

POSTOJE UČITELŮ TĚLESNÉ VÝCHOVY SMĚREM K VÝUCE ŽÁKŮ SE ZDRAVOTNÍM POSTIŽENÍM V OBECNÉ TĚLESNÉ VÝCHOVĚ V ČESKÉ REPUBLICE

ATTITUDES OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS TOWARD TEACHING STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES IN GENERAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

The present article focuses on attitudes of Czech physical education teachers toward inclusive physical education (inclusion) whose aim is a full participation of all individuals in the society and which tries to avoid any type of exclusion. The purpose of the study was to describe and compare attitudes of Czech physical education teachers towards inclusion of students with physical disabilities in their PE classes. Sixty two participants (students of distance programs at Palacký University in Olomouc) took part in the investigation process whereas 40 participants work as teachers at different Czech primary schools. The adapted version of the questionnaire, designed according to Theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991, 2000), Attitude Toward Teaching Individuals with Physical Disabilities in Physical Education (ATIPDPE) was implemented. The one-way analysis of variance ANOVA was used for consequent data as well as other descriptive, statistical and mathematical tools. Software package SPSS PC 11.0 was applied. The level of significance was defined at the level of 0,05. There were more females than males in the sample of teachers, whereas 50% of the participants did not have any personal experience with teaching students with physical disabilities. Those who were experienced in this area proved a rather positive evaluation of their previous experience. 80% of participants did not attend any course specialized in Adapted Physical Activity. Consequently, most of the participants did not feel competent to teach students with physical disabilities.

Keywords: inclusion, attitudes, adapted physical education, physical disability

SOUHRN

Tento článek je zaměřen na postoje učitelů tělesné výchovy k integraci ve školní tělesné výchově v České republice. Cílem integrovaného vzdělávání je zapojení všech osob ve společnosti bez jakéhokoliv vyčleňování. Cílem tohoto příspěvku je popsat a porovnat postoje učitelů tělesné výchovy k integrované TV. Studie se účastnilo 62 respondentů (z nich 40 učitelů prvního stupně), kteří v současnosti studují kombinované studium primární pedagogiky na Univerzitě Palackého v Olomouci. K zjištění jejich postojů byl použit dotazník „Attitude Toward Teaching Individuals with Physical Disabilities in Physical Education (ATIPDPE)“, který byl sestaven na základě Teorie plánovaného jednání (Ajzen, 1991, 2000). Pro statistickou analýzu dat jsme použili analýze rozptylu ANOVA v programu SPSS PC 11.0. Hladina statistické významnosti byla stanovena na 0,05. V našem vzorku bylo více žen a 50% respondentů nemělo předchozí osobní zkušenost s osobami se zdravotním postižením. Respondenti, kteří osobní zkušenost měli, ji hodnotili pozitivně. Osmdesát procent respondentů neabsolvovalo studijní předmět zaměřený na aplikovanou tělesnou výchovu a většina respondentů se necítila kompetentní ve vztahu k integrované tělesné výchově.

Klíčová slova: integrac; postoje; aplikovaná tělesná výchova; tělesné postižení

Introduction

The Czech republic has undergone important changes regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities in the past decades. This comprehends changes in legislation, general education (including physical education), changes in the structure of special education, etc. However, the process of inclusion is still considered to be a rather new phenomenon. Nowadays in the Czech Republic, there is a tendency to avoid segregated education of children with special needs and the aim is their inclusion into the common education stream.

Physical activity and sport is important for everyone and its implications are far behind a simple improvement of physical conditions. Physical activity provides people with socialization, the feeling of participation, improvement of life quality and production of positive emotions linked to sport. For students with different kinds and severities of disabilities, physical education plays an important role as well. Inclusion of individuals with disabilities (especially children) into sport is a crucial step for improving not only their physical condition, but also the quality of their lives, their overall rehabilitation and successful integration into society via an improved self-image and self-esteem. For these reasons, the concept of inclusive physical education exists. Inclusion generally means that a student with disability receives appropriate assistance and support, is a full-value part of the classroom and all students receive the same education.

The term attitude represents a hypothetical construct which implies an individual's views towards certain items such as persons, places, things, or events (often referred to as the attitude objects). Attitude may be defined as "an enduring organization of motivational, emotional, perceptual, and cognitive processes with respect to some aspect of the individual's world" (Kretch & Crutchfield, 1948, p. 152). In order to promote successful inclusion process, methods for the targeting of the development of positive attitudes must be implemented (McMurray, 2003). Researches in this field have revealed that the attitudes of teachers are one of most crucial factors in the inclusion of children with disability into general physical education.

An important concept behind the researched carried out in this field, there is the theory of planned behavior (abbreviated to TPB) which was developed by Icek Ajzen in 1987 as an extension of the theory of reasoned action (TRA) introduced by Martin Fishbein in 1967. The theory of planned behavior belong to one of the most predictive persuasion theories which has been applied to miscellaneous studies of the relations among behaviors, intentions, attitudes and beliefs in numerous fields such as public relations, advertising campaigns or healthcare.

Adapted Physical Activity (APA) was developed as a response to the problems encountered in sport by students with disabilities and has a direct link to education and social inclusion. APA is designed for persons who are not able to participate safely and successfully in regular physical education and it comprises an individualized program of developmental activities, games, exercises and rhythm which meets the special criteria of disabled individuals. Nevertheless, a well-organized and planned implementation of the process of inclusion is necessary.

Findings of research studies generally show that there exist positive outcomes from inclusive physical education classes. The positive outcomes are restrained by miscellaneous constraints and barriers. Academic institutions and related training programs try to modify students' and trainees' attitudes towards individuals with disabilities in PE classes.

In order to prepare future physical education teachers for the inclusion of disabled children into their classes, the first step is to recognize their attitudes as a hypothetical construct which implies an individual's views towards such inclusion. The most frequently studied component of attitudes is behavioral beliefs as they are used to deduce attitudes toward the intention to perform a certain behavior. The attitudes of teachers (positive, negative, or neutral views) are crucial. Once the results are known, it is possible to identify what should be done in preparation of future PE teachers towards children with disabilities to their classes. Negative attitudes of teachers and PE students toward inclusive education (which can arise from insufficient knowledge and lack of experience) may become a significant barrier of the overall process of inclusion. (And the most suitable time when to improve such attitudes is at universities.) There has been a growing number of children with disabilities being included into normal classes and thereby more and more PE teachers will be faced with the reality of educating them together with the rest of the classroom. Attitudes of physical educators toward teaching students with disabilities may be measured by several different devices (theoretically based researches, theory of reasoned action, Likert-type scales and ratings, questionnaires, etc.).

Inclusion first appeared decades ago and nowadays is widely spread across Europe. As aforementioned, inclusion in the Czech Republic has undergone significant changes over the span of last years and has been gaining strength since then. The inclusion of children with special needs into mainstream general education has been implemented in the Czech Republic, but it is just physical education that is neglected for miscellaneous reasons. Nowadays, the number of students with disabilities being educated in ordinary schools increases.

Research findings and specialist literature of the attitudes of physical education teachers and students of physical education are of great significance because they can help to improve the actual situation of inclusion in the Czech Republic, avoid barriers and constraints and create a positively inclusive environment among students with or without disabilities, teachers and the whole society.

Method

Participants

The data were gathered up during the summer term of 2010. Participants were 62 students of distance study attending College of Education at Palacký University in Olomouc. In our study, we selected 40 participants who are currently teaching at different primary schools in the Czech Republic. There were thirty eight (38) females and two (2) males with an average age of 36.48 years. An average year of teaching PE in primary or secondary schools was 11.17 years.

Instrument used

The adapted (Czech) version of questionnaire Attitude Toward Teaching Individuals with Physical Disabilities in Physical Education (ATIPDPE) was used for this study (original version is in the English language). This instrument is based on the Theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (1991, 2000). It focuses predominantly on the behavioral beliefs which are supposed to be the main component which influences attitudes. Attitudes of physical education teachers and students of physical education were therefore derived from behavioral beliefs and for this reason we just reduced the normative and control belief items.

In the ATIPDPE questionnaire, attitude was inferred from behavioral beliefs. Content validity evidence was established by experts in two countries and pilot studies utilizing 96 university students to elicit accessible beliefs and intensions (Kudláček, Válková, Sherrill, Myers, French, 2002). Kudláček, Válková, Sherrili, Myers & French used three methods of examining construct validity in the development of ATIPDPE: Pearson product moment correlation, multiple hierarchical regression, and known group differences. In Examination of reliability was used repeated measures ANOVA. It revealed that test-retest scores were not significantly different.

The beginning of the questionnaire contains the purpose of the study, general instructions for filling out the questionnaire and an example for using the rating scale while answering an item. The questionnaire itself is composed of 2 items asking about definitions and understanding of student with physical disabilities and definition of inclusion. The next part includes items relating to 4 intention

statements, 12 behavioral belief statements, 7 normative belief statements and 8 control belief statements (see Table 1 for your reference). This is the most important part of the questionnaire. The last part contains 14 questions concerning the demographic data about the participants and their experience with person with disabilities, teaching, etc. The 7-point Likert scale was used with all items of the survey. The three components of TBP that are posited to predict intention in the ATIPDPE questionnaire are the attitude toward behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. The instrument is properly modified in order to suit the purposes of this study. The scoring system required the use of 7-point scale for one construct and a -3 to +3 scale for the other construct. Specifically, behavioral belief evaluation scores, normative belief strength scores, and control belief power. Scores were transformed using the SPSS PC11.0 from unidirectional (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) to bidirectional (-1, -2, -3, 0, +1, +2, +3) scoring. Scores for each statement were then multiplied to create item belief scores; likelihood x evaluation, belief strength x motivation, and belief strength x belief power (LxE, BSxMC, and BSxBP) (Kudlacek et al, 2002).

The level of significance was set at 0.05. Regression analysis was used for revelation which out of each TBP component is a significant predictor of intention. One-way Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) was implemented for comparing teachers with experience and teachers without experience with students with physical disabilities.

Table 1. Sample of control belief statement
Tabulka 1. Příklad kontrolního tvrzení

1. I have appropriate training to successfully include students with physical disabilities into my PE class:	
Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	2 3 4 5 6 7
Having proper training would make inclusion of students with physical disabilities in my PE class	
Much More Difficult	Much Easier
1	2 3 4 5 6 7

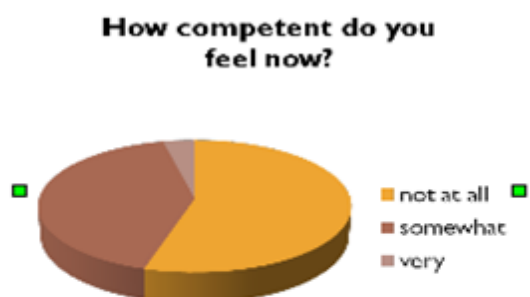
Results

The results of the demographic data study revealed that there were absolutely more females (95%) than males (5%) in the sample of teachers. There were 40 participants with an average age of 36.48 years and an average in years of teaching PE in primary or secondary schools was 11.17 years. 50% of the participants do not have any personal experience with person with physical disabilities. In

this group of teachers, a very positive evaluation of their previous experience with teaching students with disabilities dominates. Only one teacher had bad experience with person with physical disabilities. From twenty teachers with experience, 1 does not have good experience, 7 have sufficient experience, 14 very good, and 1 great experience. Thirteen teachers reported that there are integrated



Obrázek 1. Evaluace zkušenosti respondent
Figure 1. Evaluation of participants' experience



Obrázek 2. Kompetence ve vztahu k práci se studenty s postižením
Figure 2. Competence toward teaching students with disabilities

children with physical disabilities in their school. Only three teachers answered that there are integrated children with physical disabilities in class where they are teaching. 80% of participants did not attend any course of Adapted Physical Activity. Out of 40 participants, 21 do not feel competent to teach students with physical disabilities, 16 feel somewhat competent and 2 very competent to teach students with disabilities.

Discussion

One of the main constraints to the inclusion of children with physical disabilities into regular physical education is the attitude of teachers. Their attitudes toward inclusion can arise from insufficient knowledge or lack of experience. A solution to this problem would be an improvement of these two elements (knowledge and experience), whereas the most suitable time would be at university.

The purpose of the study was to describe the attitudes and predictors of intentions, of physical education teachers to include students with physical disabilities into general PE classes in Czech Republic. Quite interesting are results of the demographic data study. On the question "How competent do you feel teaching PE to students with physical disabilities?", only 2 teachers answered to be very competent, other 21 teachers answered not at all and 16 teachers somewhat. Maybe it is because 80% of them did not attend any course of Adapted Physical Activity and their knowledge is therefore insufficient in this area. Spurná, Rybová & Kudláček (2010) found that Czech teachers see the problem in the Czech preparation system of special educators and their insufficient expertise.

In part of intention, the study showed that most of the respondents among teachers are in agreement with inclusion. Their answers about intention of inclusion were really positive. The results of research in Spurná, Rybová & Kudláček (2010) showed that teachers really support the intention of

Table 2. Score of teachers on their intention using a 7-point scale

Tabulka 2. Výsledky přesvědčení k záměrům učitelů

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intention 1 I intend to include students with PD	5.18	1.45
Intention 2 I will try to include students with PD	5.70	1.51
Intention 3 I am determined to include students with PD	5.28	1.80
Intention 4 I will develop lesson plans to facilitate inclusion	5.88	1.38
Summative Intention Scores	22.03	5.59

inclusion but in fact they do not realize this.

Behavioral beliefs part shows that most respondents reported outcomes that teaching will be more difficult as well as preparation and planning for the lessons as being very likely outcomes. The majority of answers reported that inclusive PE will teach cooperation and greater tolerance, will encourage helping each others, and improve knowledge about people with PD as very good and also very likely outcome. They also believe that inclusion will have positive effect on personalities of students with PD. The negative outcomes teachers identified as being the discrimination of students without PD, discrimination of students with PD, that inclusion will reduce the quality of the lesson.

Normative beliefs are the TBP component that is used to determine subjective norm (i.e. perceived social pressure and estimated response to this pressure). The results indicate that the respondents were undecided about the referent's approval. Specialists, parents of students with PD and principals in most schools received scores indicating they were perceived as approving

inclusion by the teachers. Parents of students without disabilities received scores indicating they were perceived as disapproving inclusion by the teachers.

Last part was focused on control beliefs. Control beliefs are used to determine perceived behavioral control, a direct predictor of intention, in the TPB model. The participants reported that they agreed with contention that schools do not have sufficient equipment, appropriate financial resources and that schools have architectural barriers and students are not informed about classmates with PD. Respondents also reported that they did not agree with contention that they are prepared for inclusion of students with PD. These predictors can have negative influence on inclusion of students with physical disabilities. Teachers mostly thought that students show willingness to cooperate with classmates with PD and this will have positive influence on inclusion of children with PD.

We found out differences in attitudes between teachers with experience with person with physical disabilities and teachers without experience in each TPB components.

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