

Using an Inclusive Approach to Understanding Belonging Through Sport Occupations for Young Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Dr. Rebecca Renwick WFOT – Presentation Subtitles

00:00.000 --> 00:03.912

I'm presenting on using an inclusive approach to understanding belonging

00:03.912 --> 00:07.104

through sport occupations for young adults with intellectual

00:07.104 --> 00:09.029

and developmental disabilities.

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I'm presenting on behalf of the Sport and Belonging research team

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, and I want to acknowledge our study participants and our project funder.

00:17.604 --> 00:20.604

Inclusion has often led to presence, but not engagement

00:20.604 --> 00:25.080

in community life for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

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There is recent, increasing attention though,

00:29.296 --> 00:31.921

to belonging as a useful concept

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and it's conceptualization as ways to better understand engagement and community life.

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Literature links belonging to participation in organized sport,

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including through Special Olympics for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

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Yet, little is known about pathways to belonging,

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That is, how it happens through participation in organized sport occupations,

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and from the perspectives of young adult athletes with IDD themselves.

00:58.848 --> 01:05.557

Having this information, especially from athletes, could help inform occupational practice and research.

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Accordingly, we examined the experiences and

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pathways to belonging through participation in organized sport occupations

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from the perspectives of young adult athletes with IDD who are currently active with Special Olympics.

01:21.019 --> 01:24.649

We used an inclusive approach, which meant that

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we included three young adult special olympics athletes with IDD as active research team members.

01:30.274 --> 01:37.770

They participated in all processes and decision-making, and co-developed all materials for the project.

01:40.185 --> 01:43.185

We used a narrative inquiry design and did

01:43.185 --> 01:50.480

two Zoom, semi-structured interviews with twenty young adults Special Olympics athletes with IDD.

01:50.480 --> 01:55.160

Those interviews focussed on four times in their Special Olympics journey:

01:55.160 --> 01:59.735

Before, joining Special Olympics, now, and in the future.

02:03.410 --> 02:12.787

During interview one, we interviewed using our semi-structured interview guide about the four points in time.

02:12.787 --> 02:16.417

And you'll see the illustration and graphic on the right,

02:16.417 --> 02:19.417

And we also provided information on some ways

02:19.417 --> 02:24.348

that people often talk about belonging shown in the graphic below.

02:24.348 --> 02:29.921

We also did a member-checking interview with nine of our original participants,

02:29.921 --> 02:35.222

and that interview included viewing a member-checking video based on our preliminary results.

02:35.232 --> 02:38.892

The focus of the interview and watching the video was,

02:38.892 --> 02:44.027

did the results as shown in the video capture the experiences of our participants.

02:46.337 --> 02:54.150

When we analyzed the data, we co-constructed narrative summaries for interview number one for each participant.

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Then, we did a thematic analysis of these narrative summaries and throughout the analysis,

02:58.969 --> 03:01.969

there was review, discussion, and feedback about

03:01.969 --> 03:04.969

emerging themes with the research team, including the three athletes on the team.

03:04.969 --> 03:10.865

We used several strategies for trustworthiness and I'd like to highlight our member-checking strategy here.

03:12.650 --> 03:17.750

For member-checking, the video that was involved used computer-generated

03:17.750 --> 03:23.051

graphics of three Special Olympics athletes talking about their journeys to belonging

03:23.051 --> 03:27.491

in Special Olympics, and it included quotes from the first interviews.

03:27.491 --> 03:34.179

There were key contributions to the video by the three athletes on the team who developed, assessed,

03:34.179 --> 03:37.887

and provided feedback on representation of characters,

03:37.887 --> 03:43.969

accessibility, and comprehensibility on content, and the audience engagement potential of the video.

03:43.969 --> 03:52.260

Our findings are summarized here, and these are the key findings that we also presented in the video,

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before Special Olympics, many of the athletes had participated in community sports with family

03:58.111 --> 04:03.473

or at school. Many found it challenging to keep up with non-disabled peers during sport

04:03.473 --> 04:08.316

, and some experienced bullying or exclusion while engaging in sport.

04:08.316 --> 04:13.831

However, there was a range of experiences and feelings associated with sport participation.

04:13.831 --> 04:20.380

Upon joining Special Olympics, many of the athletes felt a little uncertain, sometimes quite nervous,

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but began to feel welcomed and accepted by coaches, and other team members, and other athletes.

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In other words, they started to feel like they were belonging.

04:30.562 --> 04:35.202

Currently in Special Olympics, the athletes experience

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a sense of belonging through development of their sport skills,

04:38.225 --> 04:44.852

the achievements that they have such as progression through the levels of sport.

04:44.852 --> 04:50.518

They also share with other athletes, the wins and losses that they experience,

04:50.518 --> 04:53.518

and they have support from athletes and coaches.

04:53.518 --> 04:56.518

They also experience belonging through special connections,

04:56.518 --> 05:00.636

socializing with other athletes during sport

05:00.636 --> 05:08.529

and also in terms of social events, that they engage in both inside and outside Special Olympics.

05:08.539 --> 05:15.883

All athletes expressed a special belonging to their Special Olympics community or family.

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In terms of their future visions and goals, athletes talked about continuing sport involvement in Special Olympics

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and/or community sports in a variety of roles,

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05:26.845 --> 05:31.224

playing, coaching, mentoring, being a part of Special Olympics committees.

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Most also talked about future plans for either school or getting/ continuing a job and living more independently.

05:42.788 --> 05:47.977

This inclusive research and its results highlight the

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occupational potential and possibilities for sport occupations for fostering belonging.

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The research results can also be built upon in the future to explore sport and belonging

06:01.365 --> 06:07.727

and occupational potential and possibilities in other sport context and other populations.

06:07.727 --> 06:15.343

The athletes on the team experienced enhanced occupational potential and possibilities

06:15.343 --> 06:19.197

through learning of new skills, being recognized for their values skills,

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their lived experience, and their contribution to the research.

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and felt a sense of belonging on the research team.

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For students and researchers on the team, there was the opportunity

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for on-going learning about inclusive research and its value from one another, including athletes.

06:35.155 --> 06:42.761

Thank you. For more information, please contact us through email or visit our website.