of youth with intellectual disability and whether participation in these programs is believed to facilitate or inhibit social inclusion.

Findings from this study will provide a better understanding of the impact its programs are having, and by identifying any needed changes to current programming.

As part of the research, I am currently recruiting youth Special Olympics athletes and their parent(s) for an interview. Athlete interview will take approximately 30 minutes, and parent interview will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes. I will personally be conducting the interview at your choice of location (e.g. residence, local café, community hall, public library).

I have been in contact with your chapter representative regarding this study. In discussions with him, he identified you as being a family who fits well the selection criteria for this study. For this reason, I would like to invite you to participate in this study by allowing me to interview both yourself and your child.

If you and your child would be interested in participating in this study, please contact me at [Contact Information Provided Here] to express your interest, and I will provide more details of your participation. Should you have any questions or concerns, I will be happy to answer any questions you and/or your child may have.

Please note that participation in this research is voluntary. You and/or your child may choose to withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences. You and your child's decision to take part or not take part in the study will not be notified to any Special Olympics personnel. In addition, participation or withdrawal in this study will not affect the quality of the services received from Special Olympics.

Anonymity of personal information (e.g. name, geographical information) will be assured.

All of the data that is collected will be stored in a locked office and will have no identifying information attached.

Should you have any questions with regards to the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa: [Contact Information Provided Here]

Sincerely,

Chiaki Inoue, MSc, MA Candidate
Principal Investigator
[Contact Information Provided Here]

Dr. Tanya Forneris, PhD
Research Supervisor
[Contact Information Provided Here]

**Annexe B- Lettre d'information
(Courriel pour les entrevues des parents)**

Cher (nom du parent en entrevue):

Mon nom est Chiaki Inoue et je suis candidate au niveau de la maîtrise à l'Université d'Ottawa puis je mène actuellement une recherche qui examine l'impact de la participation des jeunes athlètes aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux sur leur développement psychosocial ainsi que sur leur inclusion sociale. La recherche susmentionnée est appuyée et financée par les Olympiques Spéciaux Canada et le Centre de recherche sur le sport dans la société canadienne.

Le but de la recherche est d'examiner si la participation aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux facilite le développement psychosocial et l'inclusion sociale des jeunes ayant une déficience intellectuelle.

Les résultats de cette recherche permettront de comprendre l'impact des programmes tout en identifiant les changements qui devraient y être apportées (le cas échéant).

Dans le cadre de la recherche, je suis en train de recruter des jeunes athlètes des Olympiques spéciaux et de leur parents pour une entrevue. L'entrevue avec les athlètes prendra environ 30 minutes, et l'entrevue avec les parents prendra approximativement 30 à 45 minutes. Je vais personnellement diriger l'entrevue à votre choix de l'emplacement (e.g. de résidence, un café local, salle communautaire, une bibliothèque publique).

J'ai été en contact avec votre représentant de la division concernant cette étude. Dans les discussions avec lui, il vous a identifié comme étant une famille qui correspond bien aux critères de sélection pour cette étude. Pour cette raison, je voudrais vous inviter à participer à cette étude en me permettant d'interviewer vous et votre enfant.

Si vous et votre enfant seraient intéressés à participer à cette étude, s'il vous plaît contactez-moi à [Coordonnées fournies ici] pour manifester votre intérêt, et je vous fournirai plus de détails sur votre participation. Si vous avez des questions ou des préoccupations, je serai content de répondre à toutes vos questions.

La participation à cette recherche est complètement volontaire. Vous et / ou votre enfant peut choisir de se retirer de l'étude à tout moment et / ou de refuser de répondre à nos questions, sans subir de conséquences négatives. Votre décision et la décision de votre enfant de prendre part ou de ne pas prendre part à l'étude ne seront pas portées à la connaissance du personnel des Olympiques spéciaux. En outre, la participation ou le retrait de cette étude n'aura aucune incidence sur la qualité des services reçus des Olympiques spéciaux.

L'anonymat est assuré en raison du fait que les participants n'ont pas à s'identifier. Toutes les données qui seront recueillies seront entreposées dans un bureau verrouillé et aucune information qui pourrait servir à les identifier n'y sera jointe.

Si vous avez des questions quant aux procédures éthiques de cette recherche, vous pouvez communiquer avec les Responsables de la déontologie en recherche de l'Université d'Ottawa:
[Coordonnées fournies ici]

Sincèrement,

Chiaki Inoue, MSc, Candidate à la maîtrise
Chercheure principale

[Coordonnées fournies ici]

Dr. Tanya Forneris, PhD
Superviseure de recherche

[Coordonnées fournies ici]

**Appendix C- Recruitment Text
(E-mail for SOC staff)**

[NOTE] I will be contacting the Director of Sport at Special Olympics Canada, who has worked for the organization for over 25 years and are in contact with chapter staff on a daily basis, and knows all chapter staff across the country. As Special Olympics Canada is funding this research, I have had numerous opportunities to talk to her, thus she is well aware of what the study is about.

Dear [Name of the Director of Sport at Special Olympics Canada],

Hi! How are you? This is Chiaki from Ottawa.
I hope everything is well with you!

The reason I am contacting you today is because I would like to ask for your assistance in recruiting participants for my research. As you probably already know, my research intends to understand whether participation in Special Olympics programs is perceived to facilitate the psychosocial development of youth with intellectual disability and whether participation in these programs is believed to facilitate or inhibit social inclusion.

As part of the research, I am intending to interview some people (chapter representatives, athletes, and parents) across Canada for my research that is being funded through Special Olympics Canada. I will be interviewing 28 participants in total- three athletes and their parents, as well as one chapter representative from the selected four chapters, namely, British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia.

My plan is to get in contact with a staff from the chapters named above, and have them recommend me with athletes/parents that would be eligible and would be willing to participate in the interview. In addition, I will also ask them to take part in a face-to-face interview with myself to discuss about their perspectives of development and social inclusion.

Therefore, I was hoping if you can recommend me one staff from each chapter (BC, ON, QC, NS) that would be most knowledgeable about their chapter situations and can speak on their chapter's behalf, and that can also assist me in finding athlete and parent participants.

If you have any suggestions, would you provide me with their names and e-mail addresses so I can contact them?

Thank you very much for your time and assistance in advance!

* Should you have any questions with regards to the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa: [Contact Information Provided Here]

Sincerely,

Chiaki Inoue, MSc, MA Candidate

Principal Investigator

Dr. Tanya Forneris, PhD

Research Supervisor

**Appendix D- Recruitment Text for Interview Participants
(E-mail for Chapter Representatives)**

Dear Special Olympics (chapter name) representative:

I am requesting your assistance in a research study examining the relationship between Special Olympics participation and psychosocial development of athletes and its impact on social inclusion. The proposed study is supported and funded by Special Olympics Canada and Research Centre for Sport in Canadian Society.

The purpose of the proposed study is to understand whether participation in Special Olympics programs is perceived to facilitate the psychosocial development of youth with intellectual disability and whether participation in these programs is believed to facilitate or inhibit social inclusion.

Findings from this study will provide a better understanding of the impact its programs are having, and by identifying any needed changes to current programming.

As part of the research, the researchers would like to conduct interviews with youth athletes and parents of athletes from across Canada. More specifically, I will be interviewing athletes and parents from four chapters across Canada, one of which is your chapter.

Athlete and parent interviews will be conducted at their most preferred location, and will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes each upon agreeing to participate. In the interview, I will be asking questions pertaining to their perspectives of development and social inclusion.

Your assistance in the proposed research entails recommending participants that may be able to participate in an interview. I wish to recruit three youth athletes (ages 12-21) and their parents from your chapter. More specifically, I am looking for...

- 1 youth athlete with 1-3 year Special Olympics experience & their parent(s)
- 1 youth athlete with 3-5 year Special Olympics experience & their parent(s)
- 1 youth athlete with 5+ years of Special Olympics experience & their parent(s)

In addition, athlete who is to be interviewed should be verbally competent enough to take part in a semi-structured interview.

Would you be able to recommend me three athletes and their parent(s) that meet the above criteria in your chapter who would possibly be willing to participate in the research? Once you have identified potential participants, can you e-mail the attached recruitment text outlining the details of the project to potential parents/athletes? Their participation is voluntary, so should they decide to proceed on with the research, please have them contact me directly to express their interest, and we will further discuss their participation.

In addition, I would also like to ask your participation in a face-to-face interview with myself which will be approximately 45 to 60 minutes long. I will be asking questions regarding programs in your chapter, as well as questions in regards to development of athletes and social inclusion.

Participation in this research is voluntary, and your decision to take part or not take part in this study will not be notified to Special Olympics Canada personnel. Privacy will be protected and anonymity will be assured. All of the data that is collected will be stored in a locked office and will have no identifying information attached.

Should you have any questions with regards to the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa: [Contact Information Provided Here]

Sincerely,

Chiaki Inoue, MSc, MA Candidate
Principal Investigator
[Contact Information Provided Here]

Dr. Tanya Forneris, PhD
Research Supervisor
[Contact Information Provided Here]

**Annexe D- Lettre d'information pour participants à l'entrevue
(E-mail pour représentant de division)**

Chèr·e représentant·e des Olympiques spéciaux (nom de division):

Je demande votre appui pour une recherche qui a pour but d'examiner l'impact de la participation des jeunes athlètes aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux sur leur développement psychosocial ainsi que sur leur inclusion sociale. La recherche susmentionnée est appuyée et financée par Olympiques spéciaux Canada et le Centre de recherche sur le sport dans la société canadienne.

Le but de la recherche est d'examiner si la participation aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux est perçue comme facilitant le développement psychosocial et l'inclusion sociale des jeunes ayant une déficience intellectuelle.

Les résultats de cette recherche permettront de comprendre l'impact des programmes tout en identifiant les changements qui devraient y être apportées (si c'est le cas).

Dans le cadre de la recherche, les chercheurs souhaitent mener des entrevues avec des jeunes athlètes et les parents des athlètes de partout au Canada. Plus précisément, je vais interviewer les athlètes et les parents de quatre chapitres à travers le Canada, dont l'un est votre chapitre.

Entrevues avec les athlètes et les parents seront menées à leur endroit le plus préféré, et prendra environ 30 à 45 minutes chacun après d'accepter de participer. Dans l'interview, je vais poser des questions relatives à leurs perspectives de développement et de l'inclusion sociale.

Votre aide dans la recherche proposée consiste à recommander des participants qui peuvent être en mesure de participer à une entrevue. Je tiens à recruter trois jeunes athlètes (âgés de 12-21) et leurs parents à partir de votre chapitre. Plus précisément, je suis à la recherche ...

- (1) Une jeune athlète avec 1-3 années d'expérience des Olympiques Spéciaux et de leurs parents (s)
- (1) Une jeune athlète avec 3-5 ans d'expérience des Olympiques Spéciaux et de leur parent (s)
- (1) Une jeune athlète avec 5 + ans d'expérience des Olympiques Spéciaux et de leurs parents (s)

En outre, l'athlète qui doit être interrogé oralement doit être suffisamment compétent pour participer à une entrevue semi-structurée.

Seriez-vous capable de me recommander trois athlètes et leurs parents (s) qui répondent aux critères ci-dessus dans votre chapitre qui serait éventuellement disposé à participer à la recherche? Une fois que vous avez identifié les participants potentiels, pouvez-vous envoyer un courriel ci-joint avec le texte de recrutement précisant les détails du projet aux parents et athlètes potentiels? Leurs participation est volontaire, si elles décident de procéder à la recherche sur les, s'il vous plaît les faire communiquer directement avec moi à exprimer leur intérêt, et nous allons continuer à discuter de leur participation.

En outre, je voudrais également demander à votre participation à un entrevu, en personne, avec moi-même qui sera d'environ 45 à 60 minutes. Je vais poser des questions au sujet des programmes dans votre chapitre, ainsi que les questions en matière de développement des athlètes et l'inclusion sociale.

La participation à cette recherche est complètement volontaire. L'anonymat est assuré en raison du fait que les participants n'ont pas à s'identifier. Toutes les données qui seront recueillies seront entreposées dans un bureau verrouillé et aucune information qui pourrait servir à les identifier n'y sera jointe.

Si vous avez des questions quant aux procédures éthiques de cette recherche, vous pouvez communiquer avec les Responsables de la déontologie en recherche de l'Université d'Ottawa, [Coordonnées fournies ici]

Sincèrement,

Chiaki Inoue, MSc, Candidate à la maîtrise
Chercheure principale

[Coordonnées fournies ici]

Dr. Tanya Forneris, PhD
Superviseure de recherche

[Coordonnées fournies ici]

**Appendix E- Recruitment Text
(E-mail for Online Survey Participants)**

[NOTE] This e-mail will be forwarded to potential online survey participants by Special Olympics Canada chapter representatives and/or regional representatives as they will have their contact information.

*** La version française suit.***

Dear Special Olympics volunteers, coaches, and parents:

Hello!

My name is Chiaki Inoue, MSc, MA candidate at the University of Ottawa. My colleague and I are currently conducting a research titled “An Opportunity for Sport or an Opportunity for Development: Is Special Olympics Perceived as Contributing to Psychosocial Development and Social Inclusion?”. The goal of this project is to examine whether participation in Special Olympics programs is perceived to facilitate the psychosocial development of youth with intellectual disability and whether participation in these programs is believed to facilitate or inhibit social inclusion. Therefore, as part of the research, the researchers want to collect information from athletes, parents, volunteers and coaches from across Canada.

An online questionnaire has been developed for volunteers, coaches, and parents. If you are a volunteer/coach of Special Olympics program and have at least monthly contact with athletes, and/or are parent of a Special Olympics athlete, you are invited to take part in the survey!

The questionnaire should not take you more than 15-20 minutes to complete. If you can take some time completing the questionnaire by clicking the link to the online survey below, your assistance is greatly appreciated!

[Survey for Coaches and Volunteers]

<English> <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/soccvn>

<French> <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/soccvfr>

[Survey for Parents]

* Parent who is also a coach or a volunteer, you are more than welcome to fill out both surveys!

<English > <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/socpen>

<French> <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/socpfr>

It is important to mention that you are entirely free to participate in this research and anonymity is assured as you do not have to identify yourself.

In addition, all the data collected will be stored in Dr. Tanya Forneris' laboratory where only her research team has access. If you have any questions with regards to the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa [Contact Information Provided Here]

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation in advance, and should you have any questions regards to this research, please feel free to contact me at [Contact Information Provided Here]

Sincerely,

Chiaki Inoue, MSc, MA Candidate
Principal Investigator

Dr. Tanya Forneris, PhD
Research Supervisor

Chers bénévoles, entraîneurs et parents des Olympiques spéciaux:

Bonjour!

Mon nom est Chiaki Inoue, MSc, candidate de maîtrise à l'Université d'Ottawa. Mon collègue et moi complètent une recherche intitulée « Une opportunité pour le sport ou une opportunité pour le développement: Est-ce que les Olympiques spéciaux sont perçus comme contribuant au développement psychosocial et à l'inclusion sociale? ». Le but de ce projet est d'examiner si la participation dans les programmes d'Olympiques spéciaux est perçue pour faciliter le développement psychosocial de jeune avec l déficience intellectuelle et si on croit que la participation en ces programmes facilite ou inhibe l'inclusion sociale. Pour y parvenir, en tant qu'élément de la recherche, les chercheurs veulent recueillir des informations des athlètes, des parents, des bénévoles et des entraîneurs d'un bout à l'autre du Canada.

Un sondage électronique a été développé pour les bénévoles, les entraîneurs et les parents. Si vous êtes un bénévole, un entraîneur ou les parents des athlètes spéciaux du programme des Olympiques spéciaux et garder le contact avec les athlètes au moins une fois par mois, vous êtes invités à prendre part à l'enquête!

Cette tâche ne devrait pas prendre plus de 20 minutes. Si vous pouvez prendre le temps de remplir le questionnaire en cliquant sur le lien du questionnaire en ligne ci-dessous, votre aide serait grandement appréciée!

[Sondage pour les entraîneurs et les bénévoles]

<Anglais> <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/soccvn>

<Français> <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/soccvfr>

[Sondage pour les parents]

* Parent, qui est également un entraîneur ou un bénévole, vous pouvez remplir les deux sondages si vous le désirez!

<Anglais> <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/socpen>

<Français> <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/socpfr>

Il est important de préciser que vous êtes entièrement libre de participer à cette recherche et si vous décidez de participer, l'anonymat sera garanti car vous n'avez pas à vous identifier.

De plus, les données recueillies seront entreposées dans le laboratoire de recherche de Dr. Tanya Forneris où seulement les chercheurs de son groupe y auront accès. Pour toute question se rapportant à la conduite éthique de cette recherche, vous pouvez vous adresser à la Responsable de l'éthique en recherche, Université d'Ottawa : [Coordonnées fournies ici]

Merci beaucoup pour votre temps et coopération à l'avance et si vous avez des questions concernant cette recherche, s'il vous plaît n'hésitez pas à me contacter à [Coordonnées fournies ici].

Sincèrement,

Chiaki Inoue, MSc,
Candidate à la maîtrise
(Chercheure principale)

Dr. Tanya Forneris, PhD
Superviseure de recherch

Appendix F- Athlete Assent Form

Hi! My name is Chiaki Inoue from University of Ottawa. I am doing a research to understand and learn about your experiences with Special Olympics as a youth athlete, and how participating in Special Olympics helps you in everyday life. I am inviting you to take part in a research study because you are a youth participating in Special Olympics!

What happens to me if I choose to be in this study?

If you decide to participate in this study, you will have a face-to-face interview with us for about 30 minutes. In the interview, we will be asking you questions about what you think about your experiences with Special Olympics, such as what you enjoy or not enjoy.

We will also be asking you questions how your participation in Special Olympics has influenced or not influenced your everyday life.

You will also be asked to share pictures you took during your Special Olympics programs, and to share stories! You are only asked to share the pictures during the interview, and you do not have to give us the pictures at the end of the interview. The interview will be tape recorded.

What will happen with the information I give you?

Other people will not know if you are in this research study. We will put things we learn about you together with things we learn about other athletes across Canada, so no one can tell what things came from you. When we tell other people about my research, we will not use your name, so no one can tell who we are talking about.

The information collected about you during this study will be kept safely locked up. Nobody will know it except the people doing the research. We will keep all your answers private, and will not show them to your coaches, or your friends.

Are there any risks if I participate in the study?

We do not think that any big problems will happen to you as part of this study, but we may learn something that will help other youth with intellectual disabilities to encourage participation in Special Olympics.

So you can feel good about helping us to understand about youth athletes participating in Special Olympics, so your chapter or local staff can try to recruit more youth to come and enjoy Special Olympics!

What if I do not feel like participating in the study?

You should know that...

- You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. You won't get into any trouble or no one will be mad at you if you don't want to be in the study. It's up to you.
- You can say OK now, and change your mind later. All you have to do is to tell us you want to stop. If there is a question you don't want to answer, you don't have to answer them.
- Your parent(s)/guardian(s) were asked if it is OK for you to be in this study. Even if they say it's OK, it is still your choice whether or not to take part.

What if I have questions?

Before you say yes or no to being in study, you can ask any questions you have. If you join the study, you can ask questions at any time. You or your parents/guardians can contact me at [Contact Information Provided Here]. You or your parents can also contact my supervisor, Dr Tanya Forneris, at [Contact Information Provided Here].

I will give you a copy of this form to you and your parents/guardians, in case you want to ask questions later.

Agreement

We will also ask your parents/guardians for their permission for you to help us with this study. Please talk with them before you decide whether or not to participate.

If you check "yes" in the box below, it means that you have decided to participate even though you know that you don't have to do it. You have also read everything that is on this form, and the researcher, Chiaki Inoue, has answered all your questions.

Yes, I, _____, would like to participate in the study.
(Print your name here)

Your (Athlete's) Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

Annexe F- Formulaire d'assentiment athlète

Bonjour! Je me nomme Chiaki Inoue de l'Université d'Ottawa. Je fais présentement une recherche pour comprendre l'expérience des jeunes athlètes aux Olympiques spéciaux. Je suis intéressée à comprendre l'impact de la participation des jeunes aux Olympiques spéciaux dans la vie de tous les jours. Je t'invite donc à faire partie de ma recherche, car tu es un-e jeunes athlètes qui participe aux Olympiques spéciaux.

Que m'arrivera-t-il si je choisis de participer à cette recherche?

Si tu décides de participer à cette recherche, tu auras à faire une entrevue avec nous en face-à-face d'une durée d'environ 30 minutes. Cette entrevue sera enregistrée à l'aide d'un magnétophone digital. Durant l'entrevue, nous te poserons des questions au sujet de ton expérience aux Olympiques spéciaux, telles que ce que tu aimes le plus et ce que tu aimes le moins. Nous allons également te poser des questions quant à l'impact des Olympiques spéciaux sur ta vie de tous les jours.

De plus, nous te demanderons de partager des histoires ainsi que certaines photos que tu as prises durant ta participation aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux. Vous êtes seulement demandé de partager les photos lors de l'entrevue, et vous n'avez pas à nous donner les photos à la fin de l'entrevue. L'entrevue sera enregistrée à l'aide d'un magnétophone digital.

Qu'allons-nous faire avec l'information que tu nous donneras?

Ta participation à cette recherche est anonyme. Les gens ne seront donc pas que tu y participes. Les informations recueillies à ton sujet seront combinées avec celles recueillies au sujet des autres athlètes de partout au Canada pour que personnes ne puissent distinguer ce que tu as dis. Lorsque nous parlerons de cette recherche, nous ne mentionnerons pas ton nom. De cette façon, personne ne saura que nous parlons de toi.

Les informations recueillies à ton sujet durant cette recherche seront gardées en sécurité dans un endroit verrouillé. Personne ne saura où elles se trouvent à l'exception des chercheur·e·s qui participent à cette recherche. Nous garderons toutes tes réponses anonymes et nous n'allons pas les montrer à tes entraîneur·e·s ou tes ami·e·s.

Y a-t-il des risques à ce que je participe à cette recherche?

Nous ne croyons pas que ta participation à cette étude te cause de problèmes. Ta participation pourrait même nous permettre d'apprendre des choses qui aideront à encourager d'autres jeunes avec des déficiences intellectuelles à prendre part aux Olympiques spéciaux.

Alors, tu peux te sentir fier·fière que tu nous aideras à comprendre l'expérience des jeunes athlètes aux Olympiques spéciaux afin que le responsable de section ou l'employé local puissent recruter d'autres jeunes comme toi pour qu'ils puissent bénéficier des Olympiques spéciaux.

Que m'arrivera-t-il si je choisis de ne pas participer à cette recherche?

- Si tu choisis de ne pas prendre part à la recherche, il n'y aura aucune conséquence négative. Tu ne seras pas dans le trouble et personne ne sera fâché contre toi.
- Tu peux accepter de prendre part à la recherche maintenant et changer d'idée plus tard. Tu n'auras qu'à nous dire que tu ne veux plus participer. S'il y a des questions que tu ne souhaites pas répondre, tu n'es pas obligé.e.
- Nous avons également demandé la permission à tes parents/gardiens pour que tu puisses participer à cette recherche. Tu peux choisir de ne pas participer à la recherche même si tes parents/gardiens ont dit « Oui ».

Si j'ai des questions?

Si tu as des questions, tu peux les poser avant de choisir de participer à la recherche. De plus, tu peux poser des questions en tout temps, même après avoir accepté de participer à la recherche. Toi ou tes parents/gardiens pouvez communiquer avec moi [Coordonnées fournies ici]; ou communiquer avec ma superviseure, Dr Tanya Forneris, [Coordonnées fournies ici].

Je te donnerai une copie de ce formulaire afin que tu puisses le ramener à la maison au cas où toi ou tes parents/gardiens auriez des questions pendant la recherche.

Consentement

Nous allons également demander la permission à tes parents/gardiens pour que tu puisses participer à la recherche. Est-ce que tu peux s'il te plaît en discuter avec eux avant de décider de prendre part à la recherche.

Si tu coches « oui » dans la case ci-dessous, cela signifie que tu as choisis de participer à la recherche même si tu avais l'option de ne pas y prendre part. Tu as également lu ce formulaire en entier et la chercheure, Chiaki Inoue, a répondu à toutes tes questions.

Oui, j'accepte de participer à cette recherche. _____
(Nom en lettres moulées)

Signature de l'athlète

Date

Signature de la chercheure

Date

Appendix G- Consent Form (Parents/Guardians)

Project Title: An Opportunity for Sport or an Opportunity for Development: Is Special Olympics Perceived as Contributing to Psychosocial Development and Social Inclusion?

Researcher: Chiaki Inoue, M.Sc., Master's candidate, School of Human Kinetics, University of Ottawa, [Contact Information Provided Here]

Supervisor: Dr. Tanya Forneris, Assistant Professor, School of Human Kinetics, University of Ottawa, [Contact Information Provided Here]

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this research is to examine whether participation in Special Olympics programs is perceived to facilitate the psychosocial development of youth with intellectual disability and whether participation in these programs is believed to facilitate or inhibit social inclusion.

Participation: My child/athlete and I (parent/guardian) will be asked to participate in this study separately.

- 1) Participation of my child will consist of one in-person interview with the researcher. The interview will last approximately 30 minutes. The goal of the interview is to gain understanding of the lived-experiences of youth participating in Special Olympics. During the course of this interview, the researcher will ask my child questions pertaining to his/her participation in Special Olympics programs. In addition, providing pictures for the interview is encouraged for my child to tell a story about her participation. The pictures will only be used for the interview, and the researcher will not ask for a copy of the pictures.
- 2) My participation will consist of one in-person interview with the researcher. The interview will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The goal of the interview is to gain parent's perspective of how participating in Special Olympics impacts your child's psychosocial development and social inclusion. During the course of this interview, the researcher may also ask me to clarify things mentioned by my child during the aforementioned interview. In addition, I will also be asked to fill out a pre-interview questionnaire that asks for basic background information of my child, should my child agree to participate in the research. This pre-interview questionnaire will take no more than 10 minutes, and need to be returned to the researcher at least two weeks prior to the interview.

Risks: No negative effects during or following voluntary participation in this project is anticipated.

Benefits: The participation of my child and myself in this project will help contribute in providing a deeper understanding of impacts of Special Olympics participation. Further, this project will contribute to individuals with intellectual disabilities who have not yet participated in Special Olympics by informing them of its benefits and widening the possibilities through participation.

Confidentiality and anonymity: The information my child and I will share in the interview will remain strictly confidential. The information from this interview will only be used for the purpose of this research project, and confidentiality of my child and myself will be protected. Apart from the consent form, the name of my child or myself will not be recorded in the interview. No information that could lead to identification of my child or myself, including names will appear in research reports, presentations and/or publications.

Recording Procedures: The interviews will be recorded using a digital voice recorder. No identifying information, including individual names, will be recorded.

Conservation of data: This consent form and interviews data will be stored separately in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office. Only the researcher and her supervisors will have access to transcriptions and audio files, stored on a password-protected electronic device. All research material will be destroyed after a period of 10 years.

Voluntary Participation: The participation of my child and myself is completely voluntary. My child and/or I may withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences.

If you have any questions about the study, you can contact the researcher or her supervisor.

If you have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa: [Contact Information Provided Here]

Consent: I have read this consent form and I understand the procedures of this research project. Also, I understand that the participation of myself and my child is completely voluntary and s/he may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. My signature indicates my consent for myself and my child to participate.

There are two copies of the consent form, one of which is mine to keep.

I permit my child/athlete to participate in this project

I permit myself to participate in this project

Name of Child/Athlete (Please Print)

Name of Parent/Guardian (Please Print)

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

Annexe G- Formulaire de consentement (parent/gardien)

Titre du projet : Une opportunité pour le sport ou une opportunité pour le développement: Est-ce que les Olympiques spéciaux sont perçus comme contribuant au développement psychosocial et à l'inclusion sociale?

Chercheur : Chiaki Inoue, M.Sc., candidate à la maîtrise, École des sciences de l'activité physique, Université d'Ottawa, [Coordonnées fournies ici]

Superviseure : Dr. Tanya Forneris, Professeure adjointe, École des sciences de l'activité physique, Université d'Ottawa, [Coordonnées fournies ici]

But de la recherche : Le but de la recherche est d'examiner si la participation aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux est perçue comme facilitant le développement psychosocial et l'inclusion sociale des jeunes ayant une déficience intellectuelle.

Participation: Mon enfant/athlète et moi (parent/gardien) seront demandé de participer séparément à cette recherche.

- 1) La participation de mon enfant consistera à faire une entrevue en personne avec la chercheure. L'entrevue sera d'une durée d'environ 30 minutes. Le but de cette entrevue est de comprendre l'expérience que vivent les jeunes lors de leur participation aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux. Durant l'entrevue, la chercheure demandera à mon enfant des questions quant à sa participation aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux. En outre, fournir des images pour l'entrevue est encouragé pour mon enfant de raconter une histoire au sujet de sa participation. Les images ne seront utilisées que pour l'entrevue, et le chercheur ne sera pas en demander une copie des images.
- 2) Ma participation consistera à faire une entrevue en personne avec la chercheure.. L'entrevue sera d'une durée d'environ 30 à 45 minutes. Le but de cette entrevue est de comprendre la perception des parents quant à l'impact qu'a la participation de leur enfant aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux sur leur développement psychosocial et leur inclusion sociale. Durant l'entrevue, la chercheure me demandera possiblement de clarifier certains énoncés mentionnés par mon enfant lors de l'entrevue susmentionnée. En outre, je vais également être invité à remplir un questionnaire de pré-entrevue qui demande des informations de base de mon enfant, si mon enfant devrait accepter de participer à la recherche. Ce questionnaire de pré-entrevue ne prendra pas plus de 10 minutes, et doivent être retournés au chercheur d'au moins deux semaines avant l'entrevue.

Risques : Aucun effet négatif n'est anticipé lors de ma participation ou suivant la participation à cette recherche.

Bénéfices : Ma participation ainsi que celle de mon enfant à ce projet de recherche aideront à approfondir les connaissances quant à l'impact de la participation des enfants aux Olympiques spéciaux. De plus, ce projet contribuera à informer les jeunes ayant une déficience intellectuelle qui n'ont pas encore participé aux Olympiques spéciaux par rapport aux bénéfices que peuvent procurer ceux-ci et de l'accroissement des possibilités qu'ils pourraient en retirer s'ils y prennent part.

Confidentialité et anonymat : Les informations que mon enfant et moi partagerons pendant les entrevues seront strictement confidentielles. Les informations recueillies lors des entrevues seront seulement utilisées dans le cadre de ce projet de recherche. Mise à part du formulaire de consentement, mon nom ainsi que celui de mon enfant ne sera pas enregistré pendant l'entrevue. Aucune information servant à m'identifier ou à identifier mon enfant, notamment nos noms, n'apparaîtra dans le rapport de recherche, les présentations et/ou les publications.

Procédures d'enregistrement : Les entrevues seront enregistrées à l'aide d'un magnétophone digital. Aucune information servant à identifier les participant·e·s ne sera enregistrée, et ce, incluant les noms.

Conservation des données : Ce formulaire de consentement et les données recueillies par entrevue seront entreposés séparément dans un classeur verrouillé dans un bureau également verrouillé. Seules la chercheuse et sa superviseuse auront accès aux enregistrements audio et transcription qui seront sur ordinateur dont l'accès est protégé par un mot de passé. Tout le matériel de recherche sera conserve pour une période de 10 ans et sera ainsi détruit par la suite.

Participation volontaire : Ma participation ainsi que celle de mon enfant est complètement volontaire. Mon enfant et/ou moi pouvons nous retirer du projet à n'importe quel moment et/ou refuser de répondre à certaines questions sans qu'il y ait de conséquences négatives.

Si vous avez des questions par rapport à cette recherche, vous pouvez communiquer avec la chercheuse ou sa superviseuse.

Si vous avez des questions par rapport aux procédures éthiques de cette recherche, vous pouvez communiquer avec les Responsables de la déontologie en recherche de l'Université d'Ottawa : [Coordonnées fournies ici].

Consentement : J'ai lu ce formulaire de consentement et je comprendre les procédures de ce projet de recherche. De plus, je comprends que ma participation et celle de mon enfant sont complètement volontaires et que nous pouvons nous retirer de la recherche à n'importe quel moment, et ce, sans conséquences. Ma signature indique mon consentement pour ma participation ainsi que celle de mon enfant.

Il y a deux copies de ce formulaire de consentement, dont l'une est pour moi.

Je consens à mon enfant/athlète participe à cette recherche.

Je consens à moi participions à cette recherche.

Nom de l'enfant/athlète (lettres moulées)

Nom du parent/gardien (lettres moulées)

Signature du parent/gardien

Date

Signature de la chercheure

Date

Appendix H- Consent Form (Chapter Representatives)

Project Title: An Opportunity for Sport or an Opportunity for Development: Is Special Olympics Perceived as Contributing to Psychosocial Development and Social Inclusion?

Researcher: Chiaki Inoue, M.Sc., Master's candidate, School of Human Kinetics, University of Ottawa, [Contact Information Provided Here]

Supervisor: Dr. Tanya Forneris, Assistant Professor, School of Human Kinetics, University of Ottawa, [Contact Information Provided Here]

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this research is to examine whether participation in Special Olympics programs is perceived to facilitate the psychosocial development of youth with intellectual disability and whether participation in these programs is believed to facilitate or inhibit social inclusion.

Participation: My participation will consist of one in-person interview with the researcher. The interview will last approximately one hour. The goal of the interview is to gain understanding of how participating in Special Olympics impacts youth's psychosocial development, as well as to gain understanding of the role Special Olympics plays and issues it is facing in the social inclusion movement from an administrative point of view.

Risks: No negative effects during or following voluntary participation in this project is anticipated.

Benefits: My participation in this project will help contribute in providing a deeper understanding of impacts of Special Olympics participation. Further, this project will contribute to individuals with intellectual disabilities who have yet participated in Special Olympics by informing its benefits and widening the possibilities through participation.

Confidentiality and anonymity: The information I will share in the interview will remain strictly confidential. The information from this interview will only be used for the purpose of this research project, and confidentiality will be protected. Apart from the consent form, my name will not be recorded in the interview. No information that could lead to my identification, including my name, will appear in research reports, presentations and/or publications.

Recording Procedures: The interviews will be recorded using a digital voice recorder. No identifying information, including individual names, will be recorded.

Conservation of data: This consent form and interviews data will be stored separately in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office. Only the researcher and her supervisors will have access to transcriptions and audio files, stored on a password-protected electronic device. All research material will be destroyed after a period of 10 years.

Voluntary Participation: My participation is completely voluntary. I may withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences.

If you have any questions about the study, you can contact the researcher or her supervisor.

If you have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa: [Contact Information Provided Here]

Consent: I have read this consent form and I understand the procedures of this research project. Also, I understand that my participation is completely voluntary and s/he may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. My signature indicates my consent to participate.

There are two copies of the consent form, one of which is mine to keep.

Name of Chapter Representative
(Please Print)

Signature of Chapter Representative

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

Annexe H- Formulaire de consentement (Représentant de division)

Titre du projet : Une opportunité pour le sport ou une opportunité pour le développement: Est-ce que les Olympiques spéciaux sont perçus comme contribuant au développement psychosocial et à l'inclusion sociale?

Chercheur : Chiaki Inoue, M.Sc., candidate à la maîtrise, École des sciences de l'activité physique, Université d'Ottawa, [Coordonnées fournies ici]

Superviseure : Dr. Tanya Forneris, Professeure adjointe, École des sciences de l'activité physique, Université d'Ottawa, [Coordonnées fournies ici]

But de la recherche : Le but de la recherche est d'examiner si la participation aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux est perçue comme facilitant le développement psychosocial et l'inclusion sociale des jeunes ayant une déficience intellectuelle.

Participation: Ma participation consistera à faire une entrevue en personne avec la chercheuse. L'entrevue sera d'une durée d'environ une heure. Le but de l'entrevue est de comprendre comment la participation des jeunes aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux a un impact sur leur développement psychosocial et de comprendre le rôle des Olympiques spéciaux ainsi que les difficultés qu'ils rencontrent en matière d'inclusion sociale d'un point de vue administratif.

Risques : Aucun effet négatif n'est anticipé lors de ma participation ou suivant la participation à cette recherche.

Bénéfices : Ma participation ainsi que celle de mon enfant à ce projet de recherche aideront à approfondir les connaissances quant à l'impact de la participation des enfants aux Olympiques spéciaux. De plus, ce projet contribuera à informer les jeunes ayant une déficience intellectuelle qui n'ont pas encore participé aux Olympiques spéciaux par rapport aux bénéfices que peuvent procurer ceux-ci et de l'accroissement des possibilités qu'ils pourraient en retirer s'ils y prennent part.

Confidentialité et anonymat : Les informations que je partagerai pendant l'entrevue seront strictement confidentielles. Les informations recueillies lors de l'entrevue seront seulement utilisées dans le cadre de ce projet de recherche. Mise à part du formulaire de consentement, mon nom ne sera pas enregistré pendant l'entrevue. Aucune information servant à m'identifier, notamment mon nom, n'apparaîtra dans le rapport de recherche, les présentations et/ou les publications.

Procédures d'enregistrement : Les entrevues seront enregistrées à l'aide d'un magnétophone digital. Aucune information servant à identifier les participants ne sera enregistrée, et ce, incluant les noms.

Conservation des données : Ce formulaire de consentement et les données recueillies par entrevue seront entreposés séparément dans un classeur verrouillé dans un bureau également verrouillé. Seules la chercheure et sa superviseure auront accès aux enregistrements audio et transcription qui seront sur ordinateur dont l'accès est protégé par un mot de passé. Tout le matériel de recherche sera conserve pour une période de 10 ans et sera ainsi détruit par la suite.

Participation volontaire : Ma participation est complètement volontaire Je peux me retirer du projet à n'importe quel moment et/ou refuser de répondre à certaines questions sans qu'il y ait de conséquences négatives.

Si vous avez des questions par rapport à cette recherche, vous pouvez communiquer avec la chercheure ou sa superviseure.

Si vous avez des questions par rapport aux procédures éthiques de cette recherche, vous pouvez communiquer avec les Responsables de la déontologie en recherche de l'Université d'Ottawa :
[Coordonnées fournies ici]

Consentement : J'ai lu ce formulaire de consentement et je comprendre les procédures de ce projet de recherche. De plus, je comprends que ma participation soit complètement volontaire et que je peux me retirer de la recherche à n'importe quel moment, et ce, sans conséquences. Ma signature indique mon consentement pour ma participation.

Il y a deux copies de ce formulaire de consentement, dont l'une est pour moi.

Nom du représentant de section
(Lettres moulées)

Signature du représentant de section

Date

Signature de la chercheure

Date

**Appendix I- Confidentiality Agreement
(Interpreter/Translator/Research Assistant)**

I, _____ agree to keep confidential all information
(name of interpreter, translator, or research assistant)
that I learn as a result of my participation in Ms. Chiaki Inoue’s research project called “An Opportunity for Sport or an Opportunity for Development: Is Special Olympics Perceived as Contributing to Psychosocial Development and Social Inclusion?”. Furthermore, I will not reveal the identity of participants with anyone else.

Name (print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness

Name (print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix J- Survey (Parents)

1. Survey Outline



uOttawa

L'Université canadienne
Canada's university



**CENTRE DE RECHERCHE
SUR LE SPORT DANS LA
SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE** **RESEARCH CENTRE
FOR SPORT IN
CANADIAN SOCIETY**



Special Olympics
Olympiques spéciaux
Canada

Chiaki Inoue, MSc, MA candidate at the University of Ottawa and her colleague are currently conducting a research funded by Special Olympics Canada and Research Centre for Sport in Canadian Society titled "An Opportunity for Sport or an Opportunity for Development: Is Special Olympics Perceived as Contributing to Psychosocial Development and Social Inclusion?". The goal of this project is to examine whether participation in Special Olympics programs is perceived to facilitate the psychosocial development of youth with intellectual disability and whether participation in these programs is believed to facilitate or inhibit social inclusion. Therefore, as part of the research, the researchers want to collect information from athletes, parents, volunteers and coaches from across Canada. A questionnaire has been developed and you are invited to complete it. The questionnaire should not take you more than 15-20 minutes to complete. It is important to mention that you are entirely free to participate in this research and anonymity is assured as you do not have to identify yourself. In addition, all the data collected will be stored in Dr. Tanya Forneris' laboratory where only her research team has access. If you have any questions with regards to the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall 550 Cumberland Street, Room 159, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5, tel.: 613-562-5841, e-mail: ethics@uottawa.ca

Section 1: Demographic Profile

Section 2: Special Olympics Involvement

Section 3: Impact of Special Olympics on Athletes

Section 4: Impact of Special Olympics on Athletes- only applicable to those with multiple athletes per household

Section 5: Impact on Daily Life

Section 6: Impact of Special Olympics on Social Inclusion

By clicking on "Next" button below, you have agreed to take part in this survey.

** Si vous préférez répondre à ce sondage en français, svp aller à <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/socpfr>

** This survey is for parents only. Volunteers and coaches who are also parents of a Special Olympics athlete are welcome to participate. If you are a volunteer/coach and are not a parent of a Special Olympics athlete, please follow this link for volunteer & coach survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/soccvn>

2. Section 1: Demographic Profile

1. Age

2. Gender

Male

Female

3. Region/Province

Alberta

Nova Scotia

British Columbia

Ontario

Manitoba

Prince Edward Island

New Brunswick

Québec

Newfoundland & Labrador

Saskatchewan

North-western Territories

Yukon

4. Marital Status

Single

Separated

Married

Widowed

Divorced

Common Law

5. Education

High School

University (Bachelor)

Cégep

University (Master)

Some College

University (Doctorate)

Other (please specify)

6. Number of Children

7. Number of Children with Intellectual Disabilities

3. Section 2: Special Olympics Involvement

1. How many children in your household participate in Special Olympics as an athlete?

2. What and how long is your involvement in Special Olympics? (Complete all that apply)

Years of Involvement as a Parent/Legal Guardian

Years of Involvement as a Coach

Years of Involvement as a Volunteer (excluding coach)

Years of Involvement as an Administrator

3. How did you hear about Special Olympics?

4. For what reason(s) did you decide to have your child participate in Special Olympics?

4. Section 3: Impact of Special Olympics on Athletes (Child #1)

Attention

The next section focuses on understanding your child's involvement in Special Olympics and your perceptions of how their involvement impacts their development. If you have multiple children involved in Special Olympics you will be able to complete a section for each child.

1. Age of Child #1

2. Gender

Male

Female

3. Type of Intellectual Disability

4. How many years has the athlete been involved in Special Olympics? (e.g. 5 years 3 months)

5. What sport does the athlete participate in? (Check all that apply)

Athletics (Track & Field)

Softball

Floor Hockey

Aquatics

Alpine Skiing

Curling

Power lifting

Nordic (Cross Country) Skiing

Active Start

5&10 Pin Bowling

Figure Skating

FUNDamentals

Rhythmic Gymnastics

Speed Skating

Soccer

Snowshoeing

Other (please specify)

6. What is the highest level of Special Olympics competition has the athletes participated in?

None (have not participated in any competition)

Provincial Games

National Games

World Games

Regional/Local Games

5. Section 3: Impact of Special Olympics on Athletes (Child #1)

****Important - Please read the following instructions before answering questions****

For each statement please answer by referring to the scale (totally disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, totally agree)

1. Participation in Special Olympics programs allowed my child (child #1) to...

	totally disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	totally agree
Effectively communicate with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gain self-control	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop concentration skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Set and attain goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop compassion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of fairness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of sportpersonship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of teamwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be honest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be responsible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Respect others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accept criticism and feedback from others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Section 3: Impact of Special Olympics on Athletes (Child #1)

Important - Please read the following instructions before answering questions

For each statement please answer by referring to the scale (totally disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, totally agree)

1. Participation in Special Olympics programs allowed my child (child #1) to...

	totally disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	totally agree
Effectively deal with winning and losing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working with people they don't necessarily like	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop self-confidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Foster social connections	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be a team player	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a good work ethic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have a sense of right or wrong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of purpose	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of identity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a positive view of personal future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Number of Athlete per Household

1. Do you have more than one child at your household who participates in Special Olympics?

- Yes, I have 2 or more children participating in Special Olympics.
- No, I only have 1 child participating in Special Olympics.

8. Section 4: Impact of Special Olympics on Athletes (Child #2)

Attention

This section is only applicable to those who have multiple children participating in Special Olympics. If you only have one child participating in Special Olympics please select PREV below and then select the option that states you only have one child participating in Special Olympics.

1. Age of Child #2

2. Gender

Male

Female

3. Type of Intellectual Disability

4. How many years has the athlete been involved in Special Olympics? (e.g. 5 years 3 months)

5. What sport does the athlete participate in? (Check all that apply)

Athletics (Track & Field)

Softball

Floor Hockey

Aquatics

Alpine Skiing

Curling

Power lifting

Nordic (Cross Country) Skiing

Active Start

5&10 Pin Bowling

Figure Skating

FUNDamentals

Rhythmic Gymnastics

Speed Skating

Soccer

Snowshoeing

Other (please specify)

6. What is the highest level of Special Olympics competition has the athletes participated in?

None (have not participated in any competition)

Provincial Games

National Games

World Games

Regional/Local Games

9. Section 4: Impact of Special Olympics on Athletes (Child #2)

****Important - Please read the following instructions before answering questions****

For each statement please answer by referring to the scale (totally disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, totally agree)

1. Participation in Special Olympics programs allowed my child (child #2) to...

	totally disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	totally agree
Effectively communicate with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gain self-control	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop concentration skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Set and attain goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop compassion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of fairness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of sportpersonship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of teamwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be honest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be responsible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Respect others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accept criticism and feedback from others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Section 4: Impact of Special Olympics on Athletes (Child #2)

****Important - Please read the following instructions before answering questions****

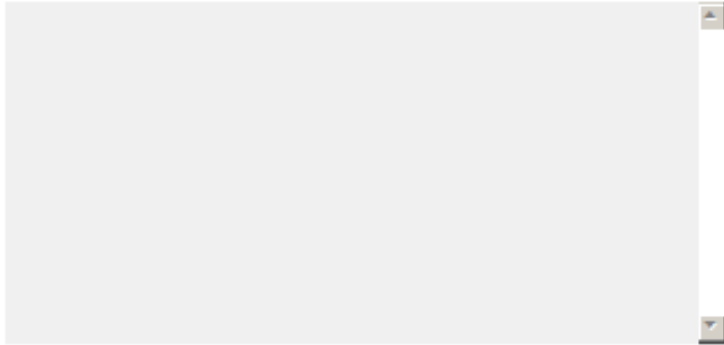
For each statement please answer by referring to the scale (totally disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, totally agree)

1. Participation in Special Olympics programs allowed my child (child #2) to...

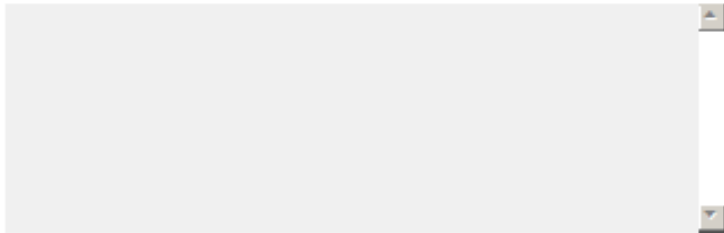
	totally disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	totally agree
Effectively deal with winning and losing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working with people they don't necessarily like	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop self-confidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Foster social connections	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be a team player	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a good work ethic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have a sense of right or wrong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of purpose	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of identity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a positive view of personal future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Section 5: Impact on Daily Life

1. How do you think Special Olympics has helped your child in daily life situations? Feel free to use examples.



2. Briefly describe what Special Olympics means to you and your child.



12. Section 6: Impact on Social Inclusion

1. Please rate how much you agree with the following statement:

	totally disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	totally agree
Special Olympics contributes to social inclusion.*	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*Social Inclusion in this study is defined as a proactive, human development approach to social well-being in which people are to be valued and respected as contributing members of society. It is more than simply removing boundaries or barriers between people; rather, it is about minimizing various distances between people, such as physical (e.g. gender, disability) and social (e.g. social status) (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002; Frazee, 2005)

2. Please provide a brief explanation for the choice you selected above.

3. (OPTIONAL) Please describe a situation where Special Olympics participation contributed in social inclusion for your child.

1. Grandes lignes d'enquête



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**CENTRE DE RECHERCHE
SUR LE SPORT DANS LA
SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE** **RESEARCH CENTRE
FOR SPORT IN
CANADIAN SOCIETY**



Special Olympics
Olympiques spéciaux
Canada

Chiaki Inoue, MSc, MA candidate à l'Université d'Ottawa et ses collègues complètent une recherche financé et soutenu par Canada Olympiques spéciaux et Centre de recherche sur le sport dans la société canadienne intitulée « Une opportunité pour le sport ou une opportunité pour le développement: Est-ce que les Olympiques spéciaux sont perçus comme contribuant au développement psychosocial et à l'inclusion sociale? ». Le but de ce projet est d'examiner si la participation dans les programmes d'Olympiques spéciaux est perçue pour faciliter le développement psychosocial de jeune avec l' déficience intellectuelle et si on croit que la participation en ces programmes facilite ou inhibe l'inclusion sociale. Pour y parvenir, en tant qu'élément de la recherche, les chercheurs veulent recueillir des informations des athlètes, des parents, des bénévoles et des entraîneurs d'un bout à l'autre du Canada. Un questionnaire a été développé et vous êtes invité à le compléter. Cette tâche ne devrait pas prendre plus de 15 à 20 minutes. Il est important de préciser que vous êtes entièrement libre de participer à cette recherche et si vous décidez de participer, l'anonymat sera garanti car vous n'avez pas à vous identifier. De plus, les données recueillies seront entreposées dans le laboratoire de recherche de Dr. Tanya Fomeris où seulement les chercheurs de son groupe y auront accès. Pour toute question se rapportant à la conduite éthique de cette recherche, vous pouvez vous adresser à la Responsable de l'éthique en recherche, Université d'Ottawa, Pavillon Tabaret, 550 rue Cumberland, pièce 159, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5, tél. : 613-562-5841, courriel : ethics@uottawa.ca.

Section 1: Profil démographique

Section 2: Implication Olympiques spéciaux

Section 3 : Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur les athlètes

Section 4: Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur les athlètes- applicable à ceux avec les athlètes multiples par ménage

Section 5: Impact sur la vie quotidienne

Section 6 : Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur d'intégration sociale

En cliquant "suivant" ci-dessous, vous avez accepté de prendre part à cette enquête.

** Should you prefer to answer this survey in English, please go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/socpen>

** Cette enquête est pour les parents. Les bénévoles et les entraîneurs qui sont aussi des parents d'un athlète des Olympiques spéciaux sont invités à participer. Si vous êtes un bénévole ou un entraîneur et vous n'êtes pas un parent d'un athlète des Olympiques spéciaux, svp suivez ce lien pour l'enquête auprès des bénévoles et des entraîneurs: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/soccvfr>

2. Section 1: Profil démographique**1. Âge****2. Sexe** Masculin Féminin**3. Région/Province** Alberta Nouvelle-Écosse Colombie-Britannique Ontario Manitoba Île-du-Prince-Édouard Nouveau-Brunswick Québec Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador Saskatchewan Territoires du Nord-Ouest Yukon**4. Statut marital** Célibataire Séparé Marié Veuf Divorcé Conjoint de fait**5. Éducation** Secondaire Université (Baccalauréat) Cégep Université (Maîtrise) Collège Université (Doctorat) Autre(s): (spécifiez)**6. Nombre d'enfant(s)****7. Nombre d'enfant(s) ayant une déficience intellectuelle**

3. Section 2: Implication Olympiques spéciaux

1. Combien d'enfants dans votre ménage participent aux Olympiques spéciaux en tant qu'athlète ?

2. Qu'est ce et de quelle longueur est votre rôle dans les Olympiques spéciaux ? (Cocher tous qui s'appliquent)

Années d'engagement en tant que parent

Années d'engagement comme entraîneur

Années d'engagement comme bénévoles (excl. entraîneurs)

Années d'engagement en tant qu'administrateur

3. Comment avez-vous entendu des Olympiques spéciaux ?

4. Pour quelle raison (s) avez-vous décidé de faire participer votre enfant dans les Olympiques spéciaux ?

4. Section 3: Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur les athlètes (en...

*** Attention ***

La section suivante se concentre sur la compréhension de la participation de votre enfant aux Olympiques spéciaux et votre perception de la façon dont leur participation impact leur développement. Si vous avez plusieurs enfants impliqués aux Olympiques spéciaux, vous serez en mesure de remplir une section pour chaque enfant.

1. Âge d'enfant #1

2. Sexe

Masculin

Féminin

3. Type d déficience intellectuelle

4. Combien d'années l'athlète a-t-il été impliqué dans les Olympiques spéciaux? (e.g. 5 année 3 mois)

5. Comment fréquent l'athlète participe-t-il aux programmes de Olympiques spéciaux (en moyenne) ?

périodes/semaine

heures/semaine

6. Quel sport l'athlète participe-t-il dedans? (Vérifiez le tout qu'appliquez)

Athlétisme (épreuves de piste et concours)

Softball

Hockey intérieur

Natation

Ski alpin

Curling

Dynamophille

Ski de fond (ski nordique)

Enfant actif

5 et 10-quilles

Patinage artistique

S'amuser grâce au sport

Gymnastique rythmique

Patinage de vitesse

Soccer

Raquette

Autre(s): (spécifiez)

7. Ce quoi le plus haut niveau des Olympiques spéciaux que les athlètes ont participé dedans?

Aucune (n'ont participé à aucune compétition)

Jeux Provinciaux

Jeux Nationaux

Jeux Mondiaux

Jeux Régional/Local

5. Section 3: Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur les athlètes (en...

**** Important – Svp lisez les instructions suivantes avant de répondre aux questions ****

Pour chaque énoncé, prière de répondre en vous référant à l'échelle (totalement en désaccord, en désaccord, neutre, en accord, totalement en accord).

1. La participation de mon enfant (enfant #1) aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux lui on permet de d'...

	totalement en désaccord	en désaccord	neutre	en accord	totalement en accord
Communiquer efficacement avec autrui	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Acquérir du contrôle personnel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Se concentrer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Établir et atteindre des objectifs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer de la compassion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer un sens de la justice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer l'esprit sportif	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Apprendre à travailler en équipe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Être honnête	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Être responsable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Respecter les autres	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accepter la critique et les commentaires d'autrui	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Section 3: Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur les athlètes (en...

Pour chaque énoncé, prière de répondre en vous référant à l'échelle (totalement en désaccord, en désaccord, neutre, en accord, totalement en accord).

1. La participation de mon enfant (enfant #1) aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux lui on permit de d'...

	totalement en désaccord	en désaccord	neutre	en accord	totalement en accord
Gérer efficacement la victoire et la défaite	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travailler avec des gens pour lesquels ils/elles n'ont pas nécessairement d'affinité	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer du leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer de la confiance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nouer des liens sociaux et des amitiés	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travailler pour le bien de l'équipe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer de bonnes habitudes de travail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faire la différence entre le bien et le mal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Être motivé envers un objectif	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer une identité positive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer une vision positive face à son futur	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Nombre d'athlète par ménage**1. Avez-vous plus d'un enfant à votre foyer qui participe aux Olympiques spéciaux?**

- Oui, j'ai 2 enfants ou plus participant aux Olympiques spéciaux.
- Non, je n'ai que 1 enfant participant aux Olympiques spéciaux.

8. Section 4: Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur les athlètes (en...

*** Attention ***

Cette section s'applique uniquement à ceux qui ont plusieurs enfants participant aux Olympiques spéciaux. Si vous n'avez qu'un seul enfant participant aux Olympiques spéciaux s'il vous plaît choisissez ci-dessous PRÉC puis sélectionnez l'option qui indique que vous n'avez qu'un seul enfant participant aux Olympiques spéciaux.

1. Âge d'enfant #2

2. Sexe

Masculin

Féminin

3. Type d' déficience intellectuelle

4. Combien d'années l'athlète a-t-il été impliqué dans les Olympiques spéciaux? (e.g. 5 année 3 mois)

5. Comment fréquent l'athlète participe-t-il aux programmes de Olympiques spéciaux (en moyenne) ?

périodes/semaine

heures/semaine

6. Quel sport l'athlète participe-t-il dedans? (Vérifiez le tout qu'appliquez)

Athlétisme (épreuves de piste et concours)

Softball

Hockey intérieur

Natation

Ski alpin

Curling

Dynamophilie

Ski de fond (ski nordique)

Enfant actif

5 et 10-quilles

Patinage artistique

S'amuser grâce au sport

Gymnastique rythmique

Patinage de vitesse

Soccer

Raquette

Autre(s): (spécifiez)

7. Ce quoi le plus haut niveau des Olympiques spéciaux que les athlètes ont participé dedans?

Aucune (n'ont participé à aucune compétition)

Jeux Provinciaux

Jeux Nationaux

Jeux Mondiaux

Jeux Régional/Local

9. Section 4: Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur les athlètes (en...

**** Important – Svp lisez les instructions suivantes avant de répondre aux questions ****

Pour chaque énoncé, prière de répondre en vous référant à l'échelle (totalement en désaccord, en désaccord, neutre, en accord, totalement en accord).

1. La participation de mon enfant (enfant #2) aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux lui on permet de d'...

	totalement en désaccord	en désaccord	neutre	en accord	totalement en accord
Communiquer efficacement avec autrui	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Acquérir du contrôle personnel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Se concentrer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Établir et atteindre des objectifs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer de la compassion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer un sens de la justice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer l'esprit sportif	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Apprendre à travailler en équipe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Être honnête	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Être responsable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Respecter les autres	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accepter la critique et les commentaires d'autrui	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Section 4: Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur les athlètes (en...

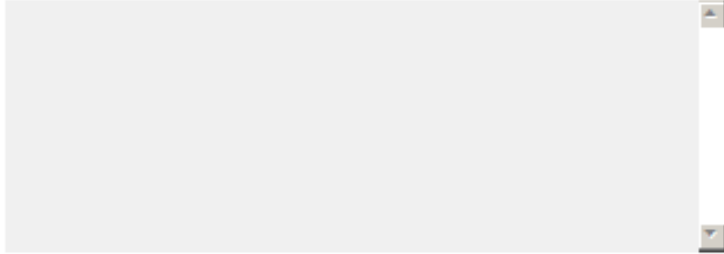
Pour chaque énoncé, prière de répondre en vous référant à l'échelle (totalement en désaccord, en désaccord, neutre, en accord, totalement en accord).

1. La participation de mon enfant (enfant #2) aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux lui on permit de d'...

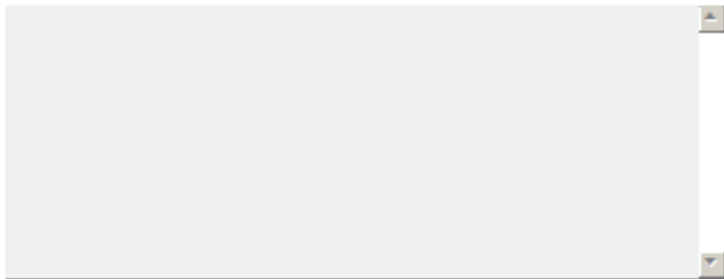
	totalement en désaccord	en désaccord	neutre	en accord	totalement en accord
Gérer efficacement la victoire et la défaite	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travailler avec des gens pour lesquels ils/elles n'ont pas nécessairement d'affinité	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer du leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer de la confiance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nouer des liens sociaux et des amitiés	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travailler pour le bien de l'équipe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer de bonnes habitudes de travail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faire la différence entre le bien et le mal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Être motivé envers un objectif	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer une identité positive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer une vision positive face à son futur	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Section 5: Impact sur la vie quotidienne

1. Comment pensez-vous des Olympiques spéciaux a ont aidé votre enfant dans les situations de la vie quotidienne? N'hésitez pas à utiliser des exemples.

A large, empty rectangular text input area with a light gray background. It has a small upward-pointing arrow icon in the top right corner and a small downward-pointing arrow icon in the bottom right corner, indicating it is a scrollable text field.

2. Décrivez brièvement ce que signifient les Olympiques spéciaux à vous et à votre enfant.

A large, empty rectangular text input area with a light gray background. It has a small upward-pointing arrow icon in the top right corner and a small downward-pointing arrow icon in the bottom right corner, indicating it is a scrollable text field.

12. Section 6: Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur d'intégration so...**1. S'il vous plaît le taux combien vous approuvez la déclaration suivante:**


	totallement en désaccord	en désaccord	neutre	en accord	totallement en accord
Les Olympiques spéciaux contribuent à l'inclusion social"	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

"L'inclusion sociale dans cette étude est définie comme une approche proactive de développement humain au bien-être social dans lequel les gens doivent être valorisés et respectés en tant que membres de la société. Il est plus que de simplement supprimer les limites ou barrières entre les gens, mais plutôt, il s'agit de minimiser les distances entre les différents peuples, tels que physique (par exemple le genre, le handicap) et sociaux (par exemple, le statut social) (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002; Frazee, 2005).


2. S'il vous plaît fournir une brève explication du choix que vous avez sélectionné ci-dessus.**3. (FACULTATIF) Décrivez svp une situation où la participation dans les Olympiques spéciaux contribuait à l'inclusion sociale de votre enfant.**

Appendix K- Survey (Coaches/Volunteers)


1. Survey Outline




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**CENTRE DE RECHERCHE
SUR LE SPORT DANS LA
SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE**



**RESEARCH CENTRE
FOR SPORT IN
CANADIAN SOCIETY**



Special Olympics
Olympiques spéciaux
Canada

Chiaki Inoue, MSc, MA candidate at the University of Ottawa and her colleague are currently conducting a research funded and supported by Special Olympics Canada and Research Centre for Sport in Canadian Society titled "An Opportunity for Sport or an Opportunity for Development: Is Special Olympics Perceived as Contributing to Psychosocial Development and Social Inclusion?". The goal of this project is to examine whether participation in Special Olympics programs is perceived to facilitate the psychosocial development of youth with intellectual disability and whether participation in these programs is believed to facilitate or inhibit social inclusion. Therefore, as part of the research, the researchers want to collect information from athletes, parents, volunteers and coaches from across Canada. A questionnaire has been developed and you are invited to complete it. The questionnaire should not take you more than 10-15 minutes to complete. It is important to mention that you are entirely free to participate in this research and anonymity is assured as you do not have to identify yourself. In addition, all the data collected will be stored in Dr. Tanya Forneris' laboratory where only her research team has access. If you have any questions with regards to the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall 550 Cumberland Street, Room 159, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5, tel.: 613-562-5841, e-mail: ethics@uottawa.ca

Section 1: Demographic Profile
Section 2: Special Olympics Involvement
Section 3: Impact of Special Olympics on Athletes

By clicking on "Next" button below, you have agreed to take part in this survey.

** Si vous préférez répondre à ce sondage en français, svp aller à <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/soccvfr>

** This survey is for volunteers and coaches. Parents who are also volunteers or coaches are welcome to participate. If you are a parent and are not a volunteer or a coach, please follow this link for parent survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/socpen>

2. Section 1: Demographic Profile**1. Are you 18 years or older?**

Yes (18+)

No (17 and under)

**2. Please select the type of involvement in Special Olympics.
(Choose one that is most applicable)**

Volunteer/Coach at on-going sport programs (e.g. weekly, bi-weekly programs)

Club manager, fundraiser, and/or administrative positions at local Special Olympics

Special Olympics Canada staff or chapter staff

Special events volunteer (e.g. fundraisers, local meets, provincial games, national games)

Other (please specify)

3. Do you have regular (at least monthly) contact with Special Olympics athletes?

Yes

No

4. Have you been consistently volunteering with Special Olympics for at least a year?

Yes

No

3. Section 1: Demographic Profile

1. Age

2. Gender

 Male Female

3. Region/Province

 Alberta Nova Scotia British Columbia Ontario Manitoba Prince Edward Island New Brunswick Québec Newfoundland & Labrador Saskatchewan North-western Territories Yukon

4. Marital Status

 Single Separated Married Widowed Divorced Common Law

5. Education

 High School University (Bachelor) Cégep University (Master) Some College University (Doctorate) Other (please specify)

6. Number of Family Members with Intellectual Disability (enter a numerical value)

4. Section 2: Special Olympics Involvement

1. 1. What and how long is your involvement in Special Olympics? (Complete all that apply)

Years of involvement as a Parent/ Legal Guardian

Years of involvement as a Coach

Years of involvement as a Volunteer (excluding coach)

Years of involvement as an Administrator

2. How frequent do you involved in Special Olympics programs (on average)?

times/week

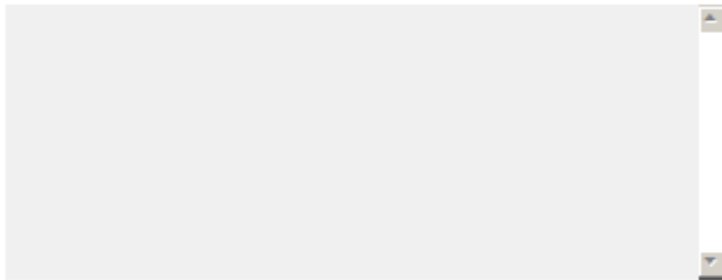
hours/week

3. What sport do you participate in? (Check all that apply)

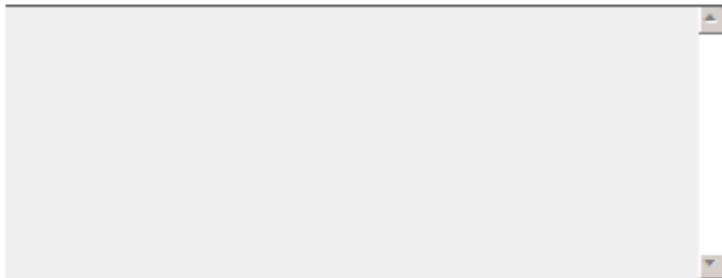
- | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athletics (Track & Field) | <input type="checkbox"/> Softball | <input type="checkbox"/> Floor Hockey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aquatics | <input type="checkbox"/> Alpine Skiing | <input type="checkbox"/> Curling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Power lifting | <input type="checkbox"/> Nordic (Cross Country) Skiing | <input type="checkbox"/> Active Start |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5&10 Pin Bowling | <input type="checkbox"/> Figure Skating | <input type="checkbox"/> FUNdamentals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rhythmic Gymnastics | <input type="checkbox"/> Speed Skating | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowshoeing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | | |

5. Section 2: Special Olympics Involvement

1. How did you hear about Special Olympics?



2. For what reason(s) did you decide to get involved in Special Olympics?



6. Section 3: Impact of Special Olympics on Athletes

****Important - Please read the following instructions before answering questions****

Sections 3 will focus on understanding the athletes' involvement in Special Olympics and your perceptions of how their involvement impacts their development.

For each statement please answer by referring to the scale (totally disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, totally agree)

1. Participation in Special Olympics programs allows athletes to...

	totally disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	totally agree
Effectively communicate with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gain self-control	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop concentration skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Set and attain goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop compassion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of fairness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of sportpersonship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of teamwork	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be honest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be responsible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Respect others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accept criticism and feedback from others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Section 3: Impact of Special Olympics on Athletes

For each statement please answer by referring to the scale (totally disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, totally agree)

1. Participation in Special Olympics programs allows athletes to...

	totally disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	totally agree
Effectively deal with winning and losing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working with people they don't necessarily like	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop self-confidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Foster social connections	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be a team player	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a good work ethic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have a sense of right or wrong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of purpose	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a sense of identity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a positive view of personal future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Section 3: Impact of Special Olympics on Athletes

1. Please rate how much you agree with the following statement:

	totally disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	totally agree
Special Olympics contributes to social inclusion*	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*Social Inclusion in this study is defined as a proactive, human development approach to social well-being in which people are to be valued and respected as contributing members of society. It is more than simply removing boundaries or barriers between people; rather, it is about minimizing various distances between people, such as physical (e.g. gender, disability) and social (e.g. social status) (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002; Frazee, 2005)

2. Please provide a brief explanation for the choice you selected above.

Annexe K- Sondage (entraîneurs/bénévoles)

1. Grandes lignes d'enquête



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**CENTRE DE RECHERCHE
SUR LE SPORT DANS LA
SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE**

**RESEARCH CENTRE
FOR SPORT IN
CANADIAN SOCIETY**



Special Olympics
Olympiques spéciaux
Canada

Chiaki Inoue, MSc, MA candidate à l'Université d'Ottawa et ses collègues complètent une recherche financé et soutenu par Canada Olympiques spéciaux et Centre de recherche sur le Sport dans la société canadienne intitulée « Une opportunité pour le sport ou une opportunité pour le développement: Est-ce que les Olympiques spéciaux sont perçus comme contribuant au développement psychosocial et à l'inclusion sociale? ». Le but de ce projet est d'examiner si la participation dans les programmes d'Olympiques spéciaux est perçue pour faciliter le développement psychosocial de jeune avec l' déficience intellectuelle et si on croit que la participation en ces programmes facilite ou inhibe l'inclusion sociale. Pour y parvenir, en tant qu'élément de la recherche, les chercheurs veulent recueillir des informations des athlètes, des parents, des bénévoles et des entraîneurs d'un bout à l'autre du Canada. Un questionnaire a été développé et vous êtes invité à le compléter. Cette tâche ne devrait pas prendre plus de 10 à 15 minutes. Il est important de préciser que vous êtes entièrement libre de participer à cette recherche et si vous décidez de participer, l'anonymat sera garanti car vous n'avez pas à vous identifier. De plus, les données recueillies seront entreposées dans le laboratoire de recherche de Dr. Tanya Fomeris où seulement les chercheurs de son groupe y auront accès. Pour toute question se rapportant à la conduite éthique de cette recherche, vous pouvez vous adresser à la Responsable de l'éthique en recherche, Université d'Ottawa, Pavillon Tabaret, 550 rue Cumberland, pièce 159, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5, tél. : 613-562-5841, courriel : ethics@uottawa.ca.

Section 1: Profil démographique

Section 2: Implication Olympiques spéciaux

Section 3 : Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur les athlètes

En cliquant "suvivant" ci-dessous, vous avez accepté de prendre part à cette enquête.

** Should you prefer to answer this survey in English, please go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/socpven>

** Cette enquête est pour les bénévoles et les entraîneurs. Les parents qui sont aussi des bénévoles ou des entraîneurs sont invités à participer. Si vous êtes un parent et n'est pas un bénévole ou un entraîneur, svp suivez ce lien pour l'enquête auprès des parents: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/socpfr>

2. Section 1: Profil démographique

1. Vous avez 18 ans ou plus?

Oui (18+)

Non (17 ans et moins)

2. S'il vous plaît sélectionner le type de participation à des Olympiques spéciaux. (Choisissez-en un qui est le plus applicable)

- Bénévoles / Entraîneurs à un programme de sport en cours (ex. hebdomadaire, programmes bimensuels)
- Directeur du club, collecteur de fonds, et / ou des postes administratifs au niveau local des Olympiques spéciaux
- Olympiques spéciaux Canada personnel ou division personnel
- Volontaire aux événements (ex. collectes de fonds, réponse locale, jeux provinciaux, jeux nationaux)
- Autre(s): (spécifiez)

3. Avez-vous (au moins une fois par mois) le contact réguliers avec les athlètes des Olympiques spéciaux?

Oui

Non

4. Avez-vous toujours été bénévole pour les Olympiques spéciaux pour au moins un an?

Oui

Non

3. Section 1: Profil démographique**1. Âge****2. Sexe** Masculin Féminin**3. Région/Province** Alberta Nouvelle-Écosse Colombie-Britannique Ontario Manitoba Île-du-Prince-Édouard Nouveau-Brunswick Québec Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador Saskatchewan Territoires du Nord-Ouest Yukon**4. Statut marital** Célibataire Séparé Marié Veuf Divorcé Conjoint de fait**5. Éducation** Secondaire Université (Baccalauréat) Cégep Université (Maîtrise) Collège Université (Doctorat) Autre(s): (spécifiez)**6. Nombre d'membres de la famille avec une déficience intellectuelle (entrez une valeur numérique)**

4. Section 2: Implication Olympiques spéciaux

1. Qu'est ce et de quelle longueur est votre rôle dans les Olympiques spéciaux ? (Cocher tous qui s'appliquent)

Années d'engagement en tant que parent

Années d'engagement comme entraîneur

Années d'engagement comme bénévoles (excl. entraîneurs)

Années d'engagement en tant qu'administrateur

2. Combien fréquent participez-vous aux programmes de Olympiques spéciaux (en moyenne) ?

périodes/semaine

heures/semaine

3. Quel sport participez-vous dedans ? (Vérifiez le tout qu'appliquez)

Athlétisme (épreuves de piste et concours)

Softball

Hockey intérieur

Natation

Ski alpin

Curling

Dynamophille

Ski de fond (ski nordique)

Enfant actif

5 et 10-quilles

Patinage artistique

S'amuser grâce au sport

Gymnastique rythmique

Patinage de vitesse

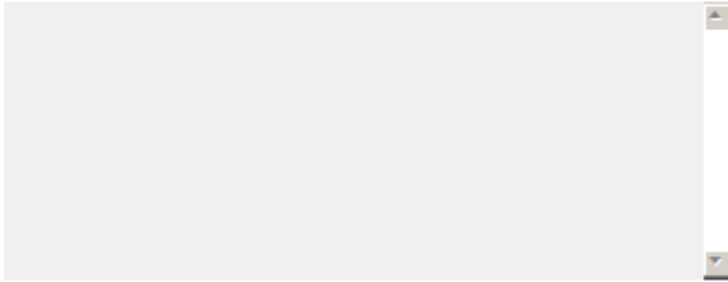
Soccer

Raquette

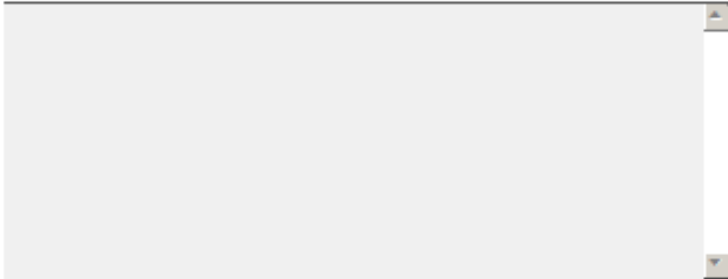
Autre(s): (spécifiez)

5. Section 2: Implication Olympiques spéciaux

1. Comment avez-vous entendu des Olympiques spéciaux?



2. Pour quelle raison (s) avez-vous décidé de faire participer vous dans les Olympiques spéciaux ?



6. Section 3: Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur les athlètes

**** Important – Svp lisez les instructions suivantes avant de répondre aux questions ****

Les sections 3 se concentrent à comprendre le rôle de athlètes dans les Olympiques spéciaux et vos perceptions de comment leur rôle a un impact sur leur développement.

Pour chaque énoncé, prière de répondre en vous référant à l'échelle (totalement en désaccord, en désaccord, neutre, en accord, totalement en accord).

1. La participation de athlètes aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux lui on permet de d'...

	totalement en désaccord	en désaccord	neutre	en accord	totalement en accord
Communiquer efficacement avec autrui	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Acquérir du contrôle personnel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Se concentrer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Établir et atteindre des objectifs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer de la compassion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer un sens de la justice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer l'esprit sportif	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Apprendre à travailler en équipe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Être honnête	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Être responsable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Respecter les autres	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accepter la critique et les commentaires d'autrui	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Section 3: Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur les athlètes

Pour chaque énoncé, prière de répondre en vous référant à l'échelle (totalement en désaccord, en désaccord, neutre, en accord, totalement en accord).

1. La participation de athlètes aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux lui on permet de d'...

	totalement en désaccord	en désaccord	neutre	en accord	totalement en accord
Gérer efficacement la victoire et la défaite	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travailler avec des gens pour lesquels ils/elles n'ont pas nécessairement d'affinité	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer du leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer de la confiance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nouer des liens sociaux et des amitiés	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travailler pour le bien de l'équipe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer de bonnes habitudes de travail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faire la différence entre le bien et le mal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Être motivé envers un objectif	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer une identité positive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Développer une vision positive face à son futur	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Section 3: Impact de les Olympiques spéciaux sur les athlètes

1. S'il vous plaît le taux combien vous approuvez la déclaration suivante:

	totallement en désaccord	en désaccord	neutre	en accord	totallement en accord	N/A
Les Olympiques spéciaux contribuent à l'inclusion social*	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*L'inclusion sociale dans cette étude est définie comme une approche proactive de développement humain au bien-être social dans lequel les gens doivent être valorisées et respectées en tant que membres de la société. Il est plus que de simplement supprimer les limites ou barrières entre les gens, mais plutôt, il s'agit de minimiser les distances entre les différents peuples, tels que physique (par exemple le genre, le handicap) et sociaux (par exemple, le statut social) (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002; Frazee, 2005).

2. S'il vous plaît fournir une brève explication du choix que vous avez sélectionné ci-dessus.

Appendix L- Pre-Interview Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions. This pre-interview questionnaire is only used to gain background information of your child who has agreed to participate in the research and is being interviewed, and all information will be kept confidential.

After completing this form, please return this form to the researcher via e-mail [Contact Information Provided Here] or physical mail [Contact Information Provided Here], at least two weeks prior to your scheduled interview.

1. Your child’s name that is being interviewed: _____
2. How many years has your child been involved in Special Olympics?
 ____years ____months
3. How old was your child when he/she first started to participate in Special Olympics?
 ____years old
4. What programs does and has your child participated in? Please list all programs.
 (e.g. athletics, floor hockey, FUNdamentals)

5. How frequent does your child participate in Special Olympics programs (on average)?
 _____ times/week _____ hours/week
6. Has your child ever participated in Special Olympics regional, provincial, national, and/or world games? YES NO

Please list the games that your child has attended, if any:

ANNEE	LEVEL	LOCATION	SPORT
<i>(e.g.) 2010</i>	<i>National</i>	<i>London, Ontario</i>	<i>Athletics</i>

Thank you!

Annexe L- Questionnaire préalable à l'entrevue

S'il vous plaît répondez aux questions suivantes. Ce questionnaire de pré-entrevue est uniquement utilisée pour obtenir des informations d'arrière-plan de votre enfant qui a accepté de participer à la recherche et est interviewé, et toutes les informations seront gardées confidentielles.

Après avoir complété ce formulaire, s'il vous plaît retourner ce formulaire aux chercheurs par courriel [Coordonnées fournies ici] ou par courrier physique [Coordonnées fournies ici], au moins deux semaines avant votre entrevue.

7. Nom de l'enfant qui est interviewé: _____
8. Combien d'années l'athlète a-t-il été impliqué dans les Olympiques spéciaux?
 ____ année ____ mois
9. Quel âge avait votre enfant quand il / elle a commencé à participer aux Olympiques spéciaux? ____ ans
10. Quels sont les programmes que votre enfant participe couramment et quels sont les programmes que votre enfant a déjà participé ? S'il vous plaît la liste de tous les programmes. (ex. athlétisme, hockey intérieur, S'amuser grâce au sport)

11. Comment fréquent l'athlète participe-t-il aux programmes de Olympiques spéciaux (en moyenne) ?
 _____ périodes/semaine, _____ heures/semaine
12. Votre enfant a-t'il/elle-déjà participé à les Olympiques spéciaux régional, provinciaux, nationaux et / ou des jeux du mondiaux? OUI NON

S'il vous plaît écrivez la liste des jeux que votre enfant a assistés:

Année	Niveau	Emplacement	Sport
<i>(ex.) 2010</i>	<i>Nationaux</i>	<i>London, Ontario</i>	<i>Athlétisme</i>

Merci!

Appendix M- Interview Guide (Athlete)

Project Title: An Opportunity for Sport or an Opportunity for Development: Is Special Olympics Perceived as Contributing to Psychosocial Development and Social Inclusion?

Introduction

1. Purpose of interview: The purpose of this interview is to understand and learn about experiences with Special Olympics as an athlete, and how participating in Special Olympics helps athletes in everyday life. We are particularly interested in personal development through participation, with a focus on psychosocial development. Psychosocial development can be measured through things such as learning how to communicate with others, recognize individual differences, and manage personal feelings. You can freely talk about both good and bad experiences.
2. Recording of Interview & Confidentiality: Would it be okay to record this interview with a digital recorder? Any personal information mentioned during the interview will be private.
3. Clarification of above statements if necessary.

Demographic Information

1. Can you tell me about yourself- age, family, education/school, hobbies etc? What do you like to do to have fun??

Special Olympics Program Participation

1. What programs Special Olympics do you participate in? (*More to remind them what programs they have been participating based on pre-interview questionnaire.)
2. What is your most favorite program, and why?
3. You have been asked to take some pictures during your Special Olympics program. Can you share those with me? (Discuss about the picture. Ask them about details of the picture to tell a story.)
4. How do you feel about Special Olympics program?
5. What does participation in Special Olympics do for you?
6. How would you describe your relationship/interaction with your peers, coaches, and volunteers? How do they make you feel?

7. Do you think you have learned the following skills by participating in Special Olympics?

- Concentration skills
- Goal setting
- Time management
- Teamwork
- Respecting others
- Be responsible (etc.)

*Ask for examples on each one if they answer “yes”.

8. Do you think these skills have helped you as a person? Do you have an example? (Follow up question: Do you think these skills have helped you in school? Do you have an example?)
9. Do you participate in sport programs outside of Special Olympics? If so, what do you do, and how is it different from Special Olympics programs?
10. Are there situations where you do not feel comfortable in Special Olympics programs? Would you change anything about Special Olympics programs?
11. Do you think if people with intellectual disabilities who have not participated in Special Olympics programs can benefit from participating in Special Olympics? In what way?

Social Inclusion

1. How do you feel being in Special Olympics programs than you are outside of the program? How does it make you feel being in Special Olympics situations?
2. When do you feel like you are “included”? What makes you feel like you are part of something?
3. Based on what you have just said, does Special Olympics makes you feel that way?
4. Since your participation in Special Olympics, do you think things have changed around you in school or in your community? If so, how?
5. (If applicable) Can you give specific stories how your participation in Special Olympics helped you feel more socially included?

Wrap Up

1. Is there anything else that you would like to share or talk about? Is there anything important for us about your experience as an athlete in Special Olympics?

Appendix M- Guide d'entretien (athlète)

Titre du projet : Une occasion sportive ou une occasion de développement : Les Olympiques spéciaux sont-ils perçus comme un agent contribuant au développement psychosocial et à l'intégration sociale?

Introduction

1. But de l'entretien : Le but de cette entretien est de mieux comprendre les expériences des athlètes participant aux Olympiques spéciaux ainsi que la manière dont cette participation leur aide dans leur vie quotidienne. Nous sommes surtout intéressés à comprendre la manière dont cette participation influence le développement personnel, particulièrement au niveau psychosocial. Le développement psychosocial peut être mesuré en évaluant l'apprentissage de diverses capacités, tel la communication avec autrui, la reconnaissance de différences chez les individus et la gestion des émotions. Sentez-vous libre de parler de vos expériences positives ainsi que de vos expériences négatives.
2. Enregistrement et confidentialité : Est-ce qu'il est possible pour moi d'enregistrer cette conversation avec mon enregistreuse digitale? Tout ce qui sera mentionné durant cette rencontre restera privé.
3. Clarification des propos précédents, au besoin.

Informations démographique

1. Pouvez-vous me parler de vous-même – âge, famille, éducation/école, loisirs, etc.? Quelles activités faites-vous pour vous amuser?

Participation au programme des Olympiques spéciaux

1. Vous participez à quels programmes des Olympiques spéciaux? (* Pour leur rappeler les programmes auxquels ils ont participer selon le questionnaire pré-entrevue.)
2. Quel programme préférez-vous et pourquoi?
3. On vous a demandé de prendre des photos lors de votre programme d'Olympiques spéciaux. Pouvez-vous les partager avec moi? (Discuter à propos des photos. Demander aux participants de partager des détails ou une histoire en lien aux photos.)
4. Que pensez-vous des programmes des Olympiques spéciaux?
5. Qu'est-ce que votre participation aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux vous apporte?
6. Comment décririez-vous votre relation et vos interactions avec les autres athlètes? les entraîneurs? et les bénévoles? Comment vous font-ils vous sentir?

7. Pensez-vous que vous avez appris les compétences suivantes en participant aux Olympiques spéciaux? (Se reporter à la fiche)

- Concentration
- Lire phonétiquement
- Fixer des buts
- Respecter les autres
- Gérer le temps
- Être responsable
- Travailler en équipe (etc.)

* Demandez des exemples sur chacun d'eux s'ils répondent « oui ».

8. Est-ce que ces compétences vous ont aidé en tant que personne? Avez-vous un exemple? (Question de suivi : Est-ce que ces compétences vous ont aidé à l'école ? Avez-vous un exemple?)

9. Participez-vous à des programmes de sports, autre que les Olympiques spéciaux? Si oui, quel(s) programme(s)? Que faites-vous? Comment est-ce que ce(s) programme(s) sont différent(s) des Olympiques spéciaux?

10. Est-ce qu'à certains moments vous vous êtes sentis inconfortable lors de votre participation aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux ? Changeriez vous quelque chose aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux?

11. Croyez-vous que des personnes avec des déficiences intellectuelles n'ayant pas participés aux Olympiques spéciaux pourraient bénéficier de tels programmes? Comment?

Intégration sociale

1. Comment vous sentez-vous être dans les programmes de Olympiques spéciaux que vous êtes en dehors du programme? Comment vous sentez-vous lorsque vous vous trouvez dans le contexte des Olympiques spéciaux?

2. Quand vous êtes vous sentis "inclus"? Qu'est-ce qui a fait que vous vous sentiez comme si vous faisiez partie de quelque chose ?

3. Selon ce que vous venez de dire, est-ce que les programmes des Olympiques spéciaux vont permettent de vous sentir ainsi ?

4. Selon votre définition d'intégration sociale, croyez-vous que votre participation aux Olympiques spéciaux a contribué à mieux vous intégrer socialement? Si oui, pourquoi?

5. Depuis votre participation à des Olympiques spéciaux, pensez-vous les choses ont changé autour de vous à l'école ou dans votre communauté? Si oui, pourquoi?

6. (si pertinent) Pouvez-vous me donner un exemple qui décrit comment votre participation aux Olympiques spéciaux vous a permis de vous sentir mieux intégré socialement ?

Wrap Up

1. Voulez-vous mentionner autres choses? Y a-t-il d'autres choses importantes à savoir au sujet de votre expérience en tant qu'athlète aux Olympiques spéciaux ?

Appendix N- Interview Guide (Parent)

Project Title: An Opportunity for Sport or an Opportunity for Development: Is Special Olympics Perceived as Contributing to Psychosocial Development and Social Inclusion?

Introduction

1. Purpose of interview: The purpose of this interview is to examine whether participation in Special Olympics programs is perceived to facilitate the psychosocial development of youth with intellectual disability and whether participation in these programs is believed to facilitate or inhibit social inclusion. We are particularly interested in personal development through participation, with a focus on psychosocial development. Psychosocial development can be measured through things such as learning how to communicate with others, recognize individual differences, and manage personal feelings. You can freely talk about both good and bad experiences.
2. Recording of Interview & Confidentiality: Would it be okay to record this interview with a digital recorder? Anything mentioned during the interview will be confidential.
3. Clarification of above statements if necessary.

Demographic Information

1. Can you tell me about yourself- age, family, career/work etc?
2. Can you tell me about your child (athlete)- type of disability, time of diagnosis etc.?

Clarification of Details from Athlete Interviews (If necessary)

[NOTE] If the athlete mentions an event or fact that was not mentioned in the pre-interview questionnaire, the researcher may ask the parent to clarify some details of the event/fact. Parent's answers should only be stating the facts, and no personal opinion of the event/fact should be stated.

Special Olympics Program Participation

1. How long has your child participated in Special Olympics? (Clarification)
2. How old was your child when they initially started to participate in Special Olympics, and what did they first participate in? (Clarification)
3. How did you first hear about Special Olympics?
4. What encouraged you to enrol your child in Special Olympics programs?
5. What was your initial goal as a parent to have your child participate in Special Olympics?

6. Has that initial goal been achieved? In what ways?
7. What is your current goal?
8. Are you personally involved in Special Olympics as a coach, volunteer, or administrator/staff? If so, can you explain your type of involvement?
9. Does your child participate in sport programs outside of Special Olympics? If so, how are they different from Special Olympics programs?
10. Have you noticed any other differences between Special Olympics programs and non-Special Olympics programs?

Psychosocial Development through Special Olympics Participation

1. Do you believe that participation in Special Olympics has helped your child develop? If so, in what way?
2. Any other ways you believe Special Olympics has helped your child?
3. Comparing from the time your child initially got involved with Special Olympics, have you observed any positive by participation in Special Olympics?
4. Have you observed any negative by participation in Special Olympics?
5. How would you describe your child's relationship/interaction with their peers, coaches, and volunteers?
6. What do coaches and volunteers mean to your child?
7. What do you expect from the coaches/volunteers? What kind of environment do you want them to provide?
8. Life skills are skills that help you achieve or be successful, such as concentration skills, goal setting, time management, teamwork, and respecting others. (Show list below) What kinds of life skills do you think the athletes are learning? Can you provide some examples? (Touch on each of the following skills.)
 - Concentration skills
 - Goal setting
 - Time management
 - Teamwork
 - Respecting others
 - Be responsible (etc.)

Can you give me an example? – do this for each one of the skills if they do not provide an example.

9. Are there any other life skills you think your child has developed as a result of Special Olympics?
10. Have the skills learned through participation in Special Olympics programs helped them (psychologically, emotionally, socially etc) in everyday situations? Can you give an example?
11. Do you think the life skills she has learned through Special Olympics has helped him/her in school? In what ways?
12. (If applicable) Has your child's experience in going to the national games/world games impacted your child? If so, how?

Social Inclusion

1. According to the website, Special Olympics Canada hopes to “[b]e a change agent for social inclusion” (SOC, 2010, “Opportunity & Accessibility”, para.1). Do you know about social inclusion?
2. As a parent, what does “social inclusion” mean? What is a “successful” social inclusion?
3. If someone asked you for a definition of social inclusion, how would you define it?
4. In general, how do you think Special Olympics participation affects social inclusion (directly or indirectly)?
5. How has participation in Special Olympics affected your child's social inclusion?
6. How do you see the role of Special Olympics in the social inclusion movement?
7. Based on your definition of social inclusion, do you think Special Olympics inhibited social inclusion for your child? If so, how?
8. (If applicable) Can you give specific stories how your child's participation in Special Olympics helped them be more socially included?

Special Olympics in General (changed order from the original)**

1. What does Special Olympics mean to you and your child?
2. Can you tell me what you like about Special Olympics?
3. Has Special Olympics benefited or helped you as a parent? If so, how?

4. Are there situations where you do not feel comfortable in Special Olympics programs? Would you like to see any changes or improvements in Special Olympics?
5. Do you think if youth with intellectual disabilities who have not participated in Special Olympics programs can benefit from participating in Special Olympics? In what way?

Other

1. What type of school does your child go to, and what prompted you to make that decision?

Wrap Up

2. Is there anything else that you would like to share or talk about? Is there anything important for us about your experience as a parent in Special Olympics?

Appendix N- Guide d'entretien (parent)

Titre du projet : Une occasion sportive ou une occasion de développement : Les Olympiques spéciaux sont-ils perçus comme un agent contribuant au développement psychosocial et à l'intégration sociale?

Introduction

1. But de l'entretien : Le but de cette entretien est d'examiner les effets de la participation à un programme des Olympiques spéciaux sur le développement psychosocial de personnes avec déficience intellectuelle. Elle cherche aussi à comprendre le lien entre la participation à ces programmes et l'intégration sociale des participants. Nous sommes surtout intéressés à comprendre la manière dont cette participation influence le développement personnel, particulièrement au niveau psychosocial. Le développement psychosocial peut être mesuré en évaluant l'apprentissage de diverses capacités, tel la communication avec autrui, la reconnaissance de différences chez les individus et la gestion des émotions. Sentez-vous libre de parler de vos expériences positives ainsi que de vos expériences négatives
2. Enregistrement et confidentialité : Est-ce qu'il est possible pour moi d'enregistrer cette conversation avec mon enregistreuse digitale? Tout ce qui sera mentionné durant cette rencontre restera privé.
3. Clarification des propos précédents, au besoin.

Démographique Information

1. Pouvez-vous me parler de vous-même – âge, famille, de carrière / de travail etc.?
2. Pouvez-vous me parler de votre enfant (athlète) – type d'handicap, moment de diagnostique, etc.?

Clarification des détails des entrevues avec les athlètes (si nécessaire)

[À NOTER] Si l'athlète mentionne des événements ou des éléments qui n'ont pas été mentionné pendant l'entretien, le chercheur peut demander au parent de donner plus de détails. La réponse des parents devrait se limiter aux faits et éviter d'exprimer des opinions.

Participation aux programmes d'Olympiques Spéciaux

1. Depuis combien de temps votre enfant participe aux Olympiques spéciaux?
2. Quel âge avait votre enfant lorsqu'il a commencé à participer aux Olympiques spéciaux? Il participait à quel programme?

3. Comment avez-vous appris de l'existence des Olympiques spéciaux
4. Qu'est ce qui vous a motivé à inscrire votre enfant à un programme d'Olympiques spéciaux?
5. Pour quel but avez-vous inscrit votre enfant aux Olympiques spéciaux? Avez-vous atteints ces buts? Qu'el este votre but présentement?
6. Avez-vous un rôle actif au sein des Olympiques spéciaux (en tant qu'entraîneur, bénévole, administrateur, etc.)
7. Votre enfant participe-t-il à des programmes de sports en dehors des Olympiques spéciaux? Si oui, comment sont-ils différents des programmes de Olympiques spéciaux?

Effets des Olympiques Spéciaux sur le développement psychosocial

1. Croyez-vous que les Olympiques spéciaux on aidé au développement de votre enfant? Si oui, comment?
2. Avez-vous observé des changements chez votre enfant à la suite de sa participation au Olympiques spéciaux?
3. Avez-vous remarqué des changements/effets positifs chez votre enfant depuis le début de sa participation aux programmes des olympiques spéciaux ?
4. Avez-vous remarqué des changements/effets négatifs ?
5. Comment décrieriez-vous les relations/interactions que votre enfant entretient avec ses pairs, ses entraîneurs et les bénévoles?
6. Qu'est-ce que les entraîneurs et les bénévoles signifie pour votre enfant?
7. Qu'attendez-vous des entraîneurs et des bénévoles? Quel type d'environnement vous voulez qu'ils créent pour votre enfant?

8. Les compétences de vie, telles que la capacité de concentration, l'établissement d'objectifs, la gestion du temps, le travail d'équipe et le respect des autres (voir la liste ci-dessous), sont des compétences qui aident à atteindre le succès. Quels types de compétences de vie pensez-vous que les athlètes apprennent? Pouvez-vous donner quelques exemples? (Discuter par rapport à chacune des compétences suivantes.)

- Concentration
- Fixer des buts
- Gérer le temps
- Travailler en équipe
- Respecter les autres
- Être responsable (etc.)

Pouvez-vous me donner un exemple? - demander pour chacune des compétences si ils ne fournissent pas un exemple.

9. Y a-t-il d'autres compétences de vie que vous pensez que votre enfant a développées à cause de sa participation aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux?
10. Selon vous, est-ce que les habiletés que votre enfant a apprises en participant aux Olympiques spéciaux l'ont aidé, psychologiquement, émotionnellement, socialement, etc., dans sa vie quotidienne? Pouvez-vous me donner un exemple?
11. Pensez-vous que les habiletés que votre enfant a appris lors des Olympiques spéciaux l'ont aidé à l'école? De quelles façons?
12. (Si pertinent) Est-ce que la participation de votre enfant aux jeux nationaux/mondiaux a eu un impact sur lui/elle? Si oui, comment?

Intégration sociale

1. Selon le site web d'Olympiques spéciaux Canada, cette organisme espère "[b] être un agent de changement pour l'inclusion sociale"(SOC, 2010, "Opportunity & Accessibility", para.1 – traduction libre). Que savez-vous au sujet de l'inclusion sociale?
2. En tant que parent, qu'est-ce que le mot 'inclusion sociale' veut dire? Comment savoir que l'inclusion sociale est réussite?
3. Si quelqu'un vous demande une définition de l'inclusion sociale, comment le définiriez-vous?
4. Généralement, comment pensez-vous que la participation aux Olympiques spéciaux affecte (directement ou indirectement) l'intégration sociale?
5. Comment la participation aux Olympiques spéciaux affectés inclusion sociale de votre enfant?

6. Quel rôle attribuez-vous aux Olympiques spéciaux au sein du mouvement d'intégration sociale?
7. Selon votre définition d'intégration sociale, croyez-vous que votre participation aux Olympiques spéciaux a contribué à mieux votre enfant intégrer socialement? Si oui, pour quoi?
8. (si pertinent) Pouvez-vous me donner un exemple qui décrit comment votre participation aux Olympiques spéciaux vous a permis de votre enfant sentir mieux intégré socialement ?

Les Olympiques spéciaux en générale

1. Pour vous et votre enfant, qu'est ce que les Olympiques spéciaux symbolisent?
2. Pouvez-vous me dire ce que vous aimez des Olympiques spéciaux?
3. En tant que parent, avez-vous bénéficié de la présence des Olympiques spéciaux? Si oui, comment/pourquoi?
4. Est-ce que, par moment, vous vous êtes senti inconfortable dans le contexte des programmes des Olympiques spéciaux?
5. Croyez-vous que les jeunes avec déficience intellectuelle qui n'ont pas participé aux Olympiques spéciaux pourraient en bénéficier? Comment?

Autres

1. Votre enfant fréquente quel type d'école ? Qu'est-ce qui vous a incité à prendre la décision de l'envoyer à ce type d'école ?

Wrap Up

1. Voulez-vous mentionner autre choses? Y a-t-il d'autres choses importantes à savoir au sujet de votre expérience en tant que athlète aux Olympiques spéciaux ?

Appendix O- Interview Guide (Chapter Representative)

Project Title: An Opportunity for Sport or an Opportunity for Development: Is Special Olympics Perceived as Contributing to Psychosocial Development and Social Inclusion?

Introduction

1. Purpose of interview: The purpose of this interview is to examine whether participation in Special Olympics programs is perceived to facilitate the psychosocial development of youth with intellectual disability and whether participation in these programs is believed to facilitate or inhibit social inclusion. We are particularly interested in personal development through participation, with a focus on psychosocial development. Psychosocial development can be measured through things such as learning how to communicate with others, recognize individual differences, and manage personal feelings. You can freely talk about both good and bad experiences.
2. Recording of Interview & Confidentiality: Would it be okay to record this interview with a digital recorder? Anything mentioned during the interview will be confidential.
3. Clarification of above statements if necessary.

Demographic Information

1. Can you tell me about yourself?
2. What is your role as a staff member in Special Olympics and how long have you been a staff at Special Olympics?
3. What prompted you to work for Special Olympics?
4. Do you also volunteer/coach at Special Olympics program?
5. (If applicable) What attracts you to volunteer/coach with Special Olympics on a purely voluntary basis?

Psychosocial Development through Special Olympics Participation

1. Based on the mission and philosophy of Special Olympics Inc. & Special Olympics Canada, Special Olympics programs are designed to foster psychosocial development, such as increased self-esteem and social competence. Do you think the programs in your chapter are designed to foster psychosocial development? If so, why? Can you provide some examples?

2. What are the main goals of the programs in your chapter?
3. Are the programs being evaluated to ensure its goals, objectives, and program content aligns with Special Olympics mission? How are the evaluations done? How frequently are these evaluations conducted?
4. How can youth with intellectual disabilities benefit from participating in Special Olympics? Do you believe that your programs foster psychosocial development and teach life skills for youth? If so, how can these skills help youth in the long run?
5. Life skills are skills that help you achieve or be successful, such as concentration skills, goal setting, time management, teamwork, and respecting others. (Show list below) What kinds of life skills do you think the athletes are learning? Can you provide some examples?
 - Concentration skills
 - Goal setting
 - Time management
 - Teamwork
 - Respecting others
 - Be responsible
 - (etc.)
6. Have the skills learned through participation in Special Olympics programs helped athletes (psychologically, emotionally, socially etc) in everyday situations? Can you give an example?
7. What do you think are the main responsibilities of volunteers and coaches?
8. What kind of environment are volunteers and coaches expected to provide for the athletes?
9. Do you think interactions with coaches, and volunteers impact psychosocial development of athletes? If so, why?
10. Do you think being part of a team going to national games and world games impacts athletes' development? Do you have any specific examples pertaining to youth athlete that went through the games experience? Can you provide an example of an athlete who have changed and developed significantly through games experience?

Social Inclusion

1. According to the website, Special Olympics Canada hopes to “[b]e a change agent for social inclusion” (SOC, 2010, “Opportunity & Accessibility”, para.1). How do you/your chapter define social inclusion? What is a “successful” social inclusion?
2. How does your chapter see the role of Special Olympics in the social inclusion movement? How can it contribute to the social inclusion movement?
3. In general, how do Special Olympics participation (directly or indirectly) affects social inclusion?
4. Can you provide some examples where you have observed or heard successful social inclusion as a result of their participation in Special Olympics? Can you also provide some examples of where you have observed or heard unsuccessful social inclusion as a result of their participation in Special Olympics?
5. In the past 10 years, there has been an increasing attention and awareness of social inclusion in society. How has it impacted Special Olympics? Do you think it has contributed in the recruitment of athletes?
6. Some parents may see Special Olympics as an “exclusion” program as it is an organization that specifically advocates for individuals with intellectual disability. Have you faced any situations where this was an issue, and if so, how did you or would you respond to the situation?
7. Do you think there are specific benefits for athletes because Special Olympics programs are exclusively for individuals with intellectual disability rather than an integrated program? If so, what are the specific benefits that Special Olympics can provide to athlete by being an exclusive advocate for athletes with intellectual disabilities?

Youth Athlete Recruitment

1. Do you have any issues recruiting youth participants? What are the biggest challenges your chapter is facing in recruiting youth participants?
2. Are there specific initiatives taken in your chapter to increase or to promote participation of new youth athletes? Please describe.
3. Has the social inclusion movement positively or negatively impacted recruitment of youth participants?

Wrap Up

1. Is there anything else that you would like to share or talk about? Is there anything important for us about your experience with Special Olympics?

**Appendix P- Text for Initial Contact with Participants
(E-mail Response for Parents)**

Dear (Name of parent interviewee):

Thank you for your interest in participating in my research study.

To remind you, the purpose of the proposed study is to understand whether participation in Special Olympics programs is perceived to facilitate the psychosocial development of youth with intellectual disability and whether participation in these programs is believed to facilitate or inhibit social inclusion.

Findings from this study will provide a better understanding of the impact its programs are having, and by identifying any needed changes to current programming.

As part of the research, I am currently recruiting youth Special Olympics athletes and their parent(s) for an interview. Athlete interview will take approximately 30 minutes, and parent interview will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes. I will personally be conducting the interview at your choice of location (e.g. residence, local café, community hall, public library).

I have attached the parent consent form and athlete assent form which both outlines the details of this research as well as the interview. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me, and I will be happy to answer any questions you and/or your child may have. Once you have read the forms and after I have answered all of your questions/concerns, please let me know whether you and your child would like to participate in this study, and we can set up an interview.

Please note that participation in this research is voluntary. You and/or your child may choose to withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences. You and your child's decision to take part or not take part in the study will not be notified to any Special Olympics personnel. In addition, participation or withdrawal in this study will not affect the quality of the services received from Special Olympics.

Anonymity of personal information (e.g. name, geographical information) will be assured.

All of the data that is collected will be stored in a locked office and will have no identifying information attached.

Should you have any questions with regards to the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa:, [Contact Information Provided Here]

Sincerely,

Chiaki Inoue, MSc, MA Candidate
Principal Investigator

Dr. Tanya Forneris, PhD
Research Supervisor

[Contact Information Provided Here]

[Contact Information Provided Here]

**Annexe P- Texte Pour un Contact Initial Avec les Participants
(Courriel de Réponse Pour les Parents)**

Cher (nom du parent en entrevue):

Merci pour votre intérêt à participer à mon étude.

Pour vous rappeler, le but de la recherche est d'examiner si la participation aux programmes des Olympiques spéciaux facilite le développement psychosocial et l'inclusion sociale des jeunes ayant une déficience intellectuelle.

Les résultats de cette recherche permettront de comprendre l'impact des programmes tout en identifiant les changements qui devraient y être apportées (le cas échéant).

Dans le cadre de la recherche, je suis en train de recruter des jeunes athlètes des Olympiques spéciaux et de leur parents pour une entrevue. L'entrevue avec les athlètes prendra environ 30 minutes, et l'entrevue avec les parents prendra approximativement 30 à 45 minutes. Je vais personnellement diriger l'entrevue à votre choix de l'emplacement (e.g. de résidence, un café local, salle communautaire, une bibliothèque publique).

J'ai joint le formulaire de consentement des parents et le formulaire d'assentiment de l'athlète qui présente les détails de cette recherche ainsi que l'entrevue. Si vous avez des questions ou des préoccupations, s'il vous plaît contactez-moi, et je serai heureuse de répondre à toutes vos questions. Une fois que vous avez lu les formes et après avoir répondu à toutes vos questions et préoccupations, s'il vous plaît laissez-moi savoir si vous et votre enfant souhaitent participer à cette étude, et nous pouvons organiser une entrevue.

La participation à cette recherche est complètement volontaire. Vous et / ou votre enfant peut choisir de se retirer de l'étude à tout moment et / ou de refuser de répondre à nos questions, sans subir de conséquences négatives. Votre décision et la décision de votre enfant de prendre part ou de ne pas prendre part à l'étude ne seront pas portées à la connaissance du personnel des Olympiques spéciaux. En outre, la participation ou le retrait de cette étude n'aura aucune incidence sur la qualité des services reçus des Olympiques spéciaux.

L'anonymat est assuré en raison du fait que les participants n'ont pas à s'identifier. Toutes les données qui seront recueillies seront entreposées dans un bureau verrouillé et aucune information qui pourrait servir à les identifier n'y sera jointe.

Si vous avez des questions quant aux procédures éthiques de cette recherche, vous pouvez communiquer avec les Responsables de la déontologie en recherche de l'Université d'Ottawa :
[Coordonnées fournies ici]

Sincèrement,

Chiaki Inoue, MSc, Candidate à la maîtrise
Chercheuse principale

[Coordonnées fournies ici]

Dr Tanya Forneris, PhD
Su perviseure de recherche

[Coordonnées fournies ici]

Figure 1. Social Ecology Surrounding Special Olympics Athletes

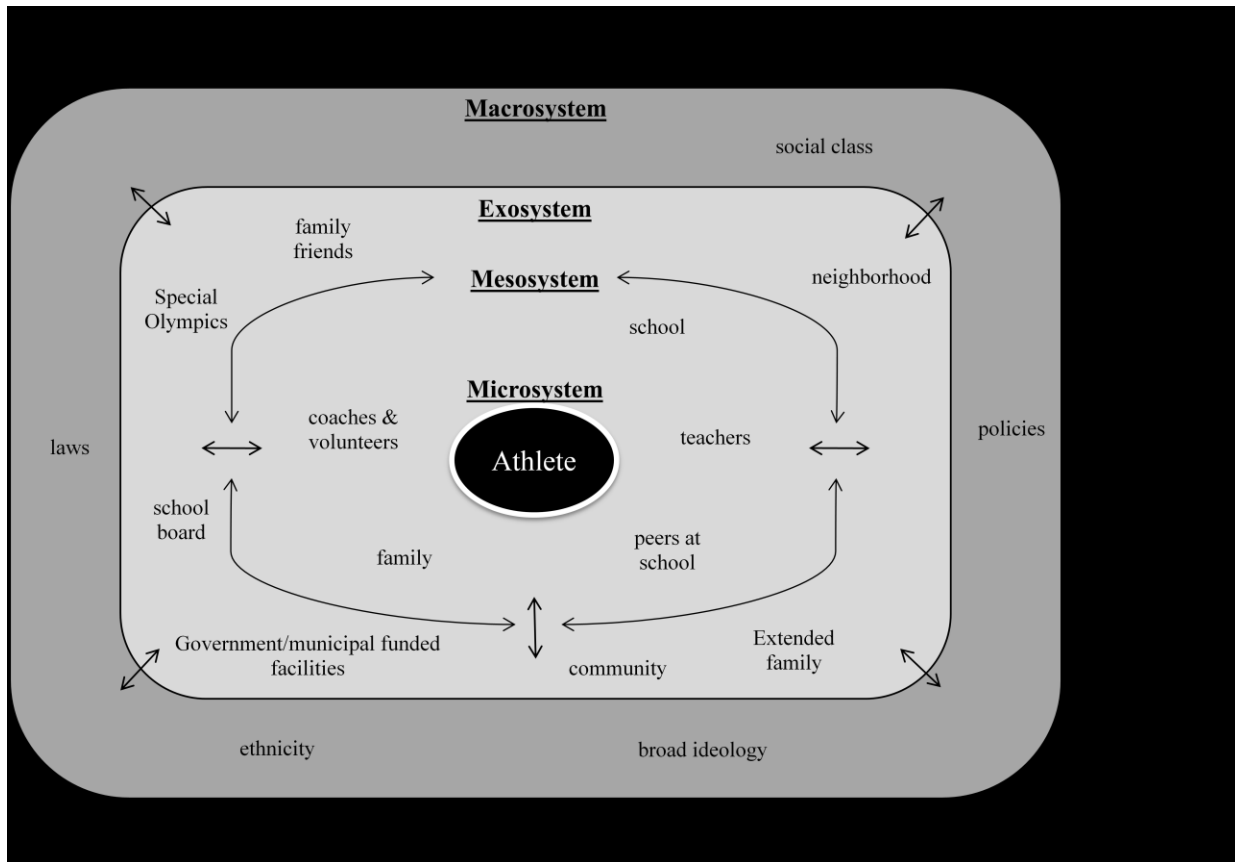


Figure 1. Illustration of the social ecology surrounding athletes with intellectual disability based on Bronfenbrenner’s (1979, 2005) ecological theory. Adapted from “Developmental Psychology: Childhood and Adolescence (1st Canadian ed.),” by D. R. Shaffer, E. Wood, & T. Willoughby, pg. 63. Copyright 2002 by Nelson.