Assessment of Physical Fitness Status of Athletes with Intellectual Disabilities Participating in Special Olympics Programs in Nairobi County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT Information on the fitness status of people with disabilities in Kenya is scanty, particularly for those who participate in Special Olympics sports. The study aimed to assess the physical fitness level of athletes with Intellectual Disability participating in the Special Olympics program in Nairobi region and compare their fitness levels across different centers and gender, using the commonly used race-specific percentiles. A total of 208 children from four Special Olympics program centers with the overall mean age of 16.8 years were assessed. Assessment protocol includes the anthropometry, body composition and physical fitness variables. There was a significant differences in physical fitness characteristics among the participants. This information should be used by program developers to design and improve program that enhance the capacity of athletes with intellectual disabilities in terms of exercise prescription, nutritional considerations, and motivating the athletes to stay in the course. This will improve their motor skills and general quality of life.