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RUN AWAY WHEN YOU SEE A STUDENT WITH AUTISM: A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ON CONFIDENCE IN PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Gamze BEYAZOĞLU
Dr., Usak University, Usak, Turkey, gamze.beyazoglu@usak.edu.tr
ORCID: 0000-0002-2902-2313

Mehmet Emin YILDIZ
Assist. Prof. Dr., Usak University, Usak, Turkey, m.yildiz@usak.edu.tr
ORCID: 0000-0001-8144-1139

ABSTRACT

The training received by teachers in the pre-service period allows us to gain knowledge about the effectiveness of the education they provide in adapted physical education settings. This study aims to perform an in-depth analysis of the pre-service physical education teachers' confidence levels in teaching the students with disabilities, and to reveal the effective factors in the formation of these confidence levels. Qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews made by using semi-structured questions with a total of six physical education pre-service teachers, two of whom were female and four of whom were male. The data obtained through interviews, observations and field notes were explained through thematic analysis. As a result of the analysis, three main themes were obtained in terms of determining the confidence of the pre-service teachers regarding the education they received to teach the students with disabilities. These were (a) Internally changing challenges (b) Multiple contextual challenges (c) Social psychology of exclusion through education. In the in-depth analyses of the teachers, it was revealed that they approached the pre-service education they received with an insecure perspective, and that various factors were effective in having such a perspective.

Keywords: Disabled person, confidence, pre-service physical education teacher.

INTRODUCTION

Understanding the pre-service experience is significant to strengthen the effectiveness of the experience of the course given during adapted physical education (Jeong et al., 2021). In the pre-service teacher training program, it is essential to have an adapted physical education practice experience to raise pre-service physical educators as effective teachers. Through acknowledging the importance of inclusive education, it is among the expectations to contribute to the preparation and effective presentation of physical education and sports teaching programs and adapted physical education and sports programs. According to the statistics of Ministry of National Education (MEB, 2022), 74.7% of primary school children, 63.5% of secondary school children and 69% of high school children are included in physical education classes as inclusive students both in state schools and in private schools. According to the provisions of the delegated legislation on special education numbered 573, 1.310.605 students have been benefiting from educational services. Pre-service education is a fundamental step towards the specialization level in the teaching profession and is a critical component of participating in the profession (Fessler & Christensen, 1992). Many factors affect each stage of a teacher's career until the specialization stage. The pre-service stage is regarded as an important factor that determines the teaching quality of the teaching profession. Besides, this stage is the basis in terms of forming teachers' instructional beliefs (Woods & Lynn, 2001). This belief system is formed by the teacher's negative experiences, memories, and feelings for another individual or situation, and this pushes the teacher to react negatively to similar circumstances (Lee & Jeong, 2013). In the studies conducted with physical education teachers evaluating their experiences with the students with disabilities, it has been noted that the teachers who have regarded their own experiences with the disabled students as inadequate have exhibited negative attitudes towards the students with disabilities (Beyazoğlu, 2020; Cornoldi et al., 1998; Kozub & Poretta, 1998; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991; Block ve Rizzo 1995). It has also been observed that the physical education teachers who have taken courses for the disabled like adapted physical education and sports or special education in pre-service education have exhibited a more positive attitude towards the students with disabilities in their classes when compared to those who have not taken such courses ((Rizzo ve Vispoel, 1991; Mendoza, 2008; Kudlacek ve ark., 2002; Block ve Rizzo, 1995; Rizzo, Davis ve Toussaint, 1994; Sherrill ve ark, 1994; Block, 1994). To offer better quality physical education programs to disabled and non-disabled students in inclusive physical education classes, undergraduate level teacher education programs should be organized so that they make pre-service physical educators teach effectively for both groups in their classes. In addition to this, qualitative studies on how confident future physical education teachers feel in providing inclusive education for the students with disabilities through the pre-service training they have received are quite limited. Based on this fact, this study aims to analyze the confidence levels of pre-service physical education teachers in teaching the students with disabilities in adapted physical education classes and to reveal the effective factors in the formation of these confidence levels.

METHOD

Participants

The participants of this study were selected from among the pre-service physical education teachers who volunteered to participate in the study according to the saturation principle (Morse, 2010) and in line with the criteria appropriate for the purpose of the research (Collins, 2010). The criteria used in sample selection were; (a) being in the senior year of undergraduate education, (b) having taken all the courses for the disabled during undergraduate education, (c) having at least one semester of training experience. Therefore, the participants of this study was composed of 2 female and 4 male pre-service physical education teachers who were studying in the 4th grade of the Faculty of Sport Sciences at a state university in the Aegean Region of Turkey, and who met these criteria. The demographic characteristics of the participants is presented in Table 1. The researchers assigned a code to each participant for confidentiality purposes.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Participants	Gender	Marital Status	Age	Having a course on physical education for the disabled during undergraduate education	Having a special education course during undergraduate education	Training experience	Previous Experience
P1	Female	Single	22 and below	Yes	Yes	Yes	I have no experience
P2	Male	Single	22 and below	Yes	Yes	Yes	I am experienced
P3	Female	Single	22 and below	Yes	Yes	Yes	I have little experience
P4	Male	Single	28	Yes	Yes	Yes	I have little experience
P5	Male	Single	22 and below	Yes	Yes	Yes	I have no experience
P6	Male	Single	22 and below	Yes	Yes	Yes	I have no experience

Procedures

For this study, research permit numbered 76606 and dated 28.04.2022 was obtained. Twenty pre-service physical education teachers selected from Usak University senior physical education and sports teaching students were invited to participate in qualitative research through e-mail. The ratio of those who responded stating that they could accept such an invitation was 60%. The pre-service physical education teachers who accepted the invitation were informed about the date, time, and place of the face-to-face interviews. The time and place of each interview was arranged according to the availability of the participants and in their own schools. Before each interview began, the participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study, and they were asked to review and sign a consent form. The consent forms signed and the data obtained from the participants were kept confidential. Only those who wished to participate voluntarily were included in the study. The sample was formed by selecting from among the volunteers who met the determined criteria.

Data Collection

Semi-structured interview questions were developed based on the related literature. Open-ended interview questions provided a path for the participants to express their understanding, perceptions, and experiences (Roulston, 2010). Besides, follow-up questions were asked for some interviews. The interviews continued until satisfactory information was obtained from the participants (Patton, 2001). Before starting data collection, interview questions were applied to two pre-service physical education teachers (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This was accepted as the pilot phase of the study. These two pre-service teachers were not included in the sample of the research. Pilot interviews also enabled to determine the clarity of the interview questions and provided an opportunity for the implementation of interview techniques (Rubin, 2005).

Face-to-face interview sessions began in conversation-like style and continued with simple questions that were not related to the official interview theme. This approach was used to help establish relationships and make the participant feel confident in the interview setting (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The initial questions asked to the participants were the questions related to their demographics. Subsequently, the questions about their daily work were asked. The interview sessions included the questions in terms of determining the confidence of the participants in the education they received in including the students with disabilities in their classes. At the end of the interviews, the participants were also asked an open-ended question regarding whether they wanted to add anything or express how they felt about their experiences.

Data Analysis and Trustworthiness

One of the researchers transcribed the audio recordings to be able to perform data analysis. This researcher also reviewed the transcribed data several times to ensure a general understanding of the data. Thematic analysis was used in data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Open coding was performed to describe the data and make them comprehensible units. As the first stage of open coding, the transcripts obtained after every third interview were coded with MaxQDA software program used by the researcher and the thesis advisor to manage and analyze the qualitative data. After each transcription analysis, the researchers held meetings to discuss the concepts they defined. Following the discussions of the first two interviews, a pre-coding guide was developed with the first coded concepts and definitions. This coding guide was reviewed by the researcher and advisor. Later on, the constant comparative method (Corbin & Strauss, 2014) was utilized to create contrast within and among the data and develop descriptive codes continuously (Miles et al., 2018). The data were analyzed in-depth, and categories were created under the themes.

Among the strategies used to verify this study were; the development of open-ended and semi-structured interviews, the demographic questionnaire presented to the participants by the researcher, and the revision of the questions by the experts. The external validity of the study was provided by the thematic saturation of the data (Miles et al, 2018). The researcher made every effort to ensure that the research questions were clear and comprehendible. Since the researcher conducted the interviews herself, she had the opportunity to discuss with

the participants individually and ask follow-up questions for ambiguous responses. In addition to this, the researcher stated to the participants that if they felt uncomfortable at any time during the interview, they could stop the interview process. To be able to ensure the validity of the responses, member monitoring was utilized following the interview transcripts.

Semi-structured interview questions were examined by the experts and tested on two pre-service physical education teachers. The researcher is an expert who has conducted qualitative research before. She kept a diary record to identify possible research biases. She also kept a diary record from the beginning of the interviews to reduce the researcher's influence on the data. The prejudices, assumptions, and beliefs during the interviews were written down in these diary records. The researcher's years of experience on the children with disabilities is an important factor to be considered in terms of reflectivity. All sessions were recorded using a voice recorder. Besides, the researcher did not include any different meaning to any statements of the participants and did not make any interpretations. The researcher did not coerce the recordings of the interviews so that they complied with the theory used in the research. Daily records were included in the data collection process. The researcher ensured that the data collection methods were performed with in-depth and intense descriptions. All 6 participants were offered to review the themes obtained. 5 of the participants who accepted the offer reviewed their transcripts and confirmed the accuracy of the results.

FINDINGS

Regarding previous experiences; while 16% of pre-service physical education teachers stated that they had experience in working with the individuals with disabilities (P3), 34% expressed that they had little experience (P4-P1), and 50% stated that they had no experience (P2-P5-P6). Three themes emerged when pre-service teachers evaluated their confidence in the education they received in including the students with disabilities in their classes. First, they explained the education they received to teach the students with disabilities under the heading of internally changing challenges, and under this heading, the categories of negative perspective regarding inclusive education and belief within cultural context were obtained. Secondly, the theme of multiple contextual challenges regarding the education they received emerged, and under this theme, the categories of lack of sufficient courses regarding the literature in the higher education curriculum of physical education and sports teaching, lack of training applications, and lack of confidence in educator quality were obtained. Finally, the theme of social psychology of exclusion through education emerged, and under this theme, the category of discrimination according to disability type, which expressed that pre-service teachers could provide education by discriminating according to disability types was obtained. The themes, categories and sample codes obtained are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Analyses Regarding the Themes Formed by Pre-Service Teachers

Theme	Category	Codes	Distinctive responses
Internally changing challenges	Negative perspective regarding inclusive education	One-to-one education	*"The students with disabilities should be given one-to-one education rather than inclusive education in physical education classes. Therefore, we could take more care of the students with disabilities. I think this will be more beneficial for the students with disabilities. In the education given to us, it is not enough to cope with 30 students and 1 disabled student in the same class."*
		Individualism	
		Limited education	
		Lack of motivation Negative view	
	Belief within cultural context	Religious values	*"If I have a disabled student in one of my classes in the future, I think I will act emotionally, I mean, whether I have received an education or not… I don't think I will think about it during the process anyway. My feelings spur me on the fact that they are weak, and I should help them."*
		Invisible power	
		Feelings	
		Weakness	
Multiple contextual challenges	Lack of sufficient courses regarding the literature in the curriculum	Feeling of failure	*"…No. I can't deal with the students with disabilities by only trusting in the education I have received. I have to take additional trainings after graduation."*
		Insufficiency Distrust	*"…there are deficiencies in theoretical courses. We just learn what the disability is, so what's next? Also, the lesson time is only sufficient for just a few types of disabilities. How do I know which type of disability will I face in my class in the future?"*
	Lack of training applications	Low self-confidence	
		Utopic education	
		Disbelief regarding the application	
	Lack of confidence in educator quality	Deficient points	*"…we get the theoretical part anyway, but when it comes to practice, I feel like I'll flame out…"*
		Sandcastle	
Social psychology of exclusion through education	Discrimination according to disability type	Low self-efficacy	*"…probably the type of student that I will have the most difficulty with while teaching is the one with autism. I am insufficient at this. The education I have received is also insufficient, so when I see a student with autism, I think I'll run away without looking back. I think I will be unwilling to teach that class. It's hard, really hard…"*
		Prejudice	
		Collectivism	*"…in fact, the question is 'how much training have we received?' so that we can teach all types of disabilities intentionally. I think none… but anyway, my confidence level in the education I have received may vary depending on the theoretical knowledge we have received. For example, I think I may teach a child with a behavioral disorder or attention deficit disorder. Yes, I can work with them…"*
		Alienation	

Internally changing challenges: negative perspective regarding inclusive education, belief within cultural context

There were some barriers for the pre-service physical education teachers such as a negative perspective regarding inclusive education and belief within cultural context although they were confident and willing to include and teach the students with disabilities in their classes.

Negative perspective regarding inclusive education 'the students with disabilities should not be included in general physical education classes'

Pre-service physical education teachers emphasized that the students with disabilities should not attend physical education classes together with the students with normal developmental levels (P2, P3). *"The students with disabilities should be given one-to-one education rather than inclusive education in physical education classes. Therefore, we could take more care of the students with disabilities. I think this will be more beneficial for the students with disabilities. In the education given to us, it is not enough to cope with 30 students and 1 disabled student in the same class." "A student with a disability cannot be in the same class with the others. I think it would be more successful if I gave one-to-one training. I couldn't do it in the same class. I would fail."*

"In my opinion, education should be given individually to the disabled student in physical education classes. Wouldn't it be more confusing all in the same class?"

Faith in a cultural context 'an invisible force

Pre-service teachers described an 'invisible power'' (P6-P4-P2) that forces them to teach the students with disabilities, contrary to their confidence in the education they received. More specifically; *"Working with the students with disabilities is a matter of faith for me. Indeed, we are also a candidate of being disabled. Our child may also be disabled. These thoughts are in my head all the time, and it is not the education I have received that drives me to work with the students with disabilities. Our religious values have taught us that it is necessary to provide education no matter what." "If I have a disabled student in one of my classes in the future, I think I will act emotionally, I mean, whether I have received an education or not… I don't think I will think about it during the process anyway. My feelings spur me on the fact that they are weak, and I should help them."*

Multiple contextual challenges: lack of sufficient courses regarding the literature in the curriculum, lack of training applications, and lack of confidence in educator quality.

Another prominent theme for the pre-service teachers was the concept of multiple contextual challenges in teaching the students with disabilities. Three categories were evident within this theme: lack of sufficient courses regarding the literature in the curriculum, lack of training applications, and lack of confidence in educator quality.

Lack of sufficient courses regarding the literature in the curriculum 'the education we have received won't work'

Most of the participants mentioned that the courses for the disabled in the physical education teaching curriculum were insufficient (P1-P2-P3-P5-P6). *While it is very likely that we will have an inclusive education class in the future, the intensity of such courses as anatomy, physiology is high, but we have very few courses on the disabled, I think this does not offer us the opportunity to provide quality education." "Actually, we have physical education and sports course for the disabled, but only one. How much can only one course educate me?..." "…No. I can't deal with the students with disabilities by only trusting in the education I have received. I have to take*

additional trainings after graduation." "…there are deficiencies in theoretical courses. We just learn what the disability is, so what's next? Also, the lesson time is only sufficient for just a few types of disabilities. How do I know which type of disability will I face in my class in the future?" "I think that the courses I have received in undergraduate education will not be beneficial. Just a lesson or two does not give me confidence in teaching the students with disabilities…"

Lack of training applications 'I don't trust the school's training applications'

The teachers stated that the pre-service teachers' training experiences were necessary and gave them positive experiences, but that training applications were insufficient. If we would like to express more clearly; *"…we get the theoretical part anyway, but when it comes to practice, I feel like I'll flame out…" "…our training periods are too short, especially if we are going to work on the disabled people, we should do training for four semesters, maybe more… "Each disability type is so different from each other that I would like to experience all of them in the trainings…" "Since our practical trainings are insufficient, what can I give a disabled student with theoretical knowledge? I am unaware of what I will face in the future… Maybe I will be a good trainer, but anyway, training applications are still very important…" "In this way, we only get to know the type of disability… There should be practical trainings so that we can improve ourselves more. We are doing trainings only in the last year, but we do not know whether there are students with disabilities in our class or not. In my opinion, we should do our practical trainings, especially in inclusive classes…"*

Lack of confidence in educator quality 'the education I have received is very utopic'

For the trainers who were under quality assurance in higher education institutions, some of the pre-service teachers mentioned that they had insufficient knowledge about physical education and sports courses and special education for the disabled for the Faculties od Sports Sciences. *"…the educators are weird… I don't seem to understand what they explain… I think they should have mastered how to implement the physical education curriculum for all disability types, but they haven't… They just try to make sand castles…" "I mean... Yes… We get an education, but I have to say that the education we have received is very utopic… The book, the concepts… Everything is according to the book, but there is no place for them in real life. My nephew has autism, but books are of no use to us… And also the educators who talk like books…"*

Social psychology of exclusion through education: Discrimination according to disability type

Discrimination according to disability type 'when I see a student with autism, I run away without looking back'

Considering all the interviews, the only theme that the pre-service teachers all agreed on was the theme of *social psychology of exclusion through education: Discrimination according to disability type*, which was the theme that the quality of education given to the students with disabilities would vary depending on the disability type or that even education would not be given at all. All the participants agreed that the education they received at the undergraduate level had a great influence on their teaching behaviors, especially the perspective created on the

disability types. In general, the undesired and excluded disability types were autism and intellectual disabilities. Surprisingly, the students with physical disabilities were the most desired students for physical education classes (P1-P2-P3-P4-P5-P6). *"…rather than teaching a student with autism, I would rather teach a physically disabled student who can understand me. I can say that we are very insufficient in the faculty in terms of physical education teaching to the students with intellectual disabilities. I may have difficulties while teaching a physically disabled student, but at least I can express myself…" "…probably the type of student that I will have the most difficulty with while teaching is the one with autism. I am insufficient at this. The education I have received is also insufficient, so when I see a student with autism, I think I'll run away without looking back. I think I will be unwilling to teach that class. It's hard, really hard…" "It would be nice if I had a hearing-impaired student. A student with an intellectual disability would not understand me, and I wouldn't understand him or her, either. In fact, I do not have the necessary knowledge on this issue. If anything goes wrong in my classroom, I don't even know how to act… I am really scared about it when I become a teacher in the future…"* A pre-service teacher who had a relative with autism among the family members stated that he was experienced in this issue and would get along well with the students with autism with the following statements: *"…I am a good uncle. I have a nephew with autism, I always take care of him. I would love to have a student with autism in my class in the future… I would gain more experience, and I believe I could be more helpful." "…it is very difficult to train all types of disabilities. I have never thought of working with a disabled student. I won't think about it anymore, but nothing can be more difficult than giving a physical education lesson to someone with an intellectual disability…" "…in fact, the question is 'how much training have we received?' so that we can teach all types of disabilities intentionally. I think none… but anyway, my confidence level in the education I have received may vary depending on the theoretical knowledge we have received. For example, I think I may teach a child with a behavioral disorder or attention deficit disorder. Yes, I can work with them…"*

CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION

This research was composed of six pre-service physical education and sports teachers studying in the Faculty of Sport Sciences at a State University in the Aegean Region of Turkey, and by using the qualitative research method, this research aimed to perform an in-depth analysis of the confidence levels of the pre-service teachers in the education they received at the undergraduate level on teaching the students with disabilities and investigate the mediating role of effective factors in the formation of these confidence levels. In this section of the study, the limitations of the study will be explained, the main findings will be interpreted, and recommendations will be offered for future policy, practice, and research.

Interpretation of the finding

While teachers of the future are able to be open to unconventional perspectives, ask the right questions and be a good observer, look at the definition of talent from many angles, and use various ways to synthesize all these,

it is a requirement to raise them so that they are capable of differentiating learning objectives, success criteria and instructional activities. Changing negative attitudes and learning through experience (Rizzo, Broadhead & Kowalski ,1997), which is one of the principles of the infusion-based curriculum for adapted physical education, defines the way pre-service physical education teachers should be educated. In our study, the themes that emerged in determining the confidence levels of the pre-service teachers in the education they received to teach the students with disabilities are at the focal point of these principles. First of all, the pre-service teachers in the study stated that they did not trust the education they received in teaching the students with disabilities; whereas most of the pre-service teachers expressed that they did not have personal training, and that the deficiencies in their undergraduate education affected their self-confidence. The responses given to the research questions revealed that (a) inadequate pre-service educational process presented negative results in terms of inclusive education, (b) the pre-service teachers exhibited different perspectives for different disability types, and most importantly (c) cultural perspective approached the individuals with disabilities within the framework of the medical model in pre-service education. In our study, in which we aimed to determine the confidence in the pre-service education and the factors affecting this confidence, the themes of (a) Internally changing challenges, (b) Multiple contextual challenges, (c) Social psychology of exclusion through education emerged. In the study, it was examined how the undergraduate education of the pre-service teachers in their senior year affected their confidence in the education they received in terms of teaching the students with disabilities. Based on the analysis of their responses, it was revealed that the pre-service teachers approached the students with disabilities in a 'prejudiced' and 'insecure' manner (Block & Rizzo, 1995; Combs, Elliott & Whipple, 2010). Our second research question was regarding the factors that caused this lack of confidence in the pre-service teachers. If we would like to explain with themes and categories;

Internally changing challenges: negative perspective regarding inclusive education, belief within cultural context

Pre-service teachers first expressed a negative perspective on inclusive education, most probably as a result of the education they received. Based on their own responses, 'the students with disabilities can be educated within the context of sports, even if there is no inclusive education'. They also mentioned that they would face difficulties in inclusive education, that the classes were crowded, and that they might be caught on the wrong foot due to the fact that they did not know what the disability type of the student with disability was. Basically, the education they received was inadequate and they lacked confidence in teaching the individuals with disabilities. Their religious beliefs, on the one hand, created a constant intrinsic impulse. In other words, the idea was that 'what goes around, comes around', like '*we are also a candidate of being disabled', or 'what if our child becomes disabled'*. According to Islamic beliefs, it is important to take care of someone who is considered as despised and deficient (Tuncay, 2014). This was where the pre-service teachers' motivation to provide education to the students with disabilities came from. Even if they were educated or uneducated in this regard, the students with disabilities were very important for some pre-service teachers.

Multiple contextual challenges: lack of sufficient courses regarding the literature in the curriculum, lack of training applications, and lack of confidence in educator quality.

We know that pre-service teachers' confidence in teaching the students with disabilities and undergraduate teacher preparation, including the number of courses taken, are important factors in teachers' attitudes towards teaching the students with disabilities (Columna et al., 2016; Mendoza, 2008; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991). Indeed, the most important category expressed by the pre-service teachers was the lack of sufficient courses on disability education literature in the curriculum. The fundamentally ruined order continues just like a spiral up to the degree of 'lack of self-confidence', 'feeling of not being able to teach', and 'lack of knowledge', which pre-service teachers feel when they face the students with disabilities. Another most important result was the lack of sufficient training applications. There is a significant relationship between academic preparation, which provides practical experiences that can increase perceived teaching efficacy, and teachers' more positive attitudes towards the students with with disabilities (Block & Rizzo, 1995; Sherrill, 1993; Rizzo, Davis & Toussaint, 1994; Sherrill et al.,1994; Block, 1994). Pre-service teachers questioned their teaching proficiency due to the lack of applied courses and this brought them to the level of 'not being able to know what to do when they face a student with a disability'. 'Lack of confidence in educator quality' emerged with the lack of knowledge in all types of disabilities and inadequate teaching of the educators in the physical education and sports courses in the undergraduate level. This situation resulted in student dissatisfaction.

Social psychology of exclusion through education: Discrimination according to disability type

In our study, it was observed that another factor determining the confidence of the pre-service physical education teachers in the education they received to include the students with disabilities in their classes was the students' disability types (Conatser et al., 2000). Accordingly, teachers were more willing to provide education to the students with autism and intellectual disabilities when compared to the students with physical disabilities and behavioral disorders (Bartonova et al., 2007; Rizzo, 1984). According to pre-service teachers, working with the students who can understand them is a strong aspect of confidence in their undergraduate education. In addition to this, there are also physical education teachers who exhibit negative attitudes towards the students with physical disabilities (Fournidou et al., 2011). Furthermore, there are teachers who make significant differentiation in terms of negative attitudes between intellectually disabled students or physically disabled students that are labeled as disabled and those without any disabilities (Aloia et al., 1980). In the study conducted by Rizzo and Vispoel (1991) on physical education teachers, they reported that the physical education teachers had a significantly more positive attitude towards the students with learning disabilities compared to the students with trainable intellectual disabilities and those having behavioral disorders.

As a very important result of our study, it can be said that the reason for making discrimination according to disability type among the teachers of the future is the ineffectiveness of the academic education given in undergraduate education. Kudlacek et al. (2002) stated in their study that expert adapted physical educators had more positive attitudes than normal physical educators. Besides, it was found in another study that the

participation of physical education teachers in adapted physical activity courses had a positive effect on teachers' attitudes in terms of including the students with disabilities in their classes (Hutzler, 2003). If we want to increase the quality of education given to individuals with disabilities, first of all, we need to make the physical education teachers of the future become experts in the field. The way to this is through a higher quality undergraduate education.

The results of this study revealed that more theoretical and practical courses for the disabled will increase the confidence of pre-service teachers in teaching the students with disabilities. It has been revealed that practical academic preparation for the disabled in undergraduate education will increase the confidence of pre-service teachers in teaching the students with disabilities, and that they will exhibit a positive attitude. It is an important finding of this research that the most important factor affecting the confidence of the pre-service physical educators in teaching the students with disabilities is the disability type of the students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the researcher, the responses of the participants are accurate and sincere. In this study, physical education and sports teaching students were told that their responses would be anonymous. However, the fact that their negative responses would be given to their instructors may have affected their reactions. Besides, all the participants are the students enrolled in the same university and taking physical education and sports courses and training practice courses for the disabled with practical experiences at the same time and only within the semester context. The fact that the students from other universities in other regions of Turkey did not participate in the research is a situation that limits the study in terms of the generalizability of the results. In addition to this, the findings cannot be generalized unless a specific program, the same course outline, course book, and application types just like the ones in the current study are used. We believe that our findings provide significant information about the existing challenges in dealing with the students with disabilities in the context of physical education and sports teacher education. Future studies can be done by keeping the sample group more heterogeneous. Physical education and sports teacher education programs (PETE) should approach the physical educators of the future with an innovative perspective in determining effective ways to train self-confident educators and experts in every sense.

ETHICAL TEXT

"In this article, the journal writing rules, publication principles, research and publication ethics, and journal ethical rules were followed. The responsibility belongs to the author (s) for any violations that may arise regarding the article. " For this study, research permit numbered 76606 and dated 28.04.2022 was obtained at Usak University.

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