

Investigation Of Attitudes Of Pre-Service Teachers Of Exercise And Sports Education For Disabilities Towards Children With Mental Disabilities

MEHMET ILKIM¹, BARIŞ MERGAN², HACI KARADAG³, KERIM RUZGAR⁴

¹Department of Exercise and Sport Education in Disabilities, Inonu University, Malatya, Turkey, +90 5053544498, Mehmet.ilkim@inonu.edu.tr (corresponding author)

²Postgraduate Student of the Department of Physical Education and Sports, Inonu University, Malatya, Turkey, +90 5050528280, barimergan@gmail.com

³PhD Student of the Department of Physical Education and Sports, Inonu University, Malatya, Turkey, +90 5057710262, hmkaradag23@hotmail.com

⁴PhD Student of the Department of Physical Education and Sports, Inonu University, Malatya, Turkey, +90 5069483507, kerimruzgar0@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Background:

Aim: This study aimed to determine the attitudes of pre-service teachers who study at Inonu University, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Department of Exercise and Sports Education for the Disabilities, towards mentally disabled children.

Methods: “The Attitudes of Physical Education and Sports Teacher Candidates Towards Mentally Handicapped Children” scale was used to collect the research data. The universe of the study consists of 200 students studying at the sports science faculty of Inonu University, in the department of exercise and sports education for the disabilities. The sample of the study consists of 136 students randomly selected from the given universe.

Results: According to the findings of the study, no statistically significant difference was found between the attitudes of physical education teachers according to the gender, age, class variable, and the status of having a disabled person attitudes towards mentally disabled children.

Conclusions:

Keywords: Exercise, attitude, individuals with mental disability.

INTRODUCTION

Man is a social being and he lives in harmony with the society he lives in. Each individual is affected by social and individual characteristics by participating in society at various levels. Thus, it reflects its social identity as required by its roles.¹ Although the concept of disability seems to be known by society, it generally exhibits an expression of uncertainty. Individuals exhibit a distinct attitude in their movement ability, attitude, and behavior by showing mental and physical differences (Disabled people and life). In other words, individuals who have lost some abilities to varying degrees due to illness or accident suffered before, during, or after birth and who cannot fully fulfill their vital conditions are called disabled.²

Attitude has been described as a state of mental preparedness that emerges as a result of the lives and experiences of individuals and has the power to determine or influence the behavior of the individual against all the formations it is related to.³ The most important of the functions in the social institution, which is called the family, is the care of children and their adaptation to society. The presence of a mentally disabled member in the family affects family life significantly. This situation brings different responsibilities to the family. These responsibilities can be listed as follows; individual care, economic concerns, medical expenses, self-care obligation, and future concerns. A basic function of the family institution is the care of children and the provision of their initial preparation for the social environment. Having a mentally retarded child is a situation that affects family life significantly. This situation puts a burden on the family. There are many

factors affecting family burden. Among these, direct care difficulties, deterioration of home routines and roles, economic concerns, medical expenses, low income, and emotional stress have an important place.^{4,5} Among the mentally disabled individuals, some show close physical resemblance to normal individuals. Mentally handicapped individuals can sometimes show that they are as competent in physical activities as normal individuals and achieve various successes in different sports branches.⁶ Mentally retarded individuals generally exhibit uncontrolled physical strength. This situation can show an aggressive and negative tendency at times. However, when physical strength is evaluated correctly, it is important for the development of the individual.⁷

MATERIAL and METHOD

Research Design: The study is quantitative research, and the scanning model, one of the descriptive research methods, was used in the study. In quantitative research, statistical data are obtained by using data collection methods such as questionnaires, scales, or structured interviews with the use of survey-type studies with wide participation.⁸

Study Population and Sample: The universe of the study consists of 200 students studying at the sports sciences faculty of Inonu University, in the department of exercise and sports education for the disabled. The sample of the study consists of 136 students randomly selected from the given universe.

Data Collection Tools: The “Attitude Scale for Children with Mentally Disabled” scale developed by Süngü (2012) was used.⁹ The scale consists of 5 factors.

FINDINGS

In this section, the statistical results of the data obtained in the study are given in tables.

Table 1. Demographic information of the students participating in the study

Gender	N	%
Male	78	57,4
Female	58	42,6
Do You Have A Disabled Acquaintance?	N	%
Yes	99	72,8
No	37	27,2
Age	N	%
18-21	57	41,9
22-25	57	41,9
26-29	22	16,2
Grade	N	%
1 st Grade	36	26,5
2 nd Grade	36	26,5
3 rd Grade	16	11,8
4 th Grade	48	35,2

The gender distribution of the students participating in the study is N = 78 boys and N = 58 girls. According to the answers given to the question of "Do you have a disabled person?", N = 99 students answered yes and N = 37

students answered no. The age distribution is N = 57 people between 18-21 years old, N = 57 people between 22-25 years old, and N = 22 people between 26-29 years old. Class distribution is N = 36 students in 1st year, N = 36 students in 2nd year, N = 16 students in 3rd year and N = 48 people on 4th year.

The results of the Mann-Whitney U test made depending on the gender variable of the participants participating in the study are given in table 2. No significant differences were found between male (S.O = 64.81) and female (S.O = 73.46) participants in the general attitude of the scale. In the fear sub-dimension of the scale, no significant differences were found between male (S.O = 68.97) and female (S.O = 67.87) participants. In the support sub-dimension of the scale, no significant differences were found between male (S.O = 67.38) and female (S.O = 70.01) participants. In the acceptance sub-dimension of the scale, no significant differences were found between male (S.O = 71.49) and female (S.O = 64.48) participants. In the benefits subscale of the scale, significant differences were found between male (S.O = 61.73) and female (S.O = 77.74) participants. In the emotions sub-dimension of the scale, significant differences were found between male (S.O = 59.88) and female (S.O = 80.09) participants.

Table 2. Mann Whitney U test results depending on gender variable of general attitude and scale sub-dimensions

General Attitude	N	S.O	S.T	U	Z	P
Male	78	64,81	5055,50	1974,50	-1,26	,20
Female	58	73,46	4260,50			
Fear	N	S.O	S.T	U	Z	P
Male	78	68,97	5379,50	2225,50	-1,16	,87
Female	58	67,87	3936,50			
Support	N	S.O	S.T	U	Z	P
Male	78	67,38	5255,50	2174,50	-,39	,69
Female	58	70,01	4060,50			
Acceptance	N	S.O	S.T	U	Z	P
Male	78	71,49	5576,00	2029,00	-1,03	,30
Female	58	64,48	3740,00			
Benefit	N	S.O	S.T	U	Z	P
Male	78	61,73	4807,00	1726,00	-2,37	,01*
Female	58	77,74	4509,00			
Emotions	N	S.O	S.T	U	Z	P
Male	78	59,88	4671,00	1590,00	-3,11	,00*
Female	58	80,09	4645,00			

Table 3. Mann Whitney u test results of the variable of general attitude and scale sub-dimensions depending on the question of "Do you have a disabled acquaintance?"

General Attitude	N	S.O	S.T	U	Z	P
Yes	99	66,64	6597,50	1647,500	-,901	,367
No	37	73,47	2718,50			
Fear	N	S.O	S.T	U	Z	P
Yes	99	65,64	6498,00	1548,000	-1,401	,161
No	37	76,16	2818,00			
Support	N	S.O	S.T	U	Z	P
Yes	99	71,41	7070,00	1543,000	-1,439	,150
No	37	60,70	2246,00			
Acceptance	N	S.O	S.T	U	Z	P
Yes	99	67,35	6668,00	1718,000	-,558	,577
No	37	71,57	2648,00			
Benefit	N	S.O	S.T	U	Z	P
Yes	99	68,13	6744,50	1794,500	-,182	,856
No	37	69,50	2571,50			
Emotions	N	S.O	S.T	U	Z	P
Yes	99	64,94	6429,00	1479,000	-1,818	,069
No	37	78,03	2887,00			

The Mann-Whitney U test results, which were made depending on the answers given by the participants to the question of whether you have a disabled person, are given in table 3. Significant differences were not detected among the participants who answered yes (S.O = 66.64) and no (S.O = 73.47) in the general attitude of the scale. In the fear subscale of the scale, no significant differences were found among the participants who answered yes (S.O = 65.64) and no (S.O = 76.16). In the fear supports sub-dimension of the scale, no significant differences were found among

the participants who answered yes (S.O = 71.47) and no (S.O = 60.70). In the acceptance sub-dimension of the scale, no significant differences were found among the participants who answered yes (S.O = 67.35) and no (S.O = 71.57). In the benefits subscale of the scale, no significant differences were found among the participants who answered yes (S.O = 68.13) and no (S.O = 69.50). In the emotions sub-dimension of the scale, no significant differences were found among the participants who answered yes (S.O = 64.94) and no (S.O = 78.03).

Table 4. Kruskal Wallis test results depending on the class variable of general attitude and scale sub-dimensions.

General Attitude	N	S.O	X²	P	Discrepancy
1 st Grade	36	78,14	3,629	,304	
2 nd Grade	36	60,72			
3 rd Grade	16	66,41			
4 th Grade	48	67,80			
Fear	N	S.O	X²	P	Discrepancy
1 st Grade	36	82,57	7,062	,070	
2 nd Grade	36	64,13			
3 rd Grade	16	69,94			
4 th Grade	48	60,75			
Support	N	S.O	X²	P	Discrepancy
1 st Grade (1)	36	76,29	13,298	,004*	(1-2), (1-3) (2-4), (3-4)
2 nd Grade (2)	36	55,14			
3 rd Grade (3)	16	49,34			
4 th Grade (4)	48	79,06			
Acceptance	N	S.O	X²	P	Discrepancy
1 st Grade (1)	36	54,08	7,913	,048*	(1-2), (1-3) (1-4)
2 nd Grade (2)	36	49,07			
3 rd Grade (3)	16	74,75			
4 th Grade (4)	48	69,30			
Benefit	N	S.O	X²	P	Discrepancy
1 st Grade	36	82,64	7,650	,054	
2 nd Grade	36	57,69			
3 rd Grade	16	64,09			
4 th Grade	48	67,47			
Emotions	N	S.O	X²	P	Discrepancy
1 st Grade	36	70,57	1,348	,718	
2 nd Grade	36	64,50			
3 rd Grade	16	76,69			
4 th Grade	48	67,22			

The results of the Kruskal Wallis test made depending on the class variable of the participants participating in the study are given in Table 4. Significant differences could not be determined in the general attitude of the scale between 1st grade (SO = 78.14), 2nd grade (SO = 60.72), 3rd grade (SO = 66.41) and 4th grade (SO = 67.80) students. In the fear sub-dimension of the scale, there were significant differences could not be detected among 1st grade (SO = 82.57), 2nd grade (SO = 64.13), 3rd grade (SO = 69.94) and 4th grade (SO = 60.75) students. In the supports sub-dimension of the scale, there were significant differences among 1st grade (SO = 76.29), 2nd grade (SO = 55.14), 3rd grade (SO = 49.34) and 4th grade (SO = 79.06) students, and Mann Whitney U test was applied in order to understand which groups had significant differences. In the acceptance sub-dimension of the scale, there were significant differences among 1st grade (SO = 54.08), 2nd grade (SO = 49.07), 3rd grade (SO = 74.75) and 4th grade (SO = 69.30) students, and Mann Whitney U test was applied in order to understand which groups had significant

differences. In the benefits sub-dimension of the scale, there were not significant differences among 1st year (SO = 82.64), 2nd year (SO = 57.69), 3rd year (SO = 64.09) and 4th year (SO = 67.47) students. In the emotions sub-dimension of the scale, significant differences could not be found among 1st year (SO = 70.57), 2nd year (SO = 64.50), 3rd year (SO = 76.69) and 4th year (SO = 67.22) students.

Discussion and Result: This study was carried out to examine the effect of factors such as age, gender, do you have a mentally disabled acquaintance, and class status on the attitudes and attitudes of pre-service teachers who study at Inonu university Faculty of Sport Sciences Department of Exercise and Sports Education for Disabled Children.

According to the findings obtained from the study, it was observed that there was no significant difference between the attitude scores of the participants towards mentally disabled children according to gender (Table 2); It was determined that there are statistically significant

differences in the benefits and emotions sub-dimensions of the scale related to the mentally disabled. Articles in the literature concluded that gender does not affect attitude score, and reached conclusions that support the result of this research.^{10,11,12,13,14} And other articles in the literature found significant differences between attitudes by gender in their research.^{15,16} The reasons for the difference between the studies are related to the environment in which the researched sample lives, educational environment, family structure, economic situation, etc. It can be thought to be caused by the differences.

According to the variable of the question "Do you have a disabled acquaintance" of the general attitude and scale sub-dimensions, no significant difference was found between both the total attitude scores and the sub-factor scores towards mentally disabled children (Table 3). Süngü (2012) reached the conclusions that support the results of this research⁹; Özer et al. (2013) found that physical education teachers who have a mentally disabled acquaintance have higher attitude scores.¹³ The different attitudes of physical education teachers and physical education teacher candidates can be interpreted as the candidates do not have sufficient experience since they have not yet entered professional life.

No significant differences were found between students in the general attitude of the scale according to the class variable of the general attitude and scale sub-dimensions (Table 4). While no significant differences were detected at the class levels in the fear sub-dimension and benefits sub-dimensions of the scale, significant differences were found in the supports sub-dimension and acceptance sub-dimensions of the scale. Martin and Kudlacek (2010), in their study on attitudes towards students with physical disabilities, determined that grade level does not have any effect on attitude.¹⁷ Likewise, Öztürk and Abakay (2014) concluded in their research that there is no significant difference between class level and attitude towards mental students.¹⁸ However, Rizzo and Kirkendall (1995) found in their research that upper-grade students got higher attitude scores.^{19,20} Considering the positive proportion between the grade level and the courses taken, it can be said that the courses taken by prospective teachers do not play an important role in developing their attitudes positively.

As a result; no significant difference was found between the attitudes and attitudes of the teacher candidates studying at the Department of Exercise and Sports Education for the Disabled, and the attitudes towards mentally disabled children for factors such as age, gender, do you have a mentally disabled acquaintance and class status.

Based on the results obtained;

- Conducting studies with a different and wider sample group,
- Teacher candidates and children with disabilities can be interacted by including practices of physical education and sports for the disabled rather than theoretical studies; In this way, it can be ensured that they get to know the disabled people closely and develop a positive attitude towards them.
- Within the framework of cooperation with special education institutions, teacher candidates can be

encouraged to observe and participate in inclusive education practices in classrooms with disabled children within the scope of the teaching practice course applied in schools in order to develop a positive attitude towards persons with disabilities.

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