

## 30 | UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CRITIQUE

### Research Critique on “Perspectives of Students with Disabilities Toward Physical Education: A Qualitative Inquiry Review”

Katherine Walker, Christian Briceno, Shaun Cannady, & Hosung So

California State University, San Bernardino, CA, USA

**Keywords:** attitudes, disability, inclusion, special needs population

#### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Up until the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, disabled individuals continued to have a hard time properly expressing themselves. The goal of this study was to explore the varying perspectives of students with disabilities toward physical education classes. The focal points of their desired perspectives include; views toward averagely maturing individuals, views toward the physical education teachers, and views toward the inclusivity and exclusivity of the class. This research gives an insight to a broad spectrum of physical educators on how students with differing abilities experience physical education classes.

**Purpose:** The main purpose of this article was to review and examine previously published qualitative inquiries in order to understand the perspective of students with disabilities toward physical education.

**Methods:** This qualitative inquiry employs a systematic review process in which a handful of research is already conducted and attempts to incorporate the findings. Five different steps were used including; focusing on a specific question (“i.e., what has the available qualitative inquiry said about the perspectives of children with disabilities about their physical education experiences”; Haegele & Sutherland, 2015), had a specific protocol that would help with accompanying processes (“i.e. the protocol was developed to include peer-reviewed, qualitative inquiry pertaining to this topic”; Haegele & Sunderland, 2015), found correlating literature through an extensive search, made specific decisions regarding inclusion and exclusion, and compiled the research findings while continuing to be thorough and straightforward. They specifically used search engines incorporating but are not limited to Academic Search Complete, Education Full Text, Education Research Complete, and more. The searches consisted of words such as: disability, disabled, special needs; physical education; and qualitative research, qualitative method, naturalistic method, perceptions and perspectives. Going through the inclusion and exclusion criterion, researchers listed what they believed should be included in the articles in order to be considered for the qualitative inquiry and what should be excluded as a

means to narrow down potential findings. The search process found 228 articles, 199 were excluded due to not meeting all inclusion criteria thus leaving 29 qualifying studies. The final thirteen articles that were chosen for the inquiry focused on the perspectives of students with disabilities. The articles were contingent on a narrative analysis. They were read over multiple times in an attempt to discover similarities and differences between the major findings in each article. Haegele and Sunderland then decided on three thematic clusters and themes from the thirteen articles.

**Results:** Research produced thirteen studies that focused on the perspectives of students with disabilities. The thirteen studies had three major similarities picked by the researchers, Haegele and Sunderland. The two found these similarities to be views toward averagely maturing students, views toward physical education teachers, and views toward the feelings of inclusion and exclusion in physical education courses.

**Conclusion:** It is important for educators to understand the perspectives of students with disabilities. By trying to acknowledge how these students feel could allow them to have a better experience in their physical education courses which in turn lifetime physical activity.

**Critique:** The general search of the article allowed for a wide variety of published studies to be considered. It was beneficial of the authors to use three specific themes to focus on when reading through the studies which posed a common theme of all thirteen. The article displayed great details involving the true perspective and feelings of the kids with disabilities. They performed many studies to find out the results which described the pros and cons of each result. By including how kids with disabilities portrayed themselves around other students and the impacts with teachers shows outstanding feedback. The authors should have mentioned the way prior experiences within physical education could have possibly affected their current attitudes, positive or negative.

## Author Information

**Katherine E. Walker**, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6288-9402> Email: [007785785@coyote.csusb.edu](mailto:007785785@coyote.csusb.edu)  
Department of Kinesiology, California State University, San Bernardino, CA, USA.

**Christian Briceno**, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8464-8343> Email: [005936901@coyote.csusb.edu](mailto:005936901@coyote.csusb.edu)  
Department of Kinesiology, California State University, San Bernardino, CA, USA.

**Shaun M. Cannady**, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9540-9690> Email: [shauncannadyrock@gmail.com](mailto:shauncannadyrock@gmail.com)  
Department of Kinesiology, California State University, San Bernardino, CA, USA.

**Hosung So, Ph.D.** <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3871-2383> Email: [hosungso@csusb.edu](mailto:hosungso@csusb.edu)  
Professor, Department of Kinesiology, California State University, San Bernardino, CA, USA.



© 2021. This work is licensed under a CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 International license.  
This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.