

Research 7

National Sports Festival for People with Disabilities

I. Overview

1. Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the current situations of hosting the qualifying matches for National Sports Festival for People with Disabilities, and to provide an evidence-based data to the government and relevant sectors for future policy development.

2. Secondary analysis (written questionnaire)

(1) Method

Secondary data analysis of the research survey “Survey on the sports implemented at the National Sports Festival for People with Disabilities” conducted by Japanese Para-Sports Association in 2013.

(2) Data Analysis

“Survey on the sports implemented at the National Sports Festival for People with Disabilities” targeted at the departments in charge of disability sports and disability sports associations in prefectures and ordinance-designated cities. A total of 63 local governments (47 prefectures <100% response rate> and 16 ordinance-designated cities <80.0% response rate>) responded. The response rate overall was 94.0%.

II. Results

1. Overview of the National Sports Festival for People with Disabilities

(1) Festival history

The National Sports Festival for People with Disabilities (NSFPD) is an event that was created by integrating the "National Sports Festival for People with Physical Disabilities" held since 1965 and the "National Sports Festival for People with Intellectual Disabilities" held since 1992; the NSFPD was first held in 2001 and takes place in the same location as the National Sports Festival of Japan, following the conclusion of that event. Its goal is to promote sports participation of people with disabilities and to facilitate public's understanding of them, and it has grown to encompass a scale of about 3,000 athletes and 2,000 staff (Table 7-1).

Because sports regulations have been established for the NSFPD, in the case of a person with a physical disability, the individual's physical disability ID card is consulted and a classification is chosen which matches the existing disability. This means that the disability classification may differ from those in sports regulations stipulated by international organizations such as the International Paralympic Committee which determines classifications based on the severity of motor impairment.

Table 7-1 Number of participants in NSFPD (2001–2014)

Year	Location Held	Number of Athletes	Number of Staff
2001	Miyagi Prefecture	3,195	1,747
2002	Kochi Prefecture	3,201	1,935
2003	Shizuoka Prefecture	3,289	2,089
2004	Saitama Prefecture	3,089	1,995
2005	Okayama Prefecture	3,238	2,009
2006	Hyogo Prefecture	3,261	2,071
2007	Akita Prefecture	3,227	2,071
2008	Oita Prefecture	3,202	2,030
2009	Niigata Prefecture	3,231	2,164
2010	Chiba Prefecture	3,238	1,925
2011	Yamaguchi Prefecture	3,238	2,166
2012	Gifu Prefecture	3,165	2,150
2013	Tokyo Prefecture	3,308	2,154
2014	Nagasaki Prefecture	3,232	2,245

Information from the Japanese Para-Sports Association website

(2) Implemented sports

NSFPD’s sports are divided into two groups: official sports and open sports. Official sports are the 13 sports (6 individual sports and 7 team sports) established in the sports regulations of the NSFPD (Table 7-2). Open sports are those sports deemed to be effective in disseminating sports among people with disabilities, and differ from festival to festival.

Table 7-2 Official sports of the NSFPD

	Individual Sports	Team Sports
Sports	Track-and-field	Basketball
	Swimming	Wheelchair basketball
	Archery	Softball
	Table tennis	Grand softball
	Flying disc (frisbee)	Volleyball
	Bowling	Soccer
		Kickball

The sports regulations of the NSFPD (2014)

(3) Number of sports by disability type

When viewing the sports by disability type, the highest number for individual sports was seen with "Physical disability", "Hearing/Equilibrium disability or speech/chewing disability", and "Intellectual disability", which had 5 sports each. For team sports, "Intellectual disability" had the most with 7 sports (Table 7-3). No individual sports were implemented for "Mental health issues" and no team sports were implemented for "Internal disability".

Table 7-3 List of NSFPD sports (by disability type)

Division	Disability Type	Sports	Number of Sports
Individual	Physical disability	Track-and-field, swimming, archery, table tennis, flying disc (frisbee)	5
	Visual impairment	Track-and-field, swimming, table tennis, flying disc (frisbee)	4
	Hearing/Equilibrium disability or speech/chewing disability	Track-and-field, swimming, archery, table tennis, flying disc (frisbee)	5
	Intellectual disability	Track-and-field, swimming, table tennis, flying disc (frisbee), bowling	5
	Mental health issues	None	0
	Internal disability	Track-and-field, archery, flying disc (frisbee)	3
Team	Physical disability	Wheelchair basketball	1
	Visual impairment	Grand softball	1
	Hearing impairment	Volleyball (gender-segregated)	2
	Intellectual disability	Basketball (gender-segregated), softball, volleyball (gender-segregated), soccer, kickball	7
	Mental health issues	Volleyball	1
	Internal disability	None	0

The sports regulations of the NSFPD (2014)

Note: Volleyball (Hearing disability/Intellectual disability) and Basketball (Intellectual disability) was implemented in both male and female events.

(4) Athlete selection

As a general rule, athletes participating in individual sports can compete in up to two events within the same sport. However, athletes participating in team sports cannot compete in individual sports. Athletes are selected by an athlete selection committee comprised of individuals associated with the disability sports or disability sports organization of a prefecture or ordinance-designated city. In addition to referring to the results of disability sports competitions in the prefecture or ordinance-designated city, the selection committee must also consider factors such as preferentially selecting athletes who have never competed in the NSFPD.

In addition to teams from the prefecture or ordinance-designated city where the festival is held, teams which won the block qualifying matches also earn the right to compete in team games. There are six blocks: Hokkaido/Tohoku, Kanto, Hokushinetsu/Tokai, Kinki, Chugoku/Shikoku, and Kyushu. Block qualifying matches are held through negotiations between the Japanese Para-Sports Association and block qualifier organizations.

(5) Form of participation in block qualifying matches

How to participate in block qualifying matches vary depending on the prefectures and ordinance-designated cities, but they can generally be classified as follows.

- ① Teams which won qualifying matches within the prefecture or ordinance-designated city
- ② Teams formed by selecting athletes from multiple teams within the prefecture or ordinance-designated city
- ③ Nomination of a single team within the prefecture or ordinance-designated city (cases where only one team exists within the prefecture or ordinance-designated city correspond with this)
- ④ Merging prefectural and ordinance-designated city teams (only for prefectures which contain an ordinance-designated city)