



The Effect of Japan's Welfare State Policy and Neoliberalism on Massed Sports in Japan

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ABSTRACT

Neoliberalism and welfare state have been the hot topics of research in Japan for many years. Since the late 1970s, Japan has experienced significant transformation from welfare state to neoliberalism. Under the neoliberal regime, massed sports policies have also been altered by the government. Hence, the aim of the study was to determine the effect of welfare state and neoliberalism policies on massed sports in Japan. Based on the welfare state and neoliberalism theories, four indicators were used as the evaluation criteria: (1) democratic, (2) autocratic, (3) public, and (4) market domains. Key finding showed that in Japan, massed sports have developed to a certain extent because of the democratic and public sports policies under the Japanese-style welfare regime. However, since the arriving of the neoliberalism in 1980s, massed sport policies have become more and more autocratic and market-oriented. This transformation has hindered the development of massed sports in Japan. Even though the mechanism leading to this outcome was due to varied factors, the government's neoliberalism was found to be one of the dominant factors. Based on the empirical data, this study suggests that massed sports should be independent of the political and economic approaches of the government.

Keywords: Welfare state, neoliberalism, massed sports, public policy, Japan