

**EXPLORING THE PHYSICAL AND RECREATIONAL
ACTIVITIES TEACHING PRACTICES OF CHILDREN
WITH DISABILITIES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION
PROGRAM IN PRIMAR SCHOOL IN KOTA BHARU**

By

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CWD	Children with Disabilities
PA	Physical Activities
RA	Recreational Activities
PE	Physical Education
SET	Special Education Teachers
JPN	Jabatan Pelajaran Negeri
WHO	World Health Organization
ICF	International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health

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ABSTRACT

Physical and recreational activities are important and good for promoting development in learning, growth and health among children. Schools become the most important and suitable institution to promote the physical activity in children. Physical education (PE) help to develop and shaping the children's behaviour. Thus well taught physical education (PE) and some supports given by the special education teachers may give some encouragement for children with disabilities to participate in physical activities.

Special education teachers are teachers who responsible to teach and care for the children with special needs. Their responsibilities are quite heavy and challenging because they need to handle these children who suffered from mental, emotional, vision, and learning disabilities. They also play a big and important role to teach the skills and provide maximum physical activity time within the class period.

Subsequently, 46 respondents were selected from five different schools to explore the recreational and physical activity teaching practices for children with disabilities in special education program in primary school in Kota Bharu. Teaching practices and teacher's perception children with disabilities in physical and recreational activities were gathered and developed through questionnaire, which was modified from Hodge et.al (2004). All the data were analysed by using Simple frequency distribution method because it is easy and save time while for the data had been computed manually (DeVos, 2001). The important findings were discussed at length to determine the research objectives that led to the conclusions of this research. On the analysis of data and conclusions relevant recommendations were formulated.

ABSTRAK

Penyertaan Aktiviti fizikal dan rekreasi adalah sangat penting dan bagus dalam membentuk perkembangan dari segi pembelajaran, tumbesaran dan kesihatan di kalangan kanak-kanak. Sekolah merupakan institusi paling penting dan sesuai untuk menggalakkan aktiviti fizikal terhadap kanak-kanak. Pendidikan jasmani telah membantu dalam membentuk tingkah laku kanak-kanak.

Para guru pendidikan khas juga telah memberikan sokongan kepada kanak-kanak kurang upaya untuk terus aktif dan bergiat maju dalam aktiviti fizikal dan rekreasi. Guru pendidikan khas ialah guru yang bertanggungjawab dalam mengajar dan mendidik kanak-kanak yang berkeperluan khas. Tanggungjawab para guru ini adalah sangat berat dan mencabar. Hal ini adalah kerana mereka perlu berhadapan dengan pelbagai karenah kanak-kanak kurang upaya yang terdiri daripada masalah mental, emosi, pembelajaran dan penglihatan. Malah, guru pendidikan khas ini juga bertanggungjawab untuk mengajar skil dan menyediakan masa yang mencukupi untuk kanak-kanak mempelajari aktiviti fizikal.

Kemudian, seramai 46 peserta telah dipilih dari lima buah sekolah yang berlainan bagi meninjau kaedah pengajaran guru pendidikan khas dalam aktiviti fizikal dan rekreasi terhadap kanak-kanak kurang upaya di sekolah pendidikan khas di sekitar Kota Bharu. Amalan pengajaran dan persepsi guru terhadap aktiviti fizikal dan rekreasi dalam kanak-kanak kurang upaya telah menggunakan borang kaji soal selidik yang telah diubahsuai daripada Hodge et. al (2004). Semua data telah dianalisis dengan menggunakan Simple Frequency Distribution kerana ia lebih senang dan mudah difahami. Keputusan ujian telah dibincangkan bagi menentukan objektif penyelidikan yang membawa kepada kesimpulan pada kajian ini.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Study Background

Physical and recreational activities are important and good for promoting development in learning, growth and health among children. According to World Health Organization, physical activity can be defined as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles and it requires energy expenditure. Examples of physical activities are swimming, jogging, walking, cycling and gardening. While recreation is an enjoyable activity that provide enjoyment for those people who joined during their free time and recognized as having socially connections. Examples of recreation activities are dance, art craft, travelling and sports. Recreation also help people to balance their lives and refresh themselves from their work as well as other mandated activities such as housecleaning, child rearing, and so on. People also view the recreational activity as a society instrument because of its contribution to society. (Hurd, Anderson et al. 2011).

Children can be categorized as individual who's aged below 18 years old (Convention of Children Right and Children Act, 2001). Children with disabilities refer to children who have long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and participation in society (Malaysian Person with Disability Act 2008).

School become the most important and suitable institution to promote the physical activity in children . Physical education (PE) help to develop and shaping the children's behaviour. Thus well PE and some support given by the special education teachers may gives some encouragements for children with disabilities to participate in

physical activities. By doing PE, these children are encouraged to have a healthy lifestyle by developing knowledge, motor skills and fitness. The aim of physical education to provide opportunities to develop skills and understanding, having positive attitude toward physical activity and provide long term healthy lifestyle. A lot of fun and enjoyment can be experienced by these children and they also can develop confidence to face the environment.

Special education teacher play a big and important role to teach the skills and provide maximum physical activity time within the class period. These teachers may carry heavy responsibilities like guiding the opportunities and to ensure students to become active in participating physical activity program.

1.2 Objectives of the study

1.2.1 General Objective

1. To explore the teacher's recreational and physical activity teaching practices for children with disabilities in special education program in primary school in Kota Bharu.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

1. To investigate teachers understanding about physical and recreational activities
2. To investigate the current teaching method/practices physical and recreational activities in special education program in primary school
3. To investigate teachers perception toward the importance of these activities to children with disabilities
4. To identify the factors (support and barriers) that contribute to participation of children with disabilities in these activities

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Definition of ICF

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) define participation as involvement in a life situation and represent the societal perspective of functioning. (WHO, 2001). As the nature and settings of life situations of children and youth different from adults, participation received special attention in ICF-CY. For children and youth, involvement in life situations likes participation in recreation and physical activities as well as school and work activities. Both of them include active physical activities, sports, play, social, artistic, cultural and skill based activities (King et al., 2003)

2.2 Activities Participation

Participation in recreation and physical activity is essential for children's development. According to Specht, King, Brown & Foris (2002), participation in these activities may encourage the development of mental and physical health thus improving life quality among people with disabilities. For examples, the children will become more energetic, able to develop coordination and movement and maintain healthy. Besides, these activities also help them to develop their social skills like cooperation and teamwork. Thus it is a great way to meet new people and develop friendship integration. Lacking of joining these activities may lead the children to involve in unbeneficial activities like playing truant, smoking, use illicit drugs or involved in criminal activity. Both of normal and disabled children may receive same benefits.

2.3 Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Malaysia.

The Department of Special Education (DoSED) managing special education program established in 1995 (Department of Special Education, 2006). It is fully responsible for planning, designing, coordinating and implementing the special education program in Malaysia. According to Zulkifli (2011), education program for children with disabilities are offered according to type of disabilities which is learning, visual and hearing. These disabilities are offered through three levels of education which is preschool, primary and secondary school levels.

Schools become the most important and suitable institution to promote the physical activity among children. Physical education is one of the important and compulsory subjects taught in all primary and secondary schools in Malaysia. Even though this subject is not included in any important examination like UPSR, PMR or SPM, this subject emphasize physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual elements among children. Physical education (PE) will help to develop and shaping the children's behaviour. Thus well taught in physical education and some support given by the special education teachers may give some encouragement for children with disabilities to participate in physical activities. The aim of physical education is to provide opportunities to develop skills and understanding, having positive attitude towards physical activity and provide long term healthy lifestyle. A lot of fun and enjoyment can be experienced by these children and they also can develop confidence to face the environment.

2.4 The Roles of Special Education Teachers and Physical Education Class

Special education teachers are teachers who responsible to teach and care for the children with special needs. Their responsibilities are quite heavy and challenging because they need to handle these children who are suffering from mental, emotional, vision and learning disabilities. Other challenges for the teachers are they need to ensure that these children must have the management skills. This is very important to ensure that these children will always feel safe and increase their self-esteem. Besides, it is very important for the teachers to have good ability in understanding, skills, knowledge and most important is patience in order to deal with children with disabilities. They also play a big and important role to teach the skills and provide maximum physical activity time within the class period. These teachers may carry heavy responsibilities like guiding the opportunities and to ensure students to become active in participating physical activity program.

One main component in teaching is the teacher's perception towards the curriculum content. In this instance, the teacher's perception towards the importance of recreational and physical activities for children may influence the teaching of recreation and sport activities at school. According to Gursel et al (2007), pre- service PE teachers able to build self-efficacy and fearlessness and to prepared them with skills and competence to teach students with disabilities in exclusive PE setting after getting appropriate learning opportunities on disability. In the current research, teachers says that only training and application of acquired knowledge will increased their confidence level and skills toward student with disabilities in teaching physical education. They expressed that knowledge about particular disabilities enabled proactive and strategic planning for particular students.

The involvement of children with disabilities in recreation and physical activity since young ages could be related to the successful of curriculum and good teaching method by the special education teachers. Kim (2008) suggested that physical activity need to be developed during childhood in order to ensure a higher like hood of being sustained through adulthood. Opportunities must be given among those with disabilities so they may able to unleash their talents. Good quality teaching may improve level of motivation and achievement in children. Furthermore, children that having good skills may give improvement to the previous and next lesson.

According to Judith et al (2010), encourage and motivating the children to be active is another role of physical educators. Examples are like promote community activities and give some physical activity homework or home fun.

In Malaysia, physical education class are thought by the special education teachers. Therefore, it is important to investigate the teaching practices and the teacher's perception about the importance of sport and recreational activities.

2.5 Teacher's Perception toward Participation of Children with Disabilities in Physical and Recreational Activities

Students with disabilities involve in different activities as compared to mainstream students, which "appears to be strongly associated with the 'privileging' of competitive teams sports over more individualized physical activities" and strongly supported by some educators (Smith & Thomas, 2006). According to Jerlinder et al. 2009, students with disabilities were often denied participation, not because of lack of resources but also because individual's identities were not socially recognised.

Morley et al. (2005) correlated positive perception about inclusion with the participation levels that student with disabilities could achieve in physical education.

Furthermore, they found in the earlier studies that teacher become more confident to cooperate with them. Having some professional development and teacher experience is a bonus.

2.6 The Importance of Participation in Physical and Recreational Activities for Children with Disabilities

Nowadays, society give less attention and no emphasis was given the importance of physical activities for children with disabilities. Not like other country, some of suitable facilities for these children to play are not provided outside of the special education school in Kelantan. According to Auxter et al, (1999), normal children could easily adapted with the surrounding environment, sport equipment and facilities provided for them while for children with disabilities, they are not capable to have the opportunity to join the physical activity with the normal children. Same like the physical education taught in schools, PE that is conducted for the children with disabilities are given less attention by the teachers and these children also need to play along with the normal children.

There are many obstacles that must be faced by children with disabilities in order to join the recreational and physical activity. Some of them were born of with mental and physical disabilities. For example, some children with disabilities could not run fast enough in a group activities, which make the group lost. This kind of impact to the group may lead to a low self-esteem among group. The proper and suitable physical education activities must be provided to them in order to familiarize their ability and talent to optimum level. This is very important to expose them to outside surrounding environment and to associate with society.

2.7 Factors Influence the Participation

Children with disabilities are at risk for sedentary living because the presence of a disability generally leads to a deterioration in physical functioning which in turn results in a further reduction in physical activity (Sherrill, 1997). There are several factors that influence participation in children including their abilities and their physical and social environments.

Cognitive behavioural difficulties, motor limitations and also parental stress are obstacles to participation that occur among children with disabilities (Bult et al., 2011; Imms, Reilly, Carlin, & Dodd, 2008). Age and gender also influence these children's participation. These factors are important to explain choice and participation in leisure activities among children with cerebral palsy and children with disabilities aged over 12 years participate less in physical activities compare to young children (Bult et al 2011). For gender, Law and her colleagues (2006) discover that, among children with disabilities, girls participate more actively than boys, which is again consistent with findings for typically developing children (Rosenblum, Sachs, & Schreuer 2011).

Studies that examined the difference between leisure patterns of school-aged children without a disability and those with a disability found that children without a disability are involved in a variety of activities outside the home such as soccer, volleyball, different clubs, swimming and music. Children with disabilities usually involved in a limited variety of activities and are more dependent to others. They participate less in social and active activities, with participation being more home-based and passive in nature, such as reading, or watching TV (Buttimer & Tierney, 2005).

2.8 The Significant of this Study

The importance of this study is to explore the physical and recreational teaching practices for children with disabilities in special education program in primary school in Kota Bharu. Currently, there are limited studies that investigated the teaching practices and teacher's perception in this area, the findings of this investigation may improve and modify future activities in order to meet the needs of their students. Therefore, it is important to investigate the teachers' practices and teacher's perceptions on physical and recreational activities.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 General View of Methodology:

This study aims to investigate the teaching practices and perceptions of teachers towards children with disabilities in participating physical and recreational activities. It was a cross sectional explorative investigation on the two issues. This study was conducted quantitatively and analyse teaching practices and perceptions of the teachers towards children with disabilities in participating physical and recreational activities. The use of the word perceptions in the questions lend itself to the qualitative paradigm because to determine someone's perceptions, participants were asked about how they feel or what they believe. Many methodological aspects and qualitative approaches were considered prior to and during this study thus the results of the research project were meaningful and trustworthy. According to DeVos (2001), quantitative research approach involves obtaining quantitative data such as numerical quantities. The design enables the researcher to analyse the data collected statistically in order to provide valid solutions to the problem being investigated. A questionnaire was provided for eliciting information which can tabulate and easy to discuss. In the early stage of questionnaire development, a pilot testing has been conducted to understand how people think about an issue or comprehend a question.

3.2 Participants

The population of this study consisted of special education teachers in Kelantan. The sample size of the study is based on the data analysis from Program Pendidikan Khas Integrasi (PPKI) Kota Bharu, January 2015. There are 120 special education teachers. The sample size has been determined by using Raosoft Software based on the teachers population. According to the sample size calculation, this study needed 46 participants with the margin of error is 10% and the confident level is 90%. The inclusion criteria for this study were more focused to the teacher who teach in special education classes in primary school and and most important is they are responsible for teaching physical education for the students with disabilities.

3.3 Instrument

Teaching practices and teacher's perception children with disabilities in physical and recreational activities were gathered and developed through questionnaire, which was modified from Hodge et al. (2004). Several items were added and some were removed to make it relevant to the research objectives and the research population. The questionnaire has been translated into Malay language using a forward- backward translation strategies by two person who are bi-lingual, English and Malay. Besides, the likert scale also been used in order to collect the data for this study.

The modified questionnaires contain 8 sections. There are 8 sections of questions about the teaching practices and the view towards the importance of physical and recreational activities among children with disabilities. The first section asked about the teacher's demographic background (i.e. age, gender, race, education, school's name and teaching experience as special education teacher).

The second section of the questionnaire asked about the teacher's understanding of physical and recreational activities. This section consists of 14 statements which the teachers need to tick the right answer for each statement provided.

While the third section asked about the teacher's method or technique in teaching the physical and recreational activities. Based on the questionnaire given, the teachers must rate the answer from 1= (Very rare)- 4= (Very frequent) for each question.

Next section, the teachers must answer the question about their duration and time management when conducting the physical and recreational activities. Based on the questionnaire given, the teachers must rate the answer from 1= (Very rare)- 4= (Very frequent) for each question.

The fifth section asked about the teacher's perspective/opinion on participation of student with disabilities in physical and recreational activities. The aim of this section is to rate the teacher's ability in accessing the capable of the students while participating the activities. Based on the questionnaire given, the teachers must rate the answer from 1= (Very rare)- 4= (Very frequent) for each question.

The next section asked about how the facilities and equipments provided for physical activities to the student with disabilities in school.

The seventh section asked about the importance of participating in physical and recreational activities among the students. This questions are made in Likert scale form, 1=strongly disagree – 4=strongly agree. In this section, the question is divided in four categories; healthy, social, emotion, and individual.

The final section asked the teachers about the factors that influence the participation of students with disabilities in activities. This section provides of two types of factors which is supportive and obstacles. This questions are also made in Likert scale form, 1=strongly disagree – 4=strongly agree. However, this section only have two categories of factors namely, internal and external factors.

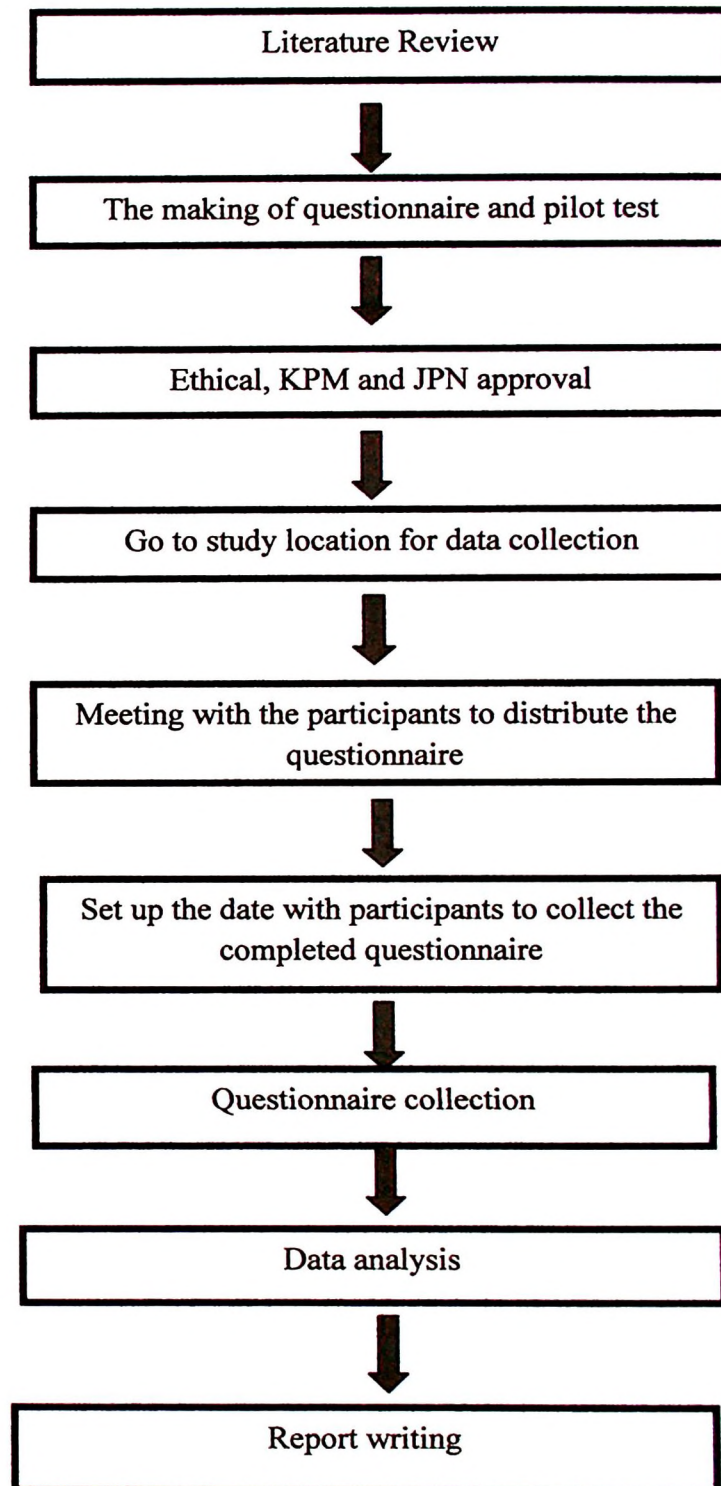
3.4 Data Collection Procedure

This study was approved by Universiti Sains Malaysia Human Ethic Committee and permission to conduct the study from several primary schools that offers special education program and the approval was officially obtained from Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Pendidikan). After getting approval from KPM, then once again getting the approval from Kelantan State Education Department (JPN) in order to get permission to conduct the study in schools around Kota Bharu district. After getting the approval from the JPN, the schools who are willing to participate will be visited.

There were 5 primary schools that were selected to conduct the study/survey which is SK Kubang Kerian 1, SK Seri Kota, SK Tanjong Mas, SK Demit 2 and SK Dato' Hashim 1. SK Kubang Kerian 1 was choosen because it was located near to the university. While for other schools, they were selected because there were many special education teachers teach there and each schools consisted of at least 12 teachers. In order to conduct the study, a specific date must be appointed to go to the selected schools. These teachers were approached and invited to participate in this study. After giving some brief explanations about the study, the teachers who agreed to participate will be given a set of questionnaire. Each set consist of an information letter detailing the purpose of the study, a consent form and the questionnaire. The teachers first were

asked to confirm their eligibility and direct a separate page for informed consent. The researched return to the schools after one week to collect the completed questionnaires.

3.5 Flow Chart of Data Collections



3.6 Statistical Analysis

All the data was collected and analysed. The researcher need to adopt variety of approaches to the sample due to validation of data can be accepted or not accepted with hypothesis. Simple frequency distribution method of analysing data was used because it is easily to understand and save time while for the data had been computed manually (DeVos, 2001).

CHAPTER 4

RESULT

The present study explored teacher's perception toward the participation of children with disabilities in physical and recreational activities the physical and recreational. There were five primary schools that have been selected to conduct this study and 46 participants have volunteered to participate in this study.

4.1 Demographic Information Analysis

Demographic/Background information about the teachers is shown in table 4.1. This demographic background information consists of age, gender, race, academic qualification and teaching experiences (years). There were 46 respondents from 5 different schools involved in this study

The teacher's age ranged between 26 and 60 years old. The mean age was (mean= 37.09,Sd= 5.69). According to the teacher's age, the range between age 36-45 has the highest frequency among teachers = 24 (52.2%), followed by 20 (43.5%) teachers for range between age 26-35. There was only 1(2.2%) teacher recorded for both range age 46-55, and 5 and older.

For gender category, the survey recorded both the total number of female and male teacher which is 38 (82.6%) and 8 (17.4%) participants respectively. The total number of female teachers is higher than male teachers. For academic qualification, degree was the highest qualification of most teachers [n= 33, (71.7)], followed by

diploma. [n=12, (26.1)] and then for master, it record the lowest qualification among teachers which is 1 (2.2%) person only.

The years of teaching experience range between 1 and 20 years. The mean of years of teaching experience was (mean= 8.85, SD= 4.310). Majority of the teachers in this study have their own years of teaching experience from year range between 7-12 years. The frequency from 7-12 years was 21 teachers (45.7%), followed by 16 teachers (34.8%) that have less than 6 years of experience , then 4 teachers (8.7%) have 8 years of experience. Eight of teachers (17.4%) have experience at range 13-18 years and lastly only 1 (2.2%) teacher has the highest year experience which was ranged between 19 and above.

Table 4.1: Characteristics of the respondents (n=46)

Variables	N (%)	M (Sd)
<i>Age</i>		37.09 (5.69)
26-35	20 (43.5)	
36-45	24 (52.2)	
46-55	1(2.2)	
56 and older	1(2.2)	
<i>Gender</i>	8 (17.4)	1.83 (0.383)
Male	38 (82.6)	
Female		
<i>Race</i>	46 (100.0)	1.00 (0.00)
Malay		
<i>Academic Qualification</i>		
Diploma	12 (26.1)	1.76 (0.480)
Degree	33 (71.7)	
Master	1 (2.2)	
<i>Years of teaching Experience</i>		
Under 6	16 (34.8)	8.85 (4.31)
7-12	21 (45.7)	
13-18	8(17.4)	
19 and above	1 (2.2)	

4.2 The level of understanding of teachers about physical and recreational activities

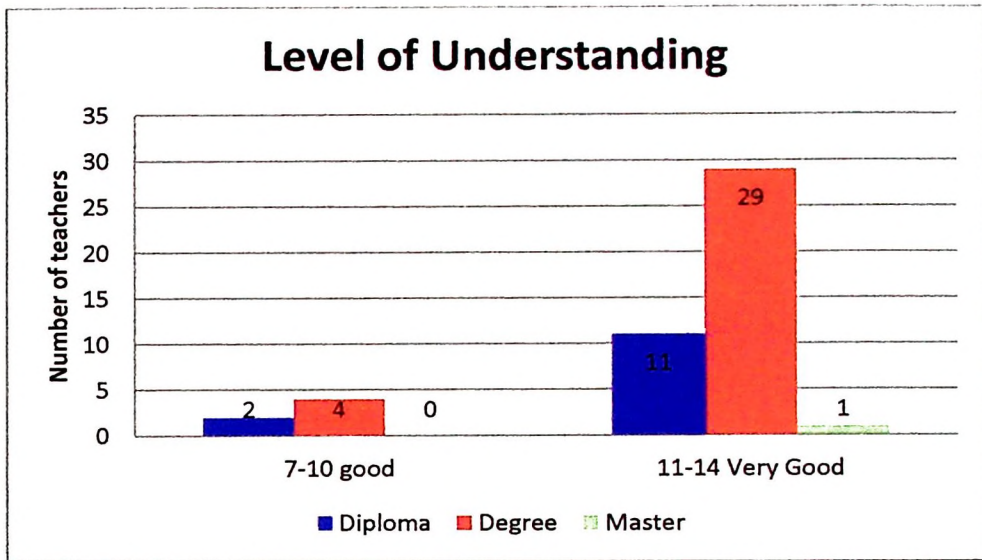


Figure 4.2 Level of teacher understands toward the definition of physical and recreational activities.

A list of 14 knowledge's about recreation and sport activity with 7 questions for sport and 7 questions for recreation. This finding was measured by using the totals score were collected by each respondent which the choice of the correct score was 1 and wrong was 0. Then, the totals score were categorized according to their ranking comprehension; range between 1 and 6 as “poor understanding” and range between 7 and 12 as “good understanding”. **Figure 4.2** Two respondents from diploma holder and four respondents from degree holders had achieved the good ranking (7-10marks). For the Very good ranking (11-14 marks) was achieved by most of them are from the degree holders which is 29 respondents, followed by 11 diploma holders and 1 master holder

4.3 Current teaching practices of physical and recreational activities in special education program in primary school

This section of questionnaire asked about the teaching practices in recreational and physical activity. It was asked through six questions. The participants were asked to rate their opinion on 4 point Likert scale from 1 (very rare) to 4 (very frequent).

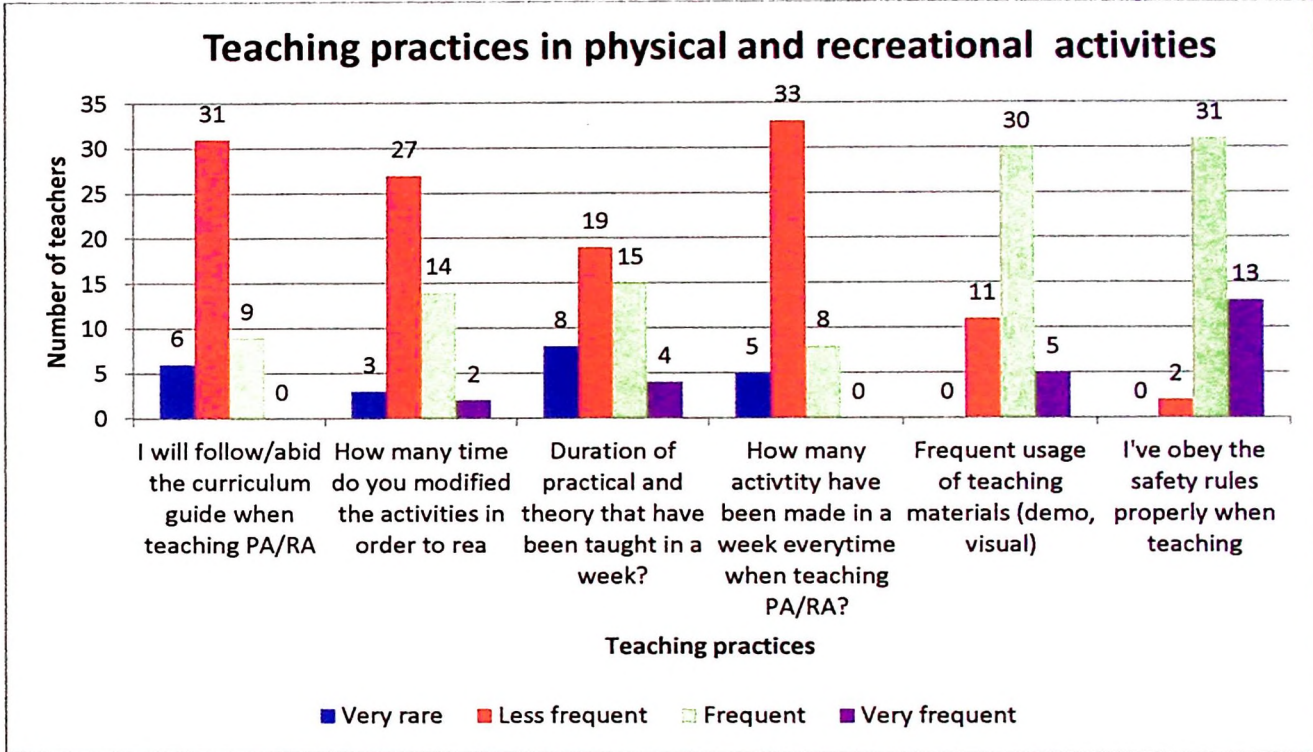


Figure 4.3 Rating of teacher’s opinion in teaching practices

For the first question, 80 % of the respondents rated ‘i will follow/abid the curriculum guide when teaching PA/RA’ as ‘very rare/less frequent’. Only fewer respondents, 19% of them rated it as ‘frequent’. This can be shown that there is no proper curriculum guide provided for the teachers.

For next question, 65 % of respondents were stated 'very rare/less frequent' that they were always modified the suitable activities in order to encourage the children with disabilities to participate in physical activities while 34 % of them rated it as 'frequent' in modifying the activities.

Total duration of practical and theory that have been taught in a week were stated as 'less frequent/very rare' by 58 % of the respondents, followed by 41% of them stated that they taught 'frequent/very frequent' on teaching duration of practical and theory.

82% of respondents were stated that they made 'very rare /less frequent' activities each time when teaching RA/PA in a week. This indicated that 82% of them made less than 5 activities per week while 17% of them had made 'frequent' activities which was more than 6 activities per week when teaching RA/PA.

For fifth question, 76% of the respondents stated that they used the teaching materials/tools (demonstration, visual) as 'frequent/very frequent' while 24% of them rated it as 'less frequent'.

95% of the respondents were 'frequent/very frequent' in obeying the safety rules toward the CWD when teaching. This indicated that the teachers need to be responsible and need to be more careful when handling them because these children were fragile. Only 5% of them not obey the safety rules when teaching and rated it as 'less frequent'.

This section of questionnaire asked about time duration taken during the teaching in recreational and physical activities. It was asked in four questions. The participants were asked to rate their opinion on 4 point Likert scale from 1 (very rare) to 4 (very frequent).

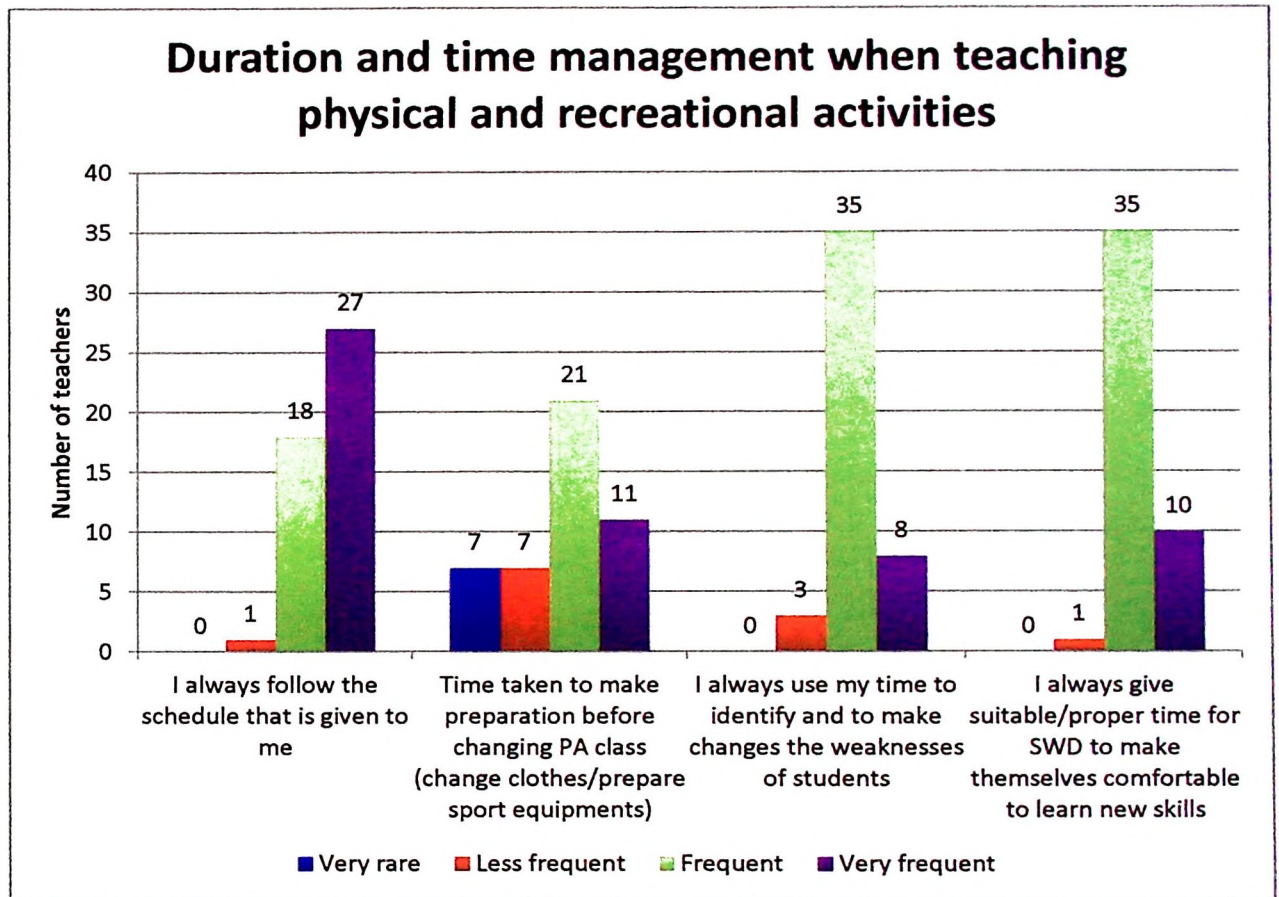


Figure 4.4 Rating on teacher’s opinion on duration and time management for teaching practices

For the first question, most of the respondents (98%) rated ‘i always follow the schedule that is given to me’ and rated it as ‘frequent/very frequent’. Only 2% of them rated it as ‘less frequent’.

Next, 69% of the respondents stated 'frequent/very frequent' that they spend less time which is only 14 minutes and less need to take time to make preparation before changing PA class which is only 14 minutes and less while 30% of them rated it as 'less frequent/very rare' as they spend at least more than 15 minutes to make preparation before changing the PA class.

For third question, 93% of the respondents always use and need their time to identify and to make changes the weaknesses of CWD and rated it as 'frequent/very frequent'. Fewer respondents (7%) were stated as 'less frequent'. This indicated some of them didn't use their time to identify these children.

Proper and suitable time/duration were given in order for the CWD to make themselves comfortable to learn new skills stated as 'frequent/very frequent' by 98 % of the respondents, followed by 2% (1 respondents) that the respondent didn't give proper time for the CWD comfortably to learn new skills.