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Examining Self-Contained and Integrated Physical Education Experiences Among Individuals with Visual Impairments

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EXAMINING SELF-CONTAINED AND INTEGRATED PHYSICAL EDUCATION
EXPERIENCES AMONG INDIVIDUALS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

by

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B.S. December 2009, The College at Brockport

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ABSTRACT

EXAMINING SELF-CONTAINED AND INTEGRATED PHYSICAL EDUCATION EXPERIENCES AMONG INDIVIDUALS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

Rebecca Coffey
Old Dominion University, 2018
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Abstract

Introduction. While research to date has examined the views of individuals with visual impairments toward integrated public-school physical education, little attention has been given to examining perspectives toward experiences at residential schools for those with visual impairments. By understanding the perspectives of those who attended physical education in both contexts, researchers can gain valuable information about particularities that can make experiences meaningful or challenging. The purpose of this study was to examine how individuals who experienced physical education in both integrated and residential school settings viewed their physical education class experiences. **Methods.** This study utilized a retrospective interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) to investigate the experiences of individuals with visual impairments in two distinct physical education contexts. Five adults with visual impairments (aged 20 to 35 years; three males, two females) were enrolled in this study. Data collection for this study included semi-structured telephone interviews and reflective interview notes. Interview data were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, and data were analyzed thematically using a process guided by IPA. **Results.** Based on the data analysis, two interrelated themes emerged from the participants transcripts, (a) feelings about inclusion and exclusion, and

(b) support needs met at residential schools. The first theme described participants' reflections that across school settings, feelings about inclusivity and exclusivity were central to how the participants understood their physical education experiences. The second theme described how perceived teacher support and feelings of relatedness with peers were identified by the participants as important factors related to their willingness to explore the environment and engage in physical education curricula. **Discussion.** Across school settings, feelings about the inclusivity and exclusivity were central to how the participants understood their physical education experiences. Positive experiences in physical education, which includes engagement and success, are often influenced by supportive teacher behaviors and peer relationships (Coates & Vickerman, 2008; Haegele & Sutherland 2015). **Implications for practice.** The findings of this study provide teachers a depiction of experiences in two settings that can help them understand what is needed of them to provide meaningful physical education experiences for students with visual impairments.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Background

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS) states that engaging in a physically active lifestyle is important for disease prevention and recommends that youth between the ages of six and 17 years of age partake in at least one or more hours of physical activity every day (USDHHS, 2008). Unfortunately, youth with visual impairments, ranging from low vision to complete blindness, tend to be less physically active than their peers without visual impairments (Kozub & Oh, 2004). This reduction in physical activity may be because those with visual impairments have fewer opportunities to interact with the environment around them, which can lead to limited movement experiences (Houwen, Visscher, Hartman & Lemmink, 2007; Schneekloth, 1989; Skaggs & Hopper, 1996). Research suggests that the development of motor skills occurs later in youth with visual impairments when compared to peers without visual impairments (Bouchard & Tetreault, 2000; Haegele, Brian, & Goodway, 2015; Levtzion-Korach, Tennenbaum, Schnitzer, & Ornot, 2000). Obtaining fundamental motor skills later can cause deficiencies that may relate to lower levels of physical activity for those with visual impairments (Haegele et al., 2015; Haegele & Porretta, 2015). Of additional concern, an inactive lifestyle at a young age can further contribute to motor development problems, which in turn can lead to a continued future of inactivity (Houwen, Hartman, & Visscher, 2009).

School-based physical education is one particular setting of interest when considering physical activity engagement among youth with visual impairments. The goal of physical education is to develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to enjoy a lifetime of physical activity (Society of Health and Physical Educators [SHAPE], 2013). Unfortunately, though, those with visual impairments have expressed a number of challenges when engaging in

physical education classes. For example, past research performed by Haegele and Zhu (2017) showed that students with visual impairments tended to be treated differently by their physical education teachers because of their disabilities. In addition, students with visual impairments reported feeling as though they are viewed as unable by their peers, therefore it comes as no surprise that they tend to experience negative social interactions with their classmates during physical education classes (de Schipper, Lieberman, & Moody, 2017; Haegele & Kirk, 2018; Haegele & Zhu, 2017). Specifically, students with visual impairments have reported experiencing instances of bullying, social isolation and other forms of discrimination from their peers during physical education (Coates & Vickerman, 2008; Haegele & Sutherland, 2015).

To date, most research examining physical education among students with visual impairments was executed in integrated settings. As mentioned above, research indicates that physical education in integrated settings in particular tends to facilitate negative experiences for students with visual impairments, such as frustrations associated with being treated differently by physical education teachers and poor feelings about peer interactions (Coates & Vickerman, 2008; de Schipper, Lieberman, & Moody, 2017; Haegele & Kirk, 2018; Haegele & Sutherland, 2015; Haegele & Zhu, 2017). As such, it is important to note that students with visual impairments may participate in physical education in self-contained settings, such as at residential schools for students with visual impairments. The contextual difference of these two physical education settings could impact the outcome of the education and success of the students with visual impairments. Currently, however, there is no research that has examined the perspectives of participants who have experienced physical education in both integrated public school and self-contained residential school for students with visual impairments settings. Understanding the views of students with visual impairments who have experienced physical

education in both contexts can provide meaningful information about which experience is viewed as being more beneficial.

To complete the research process, different procedures and instruments were used to collect the data. To investigate the participants' physical education experiences, an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) research approach was used (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). IPA is used for qualitative research to try to understand how participants make sense of their personal experiences (Smith, Jarman, & Osborn, 1999; Smith & Osborn, 2008) and focuses on the understanding of those experiences as the participants lived it (Smith et al., 2009). This study retrospectively examined school-based physical education experiences of adults with visual impairments who experienced both integrated and self-contained settings and their perceptions of those experiences. The participants for this study were between the ages of 20-35, had a visual impairment, and were recruited using a national listserv of people with visual impairments who have interest in being part of research. The participants eligibility was confirmed by the researcher using a brief screening questionnaire (see Appendix A). Once they were found eligible, they were asked to participate in the study and an informed consent was obtained from each participant. Once their consent had been received, the data collection process began.

For the data collection process, an interview guide (Appendix B) was followed in a semi-structured manner while performing telephone interviews that were audio-recorded. During the interviews, reflective notes were taken by the interviewer, so they were able to recall their initial feelings and thoughts during the analysis process. Once all of the interviews were complete, they were transcribed verbatim by the interviewer. From the transcribed interviews, common themes emerged using an analytic process inspired by IPA.

Research Questions

- How do people with visual impairments compare their experiences in integrated physical education classes with physical education classes in schools for those with visual impairments?

Definitions

Integration. An educational placement where students with disabilities are educated in classroom settings with peers without disabilities.

Legal Blindness. A medical diagnosis of a central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with the best possible correction, and/or a visual field of 20 degrees or less (Key Definitions of Statistical Terms, 2018).

Physical Education. A school-based class which focused on the development of physical and motor fitness, fundamental motor skills and patterns, and skills in aquatics, dance, and individual and group games and sports. A required service for students between the ages of 3-21 who have qualified for special education services due to a specific disability or developmental delay (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004)

School for those with Visual Impairments. A residential school for students that have blindness or a visual impairment.

Self-Contained Setting. An educational placement where students with disabilities are educated with other students with similar abilities/disabilities.

Visual Impairment. Encompasses both those who are completely blind and those with low vision (Corn & Erin, 2010, p. 13).

Limitations

- Since this is a retrospective study, the reflected experiences may not be representative of current physical education experiences.
- Since the interviews were done over the phone, facial gestures or body language were not recorded.

Delimitations

- Only people with visual impairments were used as participants for this study. Therefore, findings from this study would not generalize to persons with other disabilities.
- In order to participate in this study, participants must have taken part in both integrated physical education classes in public schools as well as in a residential school setting for people who are blind or visually impaired. Therefore, the participants in this study are limited to that specific subset of individuals.

Significance of the Study

The topic of the use of integrated versus self-contained settings for physical education classes for students with disabilities is becoming more common. However, little research has been conducted on the views of people with visual impairments in physical education. Much of this research has examined how individuals with visual impairments documented their integrated physical education classes (Haegele, Zhu & Davis, 2017), with little on the experiences of residential schools for those with visual impairments physical education classes (Haegele, Sato, Zhu & Avery, 2017). At this time, however, no research has included those who experienced both physical education settings. The purpose of this study was to examine how individuals who experienced physical education in both integrated and residential school settings viewed their

physical education class experiences. Completing this research provides insight into which setting is preferred for physical education among people with visual impairments.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of the significant literature that pertains to the research in the areas of physical activity and education for students with visual impairments, physical education experiences in integrated settings, and physical education in self-contained settings.

Physical Activity and Education for Students with Visual Impairments

Being physically active is important for one's health, and helps prevent chronic diseases (Guinhouya, Samouda, & Beaufort, 2013). Also, it contributes to the development of motor skills, encourages proper social development, helps build self-confidence (Guinhouya et al., 2013), and promotes and maintains health, fitness and well-being (Haegele & Lieberman, 2016). Developing a habit of engaging in regular physical activity is a gradual, unforced process that must respect an individual's physical readiness and interests (Kurkova, Nemcek, & Labudova, 2015). Benefits for youth who are physically active on a regular basis consist of a decrease in the chance of developing health-related issues such as anxiety, obesity and depression throughout their life span (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2011). As shown, it is important for everyone to learn about and engage in physical activity, since it contributes to a long and healthy life.

Unfortunately, research has shown that youth with disabilities, particular those with visual impairments, tend to be inactive and spend the majority of their waking time engaging in sedentary activities (Houwen, Hartman, & Visscher, 2009; Stanish, et al., 2015). Due to not participating in an adequate amount of physical activity, youth with disabilities are at higher risk for developing health-related conditions (USDHHS, 2008). Youth with visual impairments may be inactive due to having fewer opportunities to interact with their environment and/or

underdeveloped motor skills (Houven, Visscher, Hartman & Lemmink, 2007; Schneekloth, 1989; Skaggs & Hopper, 1996). Inactivity is of additional concern, as an inactive lifestyle at a young age can lead to motor problems, which in turn can nurture a continuing future of inactivity (Houwen, Hartman, & Visscher, 2009).

Physical inactivity that begins in childhood can influence behaviors in adulthood. For example, research by Starkoff and colleagues (2016) demonstrated that adult-aged individuals with visual impairments seem to spend more time in sedentary behavior compared to their sighted peers, due to increased dependence on others and limited options for physical activities. Along those lines, Van Landingham and colleagues (2012) stated that people with a visual impairment or blindness tend to be less physically active due to a greater fear of falling and a decreased motivation to participate in activities. Due to a low engagement in physical activity (Holbrook, Caputo, Perry, Fuller & Morgan, 2009; Holbrook, Kang, & Morgan, 2013), people with visual impairments show a high prevalence for conditions such as obesity, comorbidity and limitations performing daily living activities (Crews & Campbell, 2001; Holbrook et al., 2009; Holbrook, Kang, & Morgan, 2013; Ray, Horvath, Williams, & Blasch, 2007; Weil et al., 2002).

One environment for individuals with disabilities that fosters safe and effective participation and learning about physical activity is school based physical education class (Haegele, Zhu, Lee, & Lieberman, 2016). The purpose of physical education is to develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to enjoy a lifetime of physical activity (Society of Health and Physical Educators [SHAPE], 2013). The provision of physical education for students with disabilities was mandated by section 300.108 under IDEA (2004). Through a quality physical education program, students with visual impairments can have the opportunity to develop fundamental skills needed to maintain a healthy and physically active lifestyle

(Lieberman, Haegele, Columna, & Conroy, 2014). Research has revealed that students tend to engage in more physical activity if they have the skills needed to participate appropriately (Le Masurier & Corbin, 2006). Conversely, when students are less successful in activities, they are more likely to stop participating (Stodden et al., 2008). In addition to keeping students active, physical education plays a large role in social engagement for students with disabilities (Oh, Ozturk, & Kozub, 2004). To maximize the benefits and success of physical education, students must perceive it in a positive way and learn to enjoy being physically active (Bibik, Goodwin, & Orsega-Smith, 2007).

Physical Education in Integrated Contexts

Recent figures suggest that most students with disabilities tend to receive physical education in integrated settings with their peers without disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, 2018). Integrated physical education can show positive effects when implemented properly, but if poorly implemented, students with disabilities may experience adverse effects such as bullying and social isolation (Lieberman & Houston-Wilson, 2017). Coates and Vickerman (2008) discussed some concerns with integrated physical education, including the apparent lack of training for physical educators in teaching students with disabilities, as well as the use of curricula that is not tailored to incorporate the needs of students with disabilities.

Specific to students with visual impairments receiving physical education in integrated settings, barriers have been identified that can hinder experiences, such as a lack of trained physical education teachers and staff who understand the modifications and/or accommodations students with visual impairments need to be successful during physical education (Haegele et al., 2017; Lieberman & Conroy, 2013; Stuart, Lieberman, & Hand, 2006). For example, research shows that physical education teachers usually fail to properly adapt and modify instruction to fit

the interests and abilities of the students with visual impairments (Herold & Dandolo, 2009). As a result of the lack of training in staff, there may be limited access to appropriate physical activities for individuals with visual impairments in school settings, as well as in the community (Perkins, Columna, Lieberman & Bailey, 2013).

Research examining integrated physical education experiences among students with visual impairments has identified that negative experiences are common. These negative experiences are often due to a lack of support from physical education teachers and/or poor interactions with their peers without disabilities (Lieberman, Robinson, & Rollheiser, 2006). In particular, instances of discrimination (e.g., social isolation, bullying) have occurred and can be driven by both teachers and typically developing peers in integrated physical education setting (Haegele & Zhu, 2017). For example, Haegele, Sato, Zhu and Avery (2017) stated students with visual impairments reported feeling “left out” during activities with their sighted peers.

Furthermore, Place and Hodge (2001) state feelings of exclusion are consistent among those with visual impairments in research exploring social inclusion in physical education. Because of these negative experiences, students with visual impairments may choose sedentary hobbies instead of physical activity during their leisure time (Haegele & Sutherland, 2015). Overall, even though many people see providing physical education in an integrated setting integration as the ideal situation, resulting in beneficial outcomes, positive experiences are limited in the existing literature (Coates & Vickerman, 2008). Furthermore, if it is poorly implemented, it may actually promote adverse effects.

Physical Education at Residential School Settings

Not every student with a visual impairment participates in physical education in an integrated, public school setting. Students with visual impairments attending classes at

residential schools for those with visual impairments participate in physical education in self-contained settings. According to Haegele and Lieberman (2016), physical education in schools for students with visual impairments include a more direct focus on the needs of the students by providing a well-rounded program with services that are designed for students with visual impairments. With properly trained physical educators, who know and understand the needs of the students (Haegele et al., 2017), physical education in self-contained settings is likely to increase the motor competence of the students (Haegele & Porretta, 2015). In addition to increased opportunity to improve motor skills, students with visual impairments have reported feeling included, which in turn, decreased their personal perceptions of inability and assisted in reducing the fear of being excluded (Haegele et al., 2017). As such, a strong benefit of physical education in self-contained settings is that students with visual impairments felt included because of the availability of adapted equipment and activities (Haegele et al., 2017).

While research on physical education in an integrated setting is growing, little has been done to examine self-contained settings. Furthermore, the majority of the previous research in this area was from the teachers' perspectives; therefore, more research needs to be done from the students' view point (Herold & Dandolo, 2009). Thus, further inquiry into the perceptions of students with visual impairments regarding physical education in residential school settings, and how they feel about these settings in comparison to integrated settings, is warranted.

Summary

Today more so than ever, students with visual impairments are being educated in classes with their typically developing peers (Haegele & Sutherland, 2015). Unfortunately, however, physical educators tend to lack professional preparation, equipment, and time needed to plan and implement effective integrated physical education classes (Lieberman, Houston-Wilson, &

Kozub, 2002). Also, negative experiences for students with visual impairments can occur due to a lack of support from physical education teachers and poor interactions with peers without disabilities (Lieberman et al., 2006). Specifically, feelings of “exclusion” have been commonly reported by students with visual impairments during physical education experiences (Haegele & Zhu, 2017). In addition to integrated settings, students with visual impairments may also attend physical education in self-contained settings at residential schools for those with visual impairments. Physical education in schools for students with visual impairments tend to include a more direct focus on the needs of the students by providing a well-rounded program with services that are designed specifically for students with visual impairments (Haegele & Lieberman, 2016). To understand the views of people with visual impairments toward their physical education experiences, it is important to continue to research their viewpoints (Haegele & Sutherland, 2015). To the knowledge of the author, there are no current studies that have specifically focused on the difference of physical education experiences by students with visual impairments in both integrated and self-contained settings in one study. Thus, this thesis provided unique insight that can contribute to the current body of literature.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of Chapter III, Methodology, is to provide an outline of the procedures and instruments that were used throughout the data collection and data analysis process. The following sections will describe the research approach, participants, procedures, data collection, data treatment and analysis, and quality assessment.

Research Approach

The purpose of this study was to examine how individuals who experienced physical education in both integrated and residential school settings viewed their physical education class experiences. This study is retrospective, in that it asked adult-aged participants to reflect on their experiences as students. There are two main reasons for completing this research in a retrospective manner. First, retrospective studies allow the participants to gain some emotional distance from experiences and events that may be challenging for them to discuss (Haegele & Zhu, 2017). Second, performing the interviews retrospectively allowed for the interviewees to cover experiences in their entirety (i.e., their entire physical education experiences) without the threat of affecting those behaviors as an outsider (Haegele & Zhu, 2017).

To investigate the participants' physical education experiences, an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) research approach was used (Smith et al., 2009). IPA is used for qualitative research to try to understand how participants make sense of their personal and social experiences, and the meanings the experiences hold for participants (Smith et al., 1999; Smith & Osborn, 2008). The IPA research approach focuses on the understanding of the experiences as the participants lived it, which makes experiences unique to each person's situation and relationship to the world in which they live (Smith et al., 2009). When research is done using an IPA format, two aims must be considered. First, the researchers must attempt to

understand the participants' world and "what it is like" while focusing on specific experiences (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006). Secondly, the researcher has to perform an interpretative analysis that includes elucidating specific meanings and feelings that participants credit to those experiences of interest (Haegele & Kirk, 2018). For this study, the researcher examined the perceptions of experiences during physical education by students with visual impairments in two settings: (a) integrated settings with peers without disabilities, and (b) self-contained settings at residential schools for those with visual impairments.

Participants

The participants in this study included five adults between the ages of 20 to 35 years who self-identified as currently having a visual impairment and who had a visual impairment during their school aged years. The age range was selected because the target experiences occurred in the recent past, promoting the likelihood the participant would remember the details of the experiences. Specifically, to be eligible for this study, participants met the following selection criteria: (a) being ages 18 to 35-years, (b) had a visual impairment (ranging from low vision to blindness) while receiving their K-12 education, (c) participated in physical education classes in both integrated public school settings and self-contained settings at a school for those with visual impairments for a minimum of one year in each setting, and (d) willing to complete a phone interview lasting approximately 60 to 90-minutes.

Participants included in this study included three male and two female adults with visual impairments (aged 20 to 35 years). Two of the participants identified as Caucasian, two as Asian American, and one as Hispanic American. All participants were assigned pseudonyms to protect their identity. See Table 1 for more detailed descriptions of the participants' demographic information.

Table 1. Participant demographic information.

Name	Gender	Age	Race/Ethnicity	Visual Impairment	Years in Integrated PE	Years in School for students with visual impairments
Mio	Female	33	Asian American	Complete blindness	Pre-K – 3 rd grade	4 th -12 th grade
Heidi	Female	25	Caucasian	20/200 visual acuity in left eye, complete blindness in right eye.	1 st – 12 th grade	Kindergarten
Ali	Male	20	Asian American	Complete blindness in left eye, low vision in right eye	K-5 th , & 7 th -12 th grade	6 th grade
Robert	Male	35	Hispanic-American	Complete blindness	KG-10 th grade	11 th - 12 th grade
Joseph	Male	28	Caucasian	Complete blindness	K-9 th & 12 th grade	10 th -11 th grade

Procedures

Participants were recruited using a national listserv of adults with visual impairments with interest in participating in research. After institutional review board (IRB) approval (Appendix C) was received, the researcher sent a recruitment document with a brief description of the study, a description of participant responsibility and eligibility, and the researchers' email address, to the listserv moderator for posting. Interested potential participants who met the eligibility criteria were asked to email the researcher to express interest in participating. The researcher then confirmed participants eligibility with a brief screening questionnaire (Appendix A). Those found eligible were asked to participate in the study. At that point, the researcher

obtained informed consent from each participant (Appendix D). Once consent was received, participants were enrolled in the study and data collection began.

Data Collection

Data collection procedures for this study, adopted from Haegele and Zhu (2017), included semi-structured telephone interviews and reflective interview notes. The main source of data was audio-recorded telephone interviews completed in a semi-structured manner. Telephone interviews were used due to the potentially dispersed location of the participants which enabled time-efficient participant recruitment. Telephone interviews are beneficial because they are considered cost-effective and can lower the effects of the interviewer (Goodwin & Staples, 2005). All telephone interviews were recorded by the interviewer, for subsequent transcription.

To complete this interview process, participants received a phone call from the interviewer at a predetermined time that was convenient for both the participant and the interviewer. The interviews started with a description of the study purpose, and a brief background summary provided by the researcher regarding her relationship to the project and participants in the project. The interviews were semi-structured and followed an interview guide (Appendix B), inspired by a phenomenological framework, to guarantee that similar questions were asked across all participants. The interview guide was adopted from previous research with individuals with visual impairments (Haegele & Zhu, 2017) and was adapted to meet the needs of the current project. Revisions to the guide were made based on the recommendations of a panel of experts, including three researchers with expertise in physical education, adapted physical education, and special education. Interviews concluded after interview guide questions were exhausted and participants confirmed that they had no additional pertinent content to add.

During and immediately after the interviews, reflective interview notes were taken. The reflective notes contained the interviewer's initial feelings about the conversation, as well as some initial thoughts about emerging themes based on information received. By doing so, the reflective note taking process allowed the interviewer to return to the setting of the interview during the time of the analysis to ensure reflexivity (Walker, Read, & Priest, 2013). Reflexivity is a process of critically reflecting on and noting personal biases that could affect the data interpretation (Walker et al., 2013).

Data Treatment and Analysis

Once the interviews were completed, the audio-recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by the interviewer. The purpose of the transcription process was to gain a semantic, meaningful record of the interview. Because of the adopted data analysis procedures, "aim(ed) primarily to interpret the meaning of the content of the participants account" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 74), transcriptions did not require recordings of any nonverbal sounds and pauses.

Once the transcriptions were completed, thematic development with the use of qualitative methods guided by IPA began. The point of this process was to show results in the form of the participants' personal experiences (Smith et al., 2009). Thematic development included a three-step analytical process. First, the interviewer immersed herself in the data by going over the transcripts and field notes multiple times, as well as by re-listening to the audio-recordings of the interviews to become familiar with the data collected (Smith et al., 2009). The second step was for the interviewer to reduce the documents (i.e. field notes, transcripts and descriptive comments) related to the information into emergent themes (Smith et al., 2009). The document reduction process was done by constantly comparing data at the participant level. Once the emergent themes were found at the participant level, the last step was to look for any patterns or

connections between the different participants. According to Smith and colleagues (2009), identifying recurring themes across a group of participants is one way to show validity in the findings in IPA studies (Smith et al., 2009).

Quality Assessment

Yardley (2000) and Smith and colleagues (2009) discussed and recommended four principles to assess the quality of IPA studies. The four principles used to evaluate this study were: (a) sensitivity to context, (b) commitment and rigor, (c) transparency and coherence, and (d) impact and importance. First, context sensitivity was addressed by the interviewer stating her views (i.e., positionality) to the participants, so they were aware of her biases. Specifically, the interviewer explained she was an Adapted Physical Education teacher in a public-school setting, has worked at sports camps for students with visual impairments, and is working on her Master's Degree in Education with a major in Adapted Physical Education at Old Dominion University. Furthermore, sensitivity to context was addressed through the use of an abundant number of quotes from transcripts in the results. Doing so ensured that the participants' voices were central throughout the project (Smith et al., 2009). Next, commitment referred to how attentive the researcher was to each participant during the data collection process, as well as the care put into the analysis process (Smith et al., 2009). Likewise, rigor was recognized through the use of an interview guide that was initially developed for research with those with a visual impairment (Haegele & Zhu, 2017), then adapted and approved following recommendations by the original guide creators prior to use. Third, transparency referred to how clearly the stages of the research are described (Yardley, 2000) and was established through describing the participant recruitment process, interviews, transcription and analysis procedures. Additionally, coherence was reached through the clear accounting of the researcher position, reflexivity, biases and methods used

throughout the research process. Finally, impact and importance for qualitative research lies in if the research communicates content of interest, importance or usefulness (Yardley, 2000).

CHAPTER IV: MANUSCRIPT

Examining Self-Contained and Integrated Physical Education Experiences among Individuals with Visual Impairments

Abstract

Introduction. While research to date has examined the views of individuals with visual impairments toward integrated public-school physical education, little attention has been given to examining perspectives toward experiences at residential schools for those with visual impairments. By understanding the perspectives of those who attended physical education in both contexts, researchers can gain valuable information about particularities that can make experiences meaningful or challenging. The purpose of this study was to examine how individuals who experienced physical education in both integrated and residential school settings viewed their physical education class experiences. **Methods.** This study utilized a retrospective interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) to investigate the experiences of individuals with visual impairments in two distinct physical education contexts. Five adults with visual impairments (aged 20 to 35 years; three males, two females) were enrolled in this study. Data collection for this study included semi-structured telephone interviews and reflective interview notes. Interview data were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, and data were analyzed thematically using a process guided by IPA. **Results.** Based on the data analysis, two interrelated themes emerged from the participants transcripts, (a) feelings about inclusion and exclusion, and (b) feelings about support. The first theme described participants reflections that across school settings, feelings about inclusivity and exclusivity were central to how the participants understood their physical education experiences. The second theme described how perceived teacher support and feelings of relatedness with peers were identified by the participants as important factors related to their willingness to explore the environment and engage in physical education curricula. **Discussion.** Across school settings, feelings about the inclusivity and exclusivity were central to how the participants understood their physical education experiences.

Positive experiences in physical education, which includes engagement and success, are often influenced by supportive teacher behaviors and peer relationships (Coates & Vickerman, 2008; Haegele & Sutherland 2015). **Implications for practice.** The findings of this study provide teachers a depiction of experiences in two settings that can help them understand what is needed of them to provide meaningful physical education experiences for students with visual impairments.

Examining Self-Contained & Integrated Physical Education Experiences among Individuals with Visual Impairments: A Qualitative Inquiry

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS) states that engaging in a physically active lifestyle is important for disease prevention and recommends that youth between the ages of six and 17 years of age partake in at least one or more hours of physical activity every day (USDHHS, 2008). Unfortunately, youth with visual impairments, ranging from low vision to complete blindness, tend to be less physically active than their peers without visual impairments (Kozub & Oh, 2004). Because those with visual impairments tend not to engage in sufficient amounts of physical activity and garner the health-related benefits, they may be at risk for developing health-related conditions. For example, in a cross-sectional analysis of the 2011-2012 National Survey of Children's Health, Haegele, Aigner, and Healy (2019) found adolescents with severe visual impairments to report higher rates of poor health compared to those without visual impairments.

School-based physical education is one particular setting of interest when considering physical activity engagement among students with visual impairments. According to Kriemler and colleagues (2011), school-based physical education is among the most common places for youth to learn about and engage in physical activity. The goal of physical education is to develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to enjoy a lifetime of physical activity (Society of Health and Physical Educators [SHAPE], 2013). Recent figures suggest that most students with disabilities, including those with visual impairments, tend to receive physical education in integrated settings with their peers without disabilities (USDOE, 2018). When examining literature pertaining to physical education experiences among persons with visual impairments in integrated contexts, predominately challenging experiences were reported (de Schipper,

Lieberman, & Moody, 2017; Haegele & Kirk, 2018; Haegele & Zhu, 2017). For example, research in this area has demonstrated that it is not uncommon for students with visual impairments to be treated differently by their physical education teachers, including being removed or isolated from activities because of perceptions of inability (Haegele & Zhu, 2017). Instances like this can influence peers to view classmates with visual impairments as unable during physical education, which may lead to negative social interactions, such as bullying or other belittling behaviors (de Schipper et al., 2017; Haegele & Kirk, 2018; Haegele & Zhu, 2017). Because of these negative experiences, youth with visual impairments may elect to engage in sedentary hobbies during leisure time, both during and outside of school, rather than physically active pursuits (Haegele & Sutherland, 2015).

While the majority of students with visual impairments receive physical education in integrated contexts, other contexts, which may be more favorable, are available. For example, students with visual impairments attending classes at residential schools for students with visual impairments engage in physical education programs specifically tailored for those with visual impairments. According to Haegele and Lieberman (2016), physical education in schools for students with visual impairments include a more direct focus on the needs of the students by providing a well-rounded program with services that are designed for students with visual impairments. With properly trained physical educators, who know and understand the needs of the students (Haegele, Sato, Zhu, & Avery, 2017), physical education at residential schools for students with visual impairments are more likely to provide meaningful experiences. For example, in a study by Haegele and colleagues (2017), which examined reflections of adults with visual impairments toward their physical education experiences at residential schools,

participants reported feeling included, which in turn, decreased their personal perceptions of inability and assisted in reducing the fear of being marginalized during physical education.

While research is growing that examines the perspectives of those with visual impairments about physical education experiences, studies have generally focused on either integrated contexts (Haegele & Kirk, 2018; Haegele & Zhu, 2017) or residential schools for students with visual impairments (Haegele et al., 2017). To date, no research is available that specifically focuses on the experiences of individuals who attended physical education in both contexts. By examining the perspectives of those who attended physical education in both contexts, researchers can gain a better understanding of how students with visual impairments experience physical education classes from a first-person perspective and help identify ways to improve instruction in both contexts (Coates, 2011). When we acknowledge how individuals with visual impairments perceive the world, better insight can be given into how they experience different aspects of life (Haegele & Sutherland, 2015) including their physical education classes. Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine how individuals who experienced physical education in both integrated and residential school settings viewed their physical education class experiences.

Methods

Research Approach

This study was retrospective in nature and engaged in an interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) to investigate the experiences of individuals with visual impairments in two distinct physical education contexts. This study was retrospective, in that it asked adult participants to reflect on their experiences as students. There are two main reasons for completing this research in a retrospective manner. First, retrospective studies allow the

participants to gain some emotional distance from experiences and events that may be challenging for them to discuss (Haegele & Zhu, 2017). Second, performing the interviews retrospectively allowed for the interviewees to cover experiences in their entirety (i.e., their entire physical education experiences) without the threat of affecting them (Haegele & Zhu, 2017). To investigate the participants' physical education experiences, an IPA research approach was used (Smith et al., 2009). IPA is a qualitative research approach concerned with understanding how participants make sense of their personal and social experiences, and the meanings the experiences hold for participants (Smith et al., 1999; Smith & Osborn, 2008). When research is done using an IPA format, two aims must be considered. First, the researchers must attempt to understand the participants' world and "what it is like" while focusing on specific experiences (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006). Secondly, the researcher has to perform an interpretative analysis that includes elucidating specific meanings and feelings that participants credit to those experiences of interest (Larkin et al., 2006).

Participants

Participants were recruited for this study through an electronic call for participants that was distributed through a listserv of adults with visual impairments with interest in participating in research. The call for participants included the purpose, time commitment, and eligibility criteria to participate. Eligibility criteria for this study included: (a) being 18 to 35 years of age; (b) had a visual impairment (ranging from low vision to blindness) while receiving their K-12 education; (c) participated in physical education classes in both integrated and school for students with visual impairments for at least one year in each setting; and (d) willing to complete a phone interview lasting approximately 60-90 minutes. Interested parties were asked to email the lead author to express interest in participating, and the lead author then distributed a brief

screening questionnaire to ensure that potential participants met stated eligibility criteria. Those who met eligibility criteria were then asked to participate in the study.

Participants included in this study included three male and two female adults with visual impairments (aged 20 to 35 years). Two of the participants identified as Caucasian, two as Asian American, and one as Hispanic American. All participants were assigned pseudonyms to protect their identity. See Table 1 for more detailed descriptions of the participants' demographic information.

Data Collection

Data collection procedures for this study, adopted from those used by Haegele and Zhu (2017), included semi-structured telephone interviews and reflective interview notes. The main source of data was audio-recorded, semi-structured telephone interviews. Telephone interviews were used due to the potentially dispersed location of the participants and to enable time-efficient participant recruitment. To initiate the interview process, participants received a phone call from the interviewer (the first author) at a predetermined time that was convenient for both the participant and the interviewer. The interviews started with a description of the study purpose and a brief background summary provided by the interviewer regarding her relationship to the project and participants in the project. Specifically, the interviewer stated she (a) was employed as an adapted physical education teacher in a public-school district, (b) worked at a sports camp for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, and (c) was pursuing her Master's Degree in Education with a major in adapted physical education. The interviews followed an interview guide, which was inspired by the research approach and purpose of the study, to guarantee that similar questions were asked across all participants. The interview guide was adopted from previous research with individuals with visual impairments (Haegele & Zhu, 2017) and was

adapted to meet the needs of the current project. Revisions to the guide were made based on the recommendations of a panel of experts, including three researchers with expertise in physical education, adapted physical education, and special education. Interviews concluded after interview guide questions were exhausted and participants confirmed that they had no additional pertinent content to add.

During and immediately after the interviews, reflective interview notes were taken. The reflective notes contained the interviewer's initial feelings about the conversation, as well as some initial thoughts about themes that emerged during the interview. By taking reflective notes throughout the interview process, the interviewer was able to return to the setting of the interview during the time of the analysis to ensure reflexivity (Walker, Read, & Priest, 2013). Reflexivity is a process of critically reflecting on and noting personal biases that could affect the data interpretation (Walker et al., 2013).

Data Analysis and Trustworthiness

Once interviews were completed, the audio files were transcribed verbatim by the interviewer. The purpose of the transcription process was to gain a semantic, meaningful record of the interview. Once the transcriptions were complete, a thematic development process guided by IPA took place. The purpose of this process was to show results in the form of the participants' personal experiences (Smith et al., 2009). Thematic development included a three-step analytical process. First, the interviewer immersed herself in the data by going over the transcripts and field notes multiple times, as well as by re-listening to the audio-recordings of the interviews to become familiar with the data (Smith et al., 2009). The second step was for the interviewer to reduce the documents (i.e. field notes, transcripts and descriptive comments) related to the information into emergent themes (Smith et al., 2009). The document reduction

process was done by constantly comparing data at the participant level. Once the emergent themes were found at the participant level, the last step was to look for any patterns or connections between the different participants using constant comparison.

Several items, presented by Yardley (2000), were taken into consideration to enhance the trustworthiness of this study. First, to expose biases, the interviewer described her positionality to participants at the beginning of each interview. In addition, an abundant number of quotes from transcripts were presented in the results to ensure the participants' voices were central throughout the project (Smith et al., 2009). The rigor of the study was supported through the use of an interview guide that was initially developed for research with individuals with visual impairments (Haegele & Zhu, 2017), then adapted to align with the purposes of this analysis. Transparency and coherence were supported through clearly describing the researcher position and reflexivity, the participant recruitment process, interviews, transcription and analysis procedures (Yardley, 2000).

Results and Discussion

Based on the data analysis, two interrelated themes emerged from the participants' transcripts and reflective interview notes: (a) feelings about inclusion and exclusion, and (b) feelings about support across school settings. The first theme, feelings about inclusion and exclusion, includes two subthemes that capture the participants' feelings of inclusion and exclusion across integrated and residential school settings.

Feelings about Inclusion and Exclusion

Predominately exclusionary experiences in integrated classes. Across school settings, feelings about inclusivity and exclusivity were central to how the participants understood their physical education experiences. Although not common, several participants expressed

experiencing some instances of inclusivity during their integrated physical education classes. Similar to previous research (Haegele & Zhu, 2017), the participants in the current study stated that positive experiences were directly related to the ability of participants' teachers to make activities accessible. For example, Heidi recalled feeling included during games that used a projectile (i.e., a ball), because "we would use a beep ball or balls with bells. We would have all the students use it." Similarly, Joseph recalled speaking with his teacher about using sound sources in physical education, which resulted in:

All of my classmates started wearing bells. That was one inclusive step they took during class. Students put bells on during games and stuff. Once you start pointing it out, people can be pretty creative with their solutions. (Joseph)

Block and Obrusnikova (2007) previously noted the importance of physical education teachers' behaviors, suggesting these behaviors are among the most critical factors in ensuring meaningful learning experiences for students with disabilities in integrated physical education settings. The experiences of Joseph and Heidi, where physical educators provided accessible modifications to activities, support these assertions. As noted by Haegele and colleagues (2017), the availability of these types of accessible equipment can contribute to making sure a student with a visual impairment feels included. These assertions were further supported by Ali, who recalled his physical educator stating, "you [Ali] tell us what you need, and we will do our best to make it work". Ali continued by reflecting that:

There were times I felt like there was no visual impairment. It felt like I was just another student in the classroom at the point. I actually looked forward to gym class my freshman year [in integrated physical education].

It is clear that, based on the participants' narratives, there were some occasions where the actions of the participants' physical educators influenced subjective feelings of acceptance and belonging that are inherent in inclusive educational experiences (Stainback & Stainback, 1996).

While the participants noted instances of inclusive experiences during their integrated physical education classes, negative experiences were more commonly described throughout their statements and reflective interview notes. Consistent with previous research examining physical education experiences among students with disabilities (Goodwin & Watkinson, 2000; Haegele & Sutherland, 2015), including those with visual impairments (Haegele & Kirk, 2018; Haegele & Zhu, 2017), the feeling of being "left out" or "pushed aside" was abundantly reported among participants. For the most part, participants recalled not understanding the reason why they were pushed aside during their physical education classes, but theorized that it was likely associated with their vision. For example, Ali stated, "I don't know whether I was taken out of middle school (physical education) activities because of my sight, but sometimes it looked or felt that way." Ali's narrative reinforced previous research (i.e., Haegele & Zhu, 2017) which noted it is not uncommon for students with visual impairments to be removed from integrated physical education activities because of perceptions of inability related to vision, which was reinforced by Ali's narrative. The participants noted these types of exclusionary instances as being particularly challenging during integrated placements. For example, Mio recalled that "The overall experience [of being put to the side] was discouraging because you're just on the side line. Trying to get included in the activities is a huge challenge." Zachary provided further narrative on these types of experiences, stating:

There was a lot of exclusion in public education because they [teachers] didn't design it for people with a disability or someone who couldn't see, it was designed for people that

were 'normal' and had full functions of their body. There were kids in wheelchairs that couldn't participate, there were kids with crutches and stuff, and they had to sit out every time. That builds a gap between you and your peers when you are trying to participate, and they are not giving you enough information to succeed.

Zachary provided insight into the potential social repercussions, in this instance social isolation, that may arise when students with visual impairments are excluded from activities with their peers. Instances of social isolation are omnipresent in literature examining integrated physical education experiences among persons with disabilities (Haegele & Sutherland, 2015). For example, Place and Hodge (2001) noted that although enrolled in physical education in the same context, it is not uncommon for those with and without disabilities to have little to no social interactions with each other.

Feelings of inclusion at residential schools. Unlike in integrated contexts, where experiences were described as predominately negative, physical education experiences at schools for students with visual impairments were described as being mostly positive. Largely, the participants' positive views toward physical education at schools for students with visual impairments were due to feelings of inclusivity, that were dictated by the teachers as well as peers. For example, when it came to the physical education instructors, Mio stated,

They [physical educators] would encourage me to play basketball. I was like, I don't think I can do it, I'll hit my own head. But I was able to do it, which was very exciting. It was very cool that I could actually participate.

As noted previously, the behaviors of physical educators have been identified as a critical element to the success of students with disabilities in physical education (Block & Obrusnikova, 2007). This was highlighted by Mio, who viewed encouragement from her physical educator to

engage in activities that seemed impossible as critical to her success. This type of encouragement, and the success associated with it, can help those with visual impairments understand their potential in physical activity environments (Haegele & Zhu, 2017). For example, Zachary noted:

It [experiences with physical educators at residential schools] influenced the way I see visual impairment from them. They were trained specially to deal with this type of thing. It made me feel more included, it made me feel more part of the unit.

Importantly, Zachary resolved that the abilities of the physical education staff, and his success in these accommodating programs, made him feel like part of the group. The subjective feeling of belonging and sense of community that he described, while not in an integrated setting, is consistent with Stainback and Stainback's (1996) conceptualization of inclusive education. This finding is consistent with those from Haegele and colleagues (2017) that suggested physical education at residential schools can feel more inclusive than those at integrated public schools. Importantly, the participants noted that having other students with whom they could relate and who understood their visual impairment, contributed to their success and feelings of being included in class.

Support Needs Met at Residential Schools

When asked about their preferences for physical education placements, the participants expressed an overwhelming preference for their physical education experiences in the residential schools for those with visual impairments. Largely, these feelings were associated with the feeling of being supported by their teachers and peers. Perceived teacher support and feelings of relatedness with peers have been identified as important factors related to students' willingness to explore the environment and engage in curricula during educational endeavors (Patrick &

Ryan, 2005; Ryan & Patrick, 2001), including physical education (Cox & Williams, 2008). Support from parents or teachers, whether it is positive or negative, can influence students' participation in physical activities (Haegele & Sutherland, 2015; Li & Chen, 2012). Specifically, positive experiences in physical education, including engagement and success, are often influenced by supportive teacher attitudes and peer relationships (Coates & Vickerman, 2008; Haegele & Sutherland 2015). Predominately, the majority of participants described instances of positive support more often when they reflected on their self-contained physical education experiences. For example, similar to previous research (Haegele et al., 2017), Mio and Heidi both noted feeling well supported by their teachers during physical education at the school for students with visual impairments. Specifically, Mio stated, "I had all the support and all the assistance I needed to help me succeed" and Heidi recalled that, "the staff is trained in verbal and descriptive communication. That provided for a more fruitful one-on-one experience." In addition to receiving support from their teachers, being in a school for students with visual impairments provided a forum for receiving support from peers, with students helping one another. This point came to light when Joseph stated:

I think that's one thing that sticks out to me most from that class, the ability to say 'Hey, I can't do this like this, can we find another method to it.' Then everyone takes a second and says, let's try this, let's try this, everyone is with the same disability or around the same disability, so it does not take long to come up with a solution because then you have six or seven creative minds on it who are all about to face the same challenge.

Having a group of people who see an activity from the same perspective can be beneficial when trying to figure out how to assist everyone to complete the same task. This finding is consistent with research results from Haegele and colleagues (2017), who noted that participants with

visual impairments reflected on having more similarities with their peers when attending a school for people with visual impairments. In addition, Heidi, Ali and Zach each talked about how the small class sizes in the school for students with visual impairments made a difference in the support they received due to more one-on-one interaction. Participant narratives described these settings as supportive, in that teachers were better to tailor the lessons to the individual students rather than just to the class as a whole (reflective interview notes).

Scholars suggest that while properly conceptualized physical education classes that provide student support can enhance success and show positive benefits, poorly planned classes where students do not feel supported can result in adverse effects, such as withdrawal from physical education activities (Haegele & Zhu, 2017). Although one participant, Ali, recalled a positive and supportive experience with his teachers during integrated settings, all other participants reported that it was difficult to gain positive assistance and support from their physical education teachers in integrated public schools. For example, when asked about her integrated physical education classes as a whole, Mio stated that, "It was ok, because I didn't get too much assistance." She then elaborated by stating:

In the public school, it was more like they were telling everyone what to do and all that instead of explaining from a visually impaired persons perspective. And it was hard for someone who has no seeing to understand how to do and there was no one trained on how to assist.

According to Mio, having a teacher know how to assist someone with a visual impairment or explain activities properly could have made a difference in terms of the success of her experiences. Also, with a large number of students in classes and few support staff, participants noted that it was even harder for teachers to get to know students and their individualized needs.

As Joseph stated, “class size is important because there is not enough one-on-one time to understand someone’s abilities and disabilities.” The above statements are an example of how smaller class sizes and more one-on-one interaction inherent to residential school education could be beneficial to the students learning environment.

Limitations and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine how individuals who experienced physical education in both integrated and residential school settings viewed their physical education class experiences. Utilizing a retrospective, IPA approach, two interrelated themes emerged from this study. The first theme, feelings about inclusion and exclusion, depicted the participants’ reflections about inclusion and exclusion across school settings, as well their feelings about those experiences. It was clear, based on the participants’ reflections, that while elements of inclusive education were available in integrated physical education, it was uncommon. It appeared, however, that physical education at the residential school more closely depicted subjective feelings of belonging and acceptance commonly associated with inclusive philosophies (Stainback & Stainback, 1996). The second theme, support needs met at residential schools, depicted participants’ views toward the support they received in each educational context, and their feelings about support across school settings. This theme demonstrated participants views toward some inherent characteristics of integrated physical education contexts (e.g., class sizes) that hindered their ability to receive needed support for success. Therefore, based on the participants’ narratives it appeared that they were more likely to experience inclusive physical education experiences in residential school contexts in comparison to integrated public school settings.

There were two main limitations to this study. First, this study utilized telephone interviews, which can limit the researcher's ability to capture any gestural or facial expressions from the participants. Second, this study was retrospective in nature, and it is logical to suggest that the experiences of the participants may not completely reflect current practices of today. To the knowledge of the authors, this study was the first that specifically focused on examining experiences in two physical education contexts. The results of this study have several practical implications. For example, results demonstrated that small class sizes and individualized attention inherent to self-contained physical education classes was viewed positively by participants and may be implemented in integrated school or residential school contexts. Furthermore, the participants were favorable toward teachers who displayed a willingness to adapt lessons or give the students a chance to try activities in both settings. Thus, consistent with research among persons with disabilities (Block & Obrusnikova, 2007) it appeared that the teachers' behaviors were among the most critical elements to positive educational experiences across settings.

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Table 1. *Participant demographic information.*

Name	Gender	Age	Race/Ethnicity	Visual Impairment	Years in Integrated PE	Years in School for students with visual impairments
Mio	Female	33	Asian American	Complete blindness	Pre-K – 3 rd grade	4 th -12 th grade
Heidi	Female	25	Caucasian	20/200 visual acuity in left eye, complete blindness in right eye.	1 st – 12 th grade	Kindergarten
Ali	Male	20	Asian American	Complete blindness in left eye, low vision in right eye	K-5 th , & 7 th -12 th grade	6 th grade
Robert	Male	35	Hispanic-American	Complete blindness	KG-10 th grade	11 th - 12 th grade
Joseph	Male	28	Caucasian	Complete blindness	K-9 th & 12 th grade	10 th -11 th grade

CHAPTER V: SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to examine how individuals who experienced physical education in both integrated and residential school settings viewed their physical education class experiences. Little research has been conducted on the views of people with visual impairments in physical education, with much of the existing research examining how individuals with visual impairments documented their integrated physical education classes (Haegele, Zhu & Davis, 2017). Little emphasis on experiences in physical education at residential schools (Haegele, Sato, Zhu & Avery, 2017). Specifically, only one study by Haegele and colleagues (2017) examined physical education in residential schools for those with visual impairments. To the knowledge of the author, there are no current studies that have specifically focused on the difference between physical education experiences by students with visual impairments in both integrated and self-contained settings in one study.

The participants in this study participated in both integrated and self-contained physical education setting for at least one year in each setting. The participants were interviewed via the telephone using a semi-structured interview guide. While some aspects of the integrated settings were explicated, more data showing that experiences at residential schools for students with visual impairments were available. The two emerging themes in this study were, “Feelings about inclusion and exclusion” and “Support needs met at residential schools.”

The first theme, “Feelings about inclusion and exclusion” depicted feelings about the inclusivity and exclusivity that were central to how the participants understood their physical education experiences. Several participants expressed experiencing some instances of inclusivity during their integrated physical education classes. For example, Heidi recalled feeling included during games that used a projectile (i.e., a ball), because “we would use a beep ball or balls with

bells. We would have all the students use it.” While the participants noted instances of favorable experiences during their integrated physical education class, negative experiences were more commonly described throughout their statements (i.e. reflective interview notes). As noted by Haegele and Zhu (2017), it is common for students with visual impairments to be removed from integrated physical education activities because of perceptions of inability related to vision. This notion was reinforced by participant narratives; for example, when Ali stated, “I don’t know whether it was taken out of middle school (physical education) activities because of my sight, but sometimes it looked or felt that way.” Different from the integrated contexts, where experiences were described as predominately negative, physical education experiences at schools for students with visual impairments were described as being mostly positive. The participants’ positive views toward physical education at schools for students with visual impairments were due to feelings of inclusivity, that were dictated by the teachers as well as the other students.

The second theme, “support needs met at residential schools” described how physical education experiences were often influenced by supportive teacher attitudes and peer relationships (Coates & Vickerman, 2008; Haegele & Sutherland 2015). Participants expressed an overwhelming preference for their physical education experiences in the residential schools for those with visual impairments. The influence of supportive teachers was shown from all participants in different physical education settings. For example, according to Ali, both of his teachers were supportive of him being involved in the class and participating as much as possible. He recalled his second physical education teacher saying, “let’s see what we can modify here and what we can do.” They didn’t feel those subjective feelings of inclusion in the integrated setting. Even though Ali provided narrative about receiving positive support from his teachers during physical education in an integrated context, positive support was described by

the participants most often when they reflected on their self-contained physical education setting. Two examples of that came through from statements by Mio and Heidi. Mio stated, “I had all the support and all the assistance I needed to help me succeed” and Heidi recalled that, “the staff is trained in verbal and descriptive communication. That provided for a more fruitful one-on-one experience.”

Limitations

There were two main limitations throughout this study. First, this study utilized telephone interviews, which can limit the researcher’s ability to capture any gestural or facial expressions from the participants. Second, this study was retrospective in nature, and it is logical to suggest that the experiences of the participants may not completely reflect current practices.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine how individuals who experienced physical education in both integrated and residential school settings viewed their physical education class experiences. Utilizing a retrospective, IPA approach, two interrelated themes emerged from this study. The first theme, feelings about inclusion and exclusion, depicted the participants’ reflections about inclusion and exclusion across school settings, as well their feelings about those experiences. It was clear, based on the participants’ reflections, that while elements of inclusive education were available in integrated physical education, it was uncommon. It appeared, however, that physical education at the residential school more closely depicted subjective feelings of belonging and acceptance commonly associated with inclusive philosophies (Stainback & Stainback, 1996). The second theme, support needs met at residential schools, depicted participants’ views toward the support they received in each educational context, and their feelings about support across school settings. This theme demonstrated participants views

toward some inherent characteristics of integrated physical education contexts (e.g., class sizes) that hindered their ability to receive needed support for success.

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APPENDIX A

Screening Questionnaire

1. Age
2. Visual Impairment
3. Gender
4. Years in a self-contained physical education setting
5. Years in an integrated physical education setting

APPENDIX B

Participant Interview Guide

Demographic Information

6. Age
7. VI level while in school
8. VI congenital or acquired?
9. Gender
10. Race/Ethnicity
11. Can you please describe a description of your K-12 self-contained physical education placement? **want a very general description**
12. Can you please describe a description of your K-12 integrated physical education placement? **want a very general description**
13. Can you tell me about the place that you attended public school?
 - a. Urban
 - b. Rural
 - c. Suburban
14. Can you tell me about the place that you attended the school for the blind?
 - a. Urban
 - b. Rural
 - c. Suburban

Interview Questions

15. How many years did you participate in an integrated physical education setting?
16. How many years did you participate in a self-contained physical education setting?
17. Can you describe what your experiences in the integrated physical education setting?

- a. What was the essence of the integrated physical education experience?
 - b. How meaningful was your participation in this physical education?
18. How do you feel about inclusion (physical education with peers without visual impairments)?
19. Can you describe what your experiences in the self-contained physical education setting?
 - a. What was the essence of the self-contained physical education experience?
 - b. How meaningful was your participation in this physical education?
20. How do you feel about self-contained (physical education with peers with visual impairments)?
21. Can you describe how your visual impairment may or may not have influenced the meaning you ascribe to your physical education experiences?
 - a. How did this make you feel at the time?
22. Can you describe your experiences with your inclusion physical education teachers?
 - a. What meaning do you ascribe to your relationships with your physical education teachers?
 - b. Did your physical education teachers understand how you experienced physical education? How do you know?
 - c. How did this make you feel at the time?
 - d. Do you believe that your visual impairment influenced your relationship with your physical education teacher?
23. Can you describe the meaning you gave to your experiences with your peers in the integrated physical education setting?
 - a. What meaning do you ascribe to your relationships with your peers?

- b. Did your peers understand how you experienced physical education? How do you know?
 - c. How did this make you feel at the time?
 - d. Do you believe your visual impairment influenced your relationship with your peers?
24. Can you describe your experiences with your self-contained physical education teachers?
- a. What meaning do you ascribe to your relationships with your physical education teachers?
 - b. Did your physical education teachers understand how you experienced physical education? How do you know?
 - c. How did this make you feel at the time?
 - d. Do you believe that your visual impairment influenced your relationship with your physical education teacher?
25. Can you describe the meaning you gave to your experiences with your peers in the self-contained physical education setting?
- a. What meaning do you ascribe to your relationships with your peers?
 - b. Did your peers understand how you experienced physical education? How do you know?
 - c. How did this make you feel at the time?
 - d. Do you believe your visual impairment influenced your relationship with your peers?
26. Do you remember a particularly meaningful experience you had while in the integrated physical education setting (describe)?

27. Do you remember a particularly challenging experience you had while in the integrated physical education setting(describe)?
28. Do you remember a particularly meaningful experience you had while in the self-contained physical education setting(describe)?
29. Do you remember a particularly challenging experience you had while in the self-contained physical education setting(describe)?
30. How did the context of your integrated physical education environment affect your learning?
 - a. (class size, subject matter, peers)
31. How did the context of your self-contained physical education environment affect your learning?
 - a. (class size, subject matter, peers)
32. Do you believe that (integrated, self-contained) classes were the best option for you?
 - a. Why?
33. If every PE teacher in the world read this paper, what would you tell them?
34. Anything else you would like to share?

APPENDIX C



OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH

**Physical Address**

4111 Monarch Way, Suite 203
Norfolk, Virginia 23508

Mailing Address

Office of Research
1 Old Dominion University
Norfolk, Virginia 23529
Phone(757) 683-3460
Fax(757) 683-5902

DATE: November 21, 2018

TO: Justin Haegele

FROM: Old Dominion University Education Human Subjects Review Committee

PROJECT TITLE: [1350991-1] Examining Self-Contained and Integrated Physical Education Experiences Among Individuals with Visual Impairments

REFERENCE #:

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS

DECISION DATE: November 21, 2018

REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # 6.2

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The Old Dominion University Education Human Subjects Review Committee has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

We will retain a copy of this correspondence within our records.

If you have any questions, please contact Laura Chezan at (757) 683-7055 or lchezan@odu.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Old Dominion University Education Human Subjects Review Committee's records.

APPENDIX D
INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

(Verbal Consent)

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

PROJECT TITLE: Examining Self-Contained and Integrated Physical Education Experiences Among Students with Visual Impairments

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this form is to give you information that may affect your decision whether to say YES or NO to participation in this research, and to record the consent of those who say YES. This project, titled “Examining Self-Contained and Integrated Physical Education Experiences Among Students with Visual Impairments” will take place via telephone interview.

RESEARCHERS

Rebecca Coffey, Department of Human Movement Sciences, Old Dominion University

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY

Several studies have been conducted looking into the subject of the experiences of students with visual impairments in physical education. None of them have compared the experiences of self-contained and integrated physical education settings for students with visual impairments.

If you decide to participate, then you will join a study involving telephone or Skype interviews (approximately 90 minutes) with the researcher and the completion of a demographic question. The interviewer will use a guide to facilitate the conversation, and will audio record the entire interview. If you say YES, then your participation will last for about 90 minutes. Approximately 6 students with visual impairments will be participating in this study.

EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA

You should have completed a provided demographic questionnaire. To the best of your knowledge, you should not be under the age of 18 or over the age of 35, as that would keep you from participating in this study

RISKS AND BENEFITS

RISKS: There are no expected or predicted potential risks associated with participation in this study. And, as with any research, there is some possibility that you may be subject to risks that have not yet been identified.

BENEFITS: There are no expected or predicted potential benefits associated with the participation in this study.

COSTS AND PAYMENTS

The researchers want your decision about participating in this study to be absolutely voluntary.

NEW INFORMATION

If the researchers find new information during this study that would reasonably change your decision about participating, then they will give it to you.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The researchers will take reasonable steps to keep private information, such as names, contact information, and interview filed, confidential. The researchers will delete/destroy all contact information after data is collected and use pseudonyms when presenting findings. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications; but the researcher will not identify you. Of course, your records may be subpoenaed by court order or inspected by government bodies with oversight authority.

WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE

It is OK for you to say NO. Even if you say YES now, you are free to say NO later, and walk away or withdraw from the study – at any time. Your decision will not affect your relationship with Old Dominion University, or otherwise cause a loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled.

COMPENSATION FOR ILLNESS AND INJURY

IF you say YES, then your consent in this document does not waive any of your legal rights. However, in the event of harm arising from this study, neither Old Dominion University nor the researchers are able to give you any money, insurance coverage, free medical care, or any other compensation for such injury. In the event that you suffer injury as a result of participation in any research project, you may contact Dr. Justin A. Haegele, at jhaegele@odu.edu or 757 683 5338, Dr. Laura C. Chezan, the current chair for the DCOE Human Subjects Committee, at lchezan@odu.edu 757 683 7055.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

By signing this form, you are saying several things. You are saying that you have read this form or have had it read to you, that you are satisfied that you understand this form, the research study, and its risks and benefits. The researchers should have answered any questions you may have had about the research. If you have any questions later on, then the researchers should be able to answer them:

Rebecca Coffey: 315 244 1175

If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, then you should call Dr. Laura C. Chezan, the current chair for the DCOE Human Subjects Committee, at lchezan@odu.edu 757 683 7055.

Your name (please print): _____

Your Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Investigator Signature: _____

CURRICULUM VITAE

Rebecca Coffey

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ADDRESS

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CERTIFICATION

Provisional License in Physical Education, PreK-12
October 2016

EDUCATION

Master of Science in Physical Education
Concentration: Adapted Physical Education
Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA

Pending 2019

Bachelor of Science in Physical Education
State University of New York College at Brockport, Brockport, NY.

December 2019

RECENT EMPLOYMENT

Norfolk Public Schools Adapted Physical Education Teacher October 2016 – Present

- Planned adapted lessons for students
- Assisted students with lesson adaptations during class

Madrid Waddington Central School District Substitute Teacher Spring 2010- Summer 2012

- Followed teachers plans in their absence
- Managed the students and taught various lessons

VOLUNTEER WORK

Camp Abilities, Anchorage, Alaska July '09, '10, 2012 – 2016

- Assisted children who are blind or visually impaired at a sports camp
- Assisted the children to become more independent during everyday activities

CERTIFICATIONS

- American Red Cross CPR/AED

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- VAHPERD