

Taiko in the United Kingdom: Key Findings from the Taiko Census 2016

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Key Findings

UK taiko players:

- Overwhelmingly identify as White and are typically extremely well-educated, with 99% having some Higher Education experience.
- Are motivated to play taiko due to a love of playing and/or performing, belonging to a community or group of people, fitness and exercise, and music-making.
- Express a clear interest in performance resources (how to play taiko), composition and curriculum (what and how to teach) and want more access to resources and support.
- Use individual networks to share information about the taiko community, primarily through instructors, schools or groups.
- Typically purchase taiko accessories (e.g. stands) and drums as part of a group, and not as individuals.
- Play taiko as a leisure activity – 78% do not earn an income from it.
- Teach a wide range of students, including children of all ages, seniors/retirees, and individuals with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Make stands and other taiko accessories and, less commonly, drums.

Introduction

This report examines data collected in May 2016 as part of the Taiko Community Alliance Taiko Census initiative. It considers responses provided by taiko players resident in the United Kingdom and is designed to provide a snap shot of taiko as it is practiced in the UK today. It is hoped that taiko players in the UK and elsewhere will use the findings contained within this report to develop the art form – one that is clearly valued by players who completed the survey.

UK Taiko Players: Basic Profile

85 taiko players resident in the UK completed the 2016 Taiko Community Alliance Taiko Census biography and supplement:

- 52 (61.2%) respondents were female, 32 (37.6%) were male and 1 (1.2%) did not specify their gender. This compares to a general (i.e. global) response rate of 63.6% female, 35.9% male, and 0.6% other.

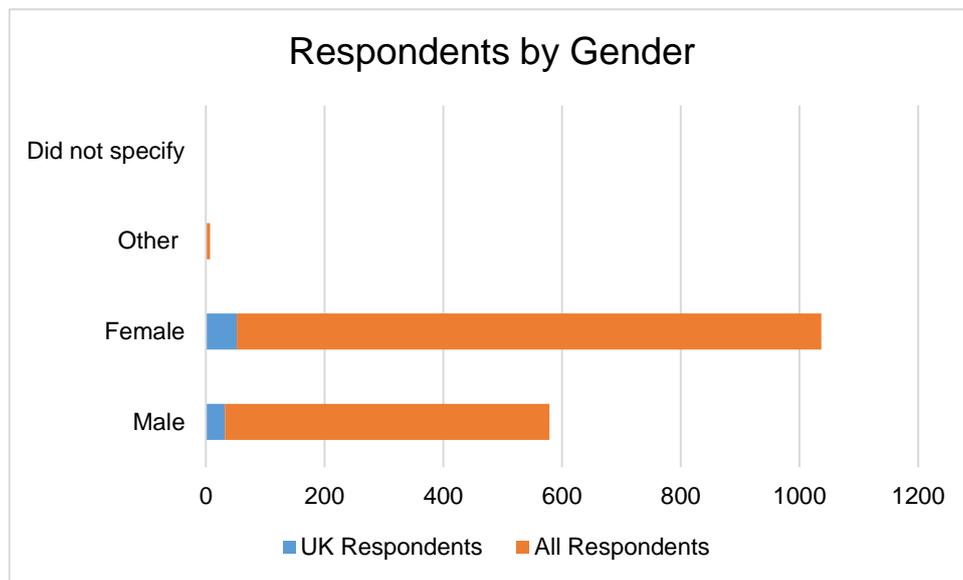


Figure 1: Respondents by Gender

- The vast majority (92%) of respondents identified as White. By way of comparison, 86% of the general population in England and Wales gave their ethnic group as “White” in 2011 (ONS 2016: online).

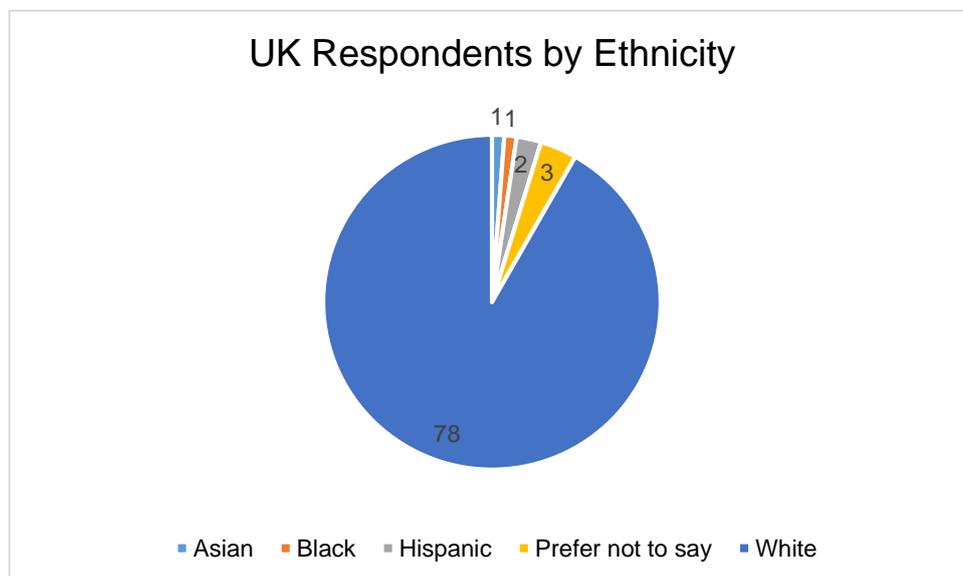


Figure 2: UK Respondents by Ethnicity

- 99% of respondents from the UK have some Higher Education experience, with 32% holding a postgraduate qualification¹. UK taiko players are thus very highly educated, particularly in contrast with the general population where 38% of the population are classed as graduates (ONS 2013: online).
- Respondents are scattered across the United Kingdom with particular concentrations in the South West, North East and North West of England, and the central belt of Scotland.



Figure 3: Map of UK respondents' locations (based on home postcode)

- The average age of all UK respondents was 44. The youngest respondent was born in 1997, and the oldest in 1944.

¹ 32 have completed their undergraduate education, 1 has completed school, 14 have a Master's qualification, 13 have further postgraduate qualifications, and 13 have some Higher Education experience.

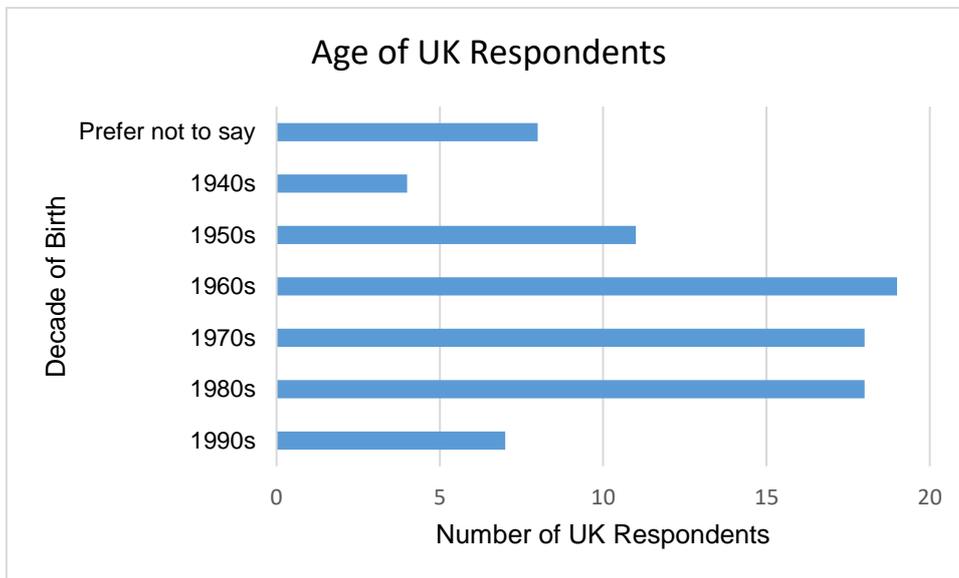


Figure 4: Decade of birth of UK respondents.

UK Taiko Players: their Motivation

When asked why they play taiko, the following themes appeared in respondents' free-text responses: a love of playing and/or performing, belonging to a community or group of people, fitness and exercise, and music-making. These are represented in the word cloud below.



Figure 5: Why respondents from the UK play taiko.

- 51% of respondents had not participated in events or gatherings designed to bring together taiko players. However, UK players have been represented at a wide range of local, national and international events and conferences, as shown in figure 6.

- Respondents were asked to rank their interest in particular areas from 5 (very important) to 1 (not important at all). Their responses are detailed below and show a clear interest in performance resources (how to play taiko), composition and curriculum (what and how to teach). Far less importance was attached to the areas of costuming and business practices.

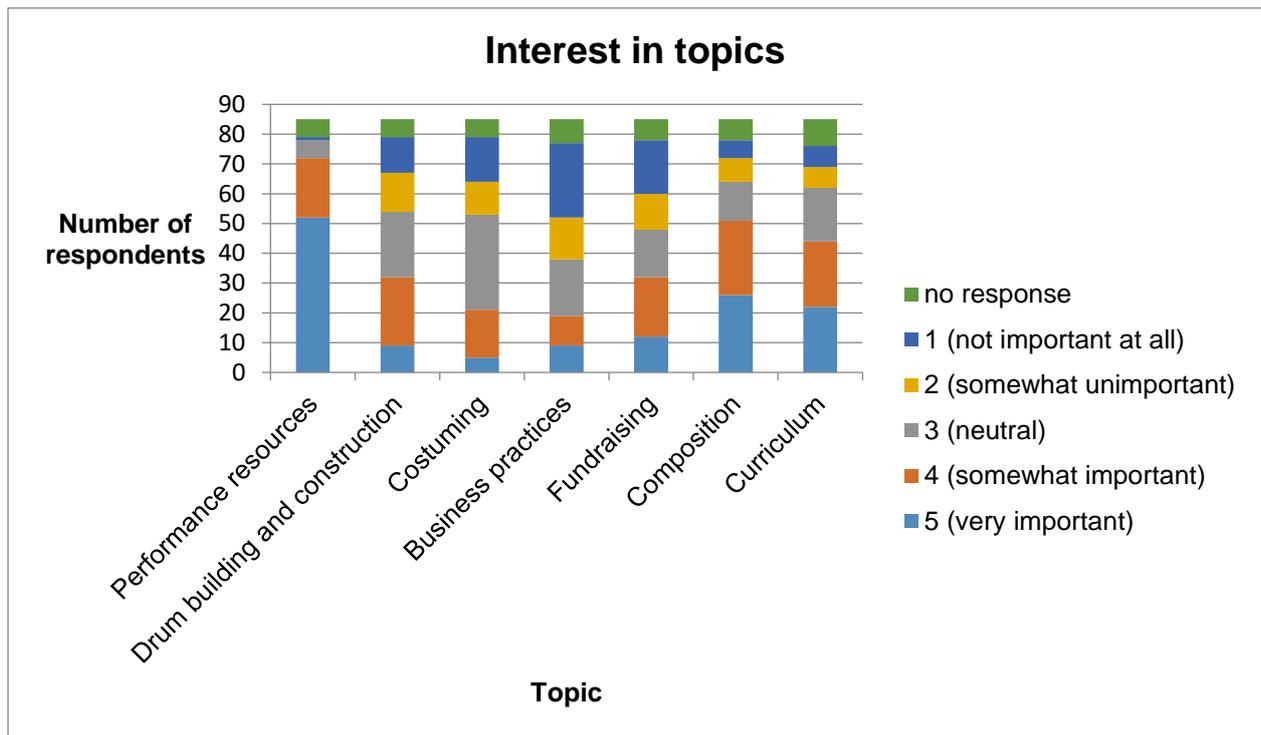


Figure 8: Importance attached to taiko topics by respondents.

UK Taiko Players: Sharing Information

Participants were asked where they get information about the taiko community. The table below lists the sources referred to by informants, and how often they were cited. It clearly shows that individual networks are being used to share information about the taiko community, primarily through instructors, schools or groups. Facebook is also used extensively alongside other online media. It is, however, worth noting that the TCA Census was heavily promoted through social media and it is thus likely that respondents were already using Facebook or other platforms to source information about taiko.

Source of information	Number of respondents
My instructor, taiko school, or taiko group	70
My friends' Facebook posts	51
Taiko Community Facebook Group	50
Word of mouth	41
Facebook events	36
TaikoSource	21
Taiko Community Alliance Facebook Page	8
Twitter	4
Taiko Beat TCA Newsletter	4
Local or community based newspapers or journals (for example Rafu Shimpo, the Bulletin)	1

Figure 9: Sources of information about the taiko community.

Census participants were asked which online tools they use and for what purpose. Responses are detailed in the chart below and reveal some interesting facts. The most commonly used tool is Facebook – it is widely used for both external and internal communications and only seven respondents reported that they

do not use it. YouTube is used by a majority of participants for the purpose of archiving, and it is also quite widely used for critique and learning. FaceTime, GoToMeeting, Instagram, Livestream, and Skype are used by a handful of respondents. Other platforms are used only for specific purposes (and again by limited numbers of respondents): Google Docs for internal communications and archiving; Twitter for external communications; and Vimeo for critique and archive).

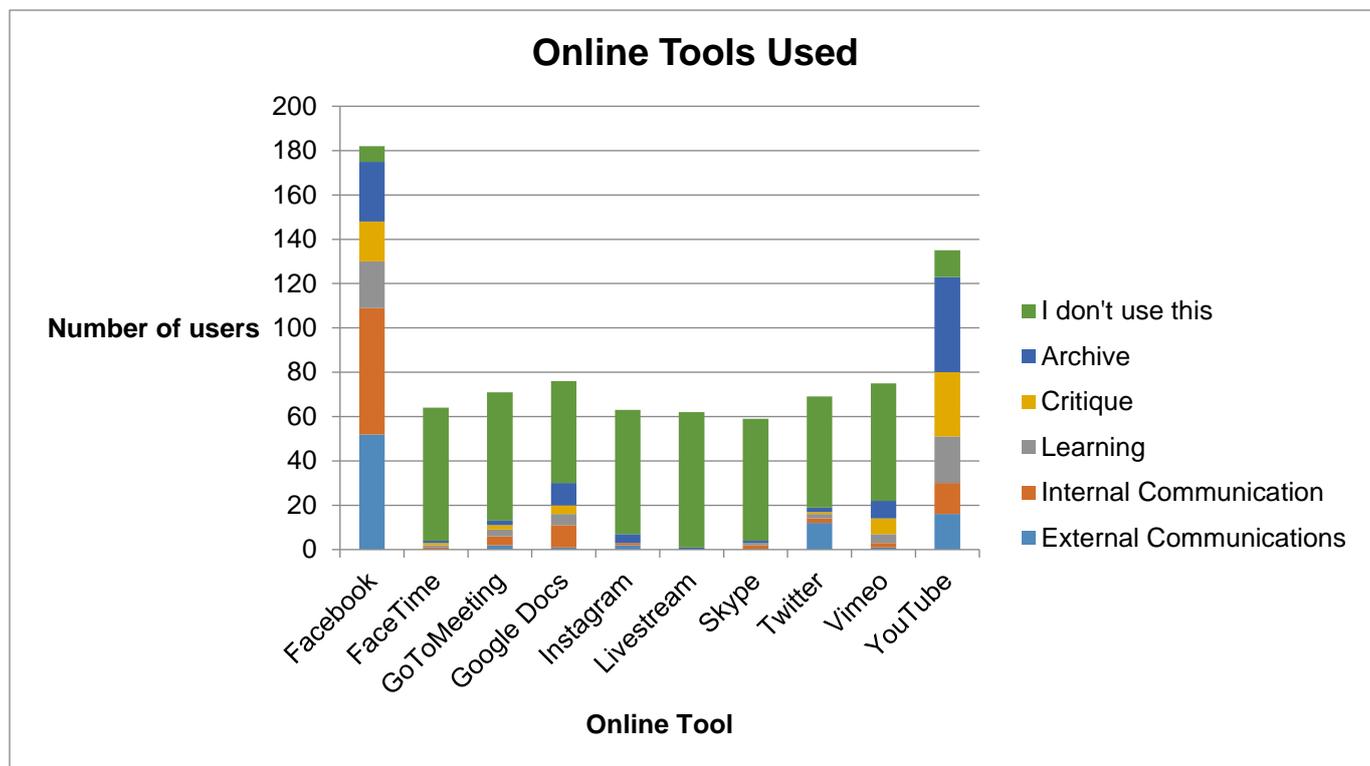


Figure 10: Online tools used by participants.

Only ten respondents (12%) stated that they used online learning resources such as KaDON or Skype lessons. Mixed views were presented about learning online and these strongly reflected the availability of high-quality local instruction. Some stated they had no need of online instruction because of access to a dōjō or teacher locally but expressed its potential use if their circumstances were different. Others thought it would only be of use to more advanced players and a small number were staunchly against the idea, stating face-to-face interaction was an essential component of being a taiko player.

UK Taiko Players: Spending and Earning

- With the exception of *tabi*, there is a notable tendency for *groups* to purchase taiko accessories, rather than individuals. Figure 11 shows how many respondents reported individual and group purchasing and making habits.

	Individual Purchase	Individual Make	Group Purchase	Group Make
<i>Happi</i>	18	4	24	18
<i>Hachimaki</i>	6	3	10	8
<i>Tekkou</i>	12	4	20	5
<i>Obi</i>	7	8	9	11
<i>Tabi</i>	42	0	34	0

Figure 11: Respondents' habits (group vs. individual for taiko accessories)

- As figure 12 demonstrates, it is significantly more common for groups to purchase drums and stands than individual players. That said, a notable minority of respondents (18%) buy their own *shime daiko*, the most commonly purchased drum by individuals. These responses show a

significant number of groups and individuals making stands and, less commonly, drums. The drivers behind this, however, are not clear.

	Individual Purchase	Individual Make	Group Purchase	Group Make
Odaiko	9	2	32	3
Odaiko stands	7	6	21	16
Chudaiko	4	1	28	2
Okedo	13	4	40	4
Naname stands	3	5	18	16
Beta stands	0	4	15	11
Shimedaiko	15	4	45	3
Shimedaiko stands	6	9	32	25
Bachi	56	9	48	11

Figure 12: Respondents' habits (group vs. individual for drums and stands)

- Respondents reported spending varying amounts of time on taiko per week. It is worth highlighting that the census question was open to interpretation as it did not specify time spent *playing* or practicing taiko per week. Nevertheless, the highest percentage (32%) spent between 3-5 hours per week on taiko, and only just over 1 in 5 respondents reported spending more than 5 hours per week on taiko.

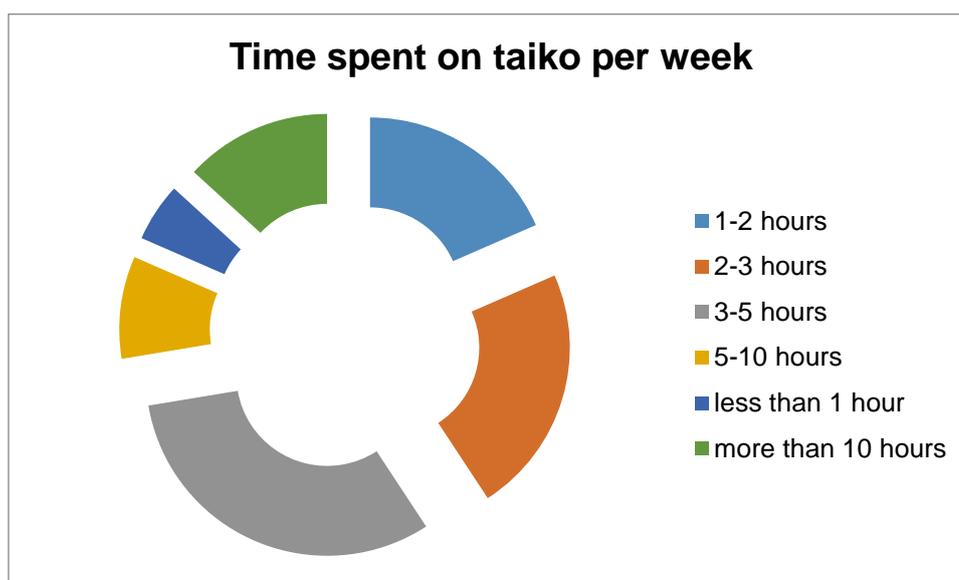


Figure 13: amount of time spent on taiko per week.

- 78% of respondents stated that they earn no income from taiko, suggesting that it is a leisure activity for most. 9% earn more than half of their income from taiko, with 10% earning less than 25% of their income from it.
- One third of survey respondents reported that they do not pay for taiko instruction. Only 15% reported paying more than £51 per month, with the remainder (48%) paying between £1-£50 per month and 3% preferring not to say. No participant reported paying group membership fees or dues.
- 70% of survey respondents spend less than £100 per year on taiko products. This reflects the tendency to purchase drums and accessories as a group. At the other end of the scale, 10% spend more than £500 per year.
- Almost 40% of taiko census participants spend less than £100 per year on taiko events (concerts, intensives, workshops, conferences etc.). The largest group of respondents (44%) spend between £101-£500. A small minority of respondents (13%) spend more than £500 per year.

UK Taiko Players: Teaching

24% of respondents reported that they teach taiko while the majority (64%) do not engage in any teaching. Of those who teach, the majority (60%) have been teaching for between 1-5 years, 20% for between 6-10 years, and 10% for less than one year. 15% have been teaching for 16 years or more. These figures reflect the recent development of taiko in Europe in comparison to other parts of the world. Workshops are the most common form of teaching, with 80% leading workshops. 75% teach on-going regular lessons to individuals or groups, and 25% teach classes in schools. Interestingly, only one census participant reported teaching at an international taiko gathering.

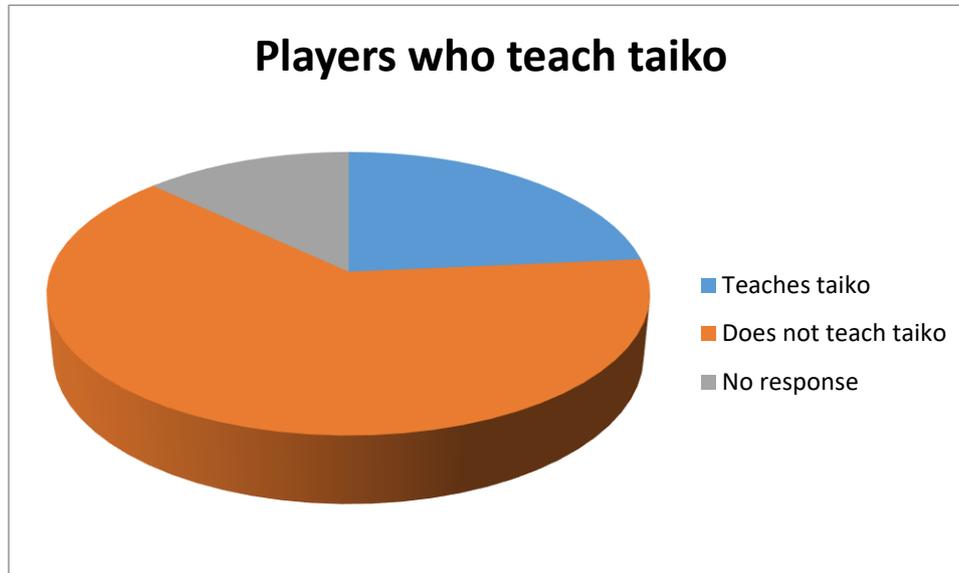


Figure 14: Respondents who report teaching taiko.

- Respondents report teaching a wide range of students in terms of age and need, as shown in figure 15. Only 15% of taiko teachers report teaching just one student type (adults) – the remainder teach multiple types of students.

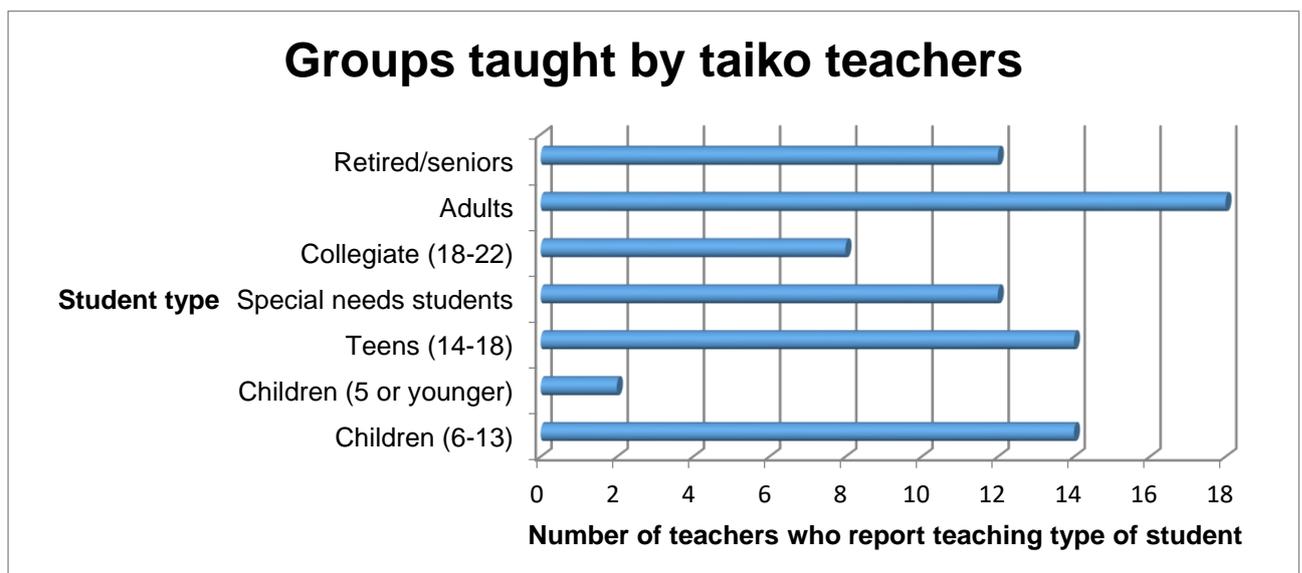


Figure 15: Student groups taught by taiko teachers.

- 45% receive no compensation for teaching, 20% report receiving some compensation and teaching contributes significantly to the income of 35% of respondents.
- 30% of taiko teachers teach less than 10 students, 20% between 26-50, and 15% more than 50 students. None of the teachers offers online interactive lessons and only one teacher offers online

recorded lessons. In terms of support and resources required to develop teaching, respondents made varied requests. Three themes, however, were repeatedly highlighted: first, teaching ideas and resources (ideally achieved through networking with other taiko players); second, funding (to purchase equipment and set up a designated dojo); and third, opportunities to develop as a taiko player (with a view to passing on skills to students).

Sources

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