

Assessing the Role and Importance of Co-curricular Activities in Special People (Deaf) Learning at Elementary Level.

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Abstract

Nations in the world are recognizing importance of the education of special people. They are also considering them as important part of society as normal people are. Schools for special people are contributing to the national stream. World is considering the same standards and activities for the special people as it is considered for the normal people. Likewise, Co curricular activities and other recreational programs are also necessary for the growth of a healthy mind and body for special learners too. Present research identifies how individuals, having disabilities, can gain health benefits from regular physical activities. The special learners (deaf) in our society do need regular & special attention for their better growth. This research identifies existing sporting opportunities for disabled people in Pakistan and sporting needs of the disabled community. The methodology for this research employed a mixture of desk research, meetings and networking and four separate, but related semi-structured questionnaires that were distributed to disabled adults and children, leisure centers and mainstream clubs existing in the district of Bahawalpur in order to both assess the current levels of provision and the perceptions of disabled people regarding the current provision in District Bahawalpur. The main findings of the research highlight a great desire amongst both disabled adults and children to take part in more sport and physical activity, with lack of awareness of current provision being cited by both groups as the number one barrier for lack of participation. Overall there is a paucity of current provision in many areas, which can also vary greatly dependant upon impairment group. The quality and organizational level of much of the current provision and the resources available can also vary greatly with several groups totally dependant upon the dedication and hard work of one or two individuals to keep them running. Overall, this research highlights the fact that disabled people generally take part in far less sport and physical activity than their able-bodied counterparts for a whole host of reasons and that there is a great deal of work to be done within Bahawalpur region and overall Pakistan.

Key Words: Deaf, co-curricular activities, learning, elementary level.

Introduction

There are two types of sports event held in the world one is Para Olympics for handicaps and deaf while Special Olympics for mental retarded people. It is thought internationally that deaf may also take part in the Olympics and other event as normal people do so that they may also work at the similar situation. Deafness or Hearing impairment refers to conditions in which individuals are fully or partially unable to detect or perceive at least some frequencies of sound which can typically be heard by members of their species. People in Pakistan do not have knowledge about the abilities of deaf persons as they are considered to be special and less than normal people. In this way society seem to give them fewer benefits and these results in low standard of life to them. For Deaf individuals with no or minimal health conditions, there is great potential for effective participation in physical activity programs. According to the National Institutes of Health (1993), approximately 1 of every 1000 children is born with profound hearing loss. (Chris Hopper, Humboldt State University). Special people due to better learning can earn similar position as occupied by the normal people. They can show mettle in all walks of life, be it educational field or it is the field of sports. They are proving themselves as good as normal people are. In year 2010, special players in cricket brought world cup to Pakistan. This is only one example while they are agile to contribute more and more in all walks of life. These types of activities can help talented deaf persons in front of many people and it raises awareness among the people. Pakistan Association of the Deaf is a national Association of Pakistani deaf community and a member of World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) and Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD).

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PAD is responsible to represent Pakistani deaf community nationally and internationally and for welfare of the deaf people. Sport, activities and other recreational programs are necessary for the growth of a healthy mind and body. They can prove to be an asset for our country. PAD has arranged these type of programs in past and the outcome was great. Members of PAD have participated in sports such as cricket and bowling and have won prizes. In 2005, Indian Deaf cricket team visited Pakistan. PAD arranged a friendly match with them. The aim of this match was to raise peace, love and friendship between India and Pakistan. PAD's team won the match. To achieve the physical activity health objective of the nation, there is a need to enhance physical activity levels of Deaf individuals, beyond school-based physical education and competitive sport programs. Promoting a variety of lifestyle physical activity opportunities, including embracing the concept of "Active Living," a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines, should become a health objective priority. Outside of textbooks on adapted physical education e.g., (Sherrill, 1998), the valuable experience that participation in sports provides for deaf children is rarely talked about as an essential component of these children's individualized education programs (IEPs). The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are about 59 million people (0.9 % of the total population) in the world with a hearing loss classified as severe or greater (hearing loss of 61dB or more). [WHO 2005]. At the local and regional levels, there are few restrictions on participation other than that the athlete must have some degree of hearing loss. At most national levels and during all international Deaf sport competitions, athletes must have a hearing loss of at least 55 dB in the better ear, and hearing aids cannot be worn. The 55 dB threshold falls within the speech range. That is, normal speech has a loudness level of 50–65 dB at about 6 feet. The selection of 55 dB precludes the participation of individuals who are able to function comfortably using speech without the assistance of hearing aids.

Objectives

Major objectives of this research are:

1. To analyze the existing sporting opportunities for special people
2. To map out current provision for special children in government sector school.
3. To identify gaps in sporting provision for disabled people.
4. To increase deaf children participation in sports
5. To discourage the sedentary life style among deaf children

Procedure of Research

Due to limited time and resources study was limited to the centers of deaf in Bahawalpur (Punjab) Pakistan. Population of the study was the deaf students, teachers and administrative staff found in these centers. The methodology employed a mixture of desk research, meetings and networking and four separate, but related semi-structured questionnaires that were distributed to special children, teachers and administrative staff, in order to both assess the current levels of provision and the perceptions of special people regarding the current provision. In addition the survey from deaf schools in Bahawalpur district of five of the centers that responded by disabled individuals with a variety of impairments.

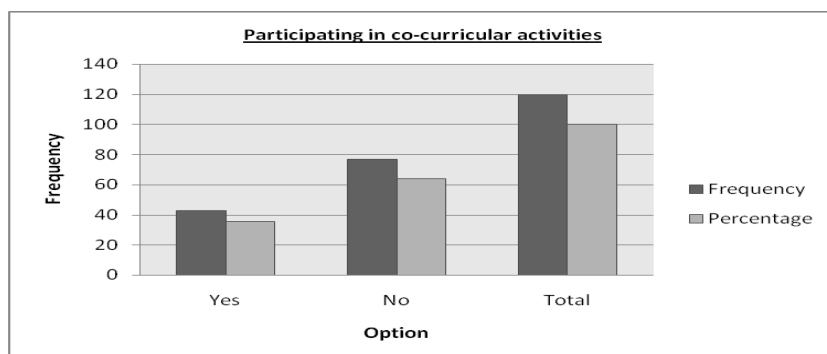
Literature Review

Sports plays most important role in the lives of special people. This impact is two way. First it keeps them healthy as researches like Moores and Elis has considered that most deaf children receive their education in public schools (Moores, 2001), so it is reasonable to assume that these children too are at risk of becoming overweight and less physically fit. This assumption has been borne out in a study of deaf students in public school programs, which found that the percentage of deaf boys and deaf girls aged 6–11 years who were classified as overweight or obese was higher than the percentages among the general population in the same age and gender groups (Ellis, 2001a). the second role that is played by the sports is that it keeps learners mentally fit. Another benefit is psychological, as Deaf people have an opportunity not only to be athletes but to be sports directors, event staff, and spectators. This type of participation strengthens their self-identity, enhances their self-esteem, and increases the confidence in maintaining a lifestyle that allows them to be contributing members of their community. Given the importance of sports in the lives of Deaf adults, it seems incongruous that school programs for deaf children and the literature in deaf education mostly neglect the benefits of participation in physical activity by deaf children (Stewart & Kluwin, 2001). In the present article, we argue that schools and education professionals should view involvement in sports and physical activities as an important part of a deaf child's overall education program. Deaf people who use sign language face the same dilemma. Interpreting services, real-time captioning, and communication via the Internet may better equip them to learn in an inclusive classroom or to find a job and communicate with their coworkers, but when it comes to social gatherings and face-to-face conversations, they are usually dependent on the presence of a small number of people who also know how to sign.

Despite all the advances that technology and the medical field can offer, communication barriers make social interactions with people who are hearing and do not sign a strained affair for most severely and profoundly deaf people (Jankowski, 1997). Involvement in sports activities has a prominent place in the Deaf community, with participants experiencing benefits not only in the physical sense but in other personal dimensions (Stewart, 1991). For many Deaf adults, participation in Deaf sport events is a major means of socialization. Deaf sport provides a place for meaningful interactions with others who communicate using sign language, an opportunity that is hard to come by in communities where the vast majority of people are hearing and communicate by means of a spoken language. At the local and regional levels, there are few restrictions on participation other than that the athlete must have some degree of hearing loss. At most national levels and during all international Deaf sport competitions, athletes must have a hearing loss of at least 55 dB in the better ear, and hearing aids cannot be worn. The 55 dB threshold falls within the speech range. That is, normal speech has a loudness level of 50–65 dB at about 6 feet. The selection of 55 dB precludes the participation of individuals who are able to function comfortably using speech without the assistance of hearing aids. The present article conducted a study of the physical fitness of a large group of deaf students ages 5 to 10 years in which deaf children demonstrated physical fitness levels below the 40th percentile on all tests except for flexibility (Ellis, 2001a). (a) health-related physical fitness (e.g. cardiovascular endurance, abdominal muscular endurance, upper body muscular endurance, muscular strength, and flexibility) and (b) skill-related physical fitness (e.g., static balance, dynamic balance, speed, power, and agility). A number of results fell at or below the 20th percentile, mainly cardiorespiratory endurance ($M = 19$ th percentile) and percent body fat ($M = 20$ th percentile). Well below the 40th percentile were scores on the sit-up ($M = 33$ rd percentile) and pull-up ($M = 23$ rd percentile) tests. The overall results of the study showed that deaf children performed below the median on standard national norms for health-related physical fitness measures, with the exception of flexibility ($M = 58$ th percentile). The Fitnessgram is a comprehensive test, and the finding that the majority of deaf participants in the study performed more poorly than 60% of the general population of the same age and gender cannot be ignored.

Findings and Discussion

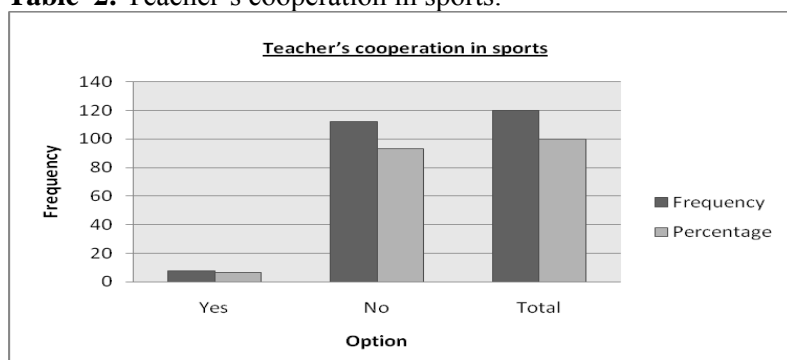
Table #1



Option	Frequency	%
Yes	43	35.83%
No	77	64.16%
Total	120	100

The learners learning in the deaf centers were asked questions with the help of teachers who responded accordingly. Purpose of asking this question was to check how much participation do the deaf learners take in co curricular activities. The data given in table no one clearly identifies that majority of the learners 64 percent learning in the district of Bahawalpur (Punjab) Pakistan do not take part in co-curricular activities as they are not provided with the opportunity to take part in different sports nor there is any mega event done in these schools. The data shows that a minority of the learners that is 36 percent take part in the activities. It is quite clear from the data that the learners are not given proper training or motivation for the participation as majority of the deaf Special learners does not take part in the games and sports.

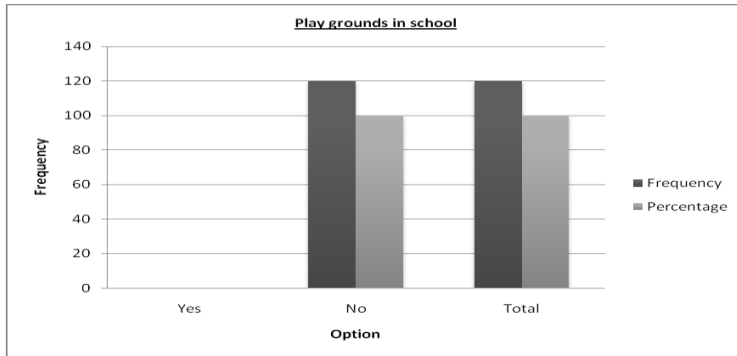
Table 2: Teacher’s cooperation in sports.



Option	Frequency	%
Yes	08	6.66%
No	112	93.33%
Total	120	100

Teachers play an important role in the formation and development of student’s character and mental abilities. In the case of special school centers the teachers seem to play fewer roles in the proper and healthier upbringing of the learners. The data identifies that the majority of the learners 7 percent are not given any cooperation in the sports activities while majority of them that is 93 percent is of the opinion that they are given a ball from the teacher and they are asked to play on their own in the ground. The data in the table no 2 identifies that the teachers teaching in special schools are not playing their roles properly in the better physical growth of the learners.

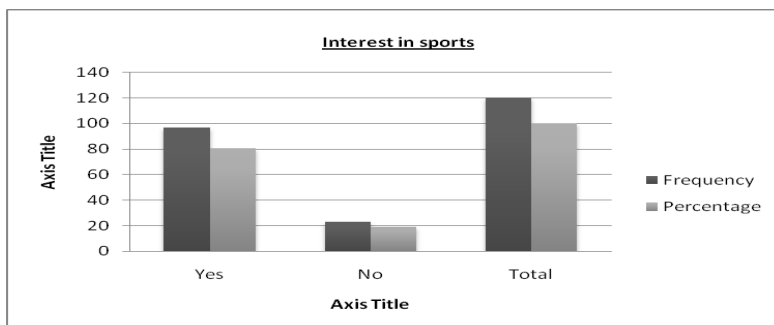
Table # 3 Play grounds in school.



Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	00	0%
No	120	100%
Total	120	100

It is a famous saying that a nation who has population in grounds less visit hospitals. One of the major causes of sudden deaths and immediate death has been counted as not going to the grounds for proper exercise. People having problems like blood pressure and heart is just because they do not go to the grounds. The deaf learners were asked the question if the school has proper ground or not. The data identifies that hundred percent of the learners said that there are not play ground existing in their school nor it is close to them. It was seen that the learners learning in the schools do not have proper building nor they have any play grounds. The centers are existing in rent buildings and they do not have proper set up for the building.

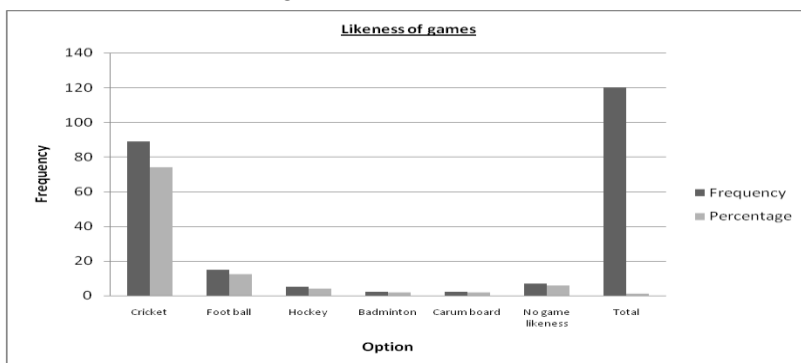
Table 2: Interest in sports.



Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	97	80.83
No	23	19.16
Total	120	100

Special children (Deaf) have also similar interest in the games and other sports as common people have. They are also good in learning as others are. Purpose of asking this question was to judge whether the learners in special schools have some interest in the games or not. The data identifies that the majority of the special learners 81 percent said that they have interest in games while 19 percent of the learners said that they have no interest in the games. The deaf learners showed their interest in games as others have shown so it is evident that the learners are quite interested in learning games.

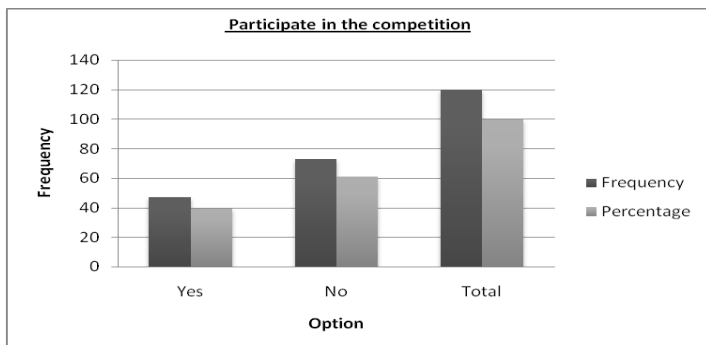
Table # 8: Likeness of games.



Option	Frequency	Percentage
Cricket	89	74.16
Foot ball	15	12.50
Hockey	05	4.16
Badminton	02	1.66
Carum board	02	1.66
No game likeness	07	5.83
Total	120	100

The special learners were asked to show their interest in the type of games which they like. Games that were given in option were cricket, football, hockey, carum board. The data identifies that 74.16% respondents like to play cricket, 12.50% respondents like to play football, 4.16% respondents like to play hockey, 1.66% respondents like to play badminton, 1.66% respondents like to play carom board and 5.83% do not like to play games. This shows that the special learners have some type of likingness towards games and they do like to play them too. Majority of them liked cricket and they love to play it with their friends.

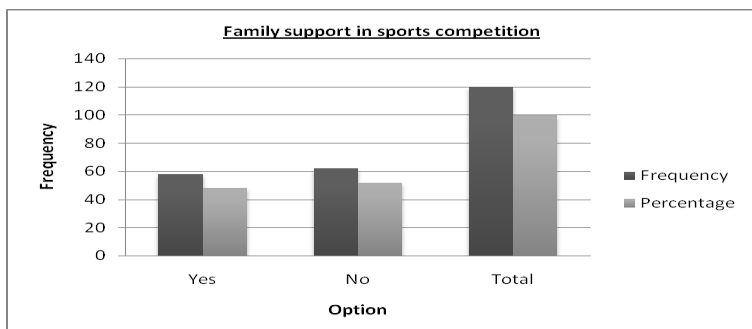
Table 9: Participate in the competition.



Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	58	48.33
No	62	51.66
Total	120	100

As the learners have shown their tilt towards games so it was asked how much opportune they are to take part in the games. The data clearly show that only 39% of the special respondents participate in competition and majority of them 60.83% do not have the chance to take part in the game competitions as they are not given any chance to play with the common boys and girls. This seems to imply that these learners are not given chance to play with those who are good in health. This may possibly be avoided as the special learners may also be given chance to prosper their abilities among their fellow students.

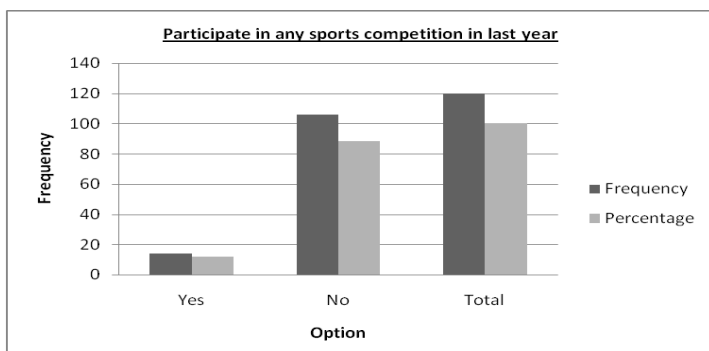
Table 10: Family support in sports competition.



Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	47	39.16
No	73	60.83
Total	120	100

According to above table and graph only 39.16% respondents have family support in sports competition & 60.83% are not supported by family. Majority of the learners are not given any family support to take part in the games. This shows social discrimination that is given to the special people as they are thought to be less competent in their physical impairment so they are given less care and kindness from the society. Even the parents do not take care of them. These attitudes towards special children need to be changed.

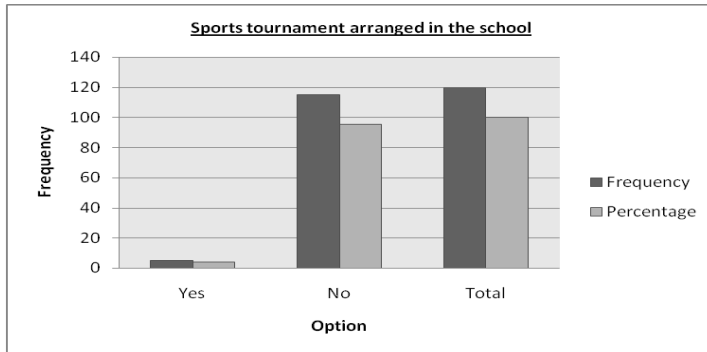
Table 11: Participate in any sports competition in last year.



Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	14	11.66
No	106	88.33
Total	120	100

The special learners are not given any chance to take part in the competitions as they are considered having less abilities and impaired abilities so they are not given any chance in appearing the games. According to above table and graph only 11.66% respondents participate in any sports competition in last year & 88.33% were not participated in any sports competition. This data clearly identifies that the learners are not given chance to appear and take active part in the games.

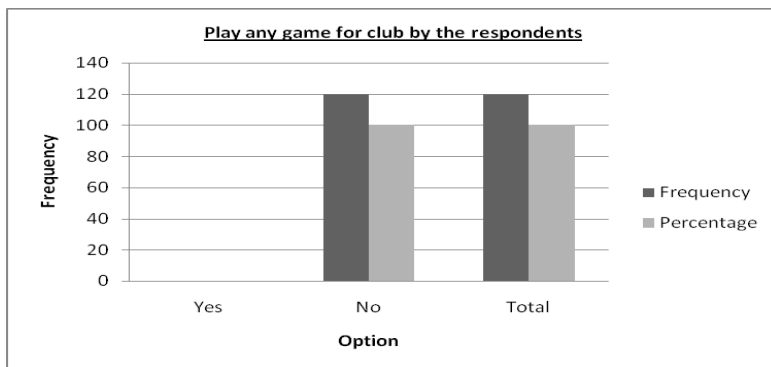
Table 12: Sports tournament arranged in the school.



Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	05	4.16
No	115	95.83
Total	120	100

According to above table and graph only 4.16% respondents shows that sports competition arranged in the school & 95.83% shows that sports competition are not arranged in the school. This shows that the special children schools do not arrange tournaments nor events for the special children. It shows that they are not given proper physical education that is more necessary for them than the healthy children as the games may improve their physical ailments and that can help them in motivation and spending proper life.

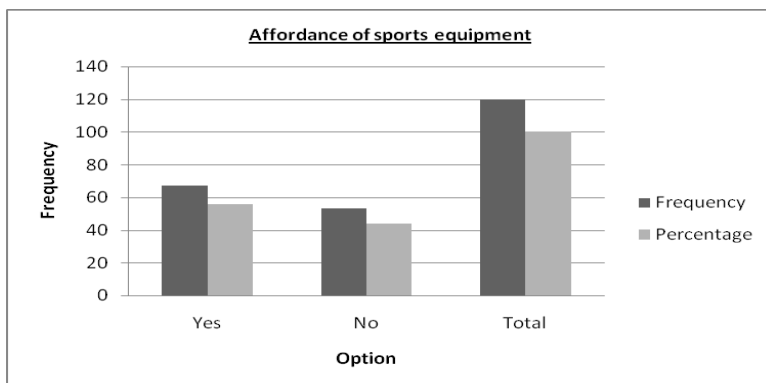
Table 16: Play any game for club by the respondents.



Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	00	00
No	120	100
Total	120	100

For proper mental and physical development of the learners there is a need to develop special children clubs. As the data retrieved from the learners clearly indicates that there is no trend of establishing game clubs in the Bahawalpur. Data identifies that 100 percent of the learners said that there are not any clubs for them where they may be able to play games. This tendency need to be revises as there is need to establish clubs for the games.

Table 17: Affordance of sports equipment.

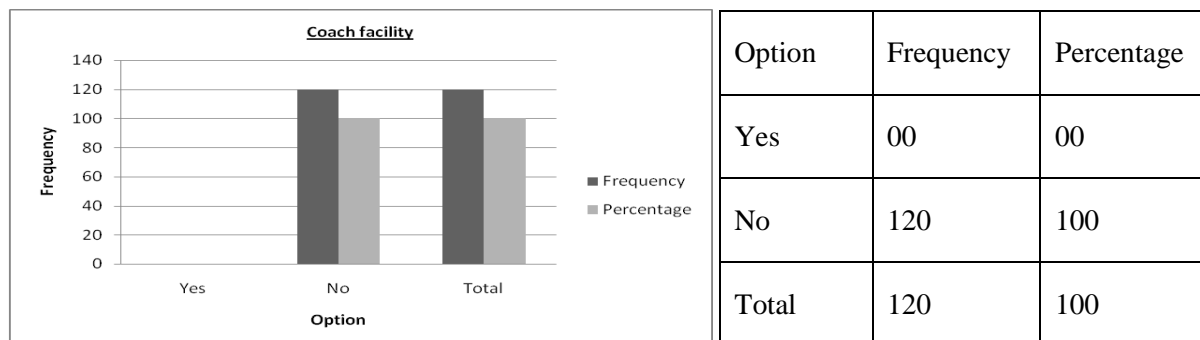


Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	67	55.83
No	53	44.16
Total	120	100

As sports are the needs of the learners in any field and they can play better sports and games if they have play grounds and playing equipment. The question was asked to judge whether the special learners have equipment for games or not.

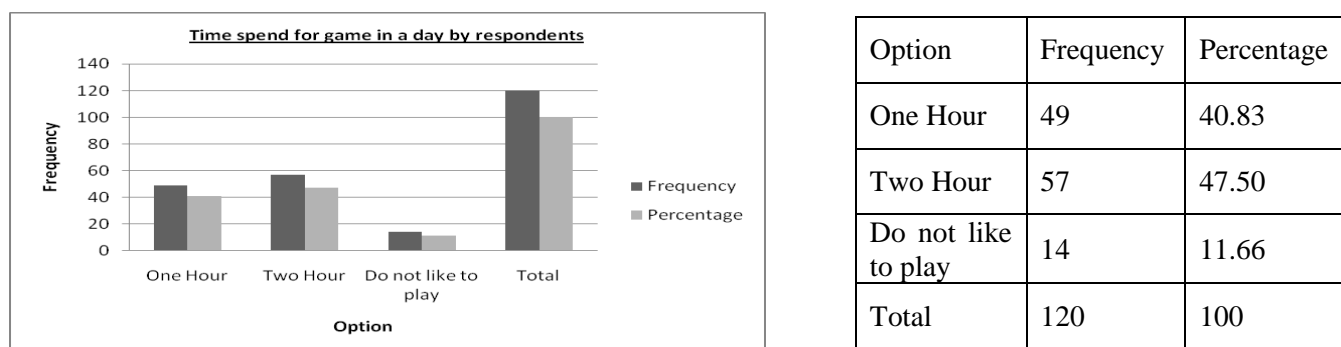
Majority of the special learners 56% identified that they do not have proper equipment for games while 44% of them said that they have playing equipment. It is clear through the data the learners may be given equipment to play so that they may be able to achieve proficiency in the game.

Table 19: Coach facility.



This question was asked to check the facilities that are provided to special learners. As it is obvious from the data that the learners are not provided with facilities of playing games neither they have the facility to adopt coach. So they are not able to have the ability to get good training for the future prospects. The data attained from the learners clearly identifies that the learners are not able to play games under the supervision of better coach. 100 percent of the learners said that they are not having coach in their institutes. So it is quite obvious that the special learners in Bahawalpur are not able to have the facility of coach.

Table 20: Time spend for game in a day by respondents.



The learners were asked to tell how much time they spent in a day to play. Majority of the learners 48 percent of them said that they spent only two hours in playing while 41 percent of them said that they have only one hour to play. 12 percent of them said that they do not like to play games so one thing is obvious from the data that the society and parents do not give so much time to the special learners as they are considered special so they are kept bound in the home and they are taken outside by the parents.

Findings

The main findings of the research highlight:

1. A great desire amongst both disabled adults and children to take part in more sport and physical activity.
2. With lack of awareness of current provision being cited by both groups as the number one barrier for lack of participation.
3. Overall there is a paucity of current provision in many areas, which can also vary greatly dependent upon impairment group. The quality and organizational level of much of the current provision and the resources available can also vary greatly with several groups totally dependent upon the dedication and hard work of one or two individuals to keep them running.
4. Disabled people do not take a more active part in sport and physical activity due to their impairments and not because possibly no attempt is made by these clubs to include them and make them feel welcome.

Recommendations

1. Govt. should provide ground facility for the Deaf and Defective Hearing children in their institutes.
2. Govt. and schools should take interest and manage the deaf children to educate and give physical training for the better health.
3. Govt. should facilitate the Deaf and Defective Hearing school with sports equipment by allocating sports fund.
4. Regularly school's game should be conduct in the school.

Conclusion

Some people might think that school programs for deaf students pay little attention to the important implications Deaf sport activities have for deaf students because deaf students do not have any physical disability that prevents them from participating in sports. Teachers may just assume that the general physical education program is sufficient, and no changes to increase participation opportunities for deaf children are necessary. But long-term engagement in sports may require more than just accommodations (e.g., interpreting services and transportation arrangements) that will help interested students get involved in extracurricular sport programs. There is also the concern that the regular physical education program might not be sufficient to ensure that deaf students are physically fit and have the fundamental motor skills required participating in and enjoying various sports activities. Overall, this research highlights the fact that disabled people generally take part in far less sport and physical activity than their able-bodied counterparts for a whole host of reasons and that there is a great deal of work to be done within Greater Warwickshire in a variety of areas in order to redress this imbalance.

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