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# Evaluation of Physical Education Teacher Candidate Views Towards Inclusive Education Approach

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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to evaluate the views of physical education teacher candidates regarding inclusive education. 119 students participated from Anadolu University and Sakarya University in this work in which a descriptive survey model is used. Inclusive Education Survey was used to obtain the data. Results show that there is no statistically significant difference between mean values of the views' sub-dimensions in accordance with "university," "age," "marital status," "person with disabilities in the family," "special education" and "inclusive education" parameters. However, a statistically significant difference between "recognition and application ability of the principles of inclusive education" in relation to the "gender" parameter is observed. There is also a statistically significant difference between "recognition and adequacy in the usability of the methods and techniques used in inclusive education" with respect to "participation in lectures, courses, seminars, etc. related to inclusive education" parameter. In conclusion, although inclusive education is accepted both in legal, practical levels in Turkey, it is obvious that there are no lectures regarding inclusive education when existing physical education and sports teaching undergraduate programs are investigated. Application dimension must also be included along with the theoretical knowledge so that inclusive education meets its objective.

**Keywords:** Student with Special Requirement, Inclusive Education, Physical Education Teacher Candidate

## 1. Introduction

Individuals with special needs must benefit from equality of opportunity in education in order to be able to sustain their lives as a part of their surrounding social environment. The practice of "separate education" within the developed framework based on the individuals' disability is conducted as "joint education" in which class teachers and special education experts participate within a class environment consisting of normal individuals and individuals with special needs. The practice of "joint education" which is based on inclusion practices regarding the student with the special requirement to be educated within a normal class has been used frequently in recent years (Altıntaş and Şengül, 2014; Batu et al., 2004; Karadeniz, 2017). Inclusion practices must ensure that individuals with special needs to participate in mutual interaction with other individuals at any levels and types and provide them with the highest level of educational purposes. Individuals with special needs within the scope of this practice may resume their education through inclusion together with their peers with no special needs full time in the same class or in part-time private classes (MEB, 2017).

Link (2008) states inclusive education as "an education that carries the relationships of the children affected by inadequacies with their peers within a class environment to a higher level, aims to minimize the barriers that those face and uses the methods and techniques of special education to provide the children who are in need of special education" whereas Phillips (2008) puts it as "a philosophical belief which is based on educating all students, no matter what their knowledge and skill levels are, together in the same class.

Providing the knowledge and skills that the individuals with special needs need through special education is one of the important factors of introducing these individuals into the society and give them the ability to live independent social lives (Eripek, 2003). Students with special needs are faced with courses and educational programs that are organized for students who show normal development (MEB, 2000). For this reason, programs of education and courses for individuals that are going to take special education should be prepared in the sense that the knowledge and skills that those individuals will be able to use in daily life are improved and also should prepare them to the social environment (Battal, 2007). Special education is crucial in the sense that providing children who need special education with the ability to become independent adults and let them socialize by improving their self-esteem (Duman, 2003; Sadioğlu et al., 2012).

Physical education, one of the most important educational tools applied by developed societies, contributes to humans' physical, social, cultural and mental developments and helps the adjustment process regarding the continuity of the societal structure (Gür, 2001). Teachers, normal students, students of inclusion, families, school administration and physical environment are the factors needed for the adjustment process of inclusive education to be applied successfully (Batu, 2000). It can be said that teachers come first as the people who will help the individuals with special needs to fit in society, socialize and develop through inclusive education. In addition to teachers must complete education of good quality, they must possess the belief that they can fully fulfill their duties and responsibilities (Yılmaz et al., 2004). Guskey (1987) defines teacher adequacy as "the belief of the teacher that he/she can bring the student's development and performance to a higher level by influencing it." This puts big roles and responsibilities on teachers who participate in inclusive education of students with special needs. Besides, having an adequate level of knowledge in special education and inclusive practices comes out as a necessity for those teachers. In the light of all these information, this study has a purpose of evaluating the views of physical education teacher candidates towards inclusive education.

## 2. Method

This study with the purpose of evaluating the views of physical education teacher candidates towards the inclusive education of students with special needs is a descriptive survey model. The investigation method used within a descriptive survey model is to describe an existing situation or a situation that had existed as it exists (Karasar, 1995).

The sample of this study consists of a total of 119 students registered in Anadolu University Sports Sciences Faculty and Sakarya University Sports Sciences Faculty physical education and sports teaching departments within the study period 2016-2017.

In this survey, "Inclusive Education Survey" and "Demographic Information Form" collect data. "Inclusive Education Survey" developed by Aksüt, Battal, and Yaldız (2005) is used for detecting physical education teacher candidates' adequacies regarding inclusive education. The scale consists of 5 points likert scale, 28 entries, and 4 sub-dimensions. The reliability coefficient of the whole scale is found as 0.86. In this study, Inclusive Education Scale's reliability turned out to be 0.921.

"Demographic Information Form," which includes the demographical information in relation with the teachers participated in the study has been developed by the investigator. Information given place within the demographic information form can be listed as age, gender, marital status, the existence of a disabled person within the family, participation in lectures, courses, seminars, etc. trainings regarding special education, participation in lectures, courses, seminars, etc. training regarding inclusive education. Data obtained from the survey is analyzed through

the usage of SPSS 20 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) program, by descriptive statistics, independent t-test, and one-way ANOVA test.

### 3. Results

Results of personal information forms of the physical education teacher candidates who participated in the survey are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Distribution of teacher candidates according to personal information forms

<b>University</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Anadolu University	60	50.4
Sakarya University	59	49.6
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	51	42.9
Male	68	57.1
<b>Age</b>		
20-22	69	58.0
23-25	42	35.3
26 and above	8	6.7
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	4	3.4
Single	115	96.6
<b>Is there any disabled person within your family?</b>		
Yes	8	6.7
No	111	93.3
<b>Have you attended any classes, courses, seminars, etc. in relation to special education?</b>		
Yes	78	65.5
No	41	34.5
<b>Have you attended any classes, courses, seminars, etc. in relation to inclusive education?</b>		
Yes	30	25.2
No	89	74.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>100</b>

It is detected that 50.4 % of participants are from Anadolu University, whereas the remaining 49.6 % is from Sakarya University. It is also seen that 42.9 % of the teacher candidates that took place in the survey are female, while 57.1 % of them are male. Age status distribution reveals that 58 % of participants are in the range between 20-22, 35.3 % of them are between 23-25 and 6.7 % of them are 26 and above. Marital status percentages of the survey sample are as follows: 3.4 % of participants are married, and 96.6 % of them are single. 6.7 % of participants answered the question "Is there any disabled person in your family?" as yes, while 93.3 % of them gave the answer no. 65.5 % of teacher candidates attended the survey replied "yes" to the question of "Have you attended any lectures, courses, seminars, etc. in relation with special education?", whereas 34.5 % of them replied as "no." It can be said that a great majority of the participants said yes to this question due to the fact that the course "Physical Education and Sports for Disabled People" took place within the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> terms of physical education and sports teaching departmental programs as a required course as of 2006. Lastly, the question "Have you attended any lectures, courses, seminars, etc. in relation with inclusive education?" is answered as yes by 25.2%, and no by 74.8% of the participants.

Table 2. Impacts of physical education teacher candidates on their views regarding inclusive education according to university parameter

	University	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	t	p
<b>Sufficiency in recognizing individuals with a need for special education</b>	Anadolu Uni.	60	7.98	1.78924	0.391	0.697
	Sakarya Uni.	59	8.12	1.98645		
<b>Sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education</b>	Anadolu Uni.	60	35.68	7.62034	1.793	0.076
	Sakarya Uni.	59	38.29	8.25228		
<b>Sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education</b>	Anadolu Uni.	60	29.41	4.62965	0.615	0.540
	Sakarya Üniv.	59	28.86	5.12881		
<b>Sufficiency in assessment and evaluation</b>	Anadolu Üniv.	60	5.46	1.35880	0.681	0.497
	Sakarya Üniv.	59	5.63	1.34815		

Table 2 shows that the mean values of the sub-dimensions of teacher candidates' inclusive education scale defined as "sufficiency in recognizing individuals with a need of special education" ( $p=0.697$ ), "sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education" ( $p=0.076$ ), "sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education" ( $p=0.540$ ) and "sufficiency in assessment and evaluation" ( $p=0.497$ ) have no statistically significant difference in terms of the university Parameter according to the t-test conducted ( $p>0.05$ ).

Table 3. Impacts of physical education teacher candidates on their views regarding inclusive education according to gender parameter

	Gender	n	$\bar{X}$	Ss	t	p
<b>Sufficiency in recognizing individuals with a need for special education</b>	Female	51	8.4248	1.80256	1.870	0.064
	Male	68	7.7794	1.90714		
<b>Sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education</b>	Female	51	37.9346	9.21001	1.126	0.262
	Male	68	36.2647	6.97132		
<b>Sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education</b>	Female	51	30.4532	5.05427	2.601	0.010*
	Male	68	28.1618	4.52023		
<b>Sufficiency in assessment and evaluation</b>	Female	51	5.6373	1.44595	0.606	0.546
	Male	68	5.4853	1.28124		

Table 3 reveals that the mean values of the sub-dimensions of teacher candidates' inclusive education scale "sufficiency in recognizing individuals with a need of special education" ( $p=0.664$ ), "sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education" ( $p=0.262$ ) and "sufficiency in assessment and evaluation" ( $p=0.546$ ) have no statistically significant difference in terms of the university parameter according to the t-test conducted ( $p>0.05$ ). "Sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education" ( $p=0.010$ ) sub-dimension has a statistically significant difference in terms of the gender parameter ( $p<0.05$ ). This can be interpreted as the views of female candidates regarding "sufficiency

in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education” ( $\bar{X}$ =30.4532) are more positive than the views of male candidates ( $\bar{X}$ =28.1618).

Table 4. Impacts of physical education teacher candidates on their views regarding inclusive education according to age parameter

	Age	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	F	p
<b>Sufficiency in recognizing individuals with a need for special education</b>	20-22	69	8.2802	1.86350	1.225	0.297
	23-25	42	7.7857	1.79554		
	26 and above	8	7.5417	2.42956		
<b>Sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education</b>	20-22	69	37.6836	8.50275	0.970	0.382
	23-25	42	36.4167	6.50755		
	26 and above	8	33.8750	10.70093		
<b>Sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education</b>	20-22	69	29.8035	5.25010	1.563	0.214
	23-25	42	28.3201	4.08397		
	26 and above	8	27.7778	4.89394		
<b>Sufficiency in assessment and evaluation</b>	20-22	69	5.6594	1.42585	0.551	0.578
	23-25	42	5.4167	1.20424		
	26 and above	8	5.3125	1.48655		

Table 4 shows that the mean values of the sub-dimensions “sufficiency in recognizing individuals with a need of special education” ( $p=0.297$ ), “sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education” ( $p=0.382$ ), “sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education” ( $p=0.214$ ) and “sufficiency in assessment and evaluation” ( $p=0.578$ ) have no statistically significant difference in terms of the age parameter, according to the ANOVA test conducted ( $p>0.05$ ).

Table 5. Impacts of physical education teacher candidates on their views regarding inclusive education according to marital status parameter

	Marital status	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	t	p
<b>Sufficiency in recognizing individuals with a need for special education</b>	Married	4	8.3333	2.21108	0.298	0.766
	Single	115	8.0464	1.88090		
<b>Sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education</b>	Married	4	35.0000	13.78724	0.501	0.617
	Single	115	37.0493	7.83164		
<b>Sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education</b>	Married	4	29.5556	0.81650	0.171	0.864
	Single	115	29.1295	4.95291		
<b>Sufficiency in assessment and evaluation</b>	Married	4	5.3750	1.10868	0.263	0.793
	Single	115	5.5565	1.36170		

It can be seen in Table 5 that the mean values of the sub-dimensions “sufficiency in recognizing individuals with a need of special education” ( $p=0.766$ ), “sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education” ( $p=0.617$ ), “sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education” ( $p=0.864$ ) and “sufficiency in assessment and evaluation” ( $p=0.793$ ) have no statistically significant difference in terms of the marital status parameter, according to the t-test conducted ( $p>0.05$ ).

Table 6. Impacts of physical education teacher candidates on their views regarding inclusive education according to “is there any disabled person within your family?” parameter

	Is there any disabled person within your family?	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	t	p
Sufficiency in recognizing individuals with a need for special education	Yes	8	7.3333	2.63674	1.125	0.263
	No	111	8.1081	1.82195		
Sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education	Yes	8	34.6771	12.39443	0.841	0.402
	No	111	37.1464	7.66206		
Sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education	Yes	8	28.0417	7.89882	0.661	0.510
	No	111	29.2232	4.62416		
Sufficiency in assessment and evaluation	Yes	8	5.4375	1.84076	0.244	0.808
	No	111	5.5586	1.31899		

It is shown in Table 6 that the mean values of the sub-dimensions of the teacher candidates’ inclusive education scales “sufficiency in recognizing individuals with a need of special education” ( $p=0.263$ ), “sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education” ( $p=0.402$ ), “sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education” ( $p=0.510$ ) and “sufficiency in assessment and evaluation” ( $p=0.808$ ) have no statistically significant difference in terms of the “is there any disabled person within your family?” parameter, according to the t-test conducted ( $p>0.05$ ).

Table 7. Impacts of physical education teacher candidates on their views regarding inclusive education according to "have you attended any classes, courses, seminars, etc. in relation with special education?" parameter

	Have you attended any classes, courses, seminars, etc. in relation with special education	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	t	p
Sufficiency in recognizing individuals with a need for special education	Yes	78	7.9615	1.84929	0.754	0.453
	No	41	8.2358	1.95540		
Sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education	Yes	78	36.8793	8.08688	0.189	0.850
	No	41	37.1728	7.96979		
Sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education	Yes	78	28.9587	4.72275	0.570	0.570
	No	41	29.4959	5.18188		

<b>Sufficiency in assessment and evaluation</b>	Yes	78	5.5769	1.37717	0.294	0.769
	No	41	5.5000	1.31339		

It can be derived from Table 7 that the mean values of the sub-dimensions “sufficiency in recognizing individuals with a need of special education” ( $p=0.453$ ), “sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education” ( $p=0.850$ ), “sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education” ( $p=0.570$ ) and “sufficiency in assessment and evaluation” ( $p=0.769$ ) have no statistically significant difference in terms of the “have you attended any classes, courses, seminars etc. in relation with special education?” parameter, according to the t-test conducted ( $p>0.05$ ).

Table 8. Impacts of physical education teacher candidates on their views regarding inclusive education according to "have you attended any classes, courses, seminars, etc. in relation to inclusive education?" parameter

	<b>Have you attended any classes, courses, seminars, etc. in relation to inclusive education?</b>	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss	t	p
<b>Sufficiency in recognizing individuals with a need for special education</b>	Yes	30	8.5889	1.87069	1.810	0.073
	No	89	7.8764	1.86297		
<b>Sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education</b>	Yes	30	39.6361	8.39456	2.130	0.035*
	No	89	36.0852	7.72550		
<b>Sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education</b>	Yes	30	30.2222	4.49663	1.408	0.162
	No	89	28.7803	4.96150		
<b>Sufficiency in assessment and evaluation</b>	Yes	30	5.7667	1.22990	1.014	0.313
	No	89	5.4775	1.38767		

Table 8 shows that the mean values of the sub-dimensions “sufficiency of recognizing individuals with a need of special education” ( $p=0.073$ ), “sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education” ( $p=0.162$ ) and “sufficiency in assessment and evaluation” ( $p=0.313$ ) have no statistically significant difference in terms of “have you attended any classes, courses, seminars etc. in relation with inclusive education?” parameter, according to the t-test conducted ( $p>0.05$ ). It is also observed that the “sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and techniques used in inclusive education” sub-dimension ( $p=0.035$ ) has a statistically significant difference in terms of the parameter at hand ( $p<0.05$ ). This can be interpreted as the views of the candidates who answered the question “have you attended any classes, courses, seminars etc. in relation with inclusive education?” as “yes” ( $\bar{X}=39.6361$ ) are more positive than the ones who said “no” ( $\bar{X}=36.0852$ ) regarding the sufficiency in knowing and being able to use the methods and the techniques used in inclusive education.

#### 4. Discussion

An evaluation of physical education teacher candidates' views regarding inclusive education had tried to be made in this work. In line with this objective, results obtained from the study are as follows:

It is found out that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean values of the sub-dimensions of the views of physical education teacher candidates regarding inclusive education with reference to the university parameter. In this sense, the fact that special education is usually given as a required course under

physical education and sports teaching undergraduate programs in Turkey, as well as the reality that there are no elective courses regarding special education and inclusion can be shown as reasons to the aforementioned statistical result.

It is observed that there is a statistically significant difference between the sub-dimension of "sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education," but there is no statistically significant difference in other sub-dimensions in relation to gender when the views of the participants are examined. Female teacher candidate views regarding the sufficiency of knowing and being able to apply the principles of inclusive education can be interpreted as "more positive" than those of male candidates. The results obtained from this study is parallel to the findings of Akyıldız (2017), Hastings and Oakford (2003), Mcleskey et al. (2001), Şahbaz and Kalay (2010).

There is no statistically significant difference between the mean values of all the sub-dimensions of candidate views in relation to the age parameter. This situation may be derived from the fact that special education lectures are given during the fourth semester under Turkish universities' physical education and sports teaching undergraduate programs. Some other studies were dealing with age parameter such as Buford and Casey (2012) and Sarı and Bozgeyikli (2002) support this result.

Other than that, mean values of all of the sub-dimensions of teacher candidate views towards inclusive education show no statistically significant difference in relation to marital status. The investigation of Özkuloğlu (2015) has similar findings to this study.

Another finding is that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean values of all of the four sub-dimensions in accordance with the existence of a disabled person within the family parameter. Previous studies like Akyıldız (2017), Kayhan et al. (2012), Sarı and Bozgeyikli (2002), Yaralı (2016) also show similar results. It is also found that mean values of all the sub-dimensions of candidate views regarding inclusive education show no statistically significant difference in reference with "attendance to lectures, courses, seminars, etc. regarding special education" parameter. It is seen that special education course must be taken as a requisite in the fourth semester under physical education and sports teaching the undergraduate program. The content of the special education course includes the fundamental concepts and disability groups in relation to special education, but basic concepts regarding inclusive education or information about the application are excluded. For this reason, special education lecture is thought to be as inadequate in influencing the views of teacher candidates towards inclusion practices. Results of this study are parallel to those of Buford and Casey (2012), Sarı and Bozgeyikli (2002), Şahbaz and Kalay (2010).

Lastly, "sufficiency in knowing and being able to apply the methods and techniques used in inclusive education" sub-dimension shows a statistically significant difference with respect to "attendance to lectures, courses, seminars, etc. regarding inclusive education" parameter. Remaining sub-dimensions do not show any statistically significant difference in relation to the parameter at hand. A comment in the way that the views of candidates who participated in lectures, courses, seminars, etc. regarding inclusive education have more positive sufficiency levels in knowing and being able to apply the methods and techniques used in inclusive education than those of the candidates who did not participate in such lectures, courses, seminars etc. can be made at this point. Works of Dolapçı and Demirtaş (2016), Sarı and Bozgeyikli (2002), Şahbaz and Kalay (2010) display similar results in the views of teacher candidates towards their participation in lectures, courses, seminars, etc. regarding inclusive education.

In conclusion, although inclusive education is widely accepted in both legal level and practice within Turkey, it is evident that there are no lectures regarding inclusive education when current ongoing physical education and sports teaching undergraduate programs are reviewed. It can be said that application dimension should also take place along with theoretical knowledge for the sake of inclusive education to meet its goal. Through this way, physical education teachers may train and educate inclusive education students with special needs in a better way.

Besides, special education and inclusion lecture to be given in the status of professional teaching knowledge within the scope of Council of Higher Education (YÖK)'s teacher educating undergraduate programs' renewed physical education and sports teaching undergraduate program framework at the seventh semester as of 2018 could be accepted as a positive development.

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