

ATTITUDES OF FUTURE PHYSICAL EDUCATORS TOWARD TEACHING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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The Republic of South Africa has undergone significant changes with regard to people with disabilities in the past number of years, which have also included changes in legislation and education. In the education of children with disabilities, inclusion is quite a new phenomenon. In order to prepare for inclusion, universities must focus on teacher preparation. Sherrill (1998) emphasised the role of attitudes in teacher preparation and therefore we have focused on the attitudes of university students toward inclusion. The aim of this study was to examine the differences in attitudes between two groups of students of the Department of Sport Science at the University of Stellenbosch in the Republic of South Africa. 30 of the students were specialized in coaching people with disabilities and 30 students were without this specialization. The adapted version of the questionnaire "Attitudes Toward Teaching Individuals with Physical Disabilities in Physical Education" (ATIPDPE), an instrument designed according to TPB (Ajzen, 1991, 2000) was used. To compare the attitudes of the two groups of students from the Republic of South Africa, a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. The computer program SPSS PC 11.0 was used to determine significant differences between students in intention to include participant with physical disability into general activity and behavioral belief. Two groups were compared with regard to TPB components and the results showed no significant differences between these groups.

Keywords: Inclusion, physical disability, attitudes, physical activity, physical education.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of South Africa has undergone significant changes with regard to people with disabilities in the past number of years. These include changes in legislation, the structure of special education, general education, access to employment and others. Inclusion in the Republic of South Africa is quite a new phenomenon. It is thus not surprising that the restructuring and redesigning of education is in the very early stages. Gradual movement away from a segregated setting for learners with special needs is taking place, in the direction of the provision of education for all learners in an inclusive and supportive learning environment (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker, & Engelbrecht, 1999).

Attitudes can be defined as someone's tendency to approach or avoid something. These choices as to whether to approach or avoid something, in turn lead to the formation of new attitudes with regards to the environment and one's self. Attitudes can be oriented towards anything ranging from, for example: objects, oneself, other persons, a disability, or a racial group (McMurray, 2003).

Attitudes towards the inclusion of people with disabilities have been influenced by the following aspects – ethical and cultural influences, beliefs, differences, structure of the population, the educational system and the system of education for future professionals. Many people are affected by a change to inclusion ranging from teachers, principals and parents to the learners both with and without disabilities. These changes are affected by current attitudes (some positive and some negative) (McMurray, 2003).

"In South Africa, the critical barrier to inclusion are negative and discriminatory attitudes in society towards difference with respect to race, class, gender, culture, disability, religion, ability and other characteristics" (Muthukrishna & Schoeman, 2000, 325). In an effort to promote successful inclusion, methods for the targeting the development of positive attitudes must be discovered and implemented (McMurray, 2003).

Research has shown that the attitudes of teachers are one of most crucial determinants in the inclusion of children with disability into general physical education and those which are of utmost importance if the process of inclusion is to be successful. "The most prevalent bar-

riers to including students with disabilities are related to teacher preparation and teacher attitudes as well as perceived and actual barriers to instruction that can include equipment, programming, and time" (Sherrill, 1998, 241).

Dube (2005) has reported that the life experiences of black and white disabled people under apartheid were very different and reflected the general inequalities between white and black people in South Africa. However, it must also be recognised that under apartheid, all disabled people – black and white – were discriminated against and marginalised because of their disability. In particular, they had limited access to fundamental socio-economic rights such as employment, education and appropriate health and welfare services.

After the year 1994, changes in legislation have begun regarding the structure of special education, general education, access to employment and others. According to Rooyen (2002), policy documents, green papers, white papers and acts have been produced constructing their purpose as promoting and protecting the rights of people with disability since 1994. In education, children with disabilities are referred to as being part of a larger group "learners with special needs" or "learners experiencing barriers to learning and development".

In 2001, the census data indicated that there were 2 255 982 people (1 173 939 females, 1 082 043 males, 1 854 376 were African, 168 678 of color, 41 235 Indian/Asian and 191 693 white) with various kinds of disability in the Republic of South Africa. This is 5% of the total population. The prevalence increased from 2% in the age group below 9 years to 27% in the age group aged 80 years and above. The prevalence of people with disability who had no schooling was high (10.5%) compared to those who had post secondary education (3%).

Furthermore, 5.2% had primary level education and 3.9% of the people had a secondary level education. This number can be a result of the fact that disabled people were often excluded in the past from educational opportunities, as the environment in regular school does not make for easy inclusion. The second explanation is that low levels of education are generally connected with low socio-economic status (poverty). No access to education could therefore be a result of both lack of access to educational opportunities and poverty (Lehohla, 2005).

The school system in South Africa enables many disabled children to attend primary school in the mainstream system. This does not in any way mean that inclusive education has been achieved, or that disabled children have been catered to. As pointed out by the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee on Educational Support Services (NCESS), this inclusion is ad hoc, and does not deal with the issues of spe-

cial educational needs or disability (Dube, 2005). "It is simply that there are no other services and so disabled children are generally dumped into mainstream schools by their parents or the education system" (Dube, 2005, 29). An inclusive education system could take various forms and be characterized differently in South Africa. In some provinces, initial support systems will have to be established prior to inclusive education. Large numbers of children are being mainstreamed by default, mainly in sites of learning of the former Department of Education (Engelbrecht et al., 1999).

Sport and physical activity is important for each of us, including people with disability. Physical activity in this population has implications far beyond the improvement of their physical condition. It gives the possibility for participation, socialization, and the improvement of quality of life and a range of positive emotions which can be experienced through activity. Such possibilities apply particularly to children with a disability. Participation of people with disability in sport, the problems they have encountered and ways of overcoming these problems have given rise to the academic discipline and profession entitled Adapted Physical Activity. In the Republic of South Africa it is possible to study this specialization at their third level of university studies under the name "Sport Coaching of People with Disabilities".

According to study by McMurray (2003), a substantial percentage of children with disabilities is included into the non Learners with Special Education Needs (LSEN) school. These schools have small class sizes and physical education activities are provided by trained specialists. McMurray (2003) found that at the LSEN schools, none of the children with disability were currently participating in physical education and only a small percentage of learners with disabilities participate in extramural physical activities. Children with disabilities could also experience certain barriers to sport participation because of problems engaging in educational and sport structures. The time has arrived for the individual's needs in the educational and sport system in South Africa to be addressed (McMurray, 2003).

In South Africa, physical education is not an independent subject, but is part of a greater subject entitled "Life orientation" (Life orientation is in the field of human and social studies). Life orientation is the study of the self in relation to others and society, and applies a holistic approach. It is concerned with the personal, social, intellectual, emotional and physical growth and development of learners, and the way in which these dimensions are interrelated and expressed in life. The focus is the development of self in society, and a balanced and confident improved quality of life for all. Life orientation guides and prepares learners for life and its responsibilities. This subject addresses knowledge, values, attitudes and skills regarding the self;

responsible citizenship; a healthy and productive life; social engagement; and the environment (Department of Education, 2002, 66).

The purpose of the subject of Life orientation is to prepare learners to engage on a personal, socio-economic, psychological, physical, moral, cultural and constitutional level with the demands of the world. In the area of recreation and physical activity, the student should learn about healthy practices and participate in recreational and leisure time activities. The goal of the area of recreation and physical activity is that students will gain an understanding of the relationship between health and physical activities and of how the environment can improve the quality of life and well being of all learners (Department of Education, 2002). It is not compulsory for any school to include the area of recreation and physical activity as part of the curriculum. Attitudes, behaviour, knowledge and skills about overcoming obstacles of inclusion are interconnected. According to some experts in the field, one solution is to prepare future teachers on how to include children with disabilities into their lessons. Furthermore, the first step in transforming attitudes is to first recognise where they stand presently. The aim of this study was to examine the differences in attitudes between two groups of students of the Department of Sport Science at the University of Stellenbosch in the Republic of South Africa. Thirty of the students specialized in coaching people with disability and 30 students were without this specialization.

METHOD

Participants

The collection of data was completed during the summer semester of 2007. A total number of 60 university students from the Republic of South Africa completed the ATIPDPE questionnaire. Students were from the Department of Sport Science. Of the 60 students, 30 of them were enrolled in Sport Science without a specialization in the Sport Coaching of People with Disabilities (SCPD) and 30 were enrolled in Sport Science with SCPD. There were 20 females and 10 males enrolled in Sport Science without SCPD and 24 females and 6 males enrolled in Sport Science with SCPD. Participants had different combinations of subjects: sport science was combined with either psychology, geography or physiology. There were 24 females and 6 males enrolled in Sport Science with SCPD. They also had different combinations of subjects: sport science and psychology, geography or physiology, plus sport coaching of people with disabilities. The mean age of students without SCPD was 19.03 and the mean age of students with SCPD was 21.57.

Instrument used

The questionnaire Attitude toward Teaching Individuals with Physical Disabilities in Physical Education (ATIPDPE) developed in 2002 by Kudláček, Válková, Sherrill, Myers and French was used. This instrument is based on the "theory of planned behaviour" by Ajzen (1991) and was constructed in the English language. In this questionnaire, attitude was inferred from behavioral beliefs. Content validity evidence was established by experts in two countries and pilot studies working with 96 university students to elicit their accessible beliefs and intentions (Kudláček, Válková, Sherrill, Myers, & French, 2002). Kudláček et al. (2002) used three methods of examining construct validity in the development of ATIPDPE: Pearson product moment correlation, multiple hierarchical regression, and known group differences. In the examination of the reliability of repeated measures, ANOVA was used, revealing that test-retest scores were not significantly different.

The introduction to the questionnaire contains definitions of terms relating to students with physical disabilities and inclusion, and detailed instructions for filling out the questionnaire. The questionnaire itself is composed of 2 items asking about the understanding of definitions, 4 intention statements, 12 behavioral belief statements, 2 normative belief statements, 2 control belief statements, and 14 questions concerning demographic data. The 7 point Likert type rating scale was used with each belief and intention statement. Behavioral belief evaluation scores were transformed from unidirectional (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) to bi-directional (-1, -2, -3, 0, 1, 2, 3) scoring. Scores for each statement were multiplied to create the item belief scores as shown in TABLE 1.

The results of the multiplications were summed and reported as the summary behavioral belief index (attitudinal score). This index represents the state of attitudes towards the target behavior. Scores for intention statements were also summed up and created the summary intention index. The questions about normative beliefs and control beliefs were created as direct measures and they were reduced in comparison with the original questionnaire, because this research is focused on behavioral beliefs as a main component of influenced attitudes. It is argued that students can not relate to the situation at schools and also their perceived competence could be much distorted without the benefit of personal experience (Kudláček et al., 2002).

The instrument was modified for purpose of this study. The original version of the instrument could not be used because this questionnaire is aimed at potential future educators of physical education. In South Africa however, this is not a subject at the university, given, as mentioned previously, that PE is not a stand alone subject but part of the subject - Life orientation. The

TABLE 1

Sample items from the attitudinal scale

Behavioral belief (outcome belief)							
Likelihood							
Including participants with physical disabilities in physical activity will help participants without disabilities to learn to interact with persons with physical disabilities:							
An extremely unlikely outcome : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ :							
An extremely likely outcome							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Evaluation							
Students without disabilities learning to interact with persons with physical disabilities is:							
An extremely bad outcome : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ :							
An extremely good outcome							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

majority of participants in this study were preparing for coaching or another activity connected with sport. The modified questionnaire was adapted by two experts in this field. One of these experts was from South Africa and altered the content with regard to language and culture differences to aid better comprehension by the subjects.

To compare the attitudes of the two groups of students from the Republic of South Africa, a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. Computer program SPSS PC 11.0 was utilised to determine if there were significant differences between students in their intention to include participants with physical disability into general activities and to hold the corresponding behavioral belief. The level of significance was set at 0.05.

RESULTS

The sample of students from the Republic of South Africa consists of 30 students of sport science with SCPD and 30 students of sport science without SCPD. Results of the demographic data study (TABLE 2) revealed that there were more females (66.7%) than males (33.3%) in the sample of students without SCPD. The same outcome is found among students with SCPD, in which case there are absolutely more females in the sample (80%) as opposed to males (20%). Personal experience with people with disabilities was reported to be one hundred percent by the students of Sport Science with the subject SCPD, while 73.3% students without SCPD do not have personal experience with people with disabilities. Only one student without the subject of SCPD has had a bad experience with people with disability. In both groups of students, a very positive evaluation of their previous experience dominates. Of students without SCPD, 12 evaluated this experience

as very good, 7 as sufficient and 4 as great. From 30 students with experience, 2 have sufficient, 25 very good and 3 great experiences.

TABLE 2

Information about participants – students without SCPD and students with SCPD

Variable	Students without SCPD % (n = 30)	Students with SCPD % (n = 30)
Female	66.70	80.00
Male	33.30	20.00
Personal experience with PD	73.30	100.00
Evaluation of experience with PD:		
bad	3.30	-
sufficient	23.30	6.07
very good	40.00	83.30
great	13.30	10.00
Taking APA course at university	26.70	93.30
Getting information outside of the university	40.00	50.00
Perceived competence to teach participants with PD today:		
not at all	20.00	-
somewhat	56.70	70.00
very	23.30	30.00
Perceived competence to teach participants with PD after graduation:		
not at all	3.30	-
somewhat	33.30	43.30
very	63.30	56.70
Intent to teach PE after graduation	20.00	50.00

Among students without SCPD, 26.7% reported taking some SCPD course at University, while 93.3% of students with SCPD had had some SCPD course at University. Of students without SCPD, 40%, as well as half (50%) of the sample of students with SCPD received information outside of the University. Among students without SCPD, 20% reported not being competent at all, while 56.7% of them reported being somewhat competent and 23.3% very competent. None of the students with SCPD declared themselves not to be competent, while 70% of them felt somewhat competent and 30% felt very competent to teach people with physical disability.

In regards to their perception of competency after graduation, only 1 of the students without SCPD and none of the students with SCPD reported having no competence at all, while 10 of the students without SCPD and 13 of the students with SCPD declared themselves to be somewhat competent, and 19 of the students without SCPD and 17 of the students with SCPD reported feeling very competent. Twenty percent of the students without SCPD and in contrast to them, 50% of the students with SCPD reported having an intention to teach physical education (PE) after their graduation.

Comparison of groups and descriptive statistic for the behavioural beliefs component

To compare the attitudes of the two groups of students from the Republic of South Africa (students of Sport Sciences with SCPD and students of Sport Sciences without SCPD) we used a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and found that there are no significant differences among these groups ($F = 0.38$, $p = 0.54$). The scores on behavioral beliefs are contained in TABLE 3. Intention toward behavior can be inferred from the summative behavioral belief index. Scores which show an opinion of likelihood (that the outcome will occur) were calculated based on a 1 to 7 scale. Scores indicating an evaluation of a good or bad outcome were calculated on a -3 to +3 scale. Both groups of students reported a positive outcome, that inclusive physical education will improve people's knowledge about people with physical disability, encourage them to help each other and that tolerance and cooperation will also be taught in this way. These statements were highlighted as being very good and also as being a very likely outcome. Students believe that these outcomes are more likely to occur and they also believe that inclusion will likely have a positive effect on the personalities of students with physical disability.

The majority of answers reported that teaching physical education with the inclusion of people with

TABLE 3

Scores of sport science with and without SCPD students on behavioral beliefs

Beliefs about the outcome	Scale	Students without SCPD (n = 30) M (SD)	Students with SCPD (n = 30) M (SD)
1) Will facilitate persons without PD learning to interact with persons with PD	Likelihood Evaluation Like × Eval	6.17 (1.21) 2.30 (0.88) 15.00 (6.54)	6.27 (0.74) 2.17 (0.87) 13.80 (6.17)
2) Will make my presenting physical activity more difficult	Likelihood Evaluation Like × Eval	4.43 (1.20) 0.13 (1.20) 0.97 (5.79)	5.30 (1.12) 0.97 (1.16) 5.30 (6.36)
3) Will encourage participants to learn to help others	Likelihood Evaluation Like × Eval	6.23 (0.77) 2.63 (0.72) 16.43 (5.05)	5.87 (1.11) 2.57 (0.77) 15.37 (5.54)
4) Will make lesson planning and preparation more difficult	Likelihood Evaluation Like × Eval	5.00 (1.46) 0.63 (1.19) 2.70 (6.03)	5.33 (1.03) 1.17 (0.95) 6.67 (5.93)
5) Will teach participants greater tolerance	Likelihood Evaluation Like × Eval	5.63 (1.47) 2.43 (1.04) 14.67 (6.59)	5.97 (0.89) 2.27 (0.78) 13.70 (5.50)
6) Will have a positive effect on the personalities of participants with PD	Likelihood Evaluation Like × Eval	6.23 (1.01) 2.50 (1.07) 15.73 (7.57)	6.10 (0.99) 2.33 (0.84) 14.70 (6.59)
7) Will experience discrimination against participants with PD	Likelihood Evaluation Like × Eval	3.20 (1.73) -2.53 (0.97) -7.87 (5.64)	3.43 (1.72) -2.40 (1.00) -7.83 (5.15)
8) Will slow down instruction and progress in a group	Likelihood Evaluation Like × Eval	4.17 (1.34) -0.60 (1.22) -2.07 (5.01)	4.53 (1.07) -0.13 (1.28) -0.40 (6.03)
9) Will improve the knowledge of participants about persons with PD	Likelihood Evaluation Like × Eval	6.50 (0.78) 2.67 (0.61) 17.60 (4.92)	6.30 (0.70) 2.50 (0.62) 16.00 (4.95)
10) Will teach participants cooperation	Likelihood Evaluation Like × Eval	6.20 (0.89) 2.73 (0.64) 17.20 (5.08)	6.03 (0.76) 2.60 (0.86) 15.83 (5.88)
11) Participants without disabilities will experience discrimination	Likelihood Evaluation Like × Eval	2.20 (1.71) -2.33 (1.35) -5.27 (4.70)	2.70 (1.60) -1.77 (1.45) -4.23 (5.19)
12) Will reduce the quality of the experience	Likelihood Evaluation Like × Eval	2.57 (1.25) -1.93 (1.05) -4.73 (3.83)	3.23 (1.52) -1.30 (1.34) -2.93 (3.94)

Legend

M (SD) - mean (standard deviation)

PD - physical disability

PA - physical activity

disability will be more difficult, along with increased difficulty in preparation and planning for the lessons as being a very likely outcome. Students with the subject SCPD evaluated these outcomes (inclusion of people with disability will be more difficult) slightly more positively ($M = 5.30$) than students without this subject ($M = 4.43$). The most negative outcome was evaluated by students as being potential discrimination against students with physical disabilities. The most positive outcome according to both groups of students is that participants without physical disability will have better and more knowledge about participants with physical disabilities.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

One of the main barriers to the inclusion of children with disabilities into regular physical education is the attitude of teachers. These attitudes toward inclusion of children with disability can arise from insufficient knowledge or lack of experience. An obvious solution would be to improve these two elements (knowledge and experience) and the most opportune time would be at university. The main aims of the study were to adapt the questionnaire ATIPDPE for South African students and to use this questionnaire for comparing students from two different groups. These students were from the Faculty of Sport Science. We gave the questionnaire to 30 students with a specialization in SCPD and 30 students without this specialization.

The results upon comparing behavioural beliefs showed that there are no significant differences between groups. It is very difficult to establish the reasons for these results. In other countries, significant differences were noted between similar subjects. Blanková (2006) found that students of general physical education have less favourable attitudes toward including students with physical disability into general physical education classes than do primary adapted physical education students in the Republic of Slovenia and also in the Czech Republic. There may be several reasons for these results. The Republic of South Africa is a multicultural country. Children grow up in a world, where differences are commonplace. For them, social contact or working with people with any dissimilarity might prove to be much easier. Another fact is the structure of the educational system. In South Africa there have not been a lot of special schools and children with disabilities have been educated in ordinary schools. Students, now studying at universities, had more possibilities to meet these children with disabilities at primary or high school.

Quite interesting are also the results of the demographic data study. To the question "Do you intend to

become a teacher after graduation?" fifteen students with SCPD specialization answered yes and only six of the students without specialization in SCPD had the same answer. Six of the thirty students without SCPD do not feel competent today in providing leadership or teaching physical activity to participants with physical disabilities. These numbers decreased when asked the question of how competent they will feel after graduation. The answer "not at all" occurred only in one response, but the answer "very competent" increased from seven to nineteen. This result could be because students from the group without SCPD will take a course in coaching people with disabilities before graduation. The group without SCPD felt slightly more competent. The proposed research identifies the attitudes the future educators hold in relation to inclusion. Knowledge of these attitudes (as they are and whatever they are) gives us the opportunity of identifying what should be done in the preparation of future teachers towards the inclusion of these children in their classes. More literature about the attitudes of future physical educators can be a contribution towards the betterment of this situation in comparison with other countries particularly where similarities exist in their educational systems and in conditions of inclusion.

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**NÁZORY BUDOUCÍCH PEDAGOGŮ
NA ZAČLENĚNÍ DĚTÍ S POSTIŽENÍM
DO TĚLESNÉ VÝCHOVY
V JIHOAFRICKÉ REPUBLICE
(Souhrn anglického textu)**

Jednou z bariér, týkající se začlenění dětí s postižením do tělesné výchovy, mohou být negativní postoje

učitelů. Tyto postoje mohou pramenit z neznalosti nebo nedostatku zkušeností s dětmi s postižením. Pro překonání těchto bariér je nezbytné změnit postoje těch, kteří mají být prostředníky v inkluzi. Tripp a Sherrill (1991) opakovaně vyzdvihují význam postojů v aplikovaných pohybových aktivitách a jejich výzkumu. Teoreticky podložený výzkum o utváření postojů může stanovit rámec porozumění faktorům, které působí na vztah mezi postojem a chováním (Tripp & Sherrill, 1991). V rámci výzkumu postojů jsme upravili dotazník „Attitude Toward Teaching Individuals with Physical Disabilities in Physical Education“ (ATIPDPE) pro studenty oboru „sport science“ na Universitě Stellenbosch v Jihoafrické republice. Do výzkumu bylo začleněno 60 studentů. Utvořili jsme dvě skupiny, ve kterých bylo 30 studentů se specializací trenérství osob se zdravotním postižením a 30 studentů bez této specializace. Porovnali jsme skupiny v komponentech teorie plánovaného jednání a výsledky ukázaly, že mezi postoji studentů v těchto dvou skupinách není statisticky významný rozdíl.

Klíčová slova: inkluze, integrace, tělesné postižení, postoje, pohybová aktivita, tělesná výchova.

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