

CHAPTER THREE - RESULTS

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Of the 186 questionnaires that were sent to secondary schools, the response rate was 40%. Nineteen of these questionnaires were incomplete and were not used in the data analysis. In the end a final sample of 56 was used for data analysis to complete this study. This is representative of just over 30% of secondary schools within the Dublin region.

School Size and Gender

Figure 2 demonstrates that 28 schools (50%) were schools that taught between 501-800 pupils, with 21 schools (37.5%) teaching less than 500 pupils and 12.5% teaching more than 800 pupils. The response from all girls schools was equal with mixed sex schools, representing 20 schools (37.5%) from each with all boys schools being the lower of the three (see figure 2.).

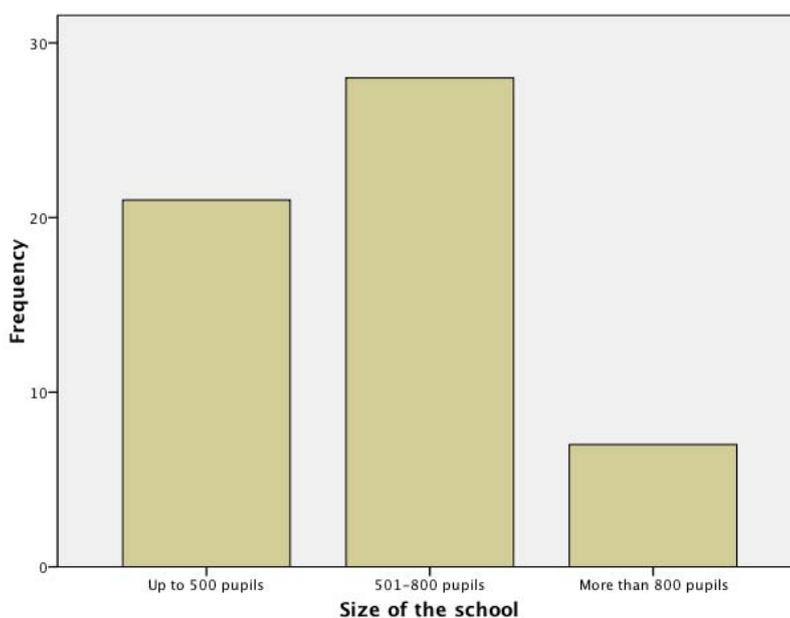


Figure 2 Size of the School

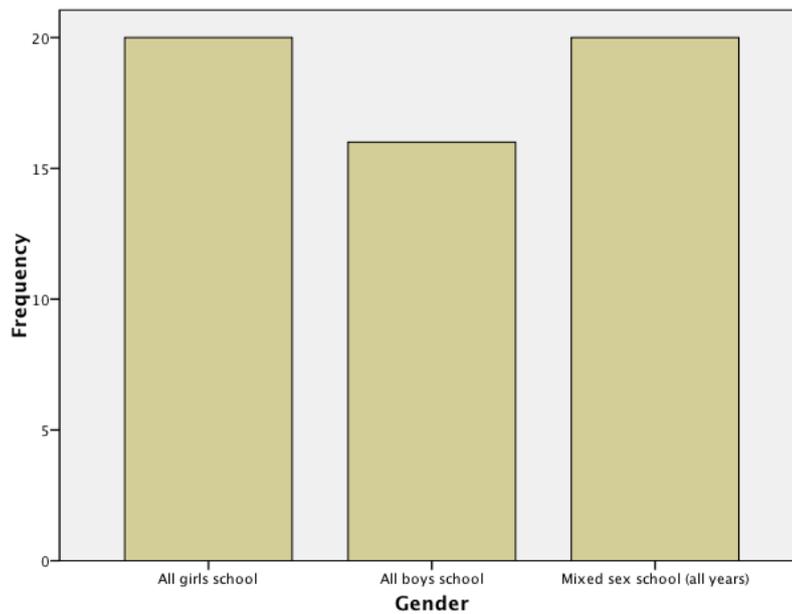


Figure 3 Gender

Staffing

75% of schools reported having between one and three PE staff members available to teach physical activity with 11% stating that they had more than three PE teachers and only three schools reporting that they had no specific PE teacher (figure 3). When asked if they felt the school had adequate staff numbers to provide physical education and activity within the school 59% of respondents claimed they did with 39% claiming they felt they did not have adequate staff. Data also confirms that the majority of PE teachers within the schools have additional responsibilities mainly teaching other subjects and /or administrative roles. 82% of the schools reported this to be the case (figure 4).

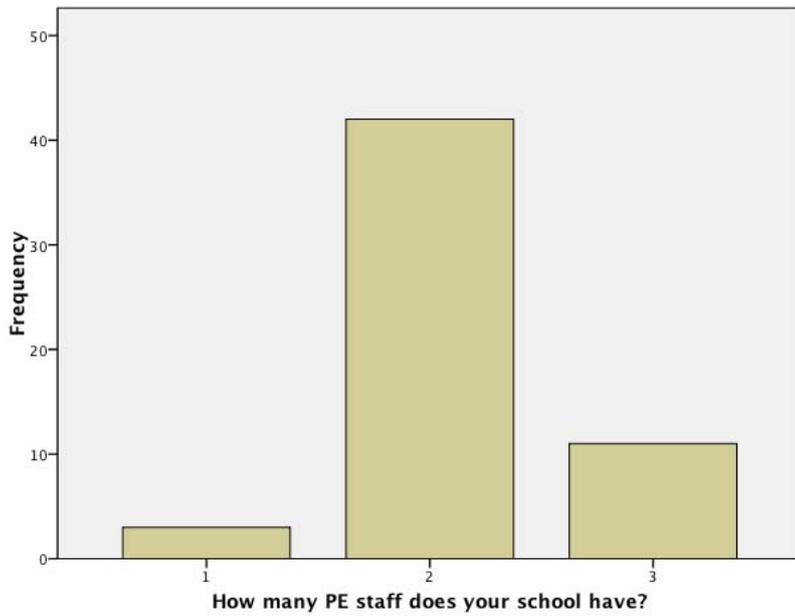


Figure 4 How many PE staff does your school have?

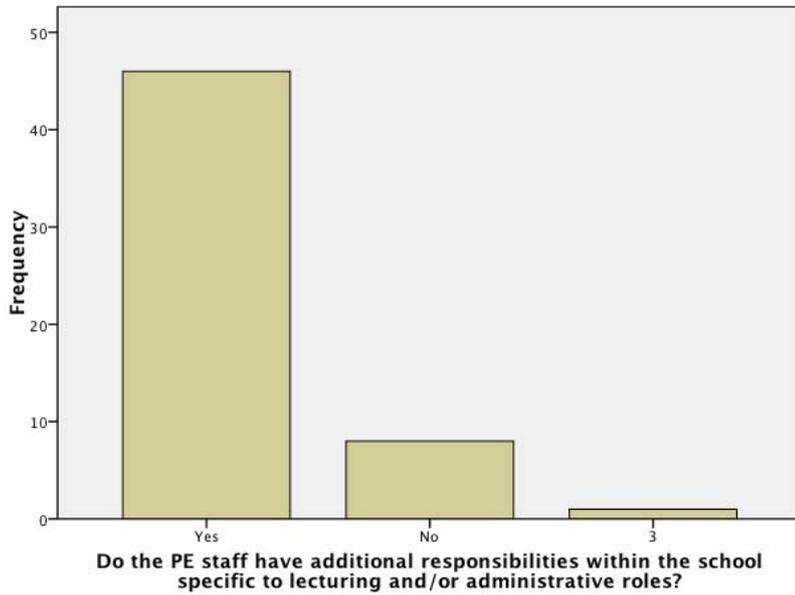


Figure 5 Do PE staff have additional responsibilities within the school specific to lecturing and / or administrative roles?

The PE Curriculum

It was found that the average time students spent on physical education is between 60 and 80 minutes per week with 78.6% of schools reporting these figures. Less than 6% of schools offer more than 80 minutes of physical activity within a school week whilst less than 60 minutes of PE is reported in at least 14% of schools (figure 5).

Physical activity is not compulsory in all years in almost 43% of schools and it is mainly 5th year (15-16) and 6th (16-17) year students that have the option of whether to participate in Physical activity or not.

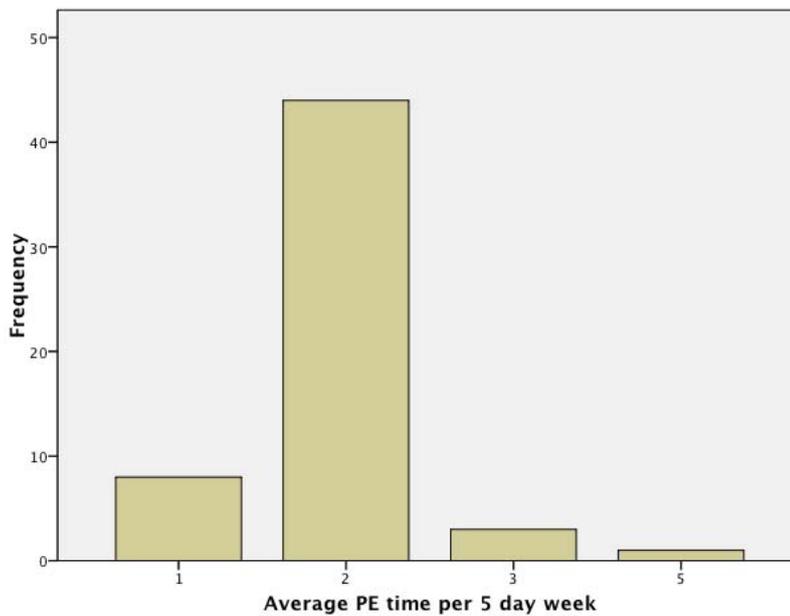


Figure 6 Average PE time per 5 day week.

When asked to comment on how adequate they felt the resources were for teaching physical activity, 46.4% of schools claimed their resources were adequate. However 26.8% of schools claimed they had inadequate resources but 16% of the respondents felt their resources were more than adequate for teaching physical activity.

26.8% of schools reported that they felt the current organisation of teaching physical activity in their schools was relatively unstructured with almost 43% of schools believing they have a partially structured method for teaching physical activity but need more guidance and support to fully implement physical education.

Overall 51.8% of schools stated that the amount of time spent on PE and/or physical activity is inadequate (figure 6).

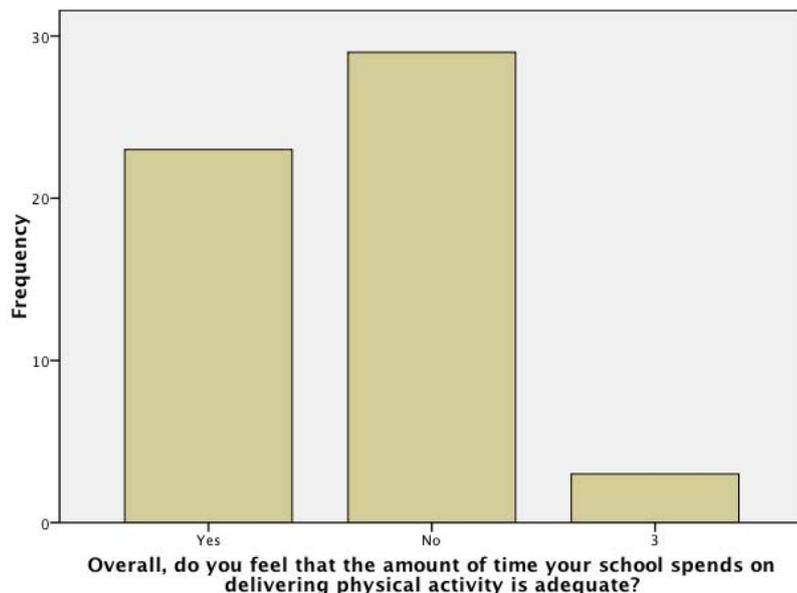


Figure 7 *Do you feel that the amount of time your school spends on delivering physical activity is adequate/*

Extra Curricular Activities

Findings show that 89.3% of schools offer extra-curricular activities to pupils on a regular basis. Only 10.7% schools stated that they do not offer any extra curricular activities to their pupils (Figure 8).

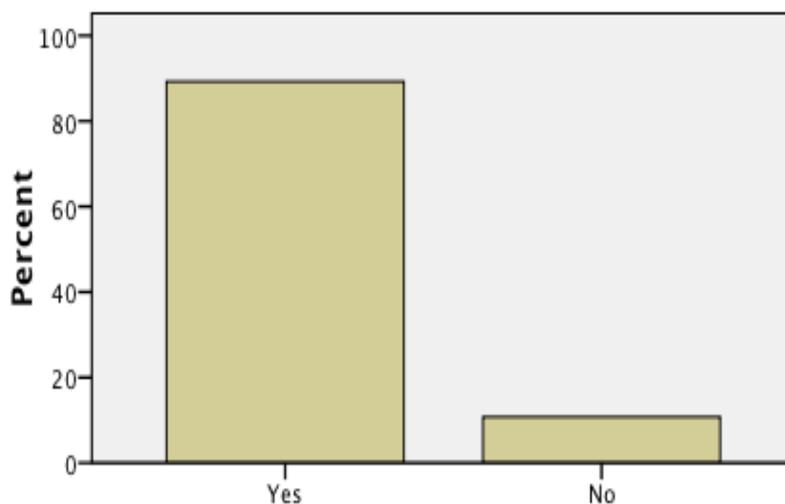


Figure 8 *Are extra-curricular PE activities offered to pupils on a regular basis at your school?*

Of these findings, 51.8% schools are reported to spend between one and three hours of extra curricular activities per week with just under 20% of schools offering more than three hours of extra curricular activities per week. The majority of extra curricular activity takes place after school (91.1%), during lunchtime (67.9%) and at the weekends (48.2%).

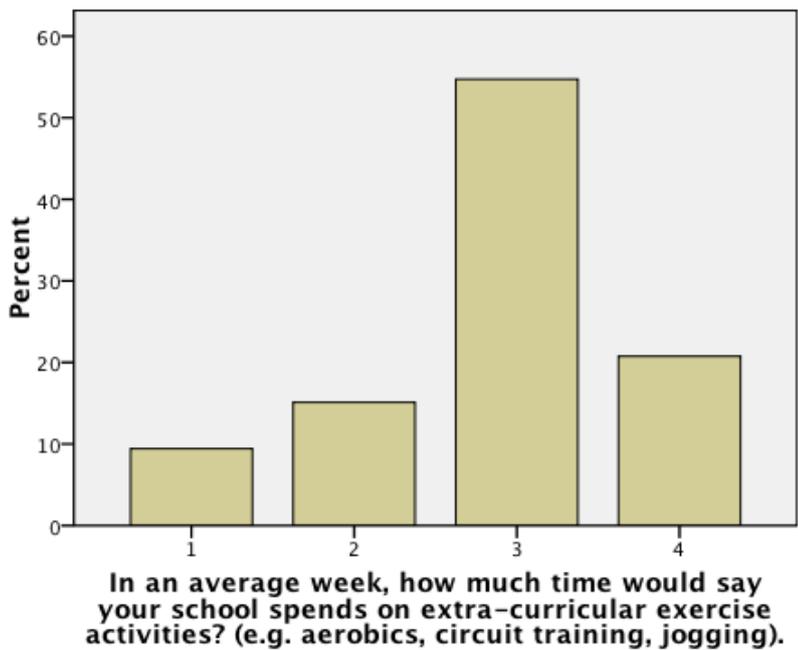


Figure 9 Amount of time spent on extra curricular activities per week.

Findings show that more than 50% of pupils from 17 of the 56 schools surveyed participate in extra curricular activities on a regular basis.

Nineteen schools reported a participation level of between 5 and 30% of pupils in extra curricular activity whilst another 19 schools estimated that between 30 and 50% of pupils regularly took part in extra curricular activities (Figure 9).

Cumulative data indicated that the extra-curricular activities that were most frequently offered by schools were basketball - 92.9%, athletics - 89.3%, soccer - 85% and GAA football - 75%, (Figures 11, 12, 13 and 14).

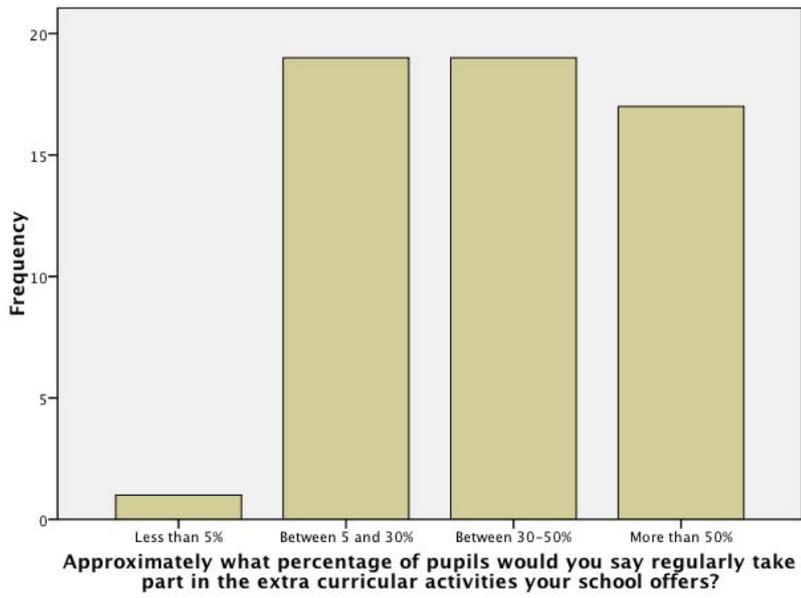


Figure 10 Percentage of pupils who regularly participate in extra curricular activities

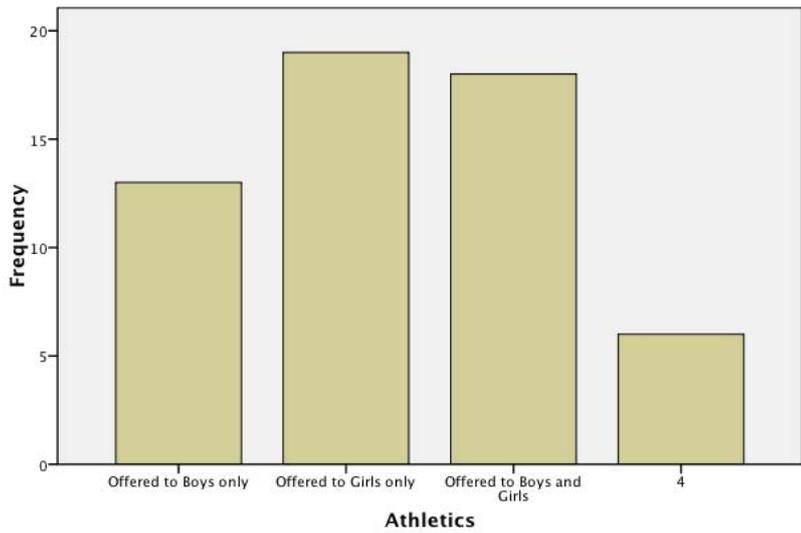


Figure 11 The number of students who participate in athletics.

Note: 4 = not offered

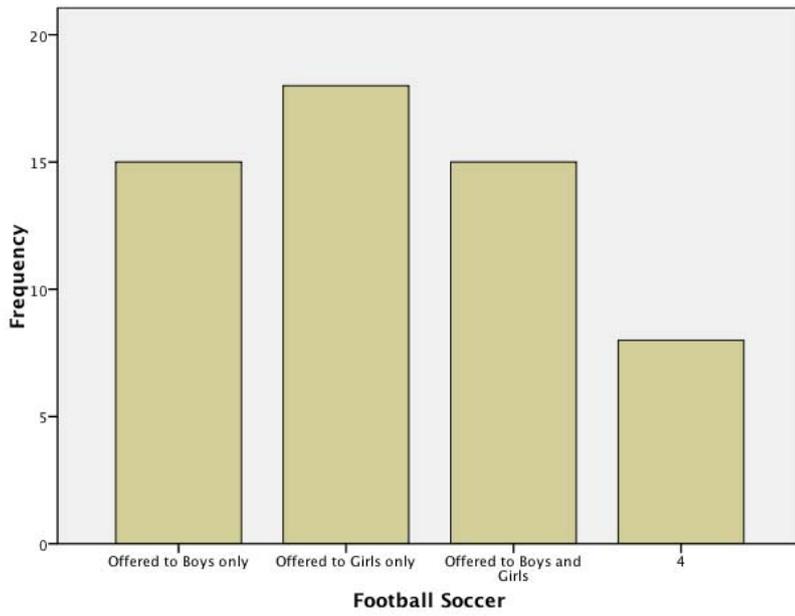


Figure 12 The number of students who participate in Soccer.

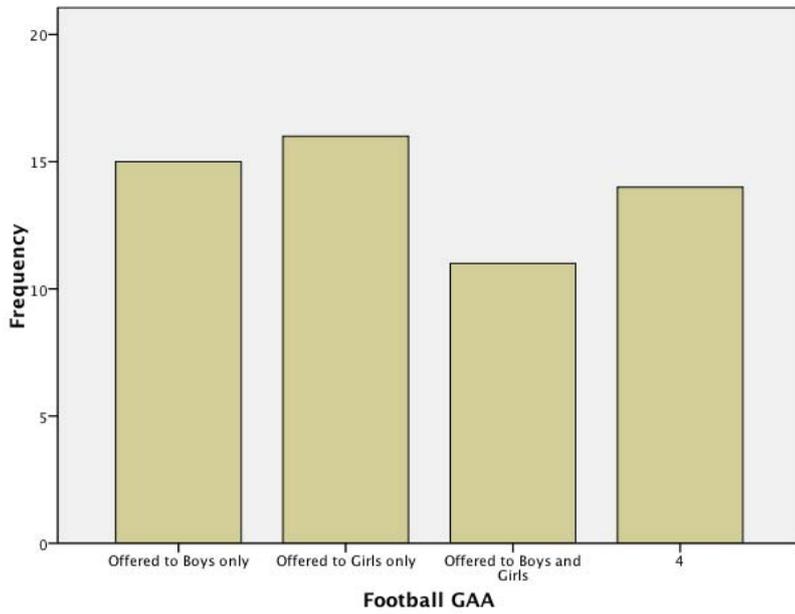


Figure 13 The number of students who participate in GAA Football.

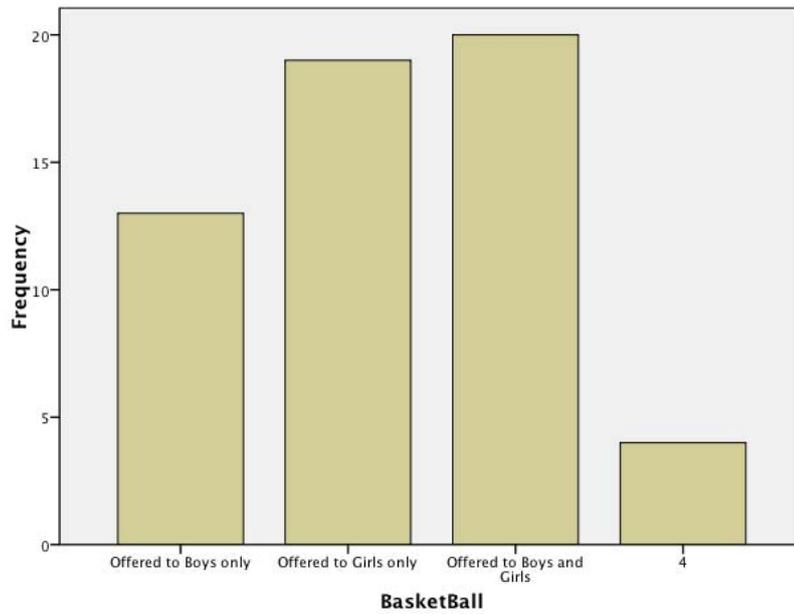


Figure 14 *The number of students who participate in Basketball.*

PE Facilities and Resources

Schools were asked to report and comment on facilities and resources available to them to assist them in offering physical activity to their pupils.

Indoor Facilities

Overall, 36% of schools felt that their indoor facilities were adequate to provide physical activity to pupils. However, 32% felt that their indoor facilities were inadequate to provide physical activity to pupils.

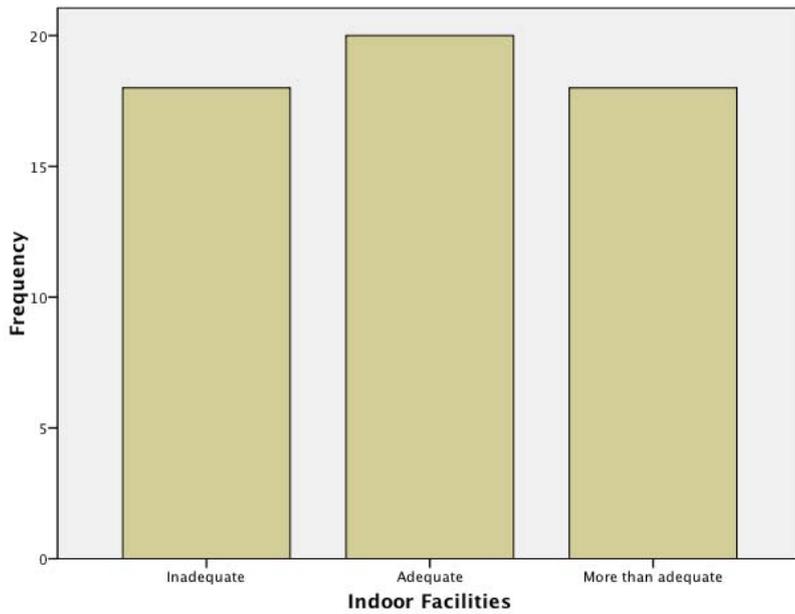


Figure 15 Adequacy of indoor facilities

It was reported that 34% of schools felt that their changing rooms are inadequate for pupils with 46% describing their changing rooms as adequate and 20% with the view of more than adequate. Likewise, the shower facilities are described as adequate by 45% and inadequate by 42% of respondents.

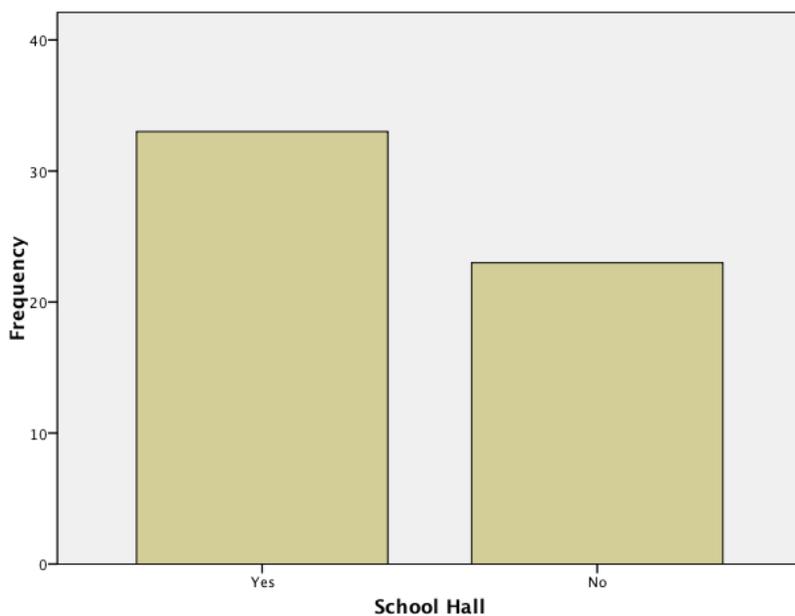


Figure 16 The amount of schools that have a school hall

Data collected from this survey highlighted that 60% of schools confirmed that they have a school hall but 40% of schools do not (figure 16). In addition 42% of schools stated they do not have a sports hall (figure 17) whilst 77% of schools have no gymnasium (figure 18).

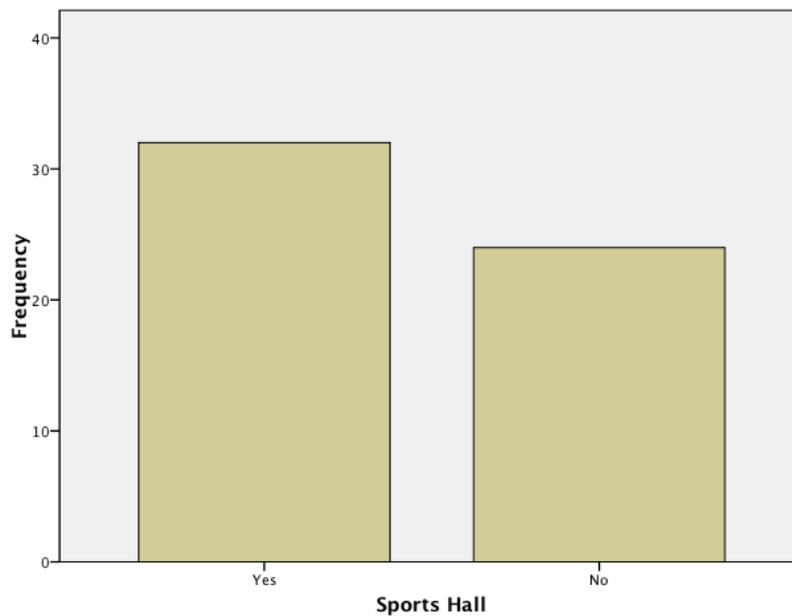


Figure 17 The number of schools that have a sports hall facility

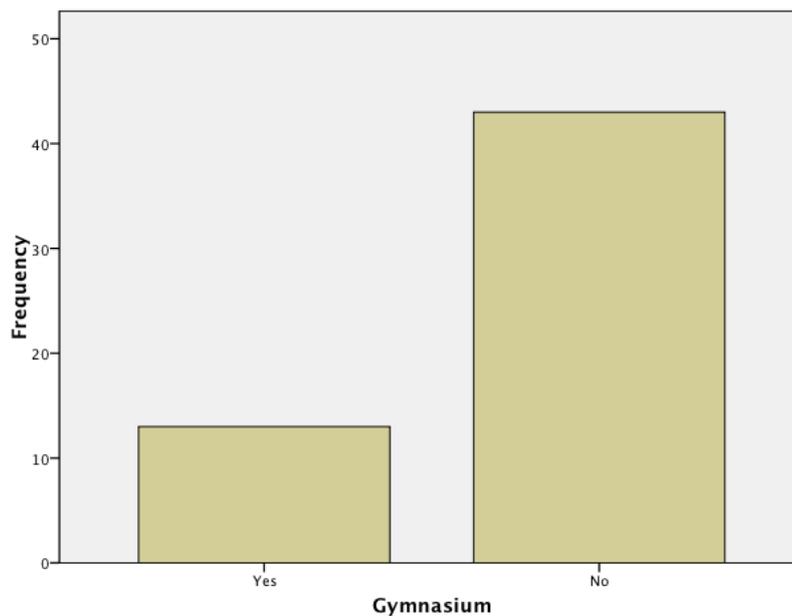


Figure 18 The number of schools that have a gymnasium facility

Outdoor facilities:

Eighteen percent of schools stated that their outdoor facilities were inadequate for their needs but 37% of schools expressed that their outdoor facilities were more than adequate with the remaining 45% reporting adequate only.

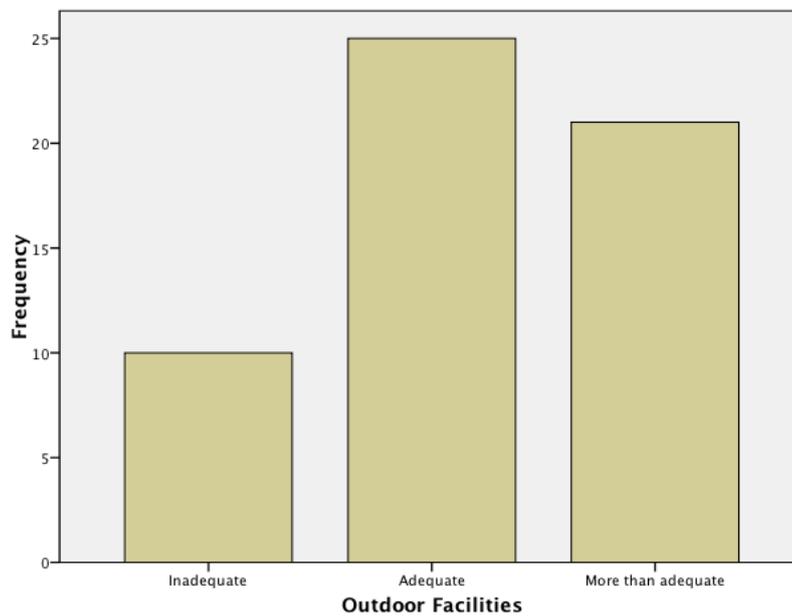


Figure 19 Adequacy of Outdoor facilities

Twenty schools (36%) reported as having no playing fields (figure 20) whilst 31 schools (55%) do not have a hard play area such as sports turf (figure 21) with 23 schools (41%) not having a tarmac hard play area (figure 22).

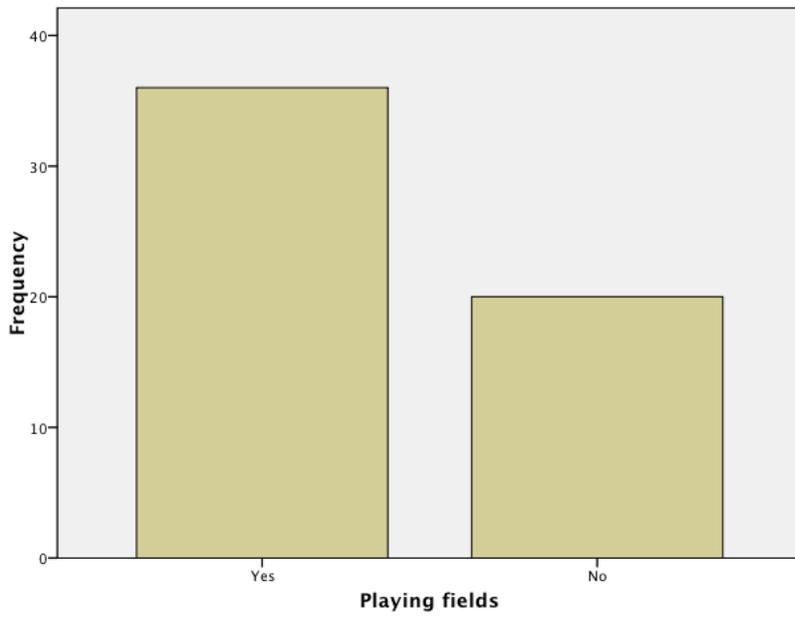


Figure 20 The number of schools that have playing fields

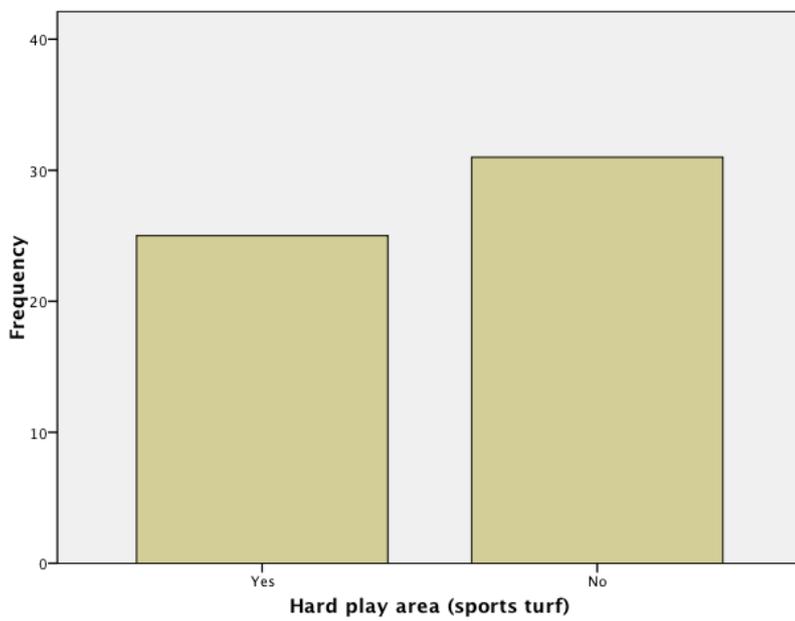


Figure 21 The number of schools that have a hard play area (sports turf)

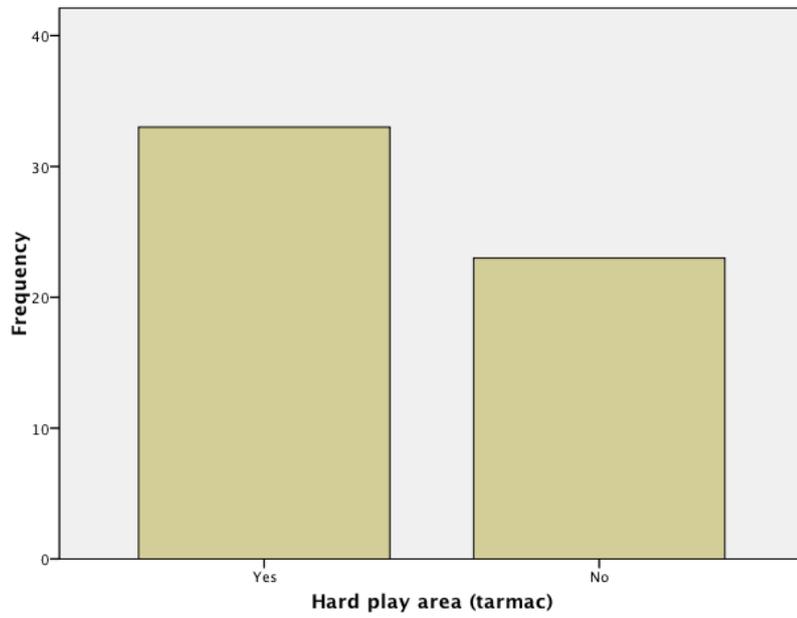


Figure 22 The number of schools that have a hard play area (tarmac)

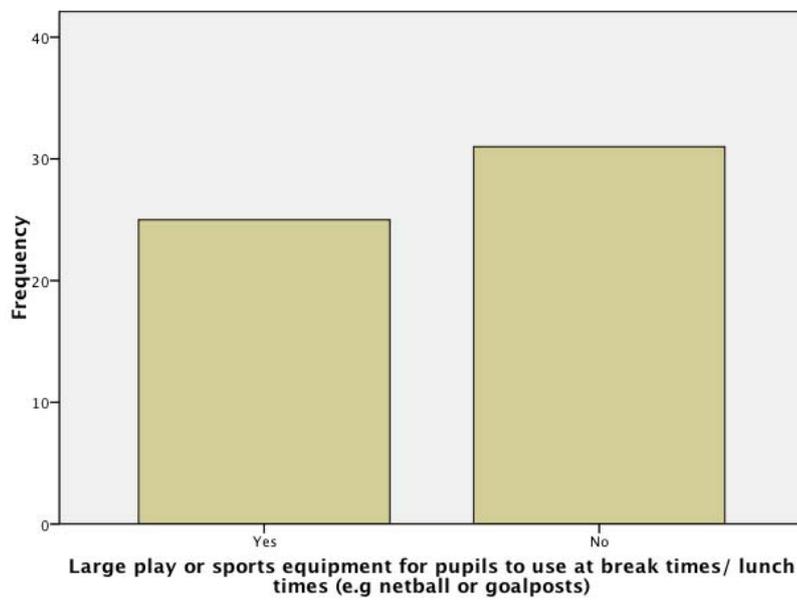


Figure 23 The number of schools that have play facilities / equipment to use at break times.

Information was gathered on whether schools had areas for students to access during break times to play and participate in any physical activities. Only 25 schools (45%) reported having such play / sports areas and only 27 schools (48%) stated that they had lunchtime / break time supervisors who encouraged physical activity or active play.

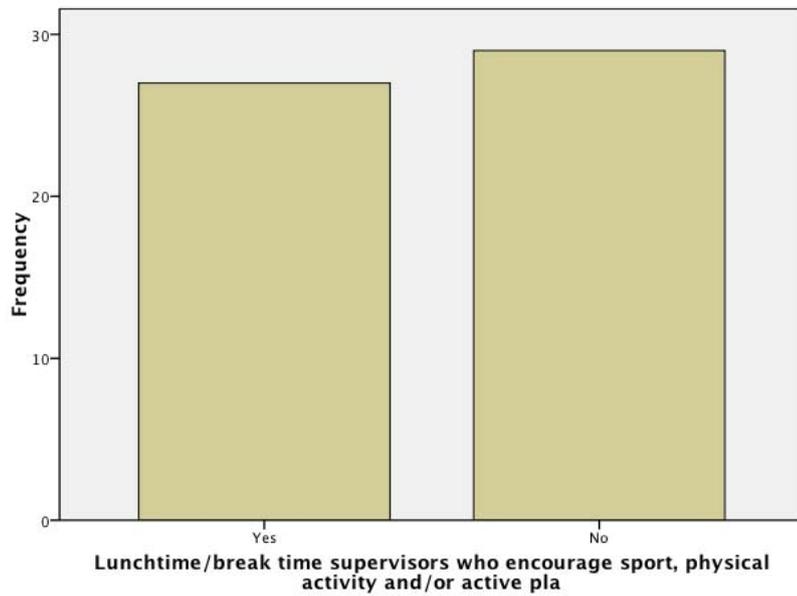


Figure 24 **The number of schools that have supervisors to encourage physical activity during break times.**

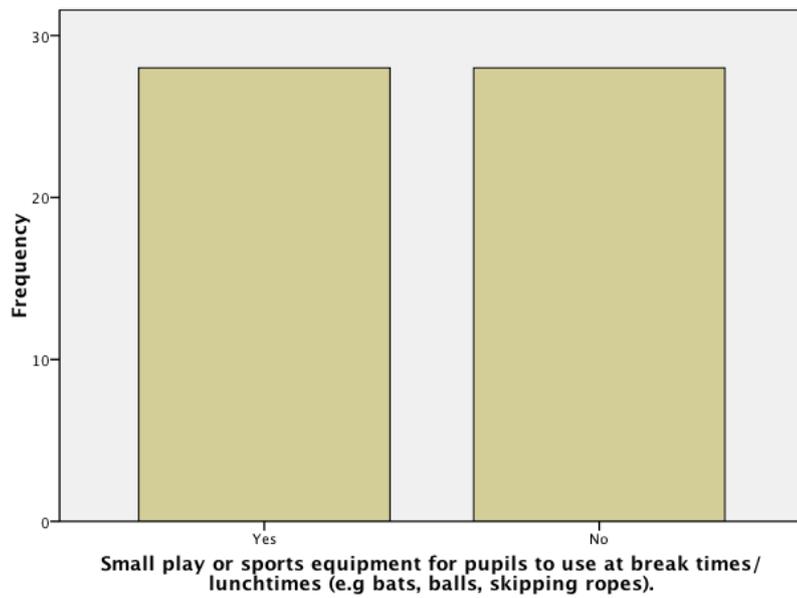


Figure 25 **The number of schools that have small play area / equipment.**

Schools were asked whether they have cycle sheds or facilities to store bicycles should students wish to take the option of cycling to school. 37.5% of schools stated that they had no cycle sheds or cycle storage facilities to accommodate students (figure 26).

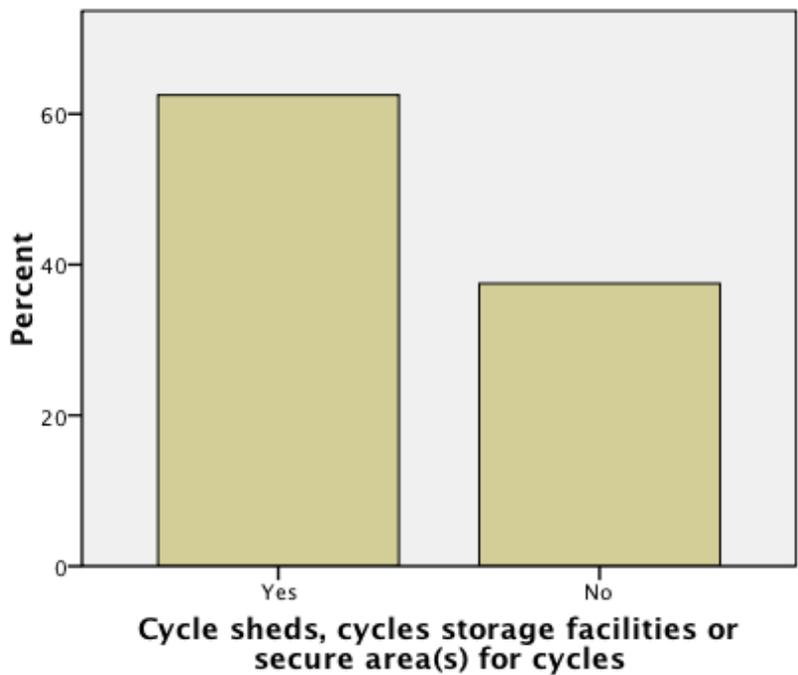


Figure 26 Facilities for storing bicycles.

Staff Training, Support and Expertise

It was found that 66% of PE staff within the department attended continuing professional development training (CPD) throughout the previous or current academic year whilst at the same time 34% of teachers admitted to no CPD training. Although 79% of schools did agree that there is a need for further staff training and CPD training in the areas of physical activity and physical education.

59% of respondents have suggested that their department head and/or school board of management generally give considerable support towards physical education and physical activity with over 58% of schools stating that the provision of money is usually made available for staff wishing to participate in further professional training.

School Policies for PE and Physical Activity

When asked if working towards health is currently an important cultural practice within their school, 75% of schools answered yes.

Only 38% of schools currently have a written policy for the promotion of physical activity within their curriculum whilst 61% claim they currently do not have a written policy in place.

Partnerships and Community Links

Schools were asked to describe the degree of liaison between the PE teacher (or the Principal if they completed the survey) and the individual responsible for health education in the school. A quarter of the respondents reported that they are the person responsible for the teaching of PE and Health education whilst 18% of schools reported that there is no one individual responsible for Health Education within the school.

It would also seem from the findings that approximately 23% schools stated that they have a reasonable to very close liaison amongst individuals responsible for PE and health education. However, 9% stated there was no liaison at all.

Findings report that over 79% schools consider external links with local sports clubs to be of value to assist in the facilitation of physical activity to pupils. 45% schools stated that having links with qualified and professional coaches would also be of great value.

73% of secondary schools have access to local facilities such as swimming pools, football pitches etc whereby they can offer physical activities to pupils. 54% of respondents stated that these facilities are within a 15 minute walking distance from the school.

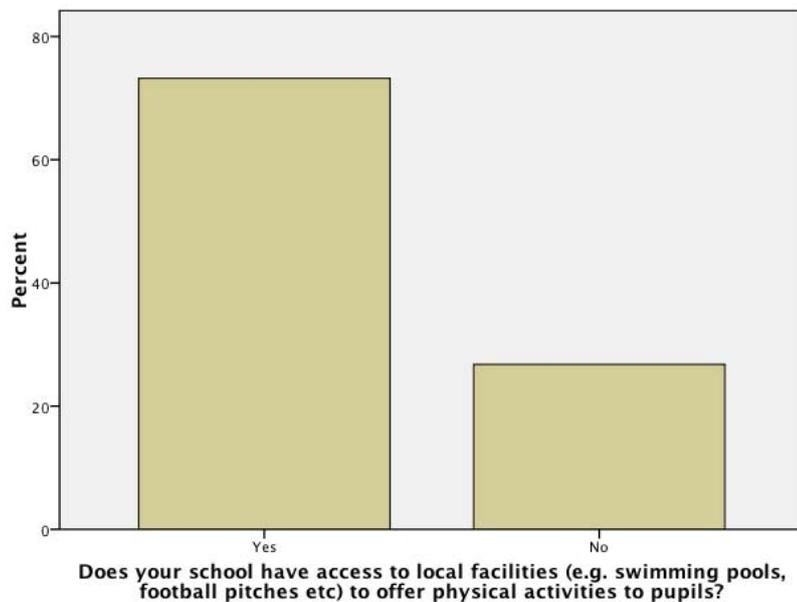


Figure 27 Schools that have access to local facilities

27% of schools applied or at least considered applying for additional funding within the last three years and out of this 14% of schools were successful in receiving funding.