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## The influence of an adapted physical education course on preservice teacher instruction: Using a self-determination lens

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## **The Influence of an Adapted Physical Education Course on Preservice Teacher Instruction: Using a Self-Determination Lens**

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*Abstract: Current federal mandates and policies have increased the focus on providing students with disabilities (SWD) a pedagogically appropriate learning experience (No Child Left Behind, 2001). Teacher education programs are attempting to provide all future teachers with experiences that enhance the pedagogical ability to teach students with a variety of needs. As such, the concept of motivation has been deemed a crucial aspect of effective instruction. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the development of PTs during a semester adapted physical education course, from a self-determined perspective. Two intact adapted physical education classes (N=46; Male=25, Female=21) were utilized. Data were collected using qualitative measures of scenario responses, reflections and peer observations and analyzed using the constant-comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Findings indicated PTs followed a chronological progression focused on providing students a positive learning context and task variety. Results support the need for increased time within practicum experiences and reinforcement/infusion of common pedagogical principles throughout teacher education programs.*

### **Introduction**

Motivation is an important component for both physical education students and their teachers due to the connection with a wide range of positive student outcomes, such as enhanced levels of learning and active in-class engagement (Tjeerdsma-Blankenship, 2008; Chen, 2001). From a teacher and teacher education perspective, educators should be able to provide pedagogies that support or enhance student motivation (NASPE, 2003). This concept of providing motivational instruction is just as important when teaching students with disabilities (SWDs). Typically, in US schools, SWDs are spending 80 percent of their school day in inclusive physical education classes (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2007) made up of both students with and without disabilities, instead of in separate classes where there are only SWDs. Preparation of quality educators is of critical importance when teaching SWDs. Physical education teacher education (PETE) students are being provided with limited coursework (commonly one semester long subject) within higher education to effectively support

and develop the pedagogical and content knowledge for providing a developmentally and educationally appropriate learning context (Piletic, 2008; Ayers & Housner, 2008). In addition, motivation is extremely important when teaching SWDs either in an inclusive or separate adapted physical education class, due to the variety of abilities seen in *all* students. Based upon the aforementioned information, it is imperative to investigate programmatic experiences and their influence on preparing future educators to provide motivational instruction. As such, this study examined 46 preservice physical education teachers during a semester long adapted physical education subject.

### **Adapted Physical Education Teacher Education**

In terms of preparing PETE students to work with SWDs, there has been a dearth of literature outlining the application and benefits of providing quality field experiences when working with SWDs (Hodge, Davis, Woodard & Sherrill, 2002). The foundation of the practicum experience (i.e. working hands-on with actual students) began at The Ohio State University in 1954 and was built upon contact theory, which allows for authentic experiences between PETE students and SWDs to enhance teacher attitudes and behaviors (Hodge & Jansma, 1999). Moreover, central tenants of the practicum are providing a multitude of teaching opportunities and interaction that is structured, supervised, and success oriented. Preferably, interactions are one-on-one and/or small group, where PETE students are exposed to situations which foster social connections (Connolly, 1994). In addition, recommendation for enhancing practicum effectiveness should require PETE students to reflect on the experience (Hodge, Tannehill & Kluge, 2003). The essence of the practicum experience is that the PETE students learn to plan, modify, and adapt lessons to meet needs, interests, and abilities of the SWD's. Hodge, et al. (2003), indicated that PETE students felt that learning to do the above pedagogic necessities enhanced their self-confidence in working with SWDs and those without disabilities. It was through the study by Hodge, et al. (2003) that PETE students were also learning about the area of student motivation and the influence of the educational environment. PETE students made reference to the importance of organization, class management, establishing rules and routines, using different types of reinforcers (i.e. social reinforcement, token economy, physical activity), and the use of the strategies, such as the Premack principle, for setting up a positive, motivationally beneficial environment (Hodge, Tannehill & Kluge, 2003).

### **Motivational Framework**

As a framework for this study, research has been grounded within self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985). SDT posits that critical drivers for motivation are an individual's perception of an environment that supports the psychological needs of autonomy (*feeling of choice/control*), competence (*perception of success*), and relatedness (*feeling cared for within a learning context*)

(Deci & Ryan, 1985; 2000). Providing students with support of these basic psychological needs within an educational setting is essential to positively influence the motivational state of each student (Vallerand, 1997; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Educational research has indicated that teacher practices for able-bodied students, such as instructional strategies, can affect students' motivation (Ryan & Stiller, 1991; Perlman, 2011; Perlman & Goc Karp, 2010). SDT related research within physical education teacher education has been focused on changing teacher instruction through self-determination based interventions (Sarrazin, Tessier, Pelletier, Trouilloud, & Chanal, 2006; Tessier, Sarrazin & Ntoumanis, 2008; Perlman, 2011<sup>a</sup>; Perlman, 2011<sup>b</sup>; Perlman, in press). Results of these studies have been successful toward guiding instructional behaviors toward creating a motivationally supportive learning context. What has been missing within previous studies were (a) a lack of investigation when working with SWDs and (b) the influence of teacher education programs in enhancing the motivational of instruction of future teachers. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of an adapted physical education methods course on PETE students ability to design and implement instruction. Specifically, this study examined instruction from a motivational perspective.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

Participants from this study were preservice physical education teachers [PETE students] (N=46; Male=25, Female=21) enrolled in one of two accredited physical education teacher education (PETE) programs within the United States. PETE student expertise, experience, and pedagogical skills varied, as the study population represented all levels of undergraduate student in terms of grade level (i.e. freshman through seniors) and previous teacher education coursework (i.e. previous methods, foundations and/or content courses).

### ***Adapted Physical Education Subject***

PETE students were enrolled in a semester long introductory adapted physical education subject (IAPES). The IAPES was a 3<sup>rd</sup> year required subject in the PETE programs. Both PETE programs had the IAPES subject as one of the first teaching methods subject within the PETE course. Co and prerequisites for the subject were motor development, anatomy/physiology and primary teaching methods. Both IAPES's followed similar methods of instruction which provided (a) content and pedagogical concepts, (b) authentic field experiences (both courses utilized an on-campus motor clinic) and (c) laboratory assignments. The IAPES was completed in essentially 3 different stages. The first stage was initial lecture phase that ran the first 4 weeks of the semester. The combined lecture/practicum experience phase ran the next 8-10 weeks of the semester. The application phase of the course occurred during the last couple weeks of the semester.

During the program development stage, instructors from both IAPESs discussed, designed and implemented similar content and pedagogical experiences. Implementation of the IAPESs began with an initial lecture phase followed by a combined field experience, in-class instruction and supportive laboratory

assignments. The subject finished with an application phase where students were provided opportunities for reviewing case studies and real life scenarios to apply what they have experienced over the semester. Initial lecture phase classes focused on developing content and pedagogical knowledge for teaching SWDs. Lectures exposed PETE students to experiential activities (e.g. using a wheelchair within a scavenger hunt activity) for developing learning activities that enhance the potential for student success in meeting diverse learning outcomes/objectives. PETE students experienced the disability but also were taught pedagogical concepts to aid in teaching SWDs.

Content areas covered during the semester lectures focused on legislation, assessment of motor skills, human development, understanding sensory systems and their importance to student movement, reflexes, instructional strategies, modification techniques, use of visual schedules when teaching students, and specific disability content.

Upon completion of the initial lecture stage, PETE students began practicum experiences and laboratory assignments. Practicum experiences were primarily conducted during the 5<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> week of the semester. Practicum experiences began by providing PETE students with background information about each of the SWDs that would be participating in the field experience. PETE students were required to lead teach three (3) lessons and peer observe three (3) lessons throughout the semester practicum experience. The field experience setting provided each PETE student with a one-on-one or small group teaching experience. Student disabilities varied and including individuals with Down syndrome, autism, mental retardation, and various physical limitations. The role of the PETE student was to design and implement a lesson to their assigned student and/or small group. Each lesson lasted between 25-40 minutes, where PETE students were provided a teaching area within the gymnasium. Throughout the semester course, PETE students were required to complete laboratory assignments (e.g. development of an Individualized Educational Plan) to further develop their content and pedagogical knowledge base.

The final application phase of the course occurred after the completion of the field experiences. During the lectures students were presented with different case-studies and real life scenarios that dealt with topics including: attitudes toward individuals with disabilities, teaching scenarios for specific disabilities and modifications that could be made, and curricular units and activity selection for disabilities that may be evident in a inclusive physical education class. The lectures format was that of guided discovery and problem solving surrounding the different topics.

## **Data Collection**

This study followed the qualitative case study approach espoused by Merriam (1998), whereby the 46 PETE students were viewed as the case. Data were gathered using three qualitative measures; scenario responses, teaching reflections and peer observations. Before beginning this study, human assurance was granted from both university internal review boards.

### Scenario Responses

Scenario responses provided PETE students with an in-depth description of an elementary and secondary inclusive physical education lesson. The nature of the inclusive lesson was that (a) the class included SWDs and (b) taught students learning activities that aligned with the same learning outcome and indicator (See scenario sample inset). PETE students were required to read each lesson and answer questions related to identifying and implementing motivational concepts for SWDs from the perspective of the students and teacher. Scenario development began with the researchers creating an in-depth narrative description of a sample elementary and secondary inclusive physical education lesson. Upon completion of the scenario development, three experts in the field of APE evaluated the scenario for content, construct and fluidity. Each expert possessed a terminal degree in APE or a related area and were asked to read the scenario and provide feedback related to the clarity of the scenario, readability and appropriateness that the scenario provided an inclusive setting. Revisions were conducted and a pilot test was conducted with an introductory adapted physical education methods class (N=22). Responses were used to perform an analysis and modify components of the scenario to align with study needs. Final revisions were made to the scenario based on expert recommendations and results of the pilot test.

### Sample Inclusive Lesson Scenario

Students from a third grade class enter the gymnasium and sit on their assigned spot on the floor. The class is made up of 25 children with a wide variety of skill and behavioral levels. Of focus of this lesson are two students, Billy and Susan. Billy is a highly functioning student with autism, while Susan has Down syndrome. The lesson of the day is focused on throwing and catching. Mrs. DeAngelis explains that today we will be playing with scoops and balls. The class seems excited and cheers. The students are asked to walk slowly and get a scoop, ball and find a space on the gym floor. The students follow directions and the lesson begins. The class begins with some basic skills. Students are asked to toss the ball in the air and catch it with the scoop. Next, the students are asked not to use their hands to throw, but instead must use the scoop to throw and catch. The majority of the class is doing well, but a few students are having some trouble catching the ball, specifically Billy and Susan. Mrs. DeAngelis approaches those students and tells the students that they should watch the ball as it enters the scoop. The students begin the activity and continue to have trouble. Mrs. DeAngelis leaves the students who are having trouble and moves around gymnasium. When Mr. DeAngelis leaves the students who are having trouble, they stop throwing and catching, but continue when Mrs. DeAngelis looks in their direction. Mrs. DeAngelis changes the activity every three to five minutes. After twenty minutes, the students have gone through six different activities. Mr. Smith notices that about ten of the twenty-five students are having trouble with some aspect of throwing and catching, and those students (including Billy and Susan) are losing interest in the activity. He notices that Mrs. DeAngelis spoke with these students, but they are still having trouble. Throughout the lesson Mrs. DeAngelis gave positive feedback, such as “good job” and “well

done” to all the students. Mrs. DeAngelis makes sure that he provides positive feedback to each student. At the beginning of each activity Mrs. DeAngelis sets a class goal. For example, when the students were asked to throw and catch using only the scoops, the class was challenged to throw and catch the ball ten times in a row without dropping it. The majority of students are having no trouble with the class goals, but each activity has a few students that do not succeed. During the last ten minutes of class, Mrs. DeAngelis organizes the class into two teams and begins a modified game. The students are placed on both ends of the gym and get points by throwing the ball and hitting the opposite wall or catch a thrown ball in the air. During the game the majority of students are doing well, but the small group of student who were having trouble blended into the background and did not play, unless the ball was throw at them. The class concludes and Mrs. DeAngelis tells the students to line-up and they exit the gymnasium.

### **Teaching Reflections**

Reflections were completed after each lead teaching lesson. Reflection questions were used to investigate perceptions of the taught lesson, as well as how each PETE student could improve or modify the lesson. Questions focused on PETE students’ thoughts on positive and negative aspects of teaching, changes and/or modifications. Furthermore, each PETE student provided information related to specific motivational questions grounded in the self-determined research of Deci & Ryan (1985; 2000) and Vallerand (1997; 2001).

### **Peer Observations**

Peer observations were completed by non-teaching PETE students. The peer observation tool identified purposeful components of teaching which impacted motivation such as instructional components, task design, and modifications. Components of the peer observation were based on tenets of SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985; 2000) and student motivation (Vallerand, 2001; Premack, 1959). Furthermore, PETE student observers were provided the opportunity to use an open-ended comments section that was used to identify positive, negative and confusing components of each lesson. Before using the peer observation form, PETE students were engaged in a training session to ensure the observation tool was utilized in an appropriate manner. Each PETE student was provided the observational tool, background information and a description of how to use the tool. In addition, each student was provided some examples to test their abilities to accurately use the observational tool.

### **Procedures**

Data collection was conducted using a two-phased approach. First, scenario responses were completed by PETE students during the first and final weeks of class.



Week one scenario responses were used to provide initial PETE student perceptions and knowledge for providing motivational instruction for SWDs, while data from the final weeks were used to aid in (a) triangulation of results and (b) identify changes of PETE students perceptions for motivating SWDs. Reflection and peer observation data were on-going and collected weekly during the field experiences.

## **Data Analysis**

Analysis of data began with verbatim transcription of all three measures and utilized the constant-comparative method (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Initial analysis began with two independent researchers reading all data for familiarity and clarity. Upon initial readings, each researcher identified raw data themes for all measures with supportive quotes. Once identification of raw data themes was completed, themes with common elements were merged together (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Both researchers met, discussed and agreed upon all themes. Analysis across data collection measures was conducted to identify common themes identified throughout all measures and concluded when a level of saturation was achieved.

## **Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness of data was addressed through triangulation and peer debrief of data collection measures (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). Triangulation was established through the use of multiple data collection measures (reflection, peer observations and scenario responses). Peer debrief sessions were conducted with a researcher unaffiliated with the study who reviewed the data, asked questions about themes and interpretations throughout the study.

## **Results**

Results of this study indicated PETE students development went through a chronological progression explained through (a) initial perceptions of motivating SWDs, (b) chronological development of motivational instruction and (c) concluding perceptions of motivating SWDs.

### **Initial Perceptions of Motivating Students with Disabilities**

Scenario responses were used to analyze PETE students' perceptions of identification and development of strategies for motivating SWDs in a physical education setting. Specifically, week one scenario responses were used to investigate initial perceptions associated with providing motivational instruction. Results supported the findings of Hodge, et al. (2003) that through the field experience PETE students would developed a tendency to motivate SWDs through

strategies focusing on (a) keeping students on task, (b) providing feedback for enhancing success and (c) task variety.

### **Keeping students on task**

PETE students indicated that developing and implementing teaching strategies to keep students on task to achieve specific learning outcomes was critical for influencing student motivation. This theme supports the association between behavior management (on-task) and student motivation (NASPE, 2003). For instance, Samantha stated that “class should be organized so the teacher can get the lesson done...this could be done if the rules are designed to make sure all students are listening.” In addition, “each student should be treated equally...this is when everyone knows and plays by the rules.” (Sara, Scenario Response). Beginning and novice teachers commonly focus within the area of behaviour management, since it is can be viewed as cornerstone of effective pedagogy that guides students toward a desired learning outcome (Lavay, French & Henderson, 2006).

### **Providing feedback for enhancing success**

PETE students indicated that providing feedback, commonly positive in nature, would motivate students by enhancing a student’s perception of success and enjoyment within the lesson. In addition, PETE students noted that using feedback statements would allow the teacher to think about the strengths and weaknesses of each student, thus allowing for task/activity modifications based on identified student needs. The following scenario responses illustrate the aforementioned ideas.

“When teaching, you should talk to each student and give them one positive thing, even if they don’t do well.” (Sandra).

“All students are trying and making sure everyone knows what they need to work on will help people enjoy p.e.” (Daniel).

“If you want students of all ages and abilities to participate within a physical education setting each class should be fun. This starts from the teacher.” (Emily)

It should be noted, that not all students agreed that teachers could provide students with instruction that supports student enjoyment. Billy stated “I think students should have fun in class, but you can’t do this for everyone. We all like different things.” (Week one Scenario Response).

From a motivational perspective, engaging student in a success-oriented environment aligns strongly with enhanced levels of student motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Vallerand, 2001). PETE student responses support the notion that providing students with feedback that is encouraging, positive and assists in students becoming more successful has been linked with increased student psychological develop, such as motivation (Haggar & Chatzisarantis, 2007).

### **Task Variety**

Task variety was a concept evident in many PETE student responses and identified as important to enhance student motivation, as well as decrease student boredom. For example, Eleanor and Katelyn within their scenario responses stated respectively.

“All students shouldn’t have to do the same thing... low-skilled kids seem to be left out and high skilled are allowed to do what they want....I would let students choose from a list of activities, so they can do something they enjoy.”

“The teacher could have come up with some more games to do.”

Developing and implementing a variety of tasks that (a) align with one learning objective and (b) provide a diverse level of challenge has been considered a key component for facilitating student motivation (Epstein, 1989; Ames, 1992).

### **Chronological Development of Motivational Instruction**

As PETE students engaged within their respective field experiences, qualitative analysis of all three data sources indicated a consistent chronological progression of development associated with within the motivational framework. As a result of data analysis, three themes emerged: (a) difficulty transferring motivational concepts into action, (b) development of comfort within teaching and (c) ability to manipulate lesson design and structure to meet student needs. Furthermore, posttest scenario responses were used to illustrate change within PETE students within the study.

### **Difficulty Transferring Motivational Concepts into Action**

The theme “difficulty transferring motivational concepts into action” emerged as reflection and peer observation data demonstrated a lack of connection between initial scenario themes (perceptions) and application within the field experiences. PETE students indicated, via reflections, that motivating SWDs was “difficult”. The provision of positive feedback, the allowance of success and the presentation of a variety of tasks were attempted with limited success. For example, “I did what I had written on my lesson plan.” Peer observations indicated similar comments as the application of the aforementioned concepts (e.g. task variety) were non-existent and illustrated below.

“It looked like a good lesson, but I did not see many [motivational concepts] on the recording (i.e. peer observation) form”.

“Ross taught a good lesson...it looked difficult to teach [Hillary – SWD]. I know I couldn’t do it any better...there were some things [Ross] could have done to get [Hillary -SWD] involved, but it didn’t seem like there was enough time.”

During the initial weeks of the field experience, PETE students primary focus was on completing the lesson as written in their lesson plans. Roger stated “I tried to finish the lesson...[but] I ran out of time.” PETE students identified a perceived desire to

increase the amount of feedback and task variety, but did not possess the comfort, confidence or pedagogical skill to implement within their teaching.

“When I’m teaching, I feel like I have a million things on my mind...but only one mouth to let [the instruction] out with. I know teachers can do this, but I’m not sure I can.” (Emma, Reflection).

On the contrary, a few (N=4) PETE students demonstrated effective implementation of feedback and task variety.

“[Colin] really did a good job of encouraging [Greg - SWD]...he looked comfortable and seemed to know what to do for him. I liked his lesson.” (Sandra, Peer Observation).

“Evan did a great job of doing new things during the lesson... his student never got bored.” (Katelyn, Observation).

These results align with the development of teaching abilities, originally proposed by Shulman (1987; 2000), who suggested teaching effectiveness is influenced by a variety of knowledge bases, beginning with both pedagogical and content knowledge, in order to provide a more meaningful and relevant instructional experience. A plausible reason for these results could be due to PETE students (a) lack of either content or pedagogical knowledge and/or (b) an environment which provides a lower level of perceived effectiveness due to limited “authentic” experience(s) of teaching with SWDs. PETE students may avoid activities that do not allow a teacher to demonstrate his/her competence or abilities (Harackiewicz, Barron, Pintrich, Elliot & Thrash, 2002), which can be amplified when teaching SWDs.

### **Development of Comfort within Teaching**

A second emergent theme was ‘development of comfort within teaching’. This theme represents the findings that as PETE students progressed within the field experience, (a) a sense of comfort developed for teaching SWDs, (b) ability to deviate from lesson plan constraints and (c) provide more relevant instruction in meeting student needs. The following statements illustrate the aforementioned ideas “I feel like I’m getting to know the class”. (Kim, Reflection)

“[At first] I didn’t know how to act with [Steve - SWD] because he was in a wheelchair...and it is not as scary now.” (Rob, Reflection)

While the majority of students began to illustrate a level of comfort for teaching SWDs, this was not the case for all PETE students. Samantha stated “I’m not sure this is for me. I don’t want to sound bad, but I like teaching a [traditional, able-bodied] physical education class.” (Reflection).

As PETE student abilities to connect and build rapport with students increased during each week of the practicum experiences, there was a demonstration of pedagogical growth in the area of student feedback and task variety. Examples of this are evident in the following PETE student responses that took place during the middle weeks of the field experience.

“[Bill] spoke more to [Susan - SWD]”.

“Good use of feedback during the lesson...This was different from last time.”

It also became apparent that teacher reflections began to focus on connecting and encouraging students through the use of feedback statements that were positive and corrective to help students succeed within each lesson task or activity. Emily stated in her teaching reflection:

I think I did a better job this time. “I know that I could always do something better, but I felt like I was talking and encouraging [Ian - SWD] more. Each time he did something well, I didn’t fear saying good job or well done...I also found myself telling [Ian - SWD] things like, ‘show me big hands’ when I needed him to keep his hands opened wide. This was probably the best lesson I have done...I felt like I was talking the whole time.” (Reflection).

As feedback statements increased and became more prevalent, PETE students began to provide SWDs a variety of tasks, in terms of the number of activities which worked on similar goals and the ability to change the level of challenge/task to align with what the PETE student perceived as the students appropriate level of success. For example “When I made my lesson, I wanted to make sure I had enough tasks for [Aaron] to do, so I made up about six different tasks that worked on the skill of throwing and catching.”

There was some concern associated with building rapport with students and providing quality pedagogy when working with SWDs.

“I’m not sure how to teach [Junior- SWD]. He is nice and listens to me, but I don’t know what to do.” Working with SWDs is “fine, but I feel like I should be more careful with what I say and what I have him do.” A possible reason for some PETE students struggles could be the continued focus on the self (Sternberg, & Horvath, 1995). As teacher’s progress and attempt to develop their instructional abilities, time is needed to adjust the focus from the self toward the student.

#### **Ability to Manipulate Lesson Design and Structure to Meet Student Needs**

The final theme that emerged was identified as “ability to manipulate lesson design and structure to meet student needs”. At approximately week four and continuing to the end of the field experience, PETE students began to provide more “meaningful classes” that focused on student needs as a catalyst for instruction. For instance, a student may have been in a wheelchair and was weak within the areas of throwing and catching. Since this student possessed the ability to throw and catch, that was the aim of the lesson. A plausible reason PETE students focus on aspects that a SWD could achieve may have been influenced by the overarching notion reinforced within both IAPESs of “teaching to the ability and not the disability”. A representation of this growth in teaching could be summarized by the following two PETE student comments whom stated “I feel more comfortable in teaching what I think is right for my student.” (Roy, Reflection) and “[Alex - SWD] can’t use her right [arm] because of her [disability], so I will teach her to catch with her other hand.”

During the final weeks of the field experience, data analysis indicated a continued comfort with meeting students’ needs within their instruction, but a few students (N=25) began to demonstrate the ability to modify learning task during their actual teaching episodes. As evident, Hillary stated that she “changed the same task

about ten times in 5 minutes...I thought that this would have helped her get [the goal of the task]”, even though these modifications were not in her lesson plan. As PETE students conducted this type of continuous reflection when teaching, PETE students inclusion of motivational concepts increased. PETE students were becoming increasingly flexible, changed the task challenge and some began to provide extrinsic rewards (i.e. token economy). One example was “I like the use of stickers...[Veronica - SWD] really liked it.” Each of these strategies focused on the area of increasing student success, which are critical components for influencing student motivation (Ames, 1992; Deci & Ryan, 1985).

### **Concluding Perceptions of Motivating Students with Disabilities**

Analysis of responses of posttest scenario data revealed some development in what PETE students perceived as effective and important aspects of motivational instruction for SWDs. PETE students continued to focus within the same areas as identified within the initial scenario responses (e.g. task variety, student success and positive feedback), yet provided a higher depth of detail and explanation for implementation within a teaching context. PETE students indicated the first step in motivating SWDs is to keep each student on-task as described by Katelyn and Sara: “If the student is not listening...you can’t really teach.” “Proximity doesn’t work with Allen [SWD] because he is used to people being next to him”.

Once a PETE student possesses the pedagogical skills to keep student’s on-task, their ability to provide instruction (e.g. motivational) could occur. PETE students once again focused their attention toward motivating SWDs within the areas of increasing student success and creating an enjoyable environment.

“The teacher [in the scenario] should be saying more positive things to [the student]...how can you expect the student to be motivated if the teacher is not doing anything to help it...I would be encouraging [the student] to help him grow and get better.”

“The class seems boring...nothing is going on...I would be more active in the class and at least be using my voice so the students know I care.” Jacob stated “the teacher should have said something positive and corrective so the student would know what to do.” “When you say something over and over again it starts to lose its meaning...like when you say “good job”. State what is good about it?” (Jacob, Scenario Response).

Task variety and variation was a common component throughout the study and identified within all data collection measures. PETE students perceived the use of task variety as a way to decrease the level of boredom and provide the opportunity to provide an adequate success level. Jean stated that “changing the rules would allow each student to play and not feel excluded...just ‘cause you can’t travel in basketball doesn’t mean you have to dribble in a wheelchair.” When designing tasks, PETE students felt that you could either make changes to the task by providing diverse activities which work on the same skill or lesson objective, or develop task extensions.

## Summary

Results of this study indicated that PETE students ability to motivate SWDs followed a chronological pattern, which began with (a) inability to teach toward the students, (b) confidence in teaching to understand student needs and (c) implementation of motivational strategies which allow for increased enjoyment and student success. Specifically, PETE students indicated the use of feedback, task variety/variation and teaching to the students needs were key in providing motivational instruction. Deci and Ryan (1985) posits that motivation is a combined interaction of supporting an individual's need of choice, success and a feeling of caring. In terms of this study, PETE students commonly utilized strategies that focused in the area of success.

## Implications

Understanding the use of motivation is a critical component to the development of beginning teachers, as is working with a diverse population of students including those with disabilities (NASPE, 2003). As mentioned above, motivation is connected with a variety of positive student outcomes, which is important to the physical education student (Roberts, 2001; NASPE, 2004). Developing the pedagogical skill for motivating all students is difficult, due to the variety of strategies for influencing the student in terms of individual, group, and environmental techniques, which a teacher can utilize. Moreover, the aforementioned pedagogical concepts and principles can be applied over a variety of age levels, student abilities, and curricula. Physical educators must understand that creating an environment that supports student motivation can benefit students of all ages and abilities.

Current practices for developing beginning physical education teachers requires a combination of theory based and application courses, infusing authentic field-based experiences to merge the two concepts. This study supports the use of a theory and practice model as a means for teacher development, as continuous growth was evident as PETE students progressed within the field experience supported by the lecture and laboratory assignments. Quality preparation of beginning physical educators may require increased authentic experiences that may require more time to allow learned concepts to become an in-grained component within PETE students teaching. PETE programs across the globe may not be providing enough contact time or experiences to effectively develop skills for teaching SWDs because most colleges and universities offer only one course in Adapted Physical Education (Piletic, 2008; Ayers & Housner, 2008). With such limited time, PETE students struggle to develop the skills to motivate a diverse population of students. As identified in previous literature, the majority of PETE programs only provide a small course load, commonly a course lasting one term to prepare teaching SWDs. Providing an increased course load or credit hours could be unrealistic as many programs are strained with increasingly high credit loads for graduation. The issue concerning course load and credit hours causes a focus on the quality preparation

during field-based experiences. In terms of quality experiences, PETE students may benefit from common themes that can be reinforced throughout the entire teacher development program. Physical education courses K-12 can be viewed as inclusive since all students', those with and without disabilities, possesses an area of weakness and it is the role of the teacher to focus on student needs and design tasks and lessons to aid in the learning of all students. Furthermore, challenges in motivating students can be aligned with PETE students weakness, as everyone is diverse in their motivational influences. If SWDs are deemed a difficult population to teach, then PETE programs should provide more exposure, since the hypothesis would be if future teachers can effectively meet the needs of SWDs then teaching "Individuals without disabilities" should be less difficult.

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