



INCLUSION AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE ATTITUDES OF PE TEACHERS

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INTRODUCTION

Since the 1990's, inclusion has been seen as a serious form of social change. Via the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), inclusion finally gained a legally binding character in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006). Besides numerous requirements in various areas of life (Booth & Ainscow, 2011), sport is said to play a special role regarding social responsibility, since differences in physical performance, as well as ethnic or cultural differences are displayed in a specific manner. Moreover, with common sporting activities, society is ensuring a set of shared values which can have a sustainable impact on social cohesion.

Since the implementation of inclusion in Germany is usually narrowed down to a structural discussion concerning the education system, great significance is attached to physical education as formal education in sport, although there has been little empirical study so far (Tiemann, 2013). Due to the structural peculiarities of the German school system, with a traditionally strong focus on homogenous achievement (e.g. separate schools for children with special needs), it is possible that teachers will face conflicts or difficulties in dealing with increasing diversity in the context of inclusion.

METHOD

Based on an interview study with 50 German PE teachers, teachers' attitudes (Hardin, 2005) on the key categories

of "body" and "performance" and their implications for inclusive education are elaborated using qualitative and quantitative content analysis (Mayring, 2007).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results show characteristic types of dealing with body and performance which – in terms of "best practice" – are conducive to inclusive education settings. Certain attitudes and values of PE teachers can therefore be considered useful for successful inclusion.

CONCLUSIONS

Similar interviews are currently being conducted in the Netherlands. Contrasting these with the German results will allow a broader, international analysis of how inclusive physical education can succeed in the long term.

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