

## Determining Teachers' Views and Behaviors Towards Current Physical Education in the Changing Understanding of Education: A Phenomenological Study

Değişen Eğitim Anlayışında Öğretmenlerin Güncel Beden Eğitimi Yönelik Görüş ve Davranışlarının Belirlenmesi: Fenomenolojik Bir Çalışma

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to present multiple facts and reveal an in-depth understanding by examining teachers' views and behaviors towards current physical education from a holistic perspective. The study was conducted with 21 physical education teachers. The phenomenology design was used. The data were collected using the interview technique and a semi-structured interview form. As a result of the content analysis, three themes were identified: Physical Education Course Content, Distance Physical Education and Technology Use and Health-Based Physical Education. As a result, although the distance education process is described as a difficult experience by the teachers, it has provided some gains in terms of health-based physical education and the use of technology in physical education. We recommend creating sharing environments that will unite in-service and pre-service teachers. Schools should follow approaches that will encourage healthy living and physical activity for everyone along with the task of bringing talented children together with sports.

**Keywords:** *Physical education teaching, Distance physical education, Health-based physical education, Use of technology in physical education*

### ÖZ

Bu araştırmanın amacı, öğretmenlerin güncel beden eğitimine yönelik görüş ve davranışlarını bütüncül bir bakış açısıyla inceleyerek çoklu gerçekleri sunmak ve derinlemesine bir kavrayış ortaya çıkarmaktır. Araştırma 21 beden eğitimi öğretmeni ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Fenomenoloji deseni kullanılmıştır. Veriler, görüşme tekniği ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılarak toplanmıştır. İçerik analizi sonucunda Beden Eğitimi Ders İçeriği, Uzaktan Beden Eğitimi ve Teknoloji Kullanımı ve Sağlık Temelli Beden Eğitimi olmak üzere üç tema belirlenmiştir. Sonuç olarak uzaktan eğitim süreci öğretmenler tarafından zor bir deneyim olarak ifade edilse de sağlık temelli beden eğitimi ve beden eğitiminde teknoloji kullanımı özelinde bazı kazanımlar edinilmesini sağlamıştır. Beden eğitimi öğretmenleri ile öğretmen adaylarını bir araya getirecek paylaşım ortamlarının oluşturulmasını öneriyoruz. Okulların yetenekli çocukları sporla buluşturma görevi ile birlikte herkes için sağlıklı yaşamı ve fiziksel aktiviteyi teşvik edecek yaklaşımları izlemesi gerekmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Beden eğitimi öğretimi, Uzaktan beden eğitimi, Sağlık temelli beden eğitimi, Beden eğitiminde teknoloji kullanımı*

## INTRODUCTION

The changes in education trends and the new requirements that arise with the developments in the world have been observed to affect the structure of the physical education (PE). In this sense, PE and gymnastics were included in a rather disciplinary and strict style in some organizations based on the idea of strengthening the public (Gençay et al., 2002; Korkmaz, 2022). Over time, team sports became very popular, and PE shifted from gymnastics towards a sports branches and skill-centered structure (Kirk, 2018). This understanding continued until the 2000s; the main purpose of PE was to provide students with certain sports skills (Cloes, 2017). Skill-based PE has changed towards a structure that focuses on health-based physical fitness and lifelong physical activity (PA) in recent years (Edginton et al., 2010; Wilkinson et al., 2018).

Today, the decrease in people's PA is remarkable. Diseases, especially obesity, caused by inactivity have increased worldwide (World Health Organization, 2021). In addition to preventing obesity, recent research has revealed the important role of PA in preventing many diseases such as cardiovascular problems, type 2 diabetes, cancer types, osteoporosis, and depression besides its function in protecting general health (American College of Sports Medicine, 2018). With the increasing amount of evidence showing the relationship between PA and health, the importance of the PE course on human health has been better understood. In this sense, the trend of health-based physical education (HBPE) is increasing worldwide (Wilkinson et al., 2018). Today, it is accepted that physical literacy and the task of providing a healthy and active lifestyle to the child is one of the most basic goals of PE teachers (Longmuir et al., 2015).

The great interest of today's generation, considered as "digital natives," in technology has made the use of technology in education a necessity rather than a matter of preference. Nevertheless, the use of technology in PE has become a much more important issue with the coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic. In fact, prior to the pandemic, it was decided that PE course credits could be obtained online in 31 states in the United States (Goad and Jones, 2017). However, criticisms were also directed towards distance physical education (DPE) indicating that there was no real PE and that it did not meet the teaching standards (Goad and Jones, 2017). In the Republic of Türkiye, the DPE was experienced for the first time with the covid-19 pandemic. Studies show that DPE led to changes in Turkish PE teachers' technological knowledge levels and perception of school and education during the pandemic (Akkaş Baysal and Ocak, 2020; Yılmaz and Toker, 2022).

In order to achieve the goals of today's PE, it is important to address the issues such as the use of student-centered teaching methods and models, the establishment of health and PE relations, and the use of technology in education by teachers (Sirard and Pate, 2001; Eberline and Richards, 2013; Almqvist et al., 2016; Wilkinson et al., 2018). Although researchers drew attention to the importance of these issues before the pandemic, studies showed that PE teachers generally preserved the traditional education approach (İnce and Hünük, 2010; Mirzeoğlu et al., 2019). However the first trial of DPE in the Republic of Türkiye clearly revealed the importance of teachers' field mastery and professional development. For example, teachers who had never taught DPE before the covid-19 health crisis had to learn, experience and teach DPE in this process. In other words, this process forced PE teachers to develop professionally and move away from traditionalism. Therefore, today, there is a great need to examine teacher experiences in order to reveal what has changed in PE teachers' perspectives on education from past to present. For this reason, the aim of this study is to present multiple facts and reveal an in-depth understanding by examining teachers' views and behaviors towards current PE from a holistic perspective in a changing understanding of education. Since this phenomenological study was carried out during the covid-19 period, teachers' views about current PE may have been affected by the current educational conditions of the covid-19 period. However, for the concept and results of study to be interpreted correctly, it should be considered that the study examines not only DPE but also the entire educational experience of teachers.

## METHOD

**Research Model:** The study was conducted with the phenomenology research design, which is one of the qualitative research methods. In phenomenology studies, the experiences of a few people regarding the concept and the common meaning of these experiences are revealed (Creswell, 2013). In this study, current PE was considered as a phenomenon. The research is based on the theoretical structure of social constructivism. According to social constructivism, individuals try to understand the world they live in and develop subjective meanings due to their experiences. Cultural and historical norms, the environment, and the interaction with other individuals shape meanings. The research in social constructivism relies on the participants' perspectives on events (Creswell, 2013).

**Participant Group:** The participant group in the study consisted of 21 secondary school PE teachers who work in public and private schools in Bursa City. Ethics committee approval for the study was obtained from Bursa Uludag University Social and Human Sciences Research and Publication Ethics Committee (Decision No: 16, Date: 03/07/2020). Purposeful sampling strategy was used when creating the participant group. Purposeful sampling refers to the researcher's choice of individuals and places for the study (Creswell, 2013).

Maximum diversity sampling was used to shape the participant group. Therefore, some different characteristics of schools, the neighborhood in which the school is located, and the characteristics of PE teachers have been determined in advance. In this way, differences between the participants are reflected. According to social constructivism, environmental, cultural and historical factors, and interpersonal interactions play important roles in people's development of meanings for the world. For this reason, while forming a heterogeneous group of 21 teachers, attention was paid to the fact that the participants worked in schools in different regions in Bursa central districts. Five teachers from Nilüfer district, seven teachers from Yıldırım district, and nine teachers from schools in Osmangazi district were included in the study. During the selection of teachers by neighborhoods, three groups were formed: "High Population Density (15,000 people and above)," "Medium Population Density (14,999-5,000 people)," and "Low Population Density (4,999 people and below)." As a result, as shown in Table 1, a heterogeneous group of participants who experienced the phenomenon and had different characteristics was obtained.

**Data Collection:** The data were collected through the interview technique. The interviews were conducted on a computer using the Zoom program due to the pandemic process. Face-to-face and synchronous individual interviews were conducted with each teacher. A semi-structured interview form was used in the data collection process. To develop the form, first, a literature review was conducted, and then the opinions of experts on qualitative research and PE teaching were taken. While designing the semi-structured interview form, it was aimed to examine current PE issues in-depth such as DPE experiences, use of technology in PE, HBPE, PE course contents, teaching methods and models, assessment, student profile, and teaching experiences. The duration of the interviews varied from 45 minutes to 75 minutes. During the interview, the questions in the form were asked. However, the developing process that exists in the nature of qualitative research was taken into consideration. Therefore, during the interview, questions were shaped according to the participants' answers for a better understanding of the cases, and some additional questions were asked when necessary. The researcher recorded the interviews with the permission of the participants and took notes during the interviews.

During covid-19 process, teachers were teaching their lessons via technological devices. Therefore, in this study, technological environments are accepted as natural education environments. However, the study covers not only covid-19 process and DPE but also face-to-face education experiences and teachers' perspectives on PE. For this reason, conducting a single interview with the participants is accepted as a limitation of the study.

**Data Analysis:** For the validity of the research, credibility and transferability were considered. To ensure credibility, the voluntary participation of the participants was given importance, and the participants were informed about the research. Code names were used instead of the real names of the participants. The interviews were recorded, and the data were reviewed repeatedly during the data analysis process. To ensure transferability, sample selection and participant characteristics are explained in detail. Regarding reliability, attention was paid to consistency and confirmability. For this, the research process was explained in detail from the beginning. The answers given during the interview were transcribed, and the interview contents in the transcripts were examined by an expert in qualitative research. In addition, transcribed records were sent to the participants, and participant confirmation was obtained.

Content analysis was performed for the analysis of the data. During the content analysis, an inductive analysis was performed from the details towards determining the overall perspectives. Accordingly, various possible codes were created based on the statements of each participant. Then, similar codes were combined. Categories and themes showing the relationships between the codes formed were determined. After the inductive analysis, the data were examined once again in a deductive manner. In the meantime, while simplifying the codes further, the categories, themes, and comments were supported. In addition, direct quotations were taken from the answers given by the participants during the interview. After obtaining the opinions of two experts who have experience in PE teaching and qualitative research, the codes and themes were finalized, and the reporting of the results was carried out.

Table 1

*Characteristics of the Participant Group*

<b>Code name</b>	<b>Characteristics of participant</b>
Meral	O: 11-20. She works in a PrS in a LP. She is mostly interested in preparing her students for social life and in values education. The school is located in a neighborhood with a high socio-cultural level. There are students with good economic status. Students with poor economic status are on scholarship at the school. The school gives importance to parents' requests.
Suzan	O: 21-30. She works in a PS in a HP. She is mostly attentive on fair-play and values education. The school is well-located in an east-west synthesis neighborhood. As a result of the urban transformation, families who attach more importance to education moved to the neighborhood.
Elif	O: 1-10. She works in a PS in a LP. She mostly aims at students' preparation for social life. She does e-Twinning projects. Her school is in a low socio-cultural level neighborhood. Some of her students have family problems. The interest in school teams is high.
Kenan	O:21-30. He works in a PS in a MP. He places importance mostly on following the rules and discipline. He is a trainer. The school is in a neighborhood with a low socio-cultural level, and individuals who come to Türkiye through migration are concentrated in the area. The school's sports facilities are insufficient. The education process becomes difficult with students who do not speak Turkish.
Gökhan	O: 1-10. He works in a PrS in a HP. Mostly, he puts emphasis on developing his students in sports and creating a sports culture. He is an active athlete. He pays attention to parents' wishes. His students have a high income level, and they live outside the neighborhood where the school is located.
Beren	O: 21-30. She works in a PS in a MP. She pays the most attention on values education. The school is located in a neighborhood with low socio-economic and cultural level. The sports facilities of the neighborhood and school are insufficient. Generally, the number of children in families is high, and there are family problems.
Sevim	O: 1-10. She works in a PS in a MP. Mostly, she places emphasis on providing PA in the lesson. She is a master's degree student. In the neighborhood where the school is located, women generally do not work, the number of children is high, and the income level is low.
Ata	O: 1-10. He works in a PS in a MP. He cares most about fair-play and values education. He studies chess. The school is a well-established and crowded school. He is satisfied with the student profile, but 8th grade students are tired of the high school placement exam anxiety.
Emre	O: 21-30. He works in a PS in a HP. He places emphasis mostly on creating a sports culture and values education. He frequently reads the curriculum. The school is in a medium level of socio-economic neighborhood. The school is not crowded, and the sports facilities are adequate.
Gizem	O: 21-30. She works in a PS in a LP. She cares the most about fair play. She takes part in disciplinary boards and follows a constructive attitude. There are students from rural areas in the school. She tries to integrate her students with harmful habits to the society through sports. The number of athlete students in the school is high.
Can	O: 11-20. He works in a PS in a HP. He emphasizes values education the most. He uses social media effectively and has been rewarded by his school for it. The school is in a neighborhood of low socio-economic level with many individuals who come to Türkiye through migration. He has established good relationships with his colleagues.
Murat	O: 21-30. He works in a PS in a HP. He mostly pays attention to students' preparation for social life and values education. He carries out studies on the elderly and stray animals. He is a trainer. The school is in a neighborhood with a high socio-economic status. Families attach importance to education and send their children to sports activities at an early age.

(Continued)

Table 1  
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Demir	O: 21-30. He works in PS in a MP. Mostly, he places importance on solving problems and mental development. He is a trainer. The school is located in a medium socio-economic level of neighborhood. The students are interested in PE and sports.
Hülya	O: 1-10. She works in a PS in a LP. She mostly values the preparation of her students for social life. She carries out e-Twinning and healthy life projects. The school is located in a neighborhood with a low socio-cultural level. It is a school that is not crowded, has insufficient sports facilities, and it does not have a canteen. Students carry the neighborhood culture to school.
Mert	O: 11-20. He works in a PS in a HP. He places the most emphasis on the rules and discipline. He is a trainer. The school is in a neighborhood with low socio-economic level. Other branch teachers in the school do not support athletic students.
Alp	O: 1-10. He works in a PS in a MP. He cares most about following the rules and discipline. His school is in a low socio-cultural level neighborhood. The school is crowded, and sports facilities and supplies are inadequate. Female students are willing to do PE, but parents do not support girls to do sports.
Derya	O: 11-20. She works in a PS in a MP. Mostly, she puts emphasis on developing her students in sports and creating a sports culture. She is an active athlete. She did not agree to turn on her camera during the online interview. In the neighborhood where the school is located, families usually belong to a lower-middle income class, and playgrounds are limited. Students are willing to participate in PE and sports, but the level of readiness is low.
Tolga	O: 11-20. He works in a PS in a HP. He mostly pays attention to following the rules and discipline. The school is in a low socio-cultural and economic neighborhood, and the sports facilities are insufficient. Parents are indifferent. Some students have malnutrition problems.
Umut	O: 1-10. He works in a PS in a HP. Mostly, he pays attention to improving his students in sports and providing PA in the lesson. His satisfaction with the students is moderate. Mothers generally do not work in the neighborhood where the school is located. He prepares students for sports high schools. School sports facilities are inadequate, and student skill levels are low.
Bora	O: 1-10. He works in a PS in a HP. He mostly emphasizes students' preparation for social life. He carries out studies on environmental problems. The school is in a well-developed socio-economic neighborhood. The school's sports facilities are insufficient. There is a passive mass of students who do not have autonomy. Object control skills are poor in small classes.
Feray	O: 21-30. She works in a PS in a HP. She is mostly attentive about sports culture and values education. It is a crowded school with students who have migrated from different places. The sports facilities of the school are insufficient, and the garden is small. The noise from the garden during PE lessons causes problems with other teachers.

Note. HP: high-population neighborhood; LP: low-population neighborhood; MP: medium-population neighborhood; O: occupational year range; PrS: private school; PS: public school.

## RESULTS

Three themes were determined: Theme 1: Physical Education Course Content, Theme 2: Distance Physical Education and Technology Use, Theme 3: Health-Based Physical Education.

### Theme 1: Physical Education Course Content:

**Traditional education approach:** Teacher-centered teaching methods are frequently preferred by the participants. The low level of readiness for PE and sports of primary school students is an important factor in the preference of teacher-centered teaching methods. The low level of fundamental movement skills such as running, jumping, balancing, catching, throwing of students leads some teachers to attach more importance to psychomotor goals. Therefore, some teachers emphasize psychomotor goals to quickly improve fundamental movement skills by using teacher-centered teaching methods. These teachers did not focus much on affective and cognitive domain gains during their responses.

Derya: *We have to do that. I show them, and then I make them do it. Because there is no PE in primary school, children come to secondary school unaware of sports.*

The sociocultural and economic conditions of the environment in which teachers work also affect the choice of teaching methods. Teachers working in disadvantaged segments did not consider the level of student readiness to be

appropriate to apply discovery learning methods such as guided discovery, convergent discovery, learner's individual designed program.

*Alp: Since the children of families with low financial income perceive life as a struggle, they also accept the school in the same way. How far can methods be applied where such an understanding prevails? This is the issue that needs to be investigated: The difference between the methods taught in universities and the methods applied.*

Indicating that the physical conditions and materials in the school were insufficient, the participants stated that it was not possible to apply student-centered teaching methods in some schools.

The fact that students in some schools did not speak Turkish obliged teachers to act with traditional education approach. These participants had difficulty in communicating verbally with their students from foreign countries, so they frequently preferred the teaching method of demonstration-performance.

*Kenan: Because of the language problem. In other words, they do not know some terms because they do not know Turkish very well. ... First, we explain it with theory and then try to show what it means with movement or with students who know it. We are trying to close the gap caused by language.*

Most participants do not have sufficient knowledge about PE teaching models. A small number of participants carried out teaching models. Some of the participants stated that they did not associate teaching models with the reality of life. The conditions of the school, the student profile, and the desire to teach the lesson quickly kept teachers from applying the teaching models.

**Constructivist education approach:** Some teachers changed their teaching style with the change of the curriculum.

*Emre: And in this old program, the lesson was going back and forth in a military order. After 2010, our program changed. Then came the update again. In fact, there are many methods in which students can be more involved. There are methods we use in connection with constructivist methods.*

A significant number of teachers who valued the constructivist education approach defined their schools as "above the standards." The participants favoring the constructivist education approach cared about individual differences, problem solving, values education, self-confidence, developing coping strategies, and the participation of students with disabilities. It has been revealed that these teachers considered sports as a tool in the development of affective-cognitive domains.

*Bora: It's about building a little self-confidence. I can say that I prefer this teaching method because I want the children to go beyond themselves and realize themselves.*

*Demir: For example, we make children run. One is an athlete, the other cannot run. Or we teach our lessons by bringing different students together. That's why I don't even make students rank in height so that they don't get psychologically affected by each other. We carry out running or warm-up exercises that children can do freely on their own, not side by side, but in groups, back and forth. So, I also attach great importance to psychological effects. In addition, inclusive students or disabled children come to classes. It is necessary to make those children do the movements.*

## **Theme 2: Distance Physical Education and Technology Use:**

**Distance physical education experience:** Participants considered DPE as a difficult experience. Teachers felt anxious that they could not adapt to DPE at the beginning. For teachers who thought that their students were very inactive during the pandemic, the priority was to increase the PA levels of the students. In fact, according to the statements of some teachers, the PE teaching profession in the DPE process became similar to the concept of "personal trainer."

Meral: *We work out the back, the leg separately, and we exercise the abdomen separately. In fact, they themselves have sort of become their own coaches. They say, "This is insufficient for me now. We are doing more." We're exercising with them. We are doing this personal trainer job what they call "PT" on Zoom.*

The statements of teachers who adopted a more constructivist education approach in their lessons during face-to-face education demonstrated that these participants also resorted to traditional education approaches at the beginning of DPE. Especially the lack of DPE experiences and training before this process led to a change in their teaching approaches. While some teachers started to have more difficulty in creating content in the process, teachers who were close to the constructivist education approach improved themselves and started to enrich their course content.

Emre: *You need to prepare very well in a narrow space. How to do PE remotely on Zoom is actually something that requires professionalism. In fact, we weren't even told about it in college or anywhere else, so there was no PowerPoint presentation, a video demonstration, and so on. This is a really difficult process, but I started to overcome it by using different methods and developing some things.*

In addition to the adaptation and course content creation problems experienced, the participants stated that most students did not open their cameras and did not answer the questions in DPE lessons. The fact that the cameras were off had consequences such as not being able to control the movements of the students and increasing the risk of injury.

Gizem: *There is no obligation to turn on the camera, but we have to have it turned on in our class. I have to see which child is doing the movement and how s/he is doing. It happened to a friend of ours. The child's camera was off, the teacher was showing basic gymnastics movements, such as the back scale. That boy, for instance, did something else by himself there and injured his foot. Who became the culprit? It was the teacher.*

In addition, teachers had difficulty in detecting students who disrupted the discipline of the class. Inequality of opportunity, inadequate technological tools, and internet problems affected participation in DPE. However, some participants stated that even their students who had sufficient opportunities to participate in the lessons did not attend the lesson. Moreover, Teacher Umut experienced that during his DPE lessons, some of his students showed off to their friends with the opportunities they had. On the other hand, the home environment was not found suitable for PE lessons by the participants. The space problem resulted in the lack of addressing learning outcomes for the psychomotor domain of the PE. Reasons such as socialization opportunities being weakened due to the pandemic, students gaining weight, low motivation, students not having grade anxiety, and increased screen time were among the factors that had negative impacts on PE lesson experiences.

It has been observed that the facilities of DPE were distributed in a very narrow range. These factors were the use of video, flexibility, less tiring DPE, saving time, not being affected by weather conditions, not waking up early, participation of families, and protection from covid-19. Although some conveniences of DPE were expressed, in fact, teachers did not perceive them as benefits. These elements were accepted as a routine of the profession, and it is seen that teachers were not satisfied with the profession during DPE.

Umut: *So are there any conveniences? Yes, we are less tired as teachers. But we don't like this case. We want to get tired. We are people who are used to getting tired. We will eat that wind and that sun in the garden, and we will see that children can do something. That's how it's going to come out. We will go to the competitions with the kids. We'll fight in a good sense if we have to. "Do this movement in the field," "Don't do that," "Why did you do it?," we will argue in the good sense. We are people who live on these.*

Some participants considered increasing the healthy life awareness of families as an advantage of DPE.

Emre: *When I explained the calories of food in the nutrition subject, most of them hung it on the refrigerator. I had them hung on the fridge. One of them said, "Sir, my father and mother look at this every day. They started to feed us accordingly." ... You can't do that at school. When you practice it at home, the family sees it too. They say, "Oh! Here seems to be something useful."*

**Use of technology in physical education:** A great change occurred in teachers' perspective on technology during the pandemic period. In addition, it was revealed that teachers improved their technological competencies. Participants generally interpreted the use of technology in education as a necessity of the age and were not against the use of technology in PE.

Suzan: *But people who are a little older like us, let's say, we were a little bit further away from technology. But in this process, we have inevitably engaged in technology. There were places we were afraid of, like whether we could do it or not. But it didn't turn out the way we feared. You can learn; you can do anything. Of course, there should be technology. It should be in every branch. It should also be included in PE.*

Elif: *Digitalization has now entered into PE, and it needs to enter.*

Nevertheless, many participants emphasized that technology should be used in a balanced manner due to the active nature of PE courses. The majority of the participants stated that they did not use technology in their lessons before the pandemic. Participants such as Sevim, who started to use web 2.0 tools in the DPE process, talked about the advantages of e-Twinning projects and web 2.0 tools such as Wordwall, Kahoot, and Padlet in their speeches.

Sevim: *In this process, web 2.0 tools actually saved my life.*

However, there were also participants who did not support the use of technology in PE.

Murat: *The student should not be intertwined with technology but just be in natural sports in the garden—that's enough for him/her. If it was high school, maybe it would go to advanced levels. But since I have been in secondary school for a very long time, I think it is appropriate for the child to be intertwined with natural sports by doing more, trying, and doing sports in repeating numbers.*

### **Theme 3: Health-Based Physical Education:**

**Thoughts on health-based physical education:** After the question aimed at revealing the thoughts about HBPE, many participants asked for this concept to be explained. From a general perspective, it is seen that teachers focused more on HBPE during DPE applied during the pandemic.

Gökhan: *Actually, I think it's good because we didn't really teach this much in face-to-face education. In other words, we directed the students to do a little more PA, as things they should do daily. We got their attention more by talking about the health problems. Some of them started to do sports or nutrition programs themselves on a regular basis. This DPE process was actually quite good for us in this regard!*

Some teachers who did not include HBPE subjects in their lessons in face-to-face education decided to address HBPE more with the pandemic outbreak. Some of these participants mentioned that the relationship between PE and health was better understood during the pandemic. In general, although HBPE practices in face-to-face education were considered inadequate, teachers believed that the concept of "health" was important in PE. Some participants thought that PE lessons were insufficient in creating healthy lifestyle behaviors. These participants drew attention to the effects of family awareness, environmental conditions, use of technology, and socio-economic and socio-cultural factors in order to create a change.



Ata: *Of course, these are related to the approach of families to children and the narrowing of children's playgrounds. Everywhere used to be a playground in the past. Parents could comfortably take their children out and make them play. Now no one trusts the streets. Families don't trust the streets.*

Contrary to what these participants thought, participants who practiced HBPE in their schools were of the opinion that PE teachers were effective in creating a healthy lifestyle.

Hülya: *For example, I made a class quit sugar. I developed a project with the kids. It's about drinking tea without sugar. Half the class is sugar-free now. Some of them have even taken sugar out of their lives now. Since the teacher is of course a very important factor in creating this kind of consciousness, the child does not care as much about what their parents say. But if we are doing this within the framework of a project at school, it is different.*

**The reasons for health-based physical education to lag behind:** It can be said that many factors caused HBPE to lag behind. Teacher-induced reasons emerged as competitiveness, traditionalism, being closed to development, having an athlete identity, priority given to the psychomotor domain, choosing the easy way, lack of mastery of the program, low motivation, the content of university education received, not being in coordination with other teachers and lifestyles of the teachers.

Demir: *It must be arising due to the competition with their friends and other PE teachers. Or maybe more classically, they might be behaving this way because they can't give up on how they have learned it. We need to get rid of this somehow.*

Emre: *But our teachers: "I am a very good athlete." I don't want to generalize the whole thing, but in my opinion, "I was a football player. Let me just tell you about football." There are those who almost never do lessons about other fields. Believe me, I know that from the people around me. There are teachers who do not give any gains related to a single cognitive and affective field in any way for a year. ... Let's look at the last part behind the annual plans. He/she would not write its current version in 2018. That's what I'm claiming. Therefore, teachers do not follow and do not read the achievements of the program.*

The fact that PE lessons are not taught efficiently in primary schools is seen as one of the obstacles to HBPE. Some participants stated that teachers tried to complete the fundamental movement skills and sports knowledge deficiencies from the primary school period and emphasized that a lot of time was spent during the compensation for these deficiencies. However, the demands of school administrations and the success of school sports teams are among the reasons why skill-based PE is more predominant in schools. Students' wishes and expectations, HBPE not being found fun by students, and students' perception of PE are among the factors that cause teachers to put HBPE in the background. According to some participants, the PE perception of the students is based on "playing games, learning sports skills, and having fun." In this sense, it has been stated that health issues are included in the plans but not implemented.

Can: *It's like saying, "If you listen to classical music, your soul will rest." Okay, classical music is very good, but not everyone wants to hear it.*

The lack of materials and physical conditions of the school and the socio-economic and cultural conditions of the environment where the school is located are the reasons why HBPE remains neglected. Also, it was stated that most teachers did not teach HBPE due to the lack of a control system by drawing attention to the learning outcomes that continue to increase to the next grade level and are related to each other. There are participants who believe that it will be beneficial to establish coordination and cooperation between the relevant institutions. On the other hand, it was pointed

out that the teachers' concerns about the tight schedule of the lessons and meeting the student expectation were expressed, and the lesson hours for HBPE were insufficient.

## DISCUSSION

In this study, the researchers aimed to present multiple facts and reveal an in-depth understanding by examining teachers' views and behaviors towards current PE from a holistic perspective in a changing understanding of education. Since the data was collected during the covid-19 period, teachers frequently included the effects of the DPE process in their answers to questions about current PE. However, for the concept and results of study to be interpreted correctly, it should be considered that the study reveals not only DPE but also the entire educational experience of teachers.

In the general framework, most of the participants teach their lessons with a traditional education approach. The factors that lead the participants to traditional education approaches are the low level of student readiness for PE and sports, the physical conditions and equipment of the school, the socio-economic and cultural structure of the environment, psychomotor gains, and language problems. Among the factors that cause teachers who are close to the constructivist education approach to practice this approach are individual differences between students, psychological factors, the new education trends, caring about everyone's participation, and the goal of achieving success in affective and cognitive gains. Generally, teachers who are close to the constructivist education approach make a difference compared to the participants who are prone to the traditional education approach in terms of perspectives on education, PE and curriculum dominance, school physical conditions, and socio-cultural and economic conditions of the region they work in. Most participants do not have sufficient information about the teaching models in PE. It is seen that the participants have a weak mastery over PE teaching methods and models in general.

Similarly, İnce and Hünük (2010) concluded that the teaching methods that experienced PE teachers use most intensively and value the most are teacher-centered ones. The researchers stated that experienced PE teachers in Türkiye primarily aim to develop sports-specific skills; therefore, they use teacher-centered teaching methods (İnce and Hünük, 2010). However, using student-centered teaching methods can increase students' metacognitive skills, course satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation (Chatzipanteli et al., 2015). Mirzeoğlu et al. (2019) found that PE teachers use teacher-centered and traditional teaching methods in their lessons. The reason for this preference is explained by the teachers' knowledge of method and application, and lack of equipment and space (Mirzeoğlu et al., 2019). The congruence between the results obtained by the researchers after the education reform in Türkiye (İnce and Hünük, 2010; Mirzeoğlu et al., 2019; Şirinkan and Erciş, 2009) and our findings indicates that the problems that have been expressed over 10 years have not been overcome.

At the beginning of the DPE process, which was experienced for the first time in Türkiye, many participants felt anxious that they would not adapt to the new approach. Among the objectives of the PE course, there are learning outcomes such as creating movement competencies, increasing PA and physical fitness, and psychomotor development. The fact that PE lessons have such outputs can slow down the adoption of DPE by physical educators (Goad and Jones, 2017). Participants consider DPE a difficult process. In addition to the participants who adapt to DPE over time, there are teachers who start to have more difficulty in finding course content. In a study conducted with Norwegian and US teacher, it has been reported that 67% of Norwegian teachers and 92% of US teachers had no online teaching experience prior to the pandemic. Nevertheless, it was reported that the participants became willing to use online learning environments and were successful in managing the process (Gudmundsdottir and Hathaway, 2020). In another study conducted with South

Korean teachers, it was found that the participants had concerns about transferring PA online and providing meaningful content in PE classes (Jeong and So, 2020).

Teachers tried to increase the PA levels of their students during DPE lessons because the students were inactive during the pandemic. To achieve this goal, teachers who adopt a more constructivist education approach during face-to-face education also exhibit traditional education approach at the beginning of the DPE. Participants who were close to the constructivist approach resorted to traditional teaching methods because they did not know how to teach at the beginning of the DPE but started to enrich their course content by improving themselves in time. Howley (2021) examined the teaching and learning experiences of PE teachers from different countries during covid-19. The researcher pointed out that some teachers used traditional approaches for implementing exercise and PA, but traditional approaches remained inadequate. It is reported that it is possible to adapt and develop non-traditional approaches to tailor them to the process (Howley, 2021).

Many participants shared that they started to give more weight to HBPE in DPE lessons. The teaching of sports techniques is not given much coverage during DPE leads teachers to this path. Some of the teachers who did not apply HBPE in face-to-face education increased their awareness of the subject in this period. HBPE seems to be the way to offer the most adequate and useful content for DPE. For example, in the USA, the most common form of DPE is an elective physical fitness course known as "Wellness for Life". The primary objective of this course is to improve students' health behaviors and physical fitness levels. In this student-centered and informational program, students are allowed to create, share, and discuss health and fitness content related to their own personal goals (Goad and Jones, 2017; Mohnsen, 2012). However, it was stated that the gains for the psychomotor domain could not be fully given during DPE. The insufficiency in meeting psychomotor learning outcomes in the literature is among the criticisms of DPE (Daum, 2012; Daum and Buschner, 2014; Daum and Woods, 2015; Goad and Jones, 2017; Mohnsen, 2012). In a study investigating the understanding and attitudes of instructors who train PE teachers towards DPE, it was reported that all of the SHAPE standards could be met with DPE, except for the first standard that emphasizes the psychomotor gains (Daum, 2012). In a study conducted with 32 DPE teachers, DPE course content, teaching design, and methods were examined. The results of this study showed that DPE was incomplete in the development of motor skills, and a limited number of students participated in the lessons. The researchers pointed out that teachers had limited experience in DPE, and some deficiencies in the technological skills of the participants prevented the students from completing the courses (Daum and Buschner, 2014). The fact that there are few studies that supported DPE before the covid-19 pandemic and examined the effects of DPE and DPE teacher training-oriented initiatives shows that the pros and cons of DPE are not fully understood (Mohnsen, 2012). In the present study, it was revealed that DPE became difficult due to many factors, such as technological problems, inability to control the students, inability to get feedback, problems in creating course content, low motivation, inequality of opportunities, lack of psychomotor gains, returning to traditional methods, space limitations, students not having grade anxiety, and increased screen time. Similarly, studies conducted during the covid-19 pandemic drew attention to inequalities in access to education, lack of technological devices, reliable internet connection problems, and infrastructure problems (Güven, 2021; Howley, 2021; Mercier et al., 2021). Although some conveniences have been expressed, the DPE process has caused teachers to be unable to perform the routines of their professional lives and has led to professional dissatisfaction. One of the important advantages of DPE is that it is easier to reach families.

Significant technological gains occurred in the teachers. Participant opinions revealed that teachers did not have sufficient education and knowledge about the subject before the pandemic and did not use technology effectively in face-to-face education. In this sense, a great change occurred in teachers' perspective on technology during DPE, and teachers'

technological competencies increased. Participants generally interpret the use of technology in education as a necessity of the age. However, due to the active nature of PE courses, it was emphasized that technology should be used in a balanced manner. Mercier et al. (2021) concluded that PE teachers had a strong desire to receive additional trainings to provide more effective distance education. These achievements are important and valuable for the future. Both the interest of today's generation in technology and the fact that the technological competencies of teachers play a key role in the success of distance education make this finding important. For DPE with better quality, it is recommended to receive technology support, such as the creation of activity logs and discussion boards, video submissions, and documenting the activity reported by the student (Daum and Woods, 2015). Also, exergames can be used to strengthen the motivation for DPE. These interactive video games, which require the player to do PA to progress throughout the game, have the potential to increase social relations and motivation during DPE with their social features, such as challenges, leaderboards, and social media shares. In addition, video and video analysis applications can be used to evaluate motor skills, heart rate monitors to determine exercise intensity, and accelerometers and comprehensive mobile devices to examine students' PA (Goad and Jones, 2017; Kooiman et al., 2017).

In today's world, where the importance of preventive health services is better understood, PE courses are positioned as a part of public health (Wilkinson et al., 2018). However, participant responses demonstrate that HBPE has been given less coverage in face-to-face lessons compared to sports skill-based PE. On the other hand, it has been revealed that the weight given to HBPE during DPE lessons has increased. From a general perspective, although HBPE practices in face-to-face education are found inadequate, teachers find the concept of "health" important in the PE course. Namlı et al. (2017), determined that students mostly explain the content of PE lessons with the concept of "sports." Researchers pointed out that the understanding that focuses on the teaching of sports skills in PE lessons in Türkiye can lead to inconsistencies between the achievements of the curriculum and student perception (Namlı et al., 2017). Accordingly, awareness of HBPE, which increased during the pandemic period, can be interpreted as a benefit of DPE. It is noteworthy that some teachers stated that they would include more HBPE subjects in their face-to-face lessons after the pandemic. The increase in the awareness of teachers, who are forced to make innovations in the course content due to the sudden covid-19 health crisis, towards HBPE points to the importance of supporting teachers in this field and increasing their knowledge level. For this reason, there is a need for intervention studies and trainings for HBPE to be carried out with teachers.

Some teachers, especially in low socio-cultural environments, think that PE lessons alone are insufficient to provide health-related gains. These teachers think that the family structure, family life habits, socio-economic level, use of uncontrolled technology, and the limitation of playgrounds are more effective on health behaviors. Contrary to these opinions, some participants who stated that they attach importance to HBPE think that adopting the understanding of "health of the whole school" and PE lessons are very effective in creating healthy life awareness. Some of these participants shared that they were able to create awareness and behavioral changes in both students and families thanks to their projects in their schools. SHAPE recommends a comprehensive school PA approach. According to this approach, it is recommended to provide quality PE in schools, to create PA opportunities during the school day, to encourage PA before and after school hours to ensure the participation of all school staff and family-community participation (SHAPE America, 2021). In the realization of this mission, the PE teacher should be enthusiastic to assume the roles of healthy and active life leader and motivator. In addition, many school-based PA interventions have succeeded in achieving health gains (Fedewa et al., 2015; Goodyear et al., 2019; Hinckson et al., 2016).

According to the results of our research, many factors play a role in keeping HBPE in the background during PE lessons. Since the PE lessons in primary school are inefficient, making up for the deficiencies in the fundamental movement skills of the students and improving sports knowledge leads to the HBPE to remain in the background. In addition, the fact that some teachers attach great importance to sports success results in not paying much attention to the cognitive-affective development. This situation indicates that some teachers act with a competitive approach by emphasizing the athlete identity. Parent requests, expectations of the school administration, and success goals of school teams, which are combined with the competitive characteristics of these teachers and their perspective on PE lessons, can transform the lessons into a training mood. İnce and Hünük (2013) reported that experienced teachers' level of health-related fitness knowledge was insufficient, and nearly half of the teachers whose level of knowledge was determined to be high did not use this information in lessons. Accordingly, in İnce and Hünük (2013)'s study, it is seen that teachers who have high health-related physical fitness knowledge and use this in their lessons highlight their teacher identities. However, the teachers with a high level of knowledge about health-related physical fitness and who do not use it in lessons identify themselves as coach-oriented (İnce and Hünük, 2013). Similarly, Castelli and Williams (2007) reported that secondary school PE teachers had low levels of health-related fitness knowledge. Our results showed that university education is aimed at sports branches and sports skills teaching has also effects on maintaining sport skill-based PE and traditionalism. Also, some participants, who are closed to self-development, maintain the traditional attitude they have acquired from their teachers and/or coaches during their studentship and/or athletics periods. In the study of Mirzeoğlu et al. (2019), most of the teachers stated the lack of field knowledge as a weakness and said that the education they received at university was insufficient. Participants of this research believe that more applied and branch-oriented courses should be given in universities, but they want institutions that train PE teachers to avoid a teaching style for training coaches/athletes (Mirzeoğlu et al., 2019).

The fact that PE teachers could not adopt a healthy life as a lifestyle may also result in the fact that they do not give sufficient importance to health gains. On the other hand, the difficulty of acting individually in HBPE was also mentioned, and it was shared that teachers opted for the easy way by focusing on teaching sports skills in the face of this situation. Insufficient lesson hours can also make teachers carry out lessons the easiest way while trying to keep up with the syllabus. Besides, teachers have low motivation according to some participants. However, Hodges et al. (2016) managed to increase the health-related fitness knowledge while maintaining the PA levels of students with a physical fitness course program. The researchers stated that there may be a need for change and professional development in teacher practices in order to increase the physical fitness knowledge of the students. After determining the teachers' perceptions of health-related fitness knowledge, a group was asked to try the program. As a result, the teachers welcomed the program and were willing to continue the implementation. However, some teachers stated that lack of time made the implementation of the program difficult (Hodges et al., 2017). In the process of internalizing health-related fitness knowledge, the factors determined by İnce and Hünük (2013), i.e. students' not wanting theoretical information, inadequacy of teacher training at university, teacher boredom, insufficiency of the lesson time, perceived role confusion, other primary expectations of school administrators, and parents' habits, are similar to the reasons why HBPE is under-emphasized.

On the other hand, some teachers' attitudes towards student requests leads to insufficient coverage of HBPE subjects. According to these participants, the PE perception of the students is based on "playing games, learning sports skills, and having fun." For this reason, while students are excited to discover their talents during the teaching of sports branches, they find HBPE subjects boring. Considering that the participants are generally prone to a teacher-centered

traditional education approach, these statements suggest that some participants transfer theoretical knowledge only through the lecture method while teaching HBPE content. Similarly, Bibik et al. (2007) reported that most of the students described team sports and games as the most fun elements in PE lessons, and therefore they preferred the traditional approach. Researchers suggested that one of the reasons for this result is that students have not experienced any approach other than the traditional PE programs (Bibik et al., 2007). However, according to the self-determination theory on which the HBPE model is based, the elements of autonomy, competence, and relatedness should be provided in the lessons. In this sense, student-centered teaching gains importance (Haerens et al., 2011). In HBPE, it is recommended that teachers include students in the decision-making process, pay attention to the participation and success of everyone, present the health gains with fun content, and encourage a positive environment and friendship in the classroom (Fernandez-Rio, 2016).

## CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, although there are participants who are close to the constructivist education approach and value HBPE, most of the teachers act with a traditional education approach. In addition, HBPE is disregarded in face-to-face lessons. DPE was experienced as a difficult process by all participants. However, the DPE process that developed due to the sudden covid-19 health crisis caused teachers to achieve various gains. Accordingly, it was revealed that the participants increased their technological competencies and started to look more optimistically at the use of technology in PE. Moreover, HBPE issues have started to be covered more in the DPE process. On the other hand, while HBPE outputs are lacking in face-to-face education, the lack of psychomotor-related gains in DPE courses indicates that the learning outcomes of curriculum regarding sports skills could not be fully achieved. It was revealed that teachers, who were in favor of the constructivist education approach in face-to-face education, initially returned to the traditional education approach because they did not know how to teach in DPE, but developed and enriched their course content over time. The fact that teachers' educational understandings, beliefs, and experiences are affected by considerably different factors presents a complex picture.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The development of the awareness of the participants about HBPE while presenting their course content through DPE, which they have not experienced before, indicates that it would be beneficial to support teachers in this field. For this reason, intervention studies and trainings that will increase the level of knowledge about HBPE are needed.

Schools should follow approaches that promote healthy living and PA for all, with the task of bringing talented children together with sports. Quality PE should be provided with comprehensive school PA programs. PA should not be limited to PE class hours only; it should spread throughout the school day and should be carried out of school. School staff, family, and community participation should be encouraged. The level of understanding and knowledge of school administrators about school health should be improved. In adopting this approach, the PE teacher should be enthusiastic to lead and create motivation.

Teaching experiences are too unique to be generalized. Therefore, institutions that train PE teachers should create sharing environments that will unite in-service and pre-service teachers.

Universities should provide more support and education about the use of technology in DPE and PE to both in-service teachers and pre-service teachers.

**Author Contribution**

1. **İnci Ece Öztürk:** Idea/Concept, Design, Checking, Data Collection And Processing, Analysis - Interpretation, Writing, Critical Review.
2. **Nimet Haşıl Korkmaz:** Idea/Concept, Design, Checking, Data Processing, Analysis - Interpretation, Writing, Critical Review.

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