

National Survey Sports Participation of People with a Disability in the Netherlands

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Keywords: disability, sports participation, management, behaviour change

Abstract

Research Question / Aim of Paper

In the presentation outcomes of a study into the sports participation of people with a disability in the Netherlands will be discussed. The main research question is: “To which amount and in what different manners do people with a disability participate in sports and what differences exist between the different categories of people with a disability?” The research results in a quantitative overview of the present and potential sports participation of people with a disability and qualitative insight into the background and motives of people with a disability, as well as the experienced stimuli and obstacles that influence degrees and manners of sports participation. The paper presents recommendations on how to improve the opportunities for people with a disability to participate in sports.

Theoretical Background and Methodology

Research into the sportparticipation of people with a disability is complicated due to diversity within the target group. There is no national registration of people with a disability. Data on their participation in sports is scarce. A literature study revealed that different samples and research methods are needed to include people with physical, mental, visual and auditive disabilities (e.g. [1], [2], [3], [4], [5]).

The quantitative part of the research is carried out in close co-operation with SCP (Social and Cultural Planning Office of the Netherlands) and NIVEL (Netherlands Institute for Health Services Research). Every four year, in the general *Amenities and Social Services Utilization Survey* (AVO), SCP measures the usage of a great number of social and cultural amenities and social services in connection with household and individual characteristics, including sporting activities and club membership. The data for this article are based on this (cross sectional) survey.

Furthermore, existing NIVEL panel-surveys of people with a disability are extended for the purpose of our study. The National Panel of the Chronically ill and Disabled (NPCG) is an initiative for collecting data on a continuous basis from a panel of 3800 people suffering from a chronic somatic disease or physical disability. A second panel is collecting data from a panel of 900 people with a mental handicap (and close

relatives). This part of the research provides insight in sports participation and stimuli and obstacles as experienced by people with a physical and mental disability.

Data on sports participation of children with a disability is not fully included in the above mentioned panels. Additional research is carried out (sample of 285 children visiting special schools (15 schools), parents (1039) and pe-teachers / school directors (198)).

Qualitative research (face to face interviews, group and internet discussions) is done to gain insight in factors that influence sports participation (using behaviour change theories from De Vries et al [6]).

Results

In the presentation the main findings will be summarized. This leads to a discussion on the challenges faced by professionals in the sports sector to improve the opportunities for people with a disability to participate in sports. The results will be published autumn 2008.

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