

Examination of Physical Education Teacher Candidates' Attitudes towards Individuals with Physical Disability by Visual Information

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ABSTRACT The purpose of this paper is to examine the attitudes of physical education teacher candidates towards the disabled through visual information, and is directed to determine the changes. The sample of the study group consists of 6 females and 27 males including a total of 33 physical education teacher candidates from Batman University of Physical Education and Sports School. In this paper, the "Attitude toward Disabled Persons Scale" (ATDP) was used. ATDP scale Form-O was translated into Turkish. Changes in attitudes towards the students with disability in the research group show the way how visual information is used to identify them. For this purpose, a short film containing the problems of the disabled was let to be watched by teacher candidates, following the display, scale was applied to the research group. The measurement results of preliminary test and posttest, applied to Physical Education and Sports teacher candidates before and after the display of the short movie, were evaluated with dependent sample t-test analysis; and the level of significance was taken as $p < 0.05$. Pretest and posttest results of the study show that there is not a statistically significant difference after the visual information of the physical education teacher candidates' attitudes towards the disabled.

INTRODUCTION

Attitude is a mental, emotional and behavioral reaction predisposition that an individual displays based upon experiences, knowledge, emotions and instincts against him or objects in the environment, or to a social issue or an event. According to Baron et al. (1977), attitudes are highly organized for long-term emotions, beliefs and behavioral tendencies. These tendencies are about other people, groups, ideas, and other parts of a country or objects (Cuceloglu 2008).

Attitudes are not innate, and they are achieved through education. Hence, like learned learning characteristics, attitudes can change, too (Aydin et al. 2004). In the circumstances wherein the direction of the attitude is positive, individuals approach or tend to be positive towards the subject of the attitude. If the direction of attitude is negative, individuals tend to become distant, and avoid being irritated or change the incident, the situation or the object that is in the scope of the attitude (Inceoglu 2010). These kinds of positive and negative attitudes can be directed to disabled individuals who constitute a clear majority. In Turkey, there are 3641 physically disabled sportsmen, 3155 of them are men, while 486 of them are women (Genclik Spor Bakanligi 2015).

The most crucial factor that provides the development of positive attitudes towards disabled individuals is the increase in social dialogue be-

tween disabled and non-disabled individuals (Wong 2008). When one talks about attitudes towards disabled people, it is the emotions, thoughts and behavior of other individuals towards individuals affected by visually, audibly, mentally and orthopedic inability (Freedman et al. 2003).

The people, who previously developed stereotypical opinions against disabled individuals, may change their attitude under the light of correct information due to alteration in their opinions. The alteration in the opinion extent of attitudes necessitates providing correct information of positive and negative sides of the subject person, object or thought. Unless the aural or visual information about the object, person and thought is sufficient, it does not provide attitudes to change; and so, they remain the same (Ozyurek 2013).

Because the attitude of the individuals who have developed normally is important throughout the entire lives of the individuals with disability (Olcay 2012), the attitudes toward individuals with disability have been a matter of research for years (Barr and Baracchitta 2008; Ostapczuk and Musch 2011: 399-411).

View of the Society towards Individuals Affected by a Disability

In the national legislation concerning disabled individuals, they are mentioned as "the

individual who requires protection, care, rehabilitation, counseling and support services because of the loss of orthopedic, cognitive, mental, emotional and social abilities due to a condition caused by birth or a disease or an accident, and who cannot be obliged to fulfill the necessities of a normal life” (Engelliler Hakkında Kanun 2015).

Although it is accepted that there are positive attitudes towards disabled individuals in societies, attitudes, which are constituted with emotions and beliefs including biased and negative emotions continue to exist (Ozyurek 2010). The negative attitudes towards disabled individuals are rooted due to the lack of knowledge about the disability and disabled individuals (Ison et al. 2010: 360-368). Also, interaction with the disabled individuals is an important factor in changing the attitudes towards disabled individuals (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006: 751-783).

In the paper conducted by Tavil and Ozyurek (2009: 265-276), through panel discussion briefing, a meaningful increase in the positive attitudes was observed. However, interaction with individuals affected by disability did not change the attitude to a meaningful level.

As it was put forward by Akbuga and Gursel (2007: 5-8), reading a panel discussion text concerning with the problems of individuals with physical, visual and audial disabilities in their family and social lives and their education of Physical Education and Sports College students has affected their general attitudes towards physically disabled individuals in a meaningful and positive way.

The research conducted in this regard intends to identify the attitudes of physical education teacher candidates towards individuals with disability using visual information.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample of this research consists of 33 individuals, 6 (18.2%) of whom are women and 27 of whom are (81.8%) men, and who are the first grade students in the College of Physical Education and Sports in Batman University.

Data Collection Tools

In order to determine individuals' attitudes towards physically disabled people, a data collection tool called “The Measurement of Atti-

tudes towards Disabled Persons – O Questionnaire” was used. This data collection tool was developed by Yuker et al. (1970) and was adapted to Turkish by Ozyurek (2006). This measurement, which includes 20 statements, is a Likert-type scale with 6 items. The measurement was graded as +3 to -3, and there were no counter-graded statements. According to this grading plan, if the numbers obtained from the measurement are high, it means that individuals regard disabled people with no difference from the non-disabled people. This measurement was adapted by Ozyurek (2006) and scored .76 in a reliability study in terms of testing-repetition reliability.

Also, another reliability study conducted by Tavil and Ozyurek in 2009 with 196 primary school teaching students has scored $r = .691$ in terms of the testing-repetition reliability. This measurement can be used to determine the attitudes of both, disabled and non-disabled individuals.

Data Collection

The data for the research was collected from the students of Batman University Physical Education and Sports College (2013-2014). The Measurement of Attitudes towards Disabled Persons – O Questionnaire was conducted with 33 volunteers who are Physical Education and Sports teacher candidates. Afterwards, a short movie about the problems of disabled individuals was shown. The measurement was conducted again with the research group after the visual informing.

Data Analysis

The measurement results of the preliminary test and posttest, conducted with Physical Education and Sports teacher candidates before and after the display of the short movie, are evaluated with a paired sample t-test; and the level of significance was taken as $p < 0.05$.

RESULTS

Evaluations, made before and after the short movie show to the physical education teacher candidates are indicated in the Table 1. Pretest results are at an average of 7.18, while posttest are 5.09.

Table 2 represents that there is no statistical-meaningful difference between the attitudes

Table 1: Values of preliminary test- post-test means (M) and standard deviation (Sd) related to attitudes of Physical Education and Sports teacher candidates toward disabled people

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Sd</i>
Pre test	33	7.18	13.55
Post test	33	5.09	10.95

of Physical Education and Sports teacher candidates towards disabled people before and after the visual information ($p=0.35$; $p>0.05$).

Table 2: The comparison of pre-test and post-test sums of Physical Education and Sports teacher candidates

	<i>M</i>	<i>Sd</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Pre-post test total	2.09	12.88	0.9	30.35

DISCUSSION

This research was conducted to determine whether the attitudes of Physical Education and Sports teacher candidates who have not received audio-visual information about disabled people change after a visual information session.

There are studies supporting this research. Sahin and Akyol (2010: 2271-2279) have investigated whether nursery and medicine students' attitudes towards disabled individuals change due to their education programs. Medicine students tend to have a more positive attitude towards individuals with disabilities because they know more about disabilities and they have had more interaction with individuals with disabilities through their education.

In the paper conducted by Tonak and Kitis (2014: 113-119) towards disabled individuals, it has been confirmed that inclining purposeful activity, activity performance, performing free time activities and increase in the life quality have positive effects on the social participation level.

Some papers show that students exhibited positive attitudes towards disabled individuals after the briefing. Melekoglu (2011) stated that through the interaction of students with special needs and teacher candidates, positive attitudes towards students with special needs could be gained. Alptekin and Batik (2013: 18-34) have provided lessons, which were conducted 4 hours

a week for 13 weeks, for Hearing Impaired Teaching first grade students. The attitudes towards disabled individuals have been affected meaningfully and positively with the briefing. The attitudes of students towards disabled individuals have increased, however, this effect has been small.

Another research conducted by Richard et al. (2005: 662-667) shows that the training received by Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation students did not change the attitudes of the students towards people with disabilities in a meaningful way.

In his research, conducted in the framework of preventing guidance understanding for making improvement and raising awareness among students' attitudes towards disabled individuals, Sezer (2012: 16-26) discusses that measurement results of students' attitudes against disabled represent a more meaningful awareness than the results of students who have not attained the guidance activity. In their study that aims at providing information through a panel text, Akbuga and Gursel (2007: 5-8) achieved the result of positive and meaningful differentiation in the attitudes of students towards disabled persons. In another research, which analyzes the attitude towards epilepsy, a similar result was reached. By displaying a movie about epilepsy to the public, the aim was to determine whether there has been an effect of the visual information on the participants. The result of the study was that the visual information did not lead to any changes in the attitudes (Ozyurek 2013). The reason for this is that motor, reaction and psychomotor skills of Physical Education teacher candidates develop through physical and sportive activities throughout their lives. These skills, which develop through time with visual, hearing and physical disabled individuals, are also embodied in Physical Education teacher candidates. This situation shows that Physical Education teacher candidates' attitudes towards disabled individuals are positive. In this context, a change in the attitudes of Physical Education teacher candidates did not happen before or after the visual briefing.

CONCLUSION

Findings of the study suggest that the attitudes of Physical Education and Sports teacher candidates towards physically disabled persons

have not changed statistically with visual information. However, they do not have a negative attitude towards disabled people, either.

The results of the study determined that after exposure to visual information, dealing with the problems of the individuals with disability has been made in order to create difference and raise awareness for Physical Education teacher candidates. There has been no statistical change. The reason is that Physical Education teacher candidates' motor skills, reaction skills and psychomotor skills have been improving through physical and sportive activities. These skills, which develop in time in visually impaired, hearing impaired and physically handicapped individuals, can also be found in Physical Education teacher candidates. This situation shows that Physical Education teacher candidates have positive attitudes towards individuals with disabilities. In this context, there has been no change in the attitudes of Physical Education teacher candidates towards individuals with disability after visual information.

In conclusion, the findings of the study show that although there has been no meaningful difference statistically in the attitudes of Physical Education teacher candidates towards individuals with physical disabilities, in general, they do not have a negative attitude towards disabled individuals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking the fact that attitudes can change through interaction and approval of new kinds of behavior into consideration, studies can be conducted in the future, which include interaction with disabled individuals.

Since plausibility, persuasiveness, and trustworthiness are thought to be effective in the formation and alteration of attitudes, information through seminars, panels, and social and sportive activities can be made in cooperation with people who have received education on disabled individuals or individuals who have a disability.

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