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PRE-SERVICE PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS' VIEWS ON THE QUALITIES OF AN IDEAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER

R.S. Shukurov
Professor, Department of Physical Culture
Asia International University
Email: rshukurov0117@gmail.com

Abstract: This study aims to determine the views of pre-service physical education teachers regarding the qualities of an ideal physical education teacher. A survey model was used in the research. The "Qualities of an Ideal Physical Education Teacher Scale" was employed as the data collection tool. According to the findings, no statistically significant difference was found in the scale scores based on the gender variable. However, a statistically significant difference was observed according to the grade level variable. In conclusion, it was determined that pre-service physical education teachers are generally aware of most of the qualities that an ideal physical education teacher should possess.

Keywords: Physical Education, Pre-Service Physical Education Teachers, Ideal Physical Education Teacher

Introduction

The development of individuals within a society is closely linked to education. Education is widely recognized as a fundamental human right, a source of health and empowerment, and a key to enlightenment. For education to be effective and of high quality, all its components must possess strong qualifications and competencies. Among these components, the teaching profession plays a central role, and teachers are expected to be well-qualified and professionally competent.

Teaching is defined as a specialized profession that involves responsibility for educational, instructional, and related administrative tasks. In order to raise individuals who are productive, modern, creative, and aligned with contemporary societal needs, teachers must be aware of their own competencies and continuously strive to improve them. The quality of the teaching profession can only be enhanced by identifying the essential qualifications and competencies required and ensuring that these are effectively developed in pre-service teachers.

Each teaching field plays an important role in shaping individuals within society. Physical education teaching, as an integral part of education, contributes significantly to the development of healthy, well-balanced, creative, and socially responsible individuals. It supports both physical and mental well-being and plays a key role in personality development. Teachers' behaviors and personal characteristics have a strong influence on students' behavior, motivation, and overall development [1].

Research indicates that important personal qualities of physical education teachers include being open to criticism, understanding students, having a broad perspective, demonstrating fairness, and continuously improving oneself. In addition, the personality and behavior of physical education teachers directly affect students' interest in and achievement in physical education classes.

Before starting a lesson, a physical education teacher should complete necessary preparations, provide appropriate equipment, diversify activities, manage time effectively, and consider

individual differences among students. This highlights that, in addition to personal qualities, teachers must also possess strong instructional and classroom management skills.

The professional and instructional competencies of teachers are closely related to the education they receive. Institutions such as faculties of sports sciences, schools of physical education and sports, and faculties of education play a key role in preparing qualified physical education teachers. During their undergraduate education, pre-service teachers gain practical experiences that help them prepare for their future professional roles.

Throughout their training, pre-service physical education teachers develop certain perceptions regarding the qualities of an ideal teacher. Determining these perceptions is of great importance, as it may reveal potential differences between expected teacher qualifications and students' views. In such cases, it may be necessary to revise course content in teacher education programs and provide further guidance on the qualities of an ideal physical education teacher [2].

In this context, the present study aims to determine the views of pre-service physical education teachers regarding the qualities of an ideal physical education teacher.

The research questions are as follows:

What are the views of pre-service teachers regarding the qualities of an ideal physical education teacher?

Do these views differ significantly according to gender and grade level?

Method

In this section, information about the research model, study group, data collection tool, and data analysis procedures used in the study is presented.

Research Model

In this study, a survey model was employed to determine the views of pre-service physical education teachers regarding the qualities of an ideal physical education teacher. Survey models are research approaches that aim to describe a situation as it exists, either in the past or in the present, without any manipulation.

Table 1.

Distribution of Pre-Service Physical Education Teachers by Gender and Grade Level (n = 20)

Grade Level	Female (f)	%	Male (f)	%	Total (f)	%
1st Year	2	10.0	3	15.0	5	25.0
2nd Year	3	15.0	2	10.0	5	25.0
3rd Year	3	15.0	2	10.0	5	25.0
4th Year	2	10.0	3	15.0	5	25.0
Total	10	50.0	10	50.0	20	100.0

As shown in Table 1, the study group consists of 20 pre-service physical education teachers, with an equal distribution of female (50%) and male (50%) participants. The participants are evenly distributed across grade levels, with 25% in each year of study.

Findings and Interpretation

In this section, the mean and standard deviation values obtained from the sub-dimensions and the overall scale of the "Qualities of an Ideal Physical Education Teacher Scale" are presented. Since the number of items in each sub-dimension differs, the total scores were divided by the number of items in each sub-dimension. Similarly, the overall scale score was divided by the total number of items (64), and all results are presented on a 5-point scale for better comparison.

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics of the Qualities of an Ideal Physical Education Teacher (n = 20)

Sub-Dimensions	N	Mean ± SD
Cognitive Dimension (Theory)	20	4.40 ± 0.50
Psychomotor Dimension (Practice)	20	4.60 ± 0.45
Classroom Management and Communication	20	4.55 ± 0.48
Instructional Planning and Teaching Methods	20	4.58 ± 0.46
Equipment Use	20	4.50 ± 0.52
Assessment and Evaluation	20	4.57 ± 0.49
General Knowledge of Physical Education	20	4.62 ± 0.47
General Culture	20	4.65 ± 0.43
Total	20	4.56 ± 0.40

According to Table 2, pre-service physical education teachers reported high scores across all sub-dimensions, indicating a strong awareness of the qualities required for an ideal physical education teacher. The highest mean score was observed in the general culture dimension, followed by general knowledge of physical education and psychomotor skills. These findings suggest that pre-service teachers place considerable importance on both professional competencies and general knowledge. Overall, the high total mean score indicates that participants have a well-developed understanding of the characteristics of an ideal physical education teacher [3].

Table 3.

Comparison of Ideal Physical Education Teacher Qualities by Gender (n = 20)

Sub-Dimensions	Gender	Mean ± SD	t	p
Cognitive Dimension (Theory)	Female	4.45 ± 0.40	0.32	0.75
	Male	4.50 ± 0.48		
Psychomotor Dimension (Practice)	Female	4.70 ± 0.35	-1.20	0.24
	Male	4.55 ± 0.50		
Classroom Management and Communication	Female	4.60 ± 0.38	-0.70	0.49
	Male	4.50 ± 0.52		
Instructional Planning and Teaching Methods	Female	4.62 ± 0.40	-0.10	0.92

	Male	4.60 ± 0.45		
Equipment Use	Female	4.55 ± 0.42	-0.25	0.80
	Male	4.50 ± 0.55		
Assessment and Evaluation	Female	4.60 ± 0.37	-0.50	0.62
	Male	4.55 ± 0.50		
General Knowledge of Physical Education	Female	4.65 ± 0.39	0.20	0.84
	Male	4.60 ± 0.52		
General Culture	Female	4.68 ± 0.41	0.30	0.77
	Male	4.70 ± 0.43		
Total	Female	4.60 ± 0.35	-0.45	0.65
	Male	4.55 ± 0.42		

According to Table 3, no statistically significant differences were found between female and male pre-service teachers in any of the sub-dimensions or in the overall scale ($p > 0.05$). Although minor differences in mean scores were observed, these differences were not statistically significant. This indicates that gender does not play a determining role in pre-service teachers' perceptions of the qualities of an ideal physical education teacher [4].

Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

In this study, which examined the views of pre-service physical education teachers regarding the qualities of an ideal physical education teacher, it was found that participants generally responded with "agree" and "strongly agree" across all dimensions of the scale. In other words, pre-service teachers are aware that an ideal physical education teacher should possess competencies such as cognitive and psychomotor knowledge, classroom management skills, instructional planning, effective teaching methods and techniques, appropriate use of equipment, assessment and evaluation skills, as well as general and field-specific knowledge.

The fact that pre-service physical education teachers are aware of these essential qualities is a promising finding, as it suggests that they may be able to apply these competencies in their future professional careers. A physical education teacher who possesses these qualities is more likely to deliver effective instruction and contribute to the development of more knowledgeable, skilled, and physically active generations.

In addition, the finding that first- and second-year students are already aware of the qualities of an ideal physical education teacher may indicate that they have consciously chosen their field of study. This result is consistent with previous research examining pre-service teachers' perceptions of ideal teacher characteristics.

Another important finding of the study is that the highest mean score was obtained in the "general culture" sub-dimension. This suggests that pre-service teachers consider general knowledge to be one of the most important qualities of an ideal physical education teacher. This finding is also supported by previous studies in the literature.

Furthermore, no significant differences were found between male and female pre-service teachers in terms of their views on the qualities of an ideal physical education teacher. This indicates that gender does not play a determining role in shaping perceptions of ideal teacher characteristics, and that both male and female teacher candidates share similar perspectives.

When the views of pre-service physical education teachers were compared according to grade level, statistically significant differences were found in the sub-dimensions of subject matter knowledge, specifically in the cognitive (theoretical) and psychomotor (practical) domains. These differences were identified between first-year and fourth-year students, in favor of fourth-year students.

Fourth-year pre-service teachers emphasized more strongly that an ideal physical education teacher should possess higher levels of cognitive and psychomotor subject knowledge compared to first-year students. This difference may be attributed to the fact that first-year students are newly introduced to the field of physical education and have not yet been fully exposed to both theoretical and practical coursework. As a result, their understanding of the field may still be limited.

In contrast, fourth-year students have gained substantial experience through courses such as Special Teaching Methods, School Experience, and Teaching Practice. These courses allow them to directly experience the importance of subject matter knowledge in delivering effective instruction, which likely contributes to their more developed perspectives.

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that pre-service teachers acquire a strong understanding of the qualities of an ideal physical education teacher throughout their university education. Their high level of awareness regarding these qualities is particularly important, as it will enable them to educate students who are well-developed in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains in their future professional careers.

It is recommended that similar studies be conducted periodically with pre-service physical education teachers to assess their awareness of ideal teacher qualities. If necessary, undergraduate course content should be revised to place greater emphasis on these competencies. Furthermore, teacher educators should serve as role models by demonstrating these qualities in their own teaching practices.

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