Development of a guide book for elementary school teachers in inclusionary physical education for students with mental retardation

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Abstract

The aim of study is developing an accessible handbook on student with Mental Retardation Disorder for elementary school inclusionary physical education teachers. The handbook was developed the Mental Retardation Disorder’s individualize needs and has been a appropriate strategies for inclusion class students. Information gathered different resource and investigated different practice as handbook was being developed. In this study questionnaire was used oriented elementary school inclusionary teachers, counsellor and physical education teacher that was working with Mental Retardation Disorder. 5 questions responses of teacher have been identified and fixate strong, weak, right, wrong directions of handbook. Handbook has been revised in line with the recommendations of educators and information. In the handbook to check the accuracy of the information, where to use the information to determine, for correction of deficiencies in the field of mental retardation were reviewed by 3 experts and teachers handbook given its final form. Handbook is presented in a format that short in order to provide accessibility. Handbook designed so that teachers can read easily. Real experiences add to facilitate the application into the handbook

Keywords: Mainstreaming class, Mental Retardation, Physical Education;

1. Introduction

Intelligence is a potential relating to brain, measurable with tests allowing us to learn and memorize, making us different from others (Kulaksızoğlu, 2003).

Children with Mental Retardation Disorder experience difficulties in adapting to their environment as they cannot fulfill the society’s expectations relating to mental and physical activities (İlhan, 2008).

Today, the idea is that children with deficiencies have the same right as other children and should be able to attain similar facilities. When educated separately, children with deficiencies remain in distance of the society subsequently experiencing adaptation issues when brought together with normally developing children. This case brought forth the inclusion education (Yılmaz, 2006).

Inclusion education is placing children with Mental Retardation Disorder into the same classroom to attain the same education as their normal peers (Macmillan, 1982). Inclusion class teachers should plan for all students to take part in activities and should prepare adaptation strategy programs and required materials. (MEB, 2000).

The aim of this study is to prepare a guide book in order to inform and support first grade teachers of elementary education about inclusion in physical education classes and about children with Mental Retardation Disorder.

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2. Method

2.1. Research Group

For the purpose of this research, 3 experts (an academic member with 9-year experience in higher education of physical education and sport, a counsellor with 13 years of experience and a physical education teacher with 8 years of experience) and 50 classes were formed. Initially there were 57 teachers, but 4 teachers refused the guide book while 3 teachers did not answer the questions thus reducing the total number to 50.

2.1.1. Data Collection Tools

Guide Book

Main titles were prepared in order to form the sections of the guide book. Main titles of this book are, Prologue, inclusion education, Movement training model, Definition of children with Mental Retardation Disorder, Activities (Change-place movements, Object control movements, Stable movements). Inclusion education section covers the definition of inclusion education application and description of its meaning. Movement training model is a model that teachers of physical education in elementary education from first grade to third grade must know. It is a systematical approach that contributes to cognitive, social and affective development while increasing the physical activity the child will learn. Movement training model considers the individual’s age and personal level while contributing to learning movement skills and physical conformity. Any skill is initially practiced individually. For that, the student practices a movement skill (walking, running, hopping, step & hop… etc.) individually in general area (awareness of space) with various aspects, levels, forms and widths. In order to feel the effort variation, they will practice the same skill in various speed, strength and paces. Children with Mental Retardation Disorder may experience difficulties when practicing skills in physical education classes. Adaptations for inclusion students, intended for children with Mental Retardation Disorder to adapt these skills, are provided (equipment modifications, rule and task modifications, instructional modification and environment modification). In the activities section of the guide book, the example relating to walking:

Walking: When transferring body weight from one foot to the other, both feet shall be on the ground. While one foot steps forward, the other is taken off the ground.

| A | Eyes will focus on the target distance |
| B | Upper body will be in straight position |
| C | Arms will be moving slightly back and forth next to the body |
| D | The foot ahead will be moved in opposite direction with the arm |
| E | In every step, one foot will be in the back and at least one of the feet will be on the ground |
| F | When the foot in the back moves towards the front, the foot ahead makes a rolling movement from the heel towards the toes |
| G | Toes will be pointing straight ahead |

(Yıldız, E., Gürsel, F., 2008)

Awareness of Space:

Awareness of Personal Space: Student is set to walk around the Circle, walks backwards around the Circle, walks around the Circle pulling their knees towards their body, walks around the Circle slapping their knees with their hands.

Awareness of General Space: Everyone is dispersed in the class, walking in different directions with the instruction, halting when the instruction stops, everyone is dispersed in the class, walking in different directions with the instruction, docking or performing the requested movement when the instruction stops (Capon, 1994).

Level: Low (crocodile walking), Mid (sheep or cat-like walking), High (giraffe-like walking).
Direction: Sides, backwards, forwards, walking with shifting direction, Below (Gymnastics board), Above (Gymnastics order), Around (circle)
Movement Direction: Straight walking, forward walking with crossed steps, walking in zig zags, curved walking.
Movement Size: Walking with small steps, Walking with big steps
Awareness of Effort
Strength: Light walking, silent walking on toes (like a mouse), Mid-strength walking, Normal walking (with companion), Heavy walking, walking with strong stomps, making noise (like elephant or bear) (MEB, 2006).
Time: Slow-paced walking (turtle), Mid-paced walking (walk to school), fast-paced walking (tiger) (MEB, 2006).
Smoothness: Robot-like walking, Walking like an elder, Walking under the rain.
Awareness of Relation: Rhythms, sounds, poems, pictures.
Partner: Shadow (pursuer), Mirror (copycat): One of the partners completes a movement after which the other performs the same movement, Synchronized (Both will start and finish simultaneously), Action will be performed bilaterally and sequentially (MEB, 2006).
With Partner: Action is performed in line with the given rhythm, everyone finds a partner when rhythm ceases, Similar to the previous, when the rhythm ceases, partners hold hands and crouch, walk hand in hand, start walking with the same foot, walking forwards with crossed steps, walking on toes, walking on heels, taking step and pulling upwards, to shadow (Capon, 1994).
Tools: Balls are made of newspapers the size of tennis balls or tennis balls are used, ball is launched in the air along with the given rhythm, person continues to walk while catching the ball, ball is launched in the air and hands are clapped twice before catching the ball, Ball is twirled around the belt, ball is placed on the ground and everyone starts walking, everyone comes near the ball without hurrying when rhythm ceases.
Adaptations for Inclusion Students:
Equipment modifications: Chairs with cushions will be used
Role or Task modification: The required oral (start, stop) or sound (whistle) signal is used at the start and end of the movement
Instructional modification: Movement is demonstrated beforehand, solid expressions are used (everyone sits on a chair when music stops).
Environment modification: Chairs not included in the game will be moved outside the play zone
Game: Everyone wears a bean bag on their head. Everyone walks without touching others. Whoever drops the bean bag will freeze. When a friend takes the bag off the ground and places it back on their head, they will start walking again.
Adaptations for Inclusion Students:
Equipment modifications: Bean bags
Role or Task modification: Distance will be restricted, border lines will be drawn
Instructional modification: Brief description will be given
Environment modification: Using visual assistance elements and sound materials (like a whistle) at the end of area

2.1.2. Questions for experts

In your professional view, do you believe teachers will apply the suggested strategies on the students in their class? Do you approve the contents of the Guide book? What do you think of the effectiveness of this guide book? What do you think about the weak points of this guide book? What could be done to refine this guide book?

2.1.3. Questions for teachers

Do you find the guide book useful? Do you find the format of the guide book easy to read and understand? Do you believe teachers will apply the suggested strategies on the students in their class? After checking the guide book, what have you learned about students with different levels of Mental Retardation Disorder? What could be done to refine this guide book?
2.2. Data Collection

The research utilizes 5 open ended questions for class teachers, counsellors and physical education teachers who work with children with Mental Retardation Disorder. Assessment of guide book by the expert was performed in the first phase. Experts and teachers were given a 2-week period to review the guide book. Questions were formed and developed as open ended questions in order to remedy any deficiencies and approve the content of the guide book.

2.3. Data Analysis

In this research study, descriptive statistics (frequency, percentages) were used. After collecting answers from the experts and teachers, the comments were presented in tables using frequency and percentage values.

3. Results

This research featured an academic member who is expert of children with Mental Retardation Disorder, a physical education teacher and one counsellor. Other participants of the study are 50 class teachers. Both groups have stated their comments on the guide book they assessed.

3.1. Comments from the Experts of Mental Deficiencies

In the first question, the experts stated that class teachers may develop their own strategies while implementing those in the book. The answer to the second question was that the book has a high readability and is understandable. The third question was answered; strategy sections are impressive, becoming even more effective since the games are explained in pictures and the strategy section and picture explanation of games are effective. In the fourth question, responders stated that misspellings and defining children with Mental Retardation Disorder according to DSM are the weak points of the book. The answer to the fifth question stated that writing style must be reviewed and some sections of the movement training model should be removed.

3.2. Comments from Teachers in the Field of Mental Deficiency

In the first question, class teachers stated that it is very descriptive and a useful source in the teaching process for students with various levels and skills. The answer to the second question stated that activities are reinforced with visual elements, facilitates the process, written with a simple language, while 2% said that the book should be written in a clear and understandable narration in general and the movement training model should be written in a more appropriate and different style. The responders’ answers to first question were that activities should be utilized and strategies need to be more descriptive. The fourth question was answered as that they may make the simple movements more specialized in the games, carry out a more qualified course, can be active in physical education classes students with Mental Retardation Disorder will feel better and how materials, rules and educative adaptations may be according to the students. Three students stated that, as they served as special education teachers during their education, this was not something new for them. The answers to the fifth question said the number of activities should be increased, more examples should be given, activities that require focus, queuing and belonging to a group should be provided, a gains section should be added in reference to physical education teaching.

References

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