

# Primary School Teachers' Attitudes about Difficulties in Physical Education (PE)

Mara Šumanović, Zvonimir Tomac and Melita Košutić  
Faculty of Education, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University in Osijek

## Abstract

*The aim of this research was to assess the views of classroom teachers about the difficulties in the implementation of Physical Education and their suggestions for changes. Research was conducted on a sample of 201 primary school teachers from the Osijek-Baranja County in the Republic of Croatia. Two questionnaires were created for this purpose. The first one contained 12 items and was used to assess the views of classroom teachers on the working conditions and their competences as possible causes of difficulties in teaching Physical Education in primary school. The second questionnaire contained 8 items and it assessed desirable changes in working conditions and teacher competences. Basic descriptive parameters (mean, modal value and standard deviation) and percentages were analysed. A connection was determined between the items of each questionnaire using the Pearson correlation coefficient with a level of statistical significance of  $p=0.05$ . Research results indicate diverse views of classroom teachers who are mostly influenced by their level of professional education and sports experience. Teachers believe that the poor material conditions and the low social status of this subject are the greatest difficulties in assessing working conditions. Their kinesiology competences are the reason for the most pronounced difficulties in working with children with health conditions and the teachers' fear of the students' injuries in class. Complicated ways of programming and assessment are additional difficulties. The status of classroom teachers, which is not at a satisfactory level, poor material conditions at schools and an unsatisfactory social status of Physical Education are not adequate incentives for teachers to improve the teaching quality and achieve optimal effects in the educational field. Teachers proposed improving the material, working conditions and ensuring daily physical activity for students at school.*

Furthermore, they proposed quality basic training for teachers and professional seminars with more kinesiology topics which would enhance their competences, change attitudes towards the subject, and increase the teachers' motivation for a successful implementation of Physical Education.

**Key words:** appraisal; desired changes; difficulty of the subject; primary school; programming; teachers' competences.

## Introduction

In order to comply with European Union standards, primary education in Croatia has been exposed to numerous reforms over the last fifteen years. Thereby, the system, curriculum, teaching methods, etc. are being questioned. Documents have been created that define the legal framework in this sector. The National Curriculum Framework (2011) has been adopted as the fundamental document that precedes the development of the framework of subject curricula. While creating subject curricula, the evaluation of the present state and definition of needs are very important (Wiles & Bondi, 1988). Empirical analyses provide insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the current programme, including the teachers, students and principals, and prepare them for the necessary changes (Baranović et al., 2006). The status of Physical Education and its prospects in the system of primary education have been explored by many international and national authors. The general conclusion is that there is a discrepancy between the stated goals and their implementation in practice.

The most comprehensive study on the state and status of *Physical Education worldwide* was conducted on two occasions in the period from 1999 to 2007 by Hardman (2008). The author concludes that the problems in the implementation of teaching Physical Education worldwide, which have not been changed for a long time, are: insufficient weekly number of teaching hours, poor status of the subject, insufficiently competent teachers (this is especially true of teachers in lower grades), lack of sports halls and playgrounds, and lack of exercise equipment. The study was used in the drafting of the Resolution on Sports and Physical Exercise, which was adopted in 2007 by the European Parliament as part of a wider package of sports policy in the region, and which has given a strong impetus to the development of physical education worldwide.

The state and perspectives of physical education was the topic of the 17th Summer School of Kinesiologists of the Republic of Croatia (2008). In their paper, Prskalo and Babin (2008) gave an overview of the status and development of kinesiology education. They emphasize the need to improve the material and personnel conditions for teaching. Bosnar, Prot, and Šafarić (1999) explored the relationship between classroom teachers and Physical Education. They concluded that teachers have a positive attitude towards this subject and that they consider themselves sufficiently competent. However, they expressed great fear of injury in their classes, which they would like to share with kinesiology teachers. Tomljenović et al. (2008) investigated

the relationship between classroom teachers and their implementation of all subjects. Physical Education classes, based on the importance, were ranked in the fourth place by the teachers, and because of the complexity of work it was not even evaluated as their favourite subject. They experience the greatest amount of stress precisely during Physical Education classes for which they mostly lack the equipment to work.

Pašalić (2009), in her research of attitudes and academic competences of classroom teachers in the field of physical education, concluded that most teachers have a positive attitude towards this subject and a low level of kinesiology academic competences. In the research on the connectedness between secondary school grades in Physical Education and motor skills of students from the Faculty of Teacher Education (as selection criteria), Šumanović, Rastovski, and Tomac (2006) found a low correlation between the observed variables and proposed changes to the criteria for the selection of future teachers. These same authors (2012) evaluated the implementation of the general curriculum of Physical Education in primary school through the attitudes of classroom teachers. Teachers evaluate the dimensions of usefulness and programmes interest Physical Education. They find it extensive in its objectives, tasks and content, while their attitudes towards changes vary. Two thirds of classroom teachers require changes to the programme in the segments of planning, programming and evaluating. Kovač et al. (2007) investigated the competences of classroom teachers in their research of physical education in Slovenia. They concluded that classroom teachers evaluate their teaching competences unrealistically high. Similar results were obtained in other studies of this problem. Research studies on the quality of teaching Physical Education both internationally and domestically usually include an analysis of *working conditions* (space and equipment, and teacher characteristics). Šumanović (2012) evaluated the implementation of Physical Education curriculum in primary schools of the Osijek - Baranja County. In the evaluation of their working conditions, teachers evaluated their workspace and equipment, availability of professional literature, collaboration with teachers who teach Physical Education in their school, knowledge and abilities of the students, and the average number of students in class. Results indicated that 49% of teachers evaluated workspace and equipment for work as being bad, and 87% of them evaluated the cooperation with other school kinesiologists and prior knowledge of their students in this area as good or very good. International and national research results suggest that the effects of teaching Physical Education are the weakest precisely in the lower grades of primary school. The reasons are most often attributed to the social status of this subject, the material conditions for work and competences of classroom teachers. Although in our country, a higher level of education of classroom teachers has been introduced already in 1992, in practice not enough qualitative progress can be felt in this area.

Work in classroom education puts special demands on teachers, because in addition to general knowledge, required are also specific knowledge, abilities and skills in the implementation of six academic areas and more. For classroom teachers Physical Education is a specific subject in many ways. It is held in large spaces, in dynamic

conditions, with teaching content that causes physical effort both for students and teachers. These conditions require teachers' positive attitudes towards this area, specific kinesiology knowledge and skills that will motivate them to implement the programme.

In Eurydice's report, *Physical Education and Sport at Schools in Europe* (2013), the European Commission EACEA believes that teachers play a key role in implementing the objectives of Physical Education into an effective practice at school. They are expected not only to be able to train and organize sport and physical activity, but also to have the skills needed to promote a healthy lifestyle and motivate young people to engage in physical exercise and their active participation in various sports. In order to successfully accomplish these requirements, teachers need to acquire appropriate initial training and attend continuous professional development.

Introductory thoughts explain the rationale for the problems of this research, which form the foundation for the basic objective of this paper.

The aim of this research was to determine the attitudes of classroom teachers towards the difficulties and changes in teaching Physical Education in the lower grades of primary schools of the Osijek - Baranja County.

## **Methodology**

### ***Sample***

The sample included 201 teachers, of which 9 male and 192 female, who teach all subjects from the first to the fourth grades in primary schools of the Osijek-Baranja County. 19.9% of teachers were 34 years old and younger, 49% were in the category of 35-47 years of age while 31% were older than 48 years. 64% of teachers have a college degree and 36% a university degree. 69% of teachers have a recreational experience with sports. 10% of the respondents have expressed to have a competitive sports experience, while 21% of them have no sports experience. The sample comprised 30% of the total population of classroom teachers in the Osijek - Baranja County.

### ***Measuring Instrument***

Two questionnaires were created to evaluate attitudes. The first (Table 1) evaluated the *difficulties* in teaching Physical Education in relation to the *working conditions* (items 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 12) and *teacher competences* (items 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11). The second 8-item questionnaire (Table 3) was used to evaluate the *desirable changes in working conditions* (items 1, 2, 3, 5) and *teacher competences* (items 4, 6, 7, 8). Attitudes were evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale (*strongly disagree; mostly disagree; not sure, mostly agree, strongly agree*). The data on the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents (gender, age, qualifications, experience in sports) were collected separately.

### ***Methods of Data Processing***

Basic descriptive parameters (mean, modal value and standard deviation) and percentages were calculated. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to establish the correlation between item responses in each questionnaire with the level of

statistical significance of  $p=0.05$ . T-test for independent samples with the level of significance  $p=0.05$  was used to determine the differences between teachers with different degrees of qualifications (college degree and university degree).

## Results and Discussion

Table 1

*Basic parameters and percentages in the item categories for the evaluation of attitudes of classroom teachers towards the difficulties in teaching Physical Education*

	% of answers per category							
	M	Mode	SD	1. Strongly disagree	2. Mostly disagree	3. Not sure	4. Mostly agree	5. Strongly agree
1. Poor material conditions for teaching.	4.09	5.00	1.12	3.98	7.46	10.94	30.84	46.76
2. Unsatisfactory subject status at school and in the society.	3.30	4.00	1.10	6.00	17.40	26.40	36.30	13.90
3. Teacher motivation.	3.30	4.00	1.10	8.00	18.90	23.90	37.30	11.90
4. Students' abilities and previous knowledge.	3.30	4.00	1.10	3.50	25.90	17.90	42.30	10.40
5. Cooperation with Physical Education subject teachers	2.90	2.00	1.20	12.90	29.90	22.90	27.90	6.50
6. Excessive requirements in the subject.	3.00	3.00	1.00	9.00	20.40	37.30	27.90	5.50
7. Teacher's modest competences.	3.20	4.00	1.10	7.00	20.90	25.90	35.80	10.40
8. Teacher's fear of student injury.	3.40	4.00	1.10	5.50	19.40	19.40	40.80	14.90
9. Teacher's attitude towards the usefulness of Physical Education for students.	3.00	4.00	1.20	11.90	23.40	23.40	30.30	10.90
10. Psycho-physical effort for the implementation of teaching.	3.20	4.00	1.10	7.00	24.90	23.90	33.80	10.40
11. Difficulties in working with students with health conditions.	3.40	4.00	1.10	4.50	20.90	16.40	44.30	13.90
12. Small number of hours provided for classes in the sports hall.	3.50	4.00	1.30	7.00	20.40	12.40	31.30	28.90

Table 2

Correlation matrix of the questionnaire items about the difficulties in teaching Physical Education

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Poor material conditions for teaching.	1.00	0.43*	0.08	-0.04	0.17	0.19*	-0.09	-0.05	-0.12	-0.09	-0.03	0.20*
2. Unsatisfactory subject status in the society.	0.43*	1.00	0.28*	0.15	0.39*	0.24*	0.10	0.11	0.05	0.01	0.00	0.25*
3. Teacher motivation.	0.08	0.28*	1.00	0.23*	0.35*	0.17	0.52*	0.12	0.27*	0.36*	0.27*	0.29*
4. Students' abilities and previous knowledge.	-0.04	0.15	0.23*	1.00	0.2*	0.16	0.22*	0.35*	0.28*	0.35*	0.40*	0.08
5. Cooperation with Physical Education subject teachers.	0.17	0.39*	0.35*	0.21*	1.00	0.36*	0.33*	0.22*	0.08	0.13	0.13	0.18
6. Excessive requirements in the subject.	0.19*	0.24*	0.17	0.16	0.36*	1.00	0.35*	0.31*	0.07	0.12	0.15	0.21*
7. Teacher's modest competences.	-0.09	0.10	0.52*	0.22*	0.33*	0.35*	1.00	0.29*	0.30*	0.40*	0.31*	0.17
8. Teacher's fear of student injury.	-0.05	0.11	0.12	0.35*	0.22*	0.31*	0.29*	1.00	0.25*	0.41*	0.37*	0.11
9. Teacher's attitude towards the usefulness of Physical Education for students.	-0.12	0.05	0.27*	0.28*	0.08	0.07	0.30*	0.25*	1.00	0.56*	0.43*	0.01
10. Psycho-physical effort for the implementation of teaching.	-0.09	0.01	0.36*	0.35*	0.13	0.12	0.40*	0.41*	0.56*	1.00	0.69*	0.11
11. Difficulties in working with students with health conditions.	-0.03	0.00	0.27*	0.40*	0.13	0.15	0.31*	0.37*	0.43*	0.69*	1.00	0.20*
12. Small number of hours provided for classes in the sports hall.	0.20*	0.25*	0.29*	0.08	0.18	0.21*	0.17	0.11	0.01	0.11	0.20*	1.00

\*p=0.05

In the discussion of the research problem, the importance of researching programme implementation at the empirical level was emphasized from the perspective of those who implement it. This provides an insight into the current situation and directs desirable changes (Wiles & Bondi, 1988; Baranović et al., 2006). In order to achieve the objective of this research, two questionnaires of attitudes were created that evaluated the difficulties in teaching Physical Education as well as the changes that classroom teachers are hoping for. Both questionnaires evaluated working conditions and teacher competences, factors that influence the quality of teaching (Pastuović, 1999; Findak, 2001).

When looking at the obtained results as a whole (Table 1), it can be concluded that teachers have different attitudes towards the difficulties and changes in teaching

Physical Education. The characteristics of the sample of respondents are possible reasons for the results. Two thirds of respondents, dominantly female, have a college degree. A mostly recreational sports experience with almost a fifth of teachers without any sports experience cause differences in the attitudes of teachers in the categories of responses, as shown in Table 1.

A relatively high percentage of responses was obtained in category 3 (*not sure*). The results are influenced by the level of kinesiology competences, interests and motivation of classroom teacher towards this educational field.

*Working conditions*, as possible difficulties in teaching Physical Education, are estimated with items 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 12, as shown in Table 1.

The greatest difficulties in the implementation of teaching, according to most teachers, are poor material conditions and a small number of hours for classes in the sports hall (items 1 and 12). Classroom teachers teach their classes in different teaching conditions. The needs of sports programmes are larger than the material conditions of individual schools. It happens that for the abovementioned reasons teaching Physical Education is improvised in inadequate conditions or sometimes replaced with the so-called academic subjects for students in lower grades. Cooperation with the subject teacher (item 5), poses a difficulty in implementing classes to one third of the teachers. Teachers use common teaching spaces and offices, equipment and props. All of this requires teamwork and good cooperation that should be encouraged in schools in which it is lacking. Every other teacher believes that the unsatisfactory status of the school subject in society (item 2) poses a problem in the implementation of teaching. This variable has a positive correlation with many variables of the subset of working conditions (Table 2).

The most prominent are connections with items 1, 5, 3 and 12. A number of research studies (e.g. Hardman, 2009) indicates that the society's support in the realization of the goals and tasks of Physical Education in many countries of the European Union is largely declarative. This is also supported by the results of this research. The lack of optimal social support affects the material conditions for teaching, as well as the collaboration and motivation of classroom teachers for achievements in this educational field. The analysis of item 4 (Table 1) leads to the conclusion that every other teacher evaluates that the students' skills and background knowledge (4 items in Table 1) pose difficulties in the implementation of teaching. In other words, teachers believe that the curriculum is too difficult for the abilities of their students. Numerous research studies confirm the importance of the teacher's expectations of students in the evaluation of good teaching (e.g. Findak, 2001; Stoll & Fink, 2000).

Half of the teachers in this research are insufficiently familiar with their students and fail to adjust their prescribed Physical Education curriculum. Šumanović et al. (2012) evaluated the teaching of Physical Education on the same population of classroom teachers. They concluded that those teachers who listed the characteristics of their students as very good have a more positive attitude towards the prescribed curriculum,

especially in the part of its usefulness to the students. They effectively programme their teaching in accordance with the recommendations of kinesiology methodology and they do not require changes in the subject. The results of the evaluation of students' skills and background knowledge (item 4) will be further explained in the analysis of other results related to the teachers' competences as factors of difficulties in the implementation of teaching.

Cooperation with the relevant teacher (item 5) divided the views of classroom teachers the most in the entire questionnaire. It poses a difficulty to a third of teachers in implementing the teaching. Teachers use common teaching spaces and offices, equipment and props. All of this requires teamwork and good cooperation, which should be encouraged to a greater extent in schools where it is lacking. Teacher competences, as possible difficulties, were evaluated with items 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 11 (Table 1). Working with students with health conditions and the teachers' fear of students getting injured in class are the greatest difficulties in the subset of teacher competence. Working with students with health conditions requires specific kinesiology training, which is lacking especially among teachers with college education who form the highest number in practice in the Osijek - Baranja County. Fear of students' injury is also present among kinesiology teachers. In order for this to decrease, teachers must have sufficient practical experience and kinesiology competences, which only a third of respondents have according to the results of this research. Teachers are the most divided in item 6, which evaluates the complexity of attitudes. Surprisingly, the highest percentage of responses is in the neutral category of attitudes. The results suggest that classroom teachers implement the prescribed curriculum in different ways, both in its extent and in quality. The analysis of other subset items suggests that insufficient competences of classroom teachers are an aggravating factor in the implementation of teaching Physical Education.

The analysis of the correlation matrix (Table 2) indicates statistically significant and predominantly low correlations of this questionnaire. The largest number of connections refers to items that evaluated the competences of teachers as potential difficulties in the implementation of teaching. teaching Physical Education requires specific teaching skills and a higher mental and physical effort in comparison to other school subjects. Poor material conditions and an unsatisfactory social status of the subject insufficiently motivated the teachers to increasingly develop their kinesiology competences so as to successfully achieve the objectives and tasks of Physical Education curriculum.

Classroom teachers have more pronounced attitudes towards the desired *changes* than towards difficulties in the implementation of teaching. They agree the most that it is necessary to provide better material conditions for teaching (item 2 in Table 3). 86% of teachers believe that it is necessary to create conditions for students' daily physical activity. Teachers recognize the possibilities of Physical Education in meeting students' needs but they also do not consider themselves to be too responsible for



Table 3

Basic parameters and percentages of answers in the categories of items for the evaluation of the attitudes of classroom teachers to the difficulties in teaching Physical Education

	% answers per category							
	M	Mode	SD	1. Strongly disagree	2. Mostly disagree	3. Not sure	4. Mostly agree	5. Strongly agree
1. Ensuring better material conditions.	4.68	5	0.71	1.00	2.50	0.50	19.00	77.00
2. Assigning the subject teacher with a part of classes.	3.9	5.0	1.2	7.0	9.0	14.9	29.4	39.8
3. Creating conditions for students' daily physical activity.	4.3	5.0	0.8	0.0	5.0	8.5	38.8	47.8
4. Planning more kinesiology topics at seminars.	4.1	5.0	0.8	1.5	3.0	10.9	49.3	35.3
5. Increasing the control over the implementation of PE classes.	3.4	4.0	1.1	6.0	13.4	29.4	36.8	14.4
6. Simplifying the system of planning and programming classes.	4.0	4.0	0.9	1.0	6.0	15.4	47.3	30.3
7. Simplifying the evaluation system in Physical Education.	4.1	4.0	0.9	1.0	6.0	9.5	48.8	34.8
8. Preparing the teachers well for the introduction of changes in PE classes.	4.1	4.0	0.9	1.0	5.0	10.9	44.3	38.8

Table 4

Matrix of the items correlation about changes in teaching Physical Education

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Ensuring better material conditions.	1.00	0.28*	0.24*	0.20*	0.00	0.06	0.17	0.13
2. Assigning the subject teacher with a part of classes.	0.28*	1.00	0.21*	0.09	0.09	0.28*	0.35*	0.13
3. Creating conditions for students' daily physical activity.	0.24*	0.21*	1.00	0.36*	0.28*	0.21*	0.24*	0.18
4. Planning more kinesiology topics at seminars.	0.20*	0.09	0.36*	1.00	0.35*	0.16	0.14	0.28*
5. Increasing the control over the implementation of PE classes.	0.00	0.09	0.28*	0.35*	1.00	0.15	0.11	0.19*
6. Simplifying the system of planning and programming classes.	0.06	0.28*	0.21*	0.16	0.15	1.00	0.82*	0.33*
7. Simplifying the evaluation system in Physical Education.	0.17	0.35*	0.24*1	0.14	0.11	0.82*	1.00	0.34*
8. Preparing the teachers well for the introduction of changes in PE classes.	0.13	0.13	0.18	0.28*	0.19*	0.33*	0.34*	1.00

\* p=0.05

the implementation of this programme, which is confirmed by the results of item 2, according to which 69% of classroom teachers would assign the subject teacher with some of the classes. Every other teacher proposes a greater control over the teaching of this subject (item 5). Classroom teachers are aware of the level of their kinesiology competence and require (84% of them) more topics in this field to be discussed at seminars. 80% of classroom teachers believe that the existing methods of planning and programming of work and evaluation are complex and that they require changes. In the wake of reforms in primary schools in the Republic of Croatia, most teachers require better preparation for the upcoming changes.

Low correlations between questionnaire items about *changes* (Table 4) were expected due to the width and diversity of the research subject. The most important is the connection between the items in order to estimate the changes in the segments of planning and programming and evaluation of students. Item 3 has the largest number of correlative bonds. Teachers consider it necessary to create conditions for students' daily physical activity. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to simplify the methods of planning and evaluating in teaching Physical Education, and through professional seminars improve the competence of classroom teachers.

Table 5

*Differences with regards to educational qualifications in the difficulty to implement Physical Education classes*

	CD M	CD SD	UD M	UD SD	t-value	p
1. Poor material conditions for teaching.	3.99	1.16	4.28	1.02	-1.75	0.08
2. Unsatisfactory subject status in the society.	3.30	1.11	3.40	1.11	-0.60	0.55
3. Teacher motivation.	3.27	1.13	3.25	1.16	0.13	0.90
4. Students' abilities and previous knowledge.	3.36	1.02	3.19	1.16	1.03	0.31
5. Cooperation with Physical Education subject teachers.	2.80	1.13	2.99	1.20	-1.11	0.27
6. Excessive requirements in the subject.	3.01	1.06	3.01	1.01	-0.04	0.97
7. Teacher's modest competences.	3.20	1.09	3.24	1.14	-0.24	0.81
8. Teacher's fear of student injury.	3.46	1.15	3.30	1.09	0.94	0.35
9. Teacher's attitude towards the usefulness of Physical Education for students.	3.06	1.23	3.00	1.19	0.31	0.76
10. Psycho-physical effort for the implementation of teaching.	3.27	1.12	2.93	1.12	2.05	0.04*
11. Difficulties in working with students with health conditions.	3.52	1.10	3.24	1.11	1.75	0.08
12. Small number of hours provided for classes in the sports hall.	3.50	1.34	3.59	1.20	-0.46	0.65

\*p=0.05; CD – college degree; UD – university degree

Table 6

*Differences with regards to educational qualifications in the desired changes in the implementation of Physical Education classes*

	CD M	CD SD	UD M	UD SD	t- value	p
1. Ensuring better material conditions.	4.64	0.73	4.77	0.66	-1.25	0.21
2. Assigning the subject teacher with a part of classes.	3.97	1.20	3.64	1.27	1.80	0.07
3. Creating conditions for the students' daily physical activity.	4.24	0.85	4.38	0.78	-1.22	0.22
4. Planning more kinesiology topics at seminars.	4.11	0.88	4.19	0.76	-0.66	0.51
5. Increasing control over the implementation of PE classes.	3.25	1.05	3.66	1.10	-2.59	0.01*
6. Simplifying the system of planning and programming classes.	4.06	0.86	3.89	0.94	1.32	0.19
7. Simplifying the evaluation system in Physical Education.	4.16	0.83	4.01	0.95	1.12	0.26
8. Preparing the teachers well for the introduction of changes in PE classes.	4.13	0.90	4.19	0.84	-0.51	0.61

$p=0.05$ ; CD – college degree; UD – university degree

The results of the analysis of differences (Table 5) of the questionnaire item *difficulty to implement Physical Education classes* have shown a significant difference only in the item concerning physical and mental effort in the implementation of classes. The group of teachers with a college degree were senior teachers who, in their basic education, obtained a lower level of kinesiology education, which in their practice, due to poor implementation of Physical Education classes, was not perfected. Specific efforts caused by teaching Physical Education, poor kinesiology education and teaching practice are the reasons obtained from these. The results of the analysis of differences in the questionnaire about the *desired changes in the implementation of Physical Education classes* (Table 6) show a significant difference only in the item that relates to greater control of teaching Physical Education classes. Teachers with a university degree believe that a greater control would increase the quality of teaching Physical Education. Teachers with a university degree are younger, with higher quality kinesiology education, who better perceive the shortcomings in the implementation of teaching.

The obtained results are in favour of research results, especially Hardman (2008), Eurydice report (2003) and Šumanović et al. (2012). A supportive social environment will dictate a solid material basis, it will motivate classroom teachers to conduct quality classes and successfully complete the objectives and tasks of Physical Education at this level with their good kinesiology competences.

The most important results of this research showed that working conditions, as perceived by classroom teachers, are not at a satisfactory level. These results have

already been highlighted as the most important reasons for teachers' dissatisfaction that occurs because of a poor social status and very bad working conditions (Macdonald, 1999). Yong and Yue (2007), while exploring the causes of stress among teachers, also listed several factors that cause teachers' dissatisfaction, and they especially highlight the conditions that apply to large classes and the timetable, working conditions, as well as low salaries and poor social status. On the other hand, a common cause of dissatisfaction are students, that is, classroom discipline and students' indifference to Physical Education classes. The status of classroom teachers, which is not at a satisfactory level, poor material conditions at schools and unsatisfactory social status of Physical Education are not adequate incentives for teachers to improve the teaching quality and achieve optimal effects in the educational field.

The limitation of this research relates to the obtained low level of metric characteristics of both measuring instruments, in which a satisfactory factor validity has not been determined. Preferably, these measuring instruments should be determined in future research so as to enable a better interpretation and generalization of the results.

## **Conclusion**

Research of the difficulties and desirable changes in teaching Physical Education, from the perspective of classroom teachers, has provided an insight into the current situation and has given quality information for desirable changes. Two questionnaires on attitudes, specially designed for this research, have been applied. The first estimated the difficulties caused by working conditions and the teachers' competence. The second questionnaire evaluated the desirable changes in the implementation of teaching.

Differences in levels of professional education and sports experience of classroom teachers from the Osijek-Baranja County were the causes of attitudes pronounced the most in evaluating the difficulties in teaching Physical Education

Poor material conditions present the greatest difficulty in teaching Physical Education. Difficulties in the subset of competences are the most pronounced in working with students with health conditions and in the fear of the students' injury during class.

Teachers require changes in the material working conditions, which would ensure students' daily physical activity. They suggest an increase in the number of kinesiology topics at seminars in order to increase the level of their teaching skills in this educational field.

There is a need for greater help from the society in the creation of a high-quality material foundation to ensure students' daily physical activity in school. Increasing the competences of classroom teachers would result in not only better quality programmes of primary education but also in professional seminars with more kinesiology topics.

In this way, the attitudes of classroom teachers would improve towards this subject, for whose implementation they are responsible, they would also more successfully and with greater motivation programme and teach Physical Education

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**Mara Šumanović**

Department for Social Science  
Faculty of Education  
Josip Juraj Strossmayer University in Osijek  
Cara Hadrijana 10, 31000 Osijek, Croatia  
msumanovic@foozos.hr

**Zvonimir Tomac**

Department for Social Science  
Faculty of Education  
Josip Juraj Strossmayer University in Osijek  
Cara Hadrijana 10, 31000 Osijek, Croatia  
ztomac@foozos.hr

**Melita Košutić**

Department for Social Science  
Faculty of Education  
Josip Juraj Strossmayer University in Osijek  
Cara Hadrijana 10, 31000 Osijek, Croatia  
mkosutic@foozos.hr

# Stavovi razrednih učitelja o poteškoćama u provedbi nastave tjelesne i zdravstvene kulture

## Sažetak

Cilj rada bio je procijeniti stavove razrednih učitelja o poteškoćama u provedbi nastave tjelesne i zdravstvene kulture i prijedloge za promjene. Istraživanje je provedeno na uzorku od 201 učitelja razredne nastave Osječko-baranjske županije Republike Hrvatske. Konstruirana su dva upitnika. Prvi je s 12 čestica procijenio stavove razrednih učitelja o uvjetima rada i njihovim kompetencijama kao mogućim uzrocima poteškoća u provedbi nastave Tjelesne i zdravstvene kulture u nižim razredima osnovne škole. Drugim su upitnikom s 8 čestica procijenjene poželjne promjene u uvjetima rada i kompetencijama učitelja. Analizirani su osnovni deskriptivni parametri (aritmetička sredina, modalne vrijednosti i standardna devijacija) i postotci odgovora. Utvrđena je povezanost između čestica svakog upitnika s pomoću Pearsonova koeficijenta korelacije uz razinu statističke značajnosti od  $p=0,05$ . Rezultati istraživanja ukazuju na raznolike stavove razrednih učitelja koji su najviše uvjetovani razinama njihova stručnoga obrazovanja i sportskog iskustva. Učitelji smatraju da su loši materijalni uvjeti i nizak društveni status predmeta najveće poteškoće u procjeni uvjeta rada. Njihove kineziološke kompetencije razlog su poteškoćama najviše izraženim u radu s djecom oštećena zdravlja i strahu od ozljeđivanja učenika na nastavi. Dodatne su poteškoće složeni način programiranja i vrednovanja u predmetu. Status razrednih učitelja koji nije na zadovoljavajućoj razini, slabiji materijalni uvjeti u školama i nezadovoljavajući društveni status predmeta TZK nisu adekvatan poticaj učiteljima za poboljšanje kvalitete provedbe nastave i postizanje optimalnih efekata u tom odgojno-obrazovnom području. Učitelji predlažu poboljšanje materijalnih uvjeta rada i osiguranje svakodnevnih tjelesnih aktivnosti učenika u školi. Nadalje, predlažu kvalitetniju temeljnu izobrazbu učitelja i stručne seminare s više kinezioloških tema kako bi se poboljšale njihove kompetencije, promijenili stavovi prema predmetu te povećala motivacija učitelja za uspješniju provedbu nastave Tjelesne i zdravstvene kulture.

**Ključne riječi:** kompetencije učitelja; osnovna škola; programiranje; promjene; uvjeti rada; vrednovanje.