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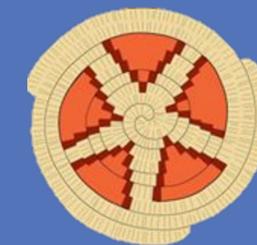
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# Influence of Adaptive Water Sports Programs on Quality of Life Perceptions for People with Disabilities: A Feasibility Study



Joanna Cosbey, PhD OTR/L; Jason Jackson, MOTS; William Meyer, MOTS

## Objectives

1. Examine the relationship between participation in adapted water sports events and QoL
2. Analyze the feasibility of the data collection methods from participants involved in adaptive water sport activities

## Background

- Participation in adaptive sport and physical exercise programs is enjoyable for participants with a wide variety of disabilities and contributes to improved personal perceptions of QoL and self-worth <sup>1,2</sup>
- Because individuals with disabilities generally report lower levels of community participation, life satisfaction, and QoL perceptions, it is important to explore the relationship between participation in adaptive sports and perceptions in these areas <sup>3,4</sup>
- Feasibility of hand delivering questionnaires has not been examined in previous research <sup>5</sup>

## References

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## Methods

### Design

- Quasi-experimental study
- Used self- or proxy-report questionnaires
- Pre- and post-activity data collection time periods
- Quantitative questionnaire data analyzed for feasibility of measuring QoL perceptions in this population

### Participants

- 13 participants with a disability
- Recruited through the NMAASP

### Inclusion Criteria:

- Any documented disability
- Participation in NMAASP event

### Instrumentation: Adaptive Water Sports Questionnaire (AWSQ)

- Developed by UNM faculty and students
- Pre-Activity: 4 pages long (51 questions; 5 sections)
- Post-Activity: 3 pages long (33 questions; 3 sections)
- Not subject to reliability or validity testing

### Domains examined in AWSQ

1. QoL perceptions
2. Feasibility

### Data Analysis

- Processed in Microsoft Excel 2011
- All data  $\geq \pm 1.5 SD$  considered meaningful
- Demographic data analyzed for:
  - Gender
  - Disability type
  - Age
  - Self- or proxy-report
- QoL data analyzed for:
  - Mean
  - SD
  - Mode

## Conclusions

### Quality of Life

- QoL is elusive and difficult to quantify
- In general, QoL remained the same after AWSP participation
- The use of participant surveys did not produce statistically significant information

### Feasibility

- The analysis of feasibility data collected indicated a need for better recruitment strategies, survey design, and timing of survey distribution

### Recommendations

#### Quantifying QoL perceptions:

- Better instruments and more rigorous research methods need to be developed and implemented in future research

#### Ways to improve future QoL data collection methods:

- Reduce survey length
- Reduce items requiring written response
- Distribute survey at a time and place that minimizes distractions and environmental discomfort
- Multiple survey formats (hardcopy and email)



## Results

### QoL Perceptions

- No statistically significant data due to small sample size and incomplete participant responses
- Data indicates that participation in AWSP does not increase participant QoL perceptions
- Data challenges popular assumptions, and much of the extant body of research

### Feasibility

- Comments indicated that collecting QoL data utilizing a questionnaire format must account for:
  1. Environmental distractions
  2. Time restrictions
  3. Caregiver responsibilities
  4. Survey length
  5. Complexity

QoL attribute	Mean Score of Perceived Importance		
	Pre-Activity	Post-Activity	Difference
Physical health	4.69	4.70	0.01
Ability to get around	4.46	4.10	-0.36
Ability to perform ADLs	4.23	3.90	-0.33
Ability to concentrate	4.00 <sup>a</sup>	3.90	-0.10
Ability to communicate	4.08	4.50	0.42
Flexibility and/or the ability to cope with stressful situations	4.15	3.80	-0.35
Energy to participate in life	4.46	4.60	0.14
Physical fitness	4.77	4.89	0.12
Active lifestyle	4.46	5.00	0.54 <sup>a</sup>
Feeling of safety	4.23	4.89	0.66 <sup>a</sup>
Opportunities for leisure activities	4.38	4.40	0.02
Ability to work	4.08	4.10	0.02
Personal relationships	4.15	3.56 <sup>a</sup>	-0.60 <sup>a</sup>
Support from friends	4.46	4.40	-0.06
Community inclusion	4.58	3.70	-0.88 <sup>a</sup>
Sense of self-confidence and/or self-efficacy	4.75	4.70	-0.05
Feeling of independence	4.54	4.70	0.16
Overall happiness	4.77	4.90	0.13
<b>Total Group Attribute mean (SD)</b>	<b>4.40 (.25)</b>	<b>4.37 (.46)</b>	<b>-0.03 (0.38)</b>

<sup>a</sup> Value  $\pm 1.5 SD$  from Total Group Attribute Mean in each area