

Visually Impaired Students' Views on Peer Tutoring in Integrated Physical Education

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A variety of pedagogical practices have been proposed, described, and promoted by scholars in effort to help enhance the experiences of visually impaired students in integrated physical education spaces. Trained peer tutoring, where students are arranged in established pairs and a nondisabled student is trained to serve as a peer tutor for a disabled student, is among them. However, little research has been done that engages directly with visually impaired students about their views and experiences with these pedagogical practices. Using belonging as a conceptual lens to guide and inform methodological and data interpretation decisions, this study's purpose was to elicit the views of visually impaired youth regarding the use of trained peer tutors in integrated physical education classes. Sixteen visually impaired youth completed two interviews about their views toward physical education generally and peer tutoring specifically. Interviews were conducted via video conference technology, and were recorded, transcribed, and subjected to thematic analysis. Three interrelated themes were constructed that depict the participants views toward formal peer tutoring: (a) peer tutoring might enhance belonging...maybe, (b) shouldn't this just happen naturally?, and (c) this is not for me. The themes provide insight into the views of visually impaired youth toward peer tutoring as a strategy that may not be supportive of feelings of belonging within integrated physical education. Rather, participants were largely dismissive of the strategy, suggesting that any help needed within this context should be navigated outside of formal pedagogical strategies that may alienate visually impaired students by identifying them as 'needing help'. These findings support suggestions for PE teachers to implement this practice only after first permitting students to engage with friends to navigate physical education spaces, and then only afterwards at the discretion of the student.