

Perceived Competence in Teaching Physical Education among Classroom Teachers

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INTRODUCTION

Classroom teachers are required to teach physical education in some states such as California. However, previous research indicates many classroom teachers do not feel competent to teach physical education (Barney & Deutsch, 2009). Understanding teachers' perception of teaching physical education may help develop better teacher education programs to prepare pre-service teachers in teaching physical education. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to examine perceived competence in teaching physical education among classroom teachers.

METHODS

- Participants were 30 classroom teachers (5 males, 25 females; $M = 40.3$ years old, $SD = 8.54$) from a public school district in central California.
- The participants completed the surveys that included three sections: background, perceived competence in teaching physical education and other questions such as general experience and preferences in teaching physical education and professional training.
- The perceived competence section, using the 7-point Likert subscale, was used to assess perception of competence in teaching physical education (i.e., teaching fundamental motor skills, sports and games, movement concepts as well as administering fitness tests). Self-developed 5-point Likert subscales on general experience and preferences in teaching physical education were included in the survey.

RESULTS

- The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for the perceived competence in teaching physical education was .87 and for the preference of teaching physical education was .75.

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Perceived Competence in Teaching Physical Education

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
PE in general	5.35	1.34
Sports and Games	5.58	1.33
Fundamental Motor Skills	4.97	1.97
Movement Concepts	4.85	2.16
Fitness Tests	4.66	2.25

Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation of Preference of Teaching Physical Education

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Prefer Teaching PE	2.70	1.11
Prefer Specialists to Teach	4.30	0.84
Professional Training	2.57	1.19
Administrative Support	4.07	0.88

- Professional training was significantly associated with perceived competence in teaching physical education ($r = .51$; $p < .01$), and preference in teaching physical education ($r = .60$; $p < .01$), respectively.
- Professional training was significantly related to perceived competence in teaching fundamental motor skills ($r = .4$; $p < .05$), and movement concepts ($r = .4$; $p < .05$), but not to teaching sports and games ($r = .36$; $p > .05$) and administering fitness tests ($r = .32$; $p > .05$).

DISCUSSION

Results of the study showed that majority of the teachers felt competent to teach physical education. The rank for the perceived competence in teaching physical education contents was in teaching sports and games, fundamental motor skills, and movement concepts.

However, the results also showed that classroom teachers preferred not teaching physical education and preferred the PE specialists to teach physical education, which are consistent with the previous research (Morgan & Bourke, 2008).

The relationships between professional training and perceived competence in teaching physical education, fundamental motor skills and movement concepts were significant. Apparently, professional training affects individual confidence to teach physical education (Chedaoy, 2000).

CONCLUSION

The findings suggest that classroom teachers have demonstrated a "moderate" level in perceived competence in teaching physical education. Professional training may be beneficial to improve classroom teachers' confidence in teaching physical education.