



### REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-57985

**Title:** IMPORTANCE OF ADAPTED PHYSICAL AND SPORTING ACTIVITIES IN SOCIAL INCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN CONAKRY (GUINEA).

**Recommendation:**

Accept as it is .....

Accept after minor revision.....

**Accept after major revision .....**

Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

| Rating         | Excel. | Good | Fair | Poor |
|----------------|--------|------|------|------|
| Originality    |        | √    |      |      |
| Techn. Quality |        |      | √    |      |
| Clarity        |        | √    |      |      |
| Significance   |        | √    |      |      |

Reviewer's ID: JPR-212

### Detailed Reviewer's Report

This manuscript addresses a highly relevant and under-researched topic: the role of adapted physical and sports activities (APSA) in the social inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in Conakry, Guinea. The study is situated within a context (West Africa) where disability is often stigmatized through traditional beliefs, and inclusive policies remain nascent. The qualitative design, focusing on the lived experiences of parents and sports leaders, is appropriate. The findings, while not surprising, provide valuable local confirmation that sport can act as a powerful tool for socialization, well-being, and challenging stigmatizing representations. However, the manuscript suffers from several methodological and presentational weaknesses that require major revision before it can be considered for publication.

**Major Compulsory Revisions:**

1. **Insufficient Methodological Detail and Justification:**

- **Sampling:** The "accidental selection technique" for parents is not clearly defined. How were these 12 parents identified? Were they users of specific associations, hospitals, or sports programs? This lack of clarity raises concerns about selection bias. Similarly, the justification for choosing 7 sports leaders as "purposive" is weak. What specific criteria (e.g., years of experience working with disabled populations, type of sport offered) were used?
- **Data Saturation:** With a total of 19 participants, the authors claim to have reached thematic saturation, but no systematic justification is provided. How many interviews were needed before no new themes emerged? Given the diversity of experiences (e.g., parents of children with different severity levels of intellectual disability, leaders from different sports), a sample of 19 may be insufficient to capture the full range of perspectives.
- **Data Analysis Procedure:** The description of "thematic grouping" is overly simplistic. The authors state they identified "units of meaning" but do not specify whether this was done independently by multiple coders, how inter-rater reliability was ensured, or what software (if any) was used. A more rigorous, step-by-step description of the thematic analysis process (e.g., Braun & Clarke's six phases) is required.

2. **Weak Integration of Data and Interpretation:**

- **Lack of Negative Cases:** The results present a uniformly positive picture of sport's benefits. However, the literature cited by the authors themselves (e.g., Marcellini, 2005) notes that sport can also lead to overcompensation or dropout if not properly managed. Are there any participants whose children or athletes had negative experiences with sport (e.g., increased frustration,

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bullying, exclusion *within* sports settings)? The absence of any mention of negative or mixed outcomes suggests a potential confirmation bias in data collection or interpretation. Addressing this would significantly strengthen the paper.

- **Superficial Use of Direct Quotes:** While quotes are provided, they are often very short and used merely to illustrate a point already stated by the authors. A deeper analysis of the *language* used by parents (e.g., expressions of shame, hope, surprise) and sports leaders (e.g., mentions of needing "specialists," "courage," "patience") could reveal more nuanced psychosocial dynamics. For example, the parent who says "I remain amazed" could be further analyzed to explore the gap between prior low expectations and post-sport reality.

#### 3. Discussion Section Lacks Critical Engagement:

- The discussion largely confirms the findings by citing other studies that show similar results (stigma leads to exclusion, sport promotes inclusion). It does not adequately engage with *contradictory* or *more complex* findings from the literature. For instance, the authors cite Ravaud et al. (2002) on European inclusion strategies but do not compare or contrast the Guinean context with these European findings. What is *distinctive* about the Guinean situation (e.g., the specific role of witchcraft beliefs, the lack of infrastructure, the Simandou 2040 program)? This comparative dimension is missing.
- The discussion also fails to critically examine the structural barriers that the results hint at but do not explore: the shortage of trained coaches, the lack of accessible facilities, the absence of government funding. The paper would be stronger if it explicitly linked the micro-level findings (parental attitudes) to meso-level (organizational capacity of sports clubs) and macro-level factors (national policy implementation gaps).

#### 4. Minor but Pervasive Writing and Structural Issues:

- **Inconsistent Citation Format:** The reference list mixes authors' first names and last names inconsistently (e.g., "Boué, M." vs. "Tremblay, S."). Journal titles are sometimes abbreviated, sometimes not. Page ranges are missing for several book chapters. A thorough revision to a consistent style (e.g., APA 7th) is required.
- **Awkward Phrasing:** Several sentences are grammatically awkward or unclear. For example: "the environment is further polluted by the various prejudices" (p. 4) – "polluted" is metaphorical but unclear. "Sport is a safe space for socialization for vulnerable individuals" (p. 6) – "safe space" needs qualification: safe from what? Physical harm, ridicule, exclusion? The intended meaning is understood, but precision is lacking.
- **Redundancy:** The abstract, introduction, results, and conclusion all repeat very similar statements (e.g., sport transforms perceptions, fosters socialization, improves well-being). This could be tightened considerably.

#### Minor Revisions (Suggested):

5. **Clarify the Distinction Between "Adapted" and "Inclusive" Sport:** The paper uses these terms almost interchangeably, but they have different meanings. "Adapted sport" often means sport modified for people with disabilities and practiced separately (e.g., Special Olympics). "Inclusive sport" typically means people with and without disabilities practicing together. Which model is being observed and discussed in Conakry? The parent who sent their child to "athletics adapted to his disability" suggests the former. The paper would benefit from explicitly defining and distinguishing these terms.
6. **Add a Limitations Section:** The paper currently has no explicit limitations section. The authors should acknowledge at least: (a) the small, non-representative sample; (b) reliance on parents and leaders rather than direct interviews with people with intellectual disabilities themselves (whose voices are notably absent); (c) the cross-sectional design, which cannot prove causality (i.e., that sport *causes* inclusion, rather than that more socially integrated individuals are also more likely to participate in sport); (d) potential social desirability bias (parents and leaders may overstate positive outcomes to please researchers).
7. **Strengthen the Connection to Policy:** The mention of the "Simandou 2040 Program" is intriguing but underdeveloped. How exactly does adapted sport align with this national strategy? What specific policy recommendations follow from this research (e.g., mandatory coach training in inclusion, subsidies for accessible transport to sports facilities, public awareness campaigns targeting the witchcraft belief)? The conclusion should offer concrete, actionable recommendations for Guinean policymakers and sports federations.

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8. **Provide More Context on Conakry:** The research setting is described only minimally. Conakry is a densely populated, rapidly urbanizing city with significant infrastructural challenges (e.g., few parks, limited public transport, traffic congestion). These contextual factors are highly relevant to understanding why people with intellectual disabilities might be confined to their homes and why access to sports facilities is difficult. A short paragraph on the urban geography and social infrastructure of Conakry would greatly enhance the reader's understanding.

### **Conclusion:**

This manuscript tackles an important and underexplored topic with significant policy implications for Guinea and similar West African contexts. The qualitative data provide compelling anecdotal evidence that adapted sport can be transformative for individuals with intellectual disabilities and for their families' perceptions. However, the paper is currently limited by insufficient methodological transparency, a lack of critical engagement with contradictory evidence, and an overly descriptive analysis that does not fully exploit the richness of the interview data. A major revision addressing the sampling justification, analytic rigor, integration of negative cases, and policy-specific recommendations would substantially improve the manuscript's contribution. I recommend "Accept after major revision"