

Behavioral beliefs and attitudes of judo teachers regarding inclusion of participants with intellectual developmental disorders: insights from qualitative interviews

Creencias y actitudes conductuales de los profesores de judo sobre la inclusión de participantes con trastornos del desarrollo intelectual: perspectivas de entrevistas cualitativas

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Abstract. This qualitative study investigates the behavioral beliefs and attitudes of judo teachers toward including individuals with intellectual developmental disorders (IDD) in their judo classes. Conducted across Slovenia, Portugal, France, and France-Polynesia, the research, within the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) framework, involved interviews with 21 judo teachers using a vignette of a judo practitioner with IDD. Data analyzed using NVivo (2020) highlighted that judo teachers generally view inclusion positively, noting enhancements in pedagogical skills and sensitivity alongside significant benefits for all participants. Judo teachers expressed that inclusion fosters empathy and group cohesion but also raises concerns about potential slowdowns in group progress and increased cognitive demands. Emotional responses varied from fulfillment and pride to concerns over inadequacy and group management. These findings suggest a need for targeted training and accommodations to address challenges and enhance the effectiveness of inclusion.

Keywords: Judo, Intellectual Developmental Disorders, Inclusion, Physical Education, Qualitative Research, Teacher Attitudes, Theory of Planned Behavior, Behavioral Beliefs

Resumen. Este estudio cualitativo investiga las creencias y actitudes conductuales de los profesores de judo hacia la inclusión de personas con trastornos del desarrollo intelectual (TDI) en sus clases de judo. Realizado en Eslovenia, Portugal, Francia y la Polinesia Francesa, la investigación, dentro del marco de la Teoría del Comportamiento Planificado (TCP), involucró entrevistas con 21 profesores de judo utilizando una viñeta de un practicante de judo con TDI. Los datos analizados con NVivo (2020) destacaron que los profesores de judo generalmente ven la inclusión de manera positiva, señalando mejoras en las habilidades pedagógicas y la sensibilidad junto con beneficios significativos para todos los participantes. Los profesores de judo expresaron que la inclusión fomenta la empatía y la cohesión del grupo, pero también plantea preocupaciones sobre posibles ralentizaciones en el progreso del grupo y mayores demandas cognitivas. Las respuestas emocionales variaron desde la satisfacción y el orgullo hasta preocupaciones sobre la insuficiencia y la gestión del grupo. Estos hallazgos sugieren la necesidad de formación y adaptaciones específicas para abordar los desafíos y mejorar la efectividad de la inclusión.

Palabras clave: Judo, Trastornos del Desarrollo Intelectual, Inclusión, Educación Física, Investigación Cualitativa, Actitudes de los Profesores, Teoría del Comportamiento Planificado, Creencias Conductuales

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Introduction

The significance of engaging in sports and physical activities is universally acknowledged, extending to populations with intellectual developmental disorders (IDD) (World Health Organization, 2022). A growing body of academic literature underscores the comprehensive physical, psychological, and social benefits of regular participation in sports, exercise, and physical activities for individuals with IDD (Kreinbacher-Bekerle et al., 2023). Moreover, there is an increasing emphasis on the necessity of inclusivity in physical activity, education, and sports (Bertills et al., 2019; Cologon, 2019). This aligns with the UNESCO-backed Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which advocates for inclusive and high-quality education for all individuals, recognizing the importance of individualized learning that accommodates diverse abilities, attributes, and aspirations. According to Sit et al. (2022), physical education and activities play a crucial role in promoting inclusion and aiding the integration of individuals with disabilities into society. The broader significance of inclusion in the realm of physical education has been underscored by scholars such as Campos, Ferreira, and Block (2015), Combs, Elliott, and Whipple (2010), and Morley, Bailey, Tan, and Cooke (2005). Judo,

established by Jigorô Kanô in 1882, embodies the principles of "Ju" (optimizing physical and mental potential) and "Do" (the path to mastery). Based on the principles of Seiryoku zen.yô, which advocates for efficient energy use in all aspects of life, and Jita Kyoei, which emphasizes mutual prosperity at a societal level (Mazac, 2006), the values of judo are in harmony with the objectives of inclusive education. A systematic review by Descamps et al. (2024) highlights the extensive benefits of judo for individuals with Neurodevelopmental Disorders (NDDs) across physical, emotional, social, and cognitive domains. Despite these benefits, the review underscores a significant gap in research within inclusive contexts. Some studies on inclusive sports programs, particularly for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), reveal the inherent benefits for both neurodivergent individuals and typically developing (TD) peers, promoting social interactions and overall well-being (Nanou, 2020; Tomey, 2017; Lavis, 2006). However, there is a noticeable absence of research focusing on the inclusion of individuals with IDD in judo. The inclusion of students with IDD in sports like judo poses unique challenges and opportunities for educators. P.E. teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion significantly influence their teaching practices and the success of inclusive

education, with positive attitudes and supportive beliefs being crucial for fostering an environment where all students can thrive (Tarantino et al., 2022). Research indicates that teachers who view inclusion positively are more likely to implement inclusive practices effectively, adapting their teaching strategies to meet diverse learner needs (Hersman & Hodge, 2010). This study aims to explore judo teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards including participants with IDD in their classes, using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as a central framework for qualitative interviews. Introduced by Ajzen in 1991, the TPB facilitates a nuanced understanding of human actions. This research endeavors to bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and practical application by investigating how judo teachers' beliefs and attitudes influence their approach to inclusion.

Objectives

Conduct and analyze qualitative interviews with judo teachers of varying experience levels to gain insights into their behavioral beliefs, and attitudes toward the inclusion of participants with IDD.

Analyze these outcomes, focusing on the advantages, disadvantages, and positive and negative emotional responses associated with the inclusion of individuals with IDD in "mainstream" judo programs.

Methods

The project has received ethical approval from the Faculty of Sports Sciences and Physical Education Ethics Committee of the University of Coimbra, with the following reference: CE/FCDEF-UIC/00862021.

The research team, which includes judo experts, crafted a vignette portraying a judo practitioner with an IDD. This vignette carefully incorporates psychosocial and technical considerations necessary before initiating a training cycle in this sport. The use of vignettes in qualitative research interviews serves as an effective tool to elicit participants' perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes. Their value lies in providing a 'real-life' context through fictionalized scenarios, making it easier for participants to engage and respond. Cited by Sampson (2020), vignettes help researchers explore specific stimuli in a controlled manner, enhancing the understanding of personal and societal values. The method is praised for its ability to generate detailed insights, as noted by Barter and Renold (1999) and Kandemir and Budd (2018). Following the approach of Obrusnikova (2011), gender-neutral names were used for the participants in the vignette and throughout the survey to foster inclusivity. In the English version of the survey, the participant is named "Rowan," while in the Portuguese and French versions, they are "Alex," and in the Slovenian version, "Saša." The use of gender-neutral names and inclusive language aims to minimize the influence of gender bias on students' attitudes and intentions as suggested by Obrusnikova (2011).

Theoretical Framework: The TPB, introduced by Ajzen in 1991, serves as an essential framework to identify, comprehend, predict, and influence human behavior. The importance of investigating P.E. teacher's attitudes regarding inclusion using the theoretical framework of the TPB started with Terry Rizzo (1984). Qualitative research using this framework has also been explored in the systematic review of Tarantino (2022). The TPB represents the psychological aspect of a person's beliefs, attitudes, and intention to engage in a specific behavior. The theory identifies three components influencing intention: (i) attitudes, reflecting personal evaluation of the behavior; (ii) subjective norms, indicating perceptions of social pressures; and (iii) perceived behavioral control, encompassing factors facilitating or inhibiting the behavior. The TPB is synthesized on the figure 1. This study focuses on the first component of this theory. After the vignette was read, the interview consisted of questions grouped into three categories based on the Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991): "Behavioral Outcomes," "Normative Concerns," and "Control Factors," with an additional final question about the participants' experience. This methodological approach, aligning with the Theory of Planned Behavior, has been effectively employed in past research (Renzi & Klobas, 2008). For the Behavioral Outcomes, participants were asked four questions: one on the advantages, one on the disadvantages, one on positive feelings, and one on negative feelings concerning the inclusion of participants with IDD into their judo classes over the next three months.

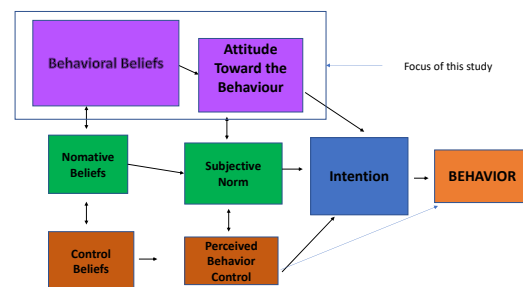


Figure 1. Theoretical framework of TPB (Ajzen, 1991)

The interviews were conducted by the first author. The researcher gained experience in conducting qualitative research from his 1-year master's dissertation before his PhD program. Also, the researcher is experienced in the field of Adapted Sports and Inclusive Sports, as these aspects are part of his full-time job as a judo teacher. The recorded interviews were subject to a detailed processing procedure that included transcription, validation by the interviewees, and professional translation into English. Given the global scope of this research, stringent translation protocols were applied, ensuring consistency by translating the content into multiple languages and then back into English. For added reliability, interviewees verified the transcriptions. The data were then coded, categorized, and analyzed using NVivo software, enabling a systematic identification of themes, patterns, and attitudes among judo instructors.

This provided a deeper insight into their perspectives. The analysis methodology was aligned with that described by Young et al. (2018), Jamshed (2014), and Burnard (1991), and was conducted by the first author.

Sample

Twenty-one Judo teachers were interviewed, from Slovenia (n=7), seven from Portugal (n=7) and France (and French-Polynesia) (n=7). Therefore, the interviews were translated into three different languages. Seven participants were female, and fourteen were male. After analysing the transcripts, the interviewer classified them into five different parts. Judo teachers with no experience at all in inclusion (1 participant), Judo teachers with almost no experience in inclusion (5 participants), Judo teachers with some experience in inclusion (5 participants), Judo teachers who are expert in inclusion (4 participants). Five interviews were conducted face-to-face, five were conducted by video call, and 11 were answered via a Word document sent by e-mail.

Results

Advantages

From the responses to the question, "What do you see as the advantages of you teaching someone with IDD in your judo class for the next three months?" a total of 61 codes emerged during the interviews. Three themes were identified, with 38 codes related to the judo teacher perspective (N=16), 13 codes associated with the group in general (N=101), and 5 codes concerning the advantages for the participant with IDD (N=4). The advantages for the judo teachers are synthesized on the figure 2, the ones for the group on the figure 3 and for the participant with IDD on the figure 4.

Theme 1: Advantages for the Judo Teacher

Most judo teachers expressed that working with participants with IDD would enhance their acquisition of pedagogical, didactic, and soft skills, including patience, creativity, and awareness. The most relevant aspect is that teachers, confronting the need for a diverse teaching approach, will have to "adapt" their pedagogy by taking "a reflective step back on (their) teaching practice" (Participant N, France), while "questioning" their method, which pushes them to research different "strategies," find new exercises, and gain "an experience that would enrich me on a didactic, motivational, emotional level, which would benefit me a lot to do better tomorrow, whether with people with disabilities or people without special care" (Participant B, Portugal). This gives them new skills useful in their professional lives in general: "you progress because you broaden your way of doing things" (Participant Y, France) and pay "more attention to things that you usually wouldn't and things that you can miss with mainstream Judokas" (Participant J, Slovenia). Also, teachers would improve their "empathy,"

learn how to become more "aware," "patient," and be more "creative" in their sessions: "Push myself to be more creative by inventing/adapting new exercises" (Participant G, French-Polynesia). Many teachers said that they would become better professionals. The reflective process of adapting teaching practices was highlighted, leading to a broader approach that enriched instructors on didactic, motivational, and emotional levels. This experience would enhance empathy, patience, and creativity, making instructors more attentive to details and capable of adapting to different needs.

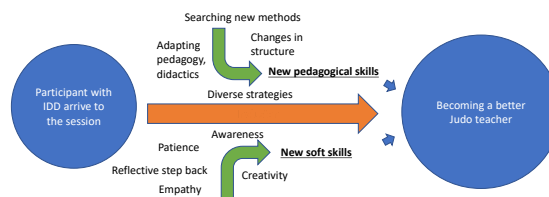


Figure 2. Advantages for the teacher itself

Theme 2: Advantages for the group

From the group's perspective, the arrival of a participant with IDD was seen as an opportunity for "sensitizing other kids to inclusion," being "more sensitive," "valorizing difference," and promoting "acceptance." The "arrival in the group will be beneficial to all, the other children will learn by adapting themselves" (Participant G, French-Polynesia), thanks to the concept of "mutual learning," highly related to the principle of Judo of mutual prosperity/Seiryoku zen.yô. Thanks to this new "exposure," the group is becoming more "open-minded." One judo teacher explained that the latest teaching methods acquired were, in her experience, beneficial to the other kids as well. Another teacher said that the partners' rotation with someone with special needs in his class helped in the process of cohesion for the whole group. The concept of mutual learning, intrinsic to judo philosophy, was emphasized, contributing to the group's openness and cohesion.



Figure 3. Opportunity for the teacher to give benefits to the whole group

Theme 3: Advantages for the participant with IDD

The benefits for the child with IDD were identified at the individual level across physical, psychological, and social dimensions. In the physical realm, participation in judo was seen as providing "various benefits associated with the practice of physical-activity" (Participant H, Portugal). One teacher focused on the fact that if the participant is moving in a judo context rather than another physical activity, it is even better. Another one concentrated on the predisposition of this population to "have body mass indices and even at the level of coordination some problems" (Participant J,

Portugal). Psychologically, improvements in "self-esteem" and social relationships were highlighted by the same instructor: "from the social part of the social relationship" (Participant J, Portugal), emphasizing the positive impact of judo within a "social context."

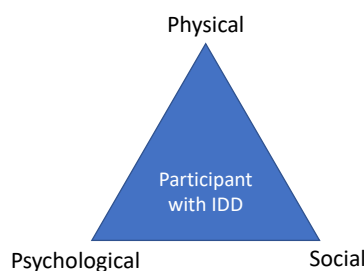


Figure 4. Advantages for the participant with IDD

Disadvantages

In response to the question, "What do you see as the disadvantages of you teaching someone with IDD in your judo class for the next three months?" 40 codes were identified, leading to three main subcategories: group perspective (N=9), teacher perspective (N=10), and no disadvantage (N=6). The disadvantages are synthesized on the figure 5.

Theme 1: Disadvantages for the Judo teacher

From the judo teacher perspective, 10 participants answered in this sub-category. Judo teachers acknowledged the increased demand for time, attention, and patience in teaching individuals with IDD. The need for careful preparation, a well-structured framework, and adaptation of teaching techniques was emphasized. We understood that it asks more energy from the instructor: "you need more time (...) you need more attention (...) you need more patience" (Participant L, Slovenia), being able to take the time and energy for "the fact that you're going to have to explain things, five different ways for them to understand" (Participant T, Slovenia). Taking over this responsibility would give "more fatigue (tiredness) (greater cognitive load)," (Participant N, France) since it will be necessary to have "more careful preparation" and "well-structured and well-organized teamwork" (Participant J, Portugal), also organizing "the preparation of the class, the preparation of the material, the number and type of tasks and, as we do not work, as we do not work exclusively with special populations, therefore, it leads us to pay enough attention to the preparation of tasks" (Participant J, Portugal). Therefore, we understand that the instructor may have to "slow down, restructure, go back more than usual or even condition one or more athletes" (Participant B, Portugal) by an "adaptation of the curriculum and teaching techniques" (Participant Y, French-Polynesia), since if the instructor fails on his mission, a "bad approach that risks excluding the student with a disability" (Participant M, French-Polynesia). The responsibility is quite important on the shoulder of the instructor, and it requires as several instructors mentioned "more time," "more attention," and "more

patience" to achieve this challenging goal.

Theme 2: Disadvantages for the Group

In analyzing the disadvantages from a group perspective, 9 participants shared their concerns, highlighting significant challenges in balancing individual and group needs. The primary issues identified were the potential to "slow down" the group's progress and "destabilize" sessions. Judo instructors emphasized the difficulty of providing individualized attention, which could hinder the group's overall advancement. When managing a group with varying needs, the teacher will have "less time to devote to other practitioners" (Participant N, France), resulting in "a group that moves on less quickly" (Participant N, France). The time required to "individualize the practice" was a particular concern, as it often leads to "the attention being diverted from the rest of the group" (Participant Y, French-Polynesia). This balancing act poses a significant challenge, especially when an instructor is solely responsible for a large group. "If you are the only one, you have to give him the attention that other group members then lack, and if you are not the only one, then you have to delegate one of your co-workers just to deal with him. So that's the biggest disadvantage. You lose the homogeneity of the group" (Participant J, Slovenia). As one Portuguese instructor mentioned, "My biggest difficulties will undoubtedly be those already exposed in relation to a person with IDD, more attention is needed and, in a class, with 15 people, it is more difficult to give this attention" (Participant F, Portugal). The need for increased attention in a group setting complicates the instructor's role. "More attention is needed, and in a group of several athletes, it becomes more difficult to be able to give the necessary attention without losing the attention needed on the others," (Participant F, Portugal). This issue is compounded with each new member, especially those requiring special consideration. According to participant V. from Slovenia, "each new member in the group needs more attention from the coach," which necessitates additional planning to "not prejudice Alex's colleagues in your own technical and tactical evolution. It will require more time to prepare the training sessions in order to share the task time with Alex equally" (Participant AM, Portugal). Initial adjustments also pose challenges. "The dynamics of the class may change a little, especially at an early stage," another instructor mentioned, pointing out the need for a period of adjustment to establish effective routines that ensure proficient training for everyone and prevent the rest of the group from stagnating. "It will be needed an adjustment period to find routines and proficient training time for everyone" (Participant AM, Portugal). In addition to logistical challenges, sensitizing the rest of the group to the concept of inclusion poses its own set of difficulties. Participant G. from French-Polynesia voiced concerns about "difficulty getting the rest of the group to understand the importance of proper instruction and special teaching for the new participant." This could potentially lead to "possible dissensions within the group with a possible phenomenon of

stigmatization" (Participant N, France). In summary, while the intention to include and accommodate individual needs within a group setting is clear, the practical implications often lead to significant challenges in maintaining group cohesion and ensuring equal progress for all members.

Theme 3: No Disadvantages

Six participants answered that they saw no disadvantages; they expressed a positive outlook, viewing challenges as opportunities for improvement rather than disadvantages. They emphasized the absence of inherent negative feelings and saw challenges as valuable experiences that could benefit both the instructor and the entire group. "I don't think there are any disadvantages (...) In the scenario described, with the inclusion of an athlete, I do not consider that there are any disadvantages, on the contrary" (Participant B, Portugal). The disadvantages, if they appear, are more considered as being challenges to overcome, as explained well by one Portuguese instructor: "I don't think these are disadvantages; they are challenges (...) We don't lose. There are no defeats. Nobody loses a fight, or we learn one day, we learn, the other days we win, that is, a victory is winning, a defeat is learning. (...) no disadvantages in terms of people with disabilities or people with intellectual, motor, visual impairments. (...) only have advantages, not only in what to teach and learn, because we also learn the sensitivity of the coaches; it's an asset. We gain from interacting with children who are most in need of our support because we realize that there are people who really need our attention, our time, and then we also think that the class also gains a lot from this. (...) I never consider the downsides. I think we don't; we don't lose. (...) Therefore, there are no disadvantages (...) So, I don't see any downsides, now there are aspects where it's more difficult" (Participant AL, Portugal). Therefore, those challenges appear as advantages, which can help everyone to improve in many dimensions. The disadvantages, if they exist, are not with the kid itself: "No disadvantage with the kid itself," but directly related to the difficult factors, such as being the only instructor or having too many participants in the same group: "let's try, and we will see we'll discuss, we will find a way. Uh, so it's hard to me to see disadvantages here" (Participant K, Slovenia).

Positive Feelings

From responses to the question, "What positive feelings do you associate with teaching someone with IDD in your judo class for the next three months?" a total of 62 codes were identified, leading to three main subcategories, which are "Success-Progress" (N=11), "Usefulness and Proudestness" (N=5) and "Interaction" (N=6). The positive feelings are synthesized on the figure 6.

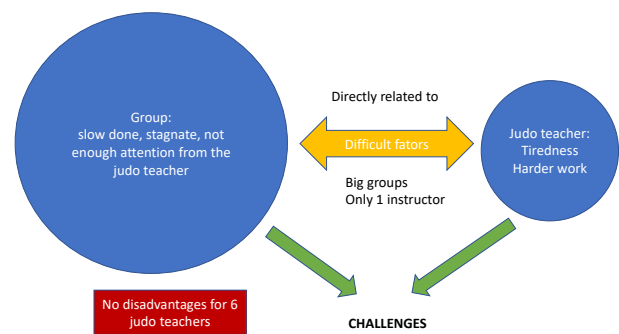


Figure 5. Disadvantages

Theme 1: Success-Progress

Eleven judo teachers expressed positive feelings associated with observing the participant's progression, noting success and acceptance within the group. The joy derived from collaboration and compassion among the participants was emphasized, contributing to a sense of pride and fulfillment for both the participant included and the rest of the group. Observing the progression of the participant is part of the positive feelings for many judo teachers: "seeing his progress," and being in a position of success, through the fact of observing that the inclusion in the group has worked and observing "acceptance" within the group, is part of the positive feelings: "the collaboration of the kids could, would make me feel really proud" (Participant K, Slovenia). This progression comes from all the participants, not only the child with IDD: "Both on Rowan's side and on the side of the rest of the group, who I hope will show a lot of compassion and empathy towards him" (Participant G, French-Polynesia).

Theme 2: Usefulness and Proudestness

Judo teachers associated positive feelings with a sense of usefulness and pride. The joy of contributing to the well-being and progress of individuals with IDD was highlighted, reinforcing a rewarding sense of accomplishment. They felt proud of finding teaching solutions and deriving personal satisfaction from the positive impact on participants. Five judo teachers answered that they would feel "useful" and "proud." We observed a correlation between both feelings, that being useful is a sentiment that often makes them proud. The feeling of doing something useful seems quite essential for the instructors: "feeling of being useful (...) The feeling of bringing them a lot" (Participant A, France). The idea of doing rewarding work is even more critical than with other public: "it's a lot of fun and very rewarding to work with him because, um, he's the one that really needs the help of the, of the teacher" (Participant B, Slovenia). As well as the feeling of "pride": "would be to feel myself, how to say, hmmm, to try to understand how, how an individual works with a handicap like that and to find these keys which would allow to unlock skills that he himself would not have, how to say, imagined, and to find, to find the joy, and have fun too, when he gets to do things or understands things, or just having fun doing something you know. (...) that's what

would motivate me, me, teaching a public like that" (Participant Y, France). This could be a similar feeling as working with any public in general: "even more of personal satisfaction and joy, when, when I perceive that the person feels how to say, more fulfilled, you see I'm saying to myself 'damn...!' (...) Whether it is a disabled person or not, the feeling remains more or less the same; why I like to teach (...) the joy that someone feels when they understand something or indeed the joy that someone feels, gives me joy, when it's something that I more or less provoked, you see. (...) It's comparable when you give a gift to someone and 'oh, thank you, that's so nice,' and you feel he's happy well, hum, that's cool. (...) That's why I like very much, that I have a lot of admiration towards certain teachers that I had because when they showed me certain exercises when they explained some to me, things. I was there like, 'Waww, that's great.' (...) That's what makes me the most fun when I teach. And after? Hmmm, a disabled person, I can't see the ... (difference)" (Participant Y, France). One instructor expressed how proud he feels thanks to his experience in his club: "It makes me happy to talk about disability. We are quite proud of having put this in place. I hope that the model we followed can be inspired by other clubs" (Participant J, Portugal). The feeling of doing rewarding work: "it's a lot of fun and very rewarding to work with him because, um, he's the one that really needs the help of the, of the teacher" (Participant B, Slovenia). The feeling of acceptance is also related to the one of doing something "good" and valuable: "feeling of acceptance of accepting someone who is a bit different than I am, and maybe other children in the group are" (Participant Ž, Slovenia).

Theme 3: Interaction

Positive feelings were also linked to the interaction and empathy between the teacher and the participant with IDD. Observing genuine smiles, expressions, and involvement of the participant contributed to the happiness and positive feelings of the judo teachers. Interaction became a mutually beneficial process, fostering a true sense of happiness and fulfillment. Six judo teachers answered in this sub-category. The happiness and positive feelings occur through the interaction and empathy between the teacher and the participant: "seeing the smile (of the kid) after achievement." Participant A. from France insisted on the fact that those are even more true with participants with IDD: "these are real people. There is no cheating, I mean, when you have smiles, when you have sparkling eyes (...) it brings you so much happiness (...) the return you have and in the most true way possible." The teacher is also receiving a lot from this interaction: "because what we receive is so much, right, that you want to help, but sometimes, hum, and those hugs, we work a lot with, with people with the syndrome, hmm 21 it's not, it's, ..., the smile and the expressions, the involvement, the affection, hmm there are many, the positive feelings" (Participant J, Portugal).

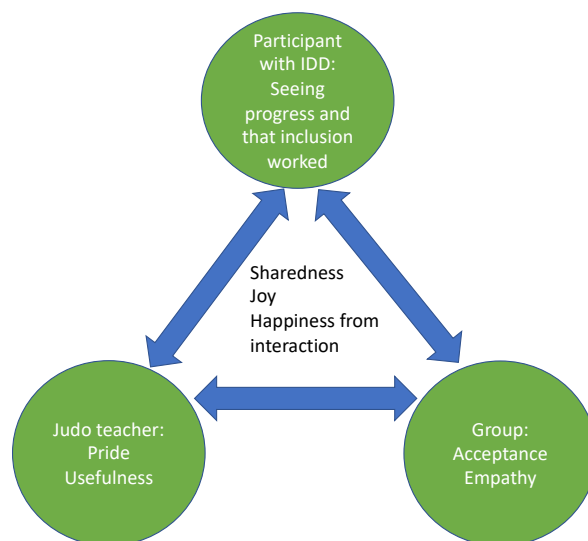


Figure 6. Positive feelings

Negative feelings

From responses to the question, "What negative feelings do you associate with teaching someone with IDD in your judo class for the next three months?" A total of 38 codes were identified, leading to five main subcategories, which are "Worry or Stress of Not being Good Enough" (N=8), "From the judo teacher itself" (N=6), "Worry for the rest of the group", (N=3) "For the participant included" and "No negative feeling" (N=6). The negative feelings are synthesized on the figure 7.

Theme 1: Negative emotions felt by Judo teachers

Six judo teachers answered in this sub-category. Negative feelings directly related to the judo teacher included challenges such as impatience, frustration, and mental load. Instructors acknowledged potential difficulties in explaining concepts multiple times and expressed concerns about failing to achieve set goals, leading to frustration. The mental load associated with the responsibility of successful inclusion was also acknowledged. One Slovenian instructor shared with us the challenge of being patient: "patience, I don't have patience (...) I don't really have patience not a lot of it. And that's why I don't want to have kids ahah, because I don't think I have the patience to say the same thing 30 different times in a few days. And to me, that was the worst thing because I had to explain the technique. And then I usually explained it again. And then they start working, and you explain it again. And again. And again. And again. And by the end of it, like I, I just don't have the patience to do that. And I understand it's not their fault. But on the other hand, when you have to do the same thing a few times like it gets on your nerves. It's.... (...) that kids with learning disabilities often need more time. And often, you have to explain it two or three different times before they get it (...). I don't have that patience. I definitely don't. So, it's not the kid with the disability, just the fact that they are a kid. And you have to explain something. (...) I'm

already annoyed. So yeah, the kids are not at fault here. It's, It's my patience definitely" (Participant L, Slovenia). Another negative feeling shared was the one of "frustration": "There may be frustration when we fail to achieve the goals we set ourselves" (Participant N, Portugal). Or because of communication difficulties: "when they don't really understand the way you want them to understand, it's a bit like frustrating" (Participant T, Slovenia). The frustration can also come, as seen before, from a situation that the instructor would not be able to handle: "if I wouldn't, uh, know how to handle a different situation, like, uh, it's written here, um, um, or, uh, like, um, uh, because he, we need to, uh, watch his neck or like this, that, it's also a little bit of fear, um, that can, yes, those fears, frustrating stress" (Participant K, Slovenia). One judo teacher affirmed it was "more work (...) it's gets difficult" (Participant B, Slovenia); again, one associated those feelings with the difficult factors of having only one instructor: "if there's just one coach that it would be very challenging" (Participant B, Slovenia). Another judo teacher spoke about the concept of mental load regarding the challenge of inclusion, considered a duty which has to be succeeded: "Mental load because if there is a failure in the inclusion process, quite legitimately, the fault is mine. Because it's not just a 'bonus' or something uniquely rewarding to welcome this child, but it's also a responsibility that I consider to be normal" (Participant G, French-Polynesia). Other negative feelings were "nervousness," "redundancy," "resignation," "wasted time," and "the impression of doing 'kindergarten'" (Participant N, France).

Theme 2: Worry or Stress of Not Being Good Enough

Judo teachers expressed concerns about their ability to meet the unique needs of individuals with IDD, fearing failure or inadequacy. Worries about presenting concepts too difficult for comprehension and challenges in managing complex situations, particularly crises, emerged as common sources of stress. Eight judo teachers answered in this sub-category, the one related to the worry or stress of not being good enough as a teacher and therefore "afraid of failing." Starting an experience in adapted judo, participant A. from France shared some negative feelings that can occur after one session when he thinks having presented something too difficult: "I remember having made a turnaround which, technically, did not seem difficult to me (...) Maybe in the end, technically, it was too complex (...) those are the only negative feelings I can have, is when I walk out of class thinking, hmm, I fucked up, I should have done better, but that's it. Vis-a-vis, regarding the others? No, no, I can't see, it's all positive." Participant Y. from France, without almost no experience in inclusive judo, shared with us his worry about facing complex situations, like one participant having a crisis during the session: "not knowing how to control (...) when he has a crisis (...) I will not know how to manage that, well especially if... it would frighten me in fact, not to know how to manage (...) I do what, you see, what are you doing, then afterwards (...) The negative

feeling, actually, I would say it's always the same, is the uncertainty of not knowing how to react to a situation". Or that because of this lack of experience, facing a complex situation he would be "causing him a trauma like hmmm, I don't know, that he doesn't want to come to judo anymore or that he is afraid to enter a place that looks like a dojo, where I would be afraid to shock someone" (Participant Y, France). Participant B. from Portugal told us her fear of not being able to find the proper way of approaching the participant with IDD: "fear for thinking I'm not capable, (...) The fear of not being able to communicate properly, of not conveying the message as a perspective, of not being able to create the correct stimulus, thus making student learning unfeasible and not only, but worse, of not providing the pleasure of sports practice, for me it is disheartening not to feel the athlete's pleasure. I like to see smiles, even in adults." Participant B. from Portugal clearly explained her fear, which is not related to the person itself but to his teaching abilities: "Never negative feelings associated with the person's problem, just the fear of not being able to help. No prejudice," "(fear) for not having developed experience or learning," "(fear) for leaving my comfort area." (Participant B. Portugal) And in the case of a complex situation: "Anguish of something going wrong and being harder to solve" (Participant F. Portugal). This is because judo teachers recognize a "lack of experience" and "knowledge," which results in a "lack of confidence."

Theme 3: Worry for the Rest of the Group

Three judo teachers answered in this sub-category. Concerns were raised about the potential impact on the rest of the group, such as reduced attention and frustration among other participants. Judo teachers expressed worries about maintaining group cohesion, potential negative reactions from other participants, and challenges in fostering acceptance and understanding within the group. The negative feelings regarding the rest of the group are that they would feel that the judo teacher does not give enough attention to them: "that I would focus on him more than on all other kids in the group and that they would feel, other would feel left out because of that. They would feel that I am only hmmm I am using most of my attention for him and not for them and that they would hmmm their mood in the training would get a bit worse" (Participant Ž, Slovenia). Or that some participants would have difficulties accepting him: "for all other, uh, participants, uh, it could be very hard to, to, uh, get to know him to understand that he's different, that he thinks differently. So that would be, I think, uh, at first would be strange for, for them, I guess, maybe" (Participant B, Slovenia). And that some, by their impatience, would not want to work with him: "they would start getting a bit like impatient and wouldn't want to work with them, and that would break the group apart a little bit, because some of them, probably, feel like very empathic and would try to help him, but others probably, maybe wouldn't really care or just want to train for themselves and only see that he is slowing them down a little bit"

(Participant Ž, Slovenia). This lack of acceptance from other kids who would not want to work with the new one or show a lack of empathy is the primary concern of some judo teachers: "if, uh, other kids wouldn't accept him, uh, if I wouldn't have find, found a way to include him (...) I will get, uh, uh, frustrated or, um, in stress" (Participant K, Slovenia). One judo teacher also told us that if the new child would be violent: "afraid that the child might be violent," (Participant C, France) she would be "worried for others' integrity."

Theme 4: Worries for the participant with IDD

Worries regarding the participation and behavior of the participant with IDD were mentioned, including fears of blocking moments. Some judo teachers were worried that he would not participate: "Fear of blocking moments from the part of Alex." (Participant AM, Portugal) Or violent behavior: "The worst situation is having someone who has violent behavior. I feel bad when dealing with such situations regularly" (Participant V, Slovenia).

Theme 5: No Negative Feelings

Despite the potential challenges, 6 judo teachers expressed that they did not have any negative feelings regarding this situation of inclusion: "none," "There isn't (...) they don't exist (...) I never had negative thoughts with people in Judo," (Participant AL Portugal) viewing any difficulties as opportunities for growth. They emphasized the absence of negative thoughts toward individuals with IDD and perceived challenges as valuable experiences. One instructor explained to us that everything which would come from them would be a bonus. There was nothing negative to take into consideration: "I don't really have any expectations (...) if they win or not, it doesn't really matter, if they misbehave..., well, they have Intellectual Disabilities (...) it's hard to be angry at them, although sometimes I am (...) I know that they could behave better (...) that's not bad..., yeah, you can't be angry about stuff like that" (Participant J, Slovenia).

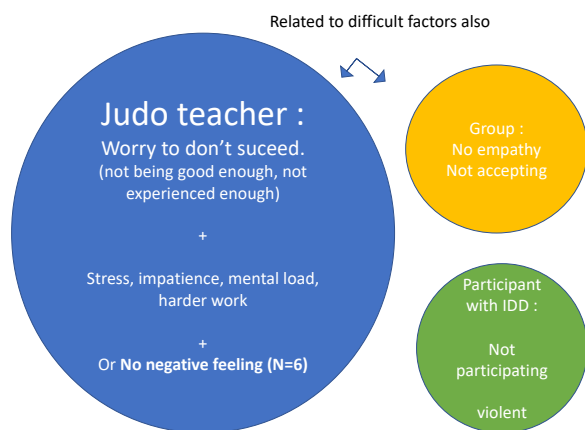


Figure 7. Negative feelings

Discussion

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) offers a comprehensive framework for understanding the behavioral beliefs of judo teachers towards inclusive practices, paralleling findings from studies on P.E. teachers (Tarantino, 2022). In this framework, attitudes towards behaviors, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, play crucial roles in shaping intentions and behaviors. The behavioral beliefs and attitudes of both judo and P.E. teachers display a positive attitude towards including students with IDD, recognizing the benefits such as enhanced pedagogical skills, empathy, and patience.

These attitudes are influenced by personal and professional growth experiences and align with findings in P.E. where teachers report similar growth when teaching diverse learners.

In the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 which advocates for inclusive and equitable quality education, this study's findings are significant. The positive attitudes of judo teachers towards inclusion reflect the global commitment to ensuring that no one is left behind in educational settings, including sports education. This aligns to provide inclusive and quality education for all, recognizing the importance of accommodating diverse abilities within learning environments.

Casebolt and Hodge (2010) have established a correlation where physical education teachers tend to teach inclusively, spurred by underlying supportive beliefs shaped by personal achievement and a humanistic or social justice orientation towards inclusion (attitude toward behaviors). Their conviction that inclusion is part of their professional ethos is well documented (Theodorakis, Bagiatis, & Goudas, 1995), seen as both professionally mandated and socially endorsed (subjective norm). A differentiation in the inclination to teach students with mild versus severe disabilities has been noted (Hodge et al., 2004), attributed to the perceived challenges of teaching those with severe disabilities, influencing the teachers' perceived behavioral control. They also identified that intentionality in teachers to welcome students with disabilities into general physical education classes, is driven by personal and humanistic values (attitude toward behaviours) and a belief in the professional and social appropriateness of such inclusion (subjective norm) (Hodge et al., 2004). The research suggests these intentions stem from generally positive attitudes and the motivational pull to teach students with disabilities (behavioral beliefs and normative beliefs). However, the teachers' control beliefs might introduce a friction, leading to a divergence among their beliefs, intentions, and actual teaching practices. As the results of this research prove, the control beliefs regarding the group size or being the only instructor in the group have a direct impact on judo teachers' attitudes. Therefore, these two constructs of the TPB have been highly correlated for judo teachers in this research. Most of the previous literature regarding this topic has been

reported in the literature review of Tarantino et al. 2022. Their review includes 18 qualitative studies investigating the perceptions of P.E. teachers regarding inclusion, they are all using the Theory of Planned Behavior as a framework. Unfortunately, no literature about judo, combat sport or martial arts studying the instructor's attitudes regarding inclusion was found.

Advantages

This study highlights several key benefits perceived in inclusive practices for judo teachers. Among these is the enhancement of pedagogical and soft skills, where judo teachers reported a significant growth in creativity, empathy, and patience, reflective of broader professional development as an advantage of practicing inclusion. Those findings align with the ones of the previous literature; for example, Hersman and Hodge (2010) observed similar personal growth benefits among physical educators engaged in inclusive teaching. Furthermore, Casebolt and Hodge (2010) identified increased adaptability in teachers within inclusive physical education settings, emphasizing professional growth through meeting diverse learner needs. As illustrated in the results of this study, the need for judo teachers to adapt and innovate resonates with the findings from Combs, Elliott, and Whipple (2010), who discussed how P.E. teachers adapted their instructional strategies to meet diverse learner needs. Combs, Elliott, and Whipple (2010) highlighted that teacher utilize their creative abilities to adapt instructional situations for students requiring additional support, regardless of their special needs. Furthermore, Morley et al. (2005) observed that creative uses of equipment to differentiate lessons were frequently mentioned in responses. Similarly, Casebolt and Hodge (2010) found that creativity among P.E. teachers was bolstered by the modification of activities. Additionally, Hersman and Hodge (2010) identified patience as a crucial soft skill for teaching students with different abilities. Patience is a soft skill which is being developed and has been mentioned often in the judo instructors interviews as well. The literature review of Tarantino (2022) emphasizes the importance of planning and implementing inclusive teaching strategies- Teachers with positive attitudes towards inclusion are noted to devise comprehensive plans to cater to diverse student needs (Combs, Elliott, & Whipple, 2010). In the study by Hodge et al. (2004), the authors discuss that teachers who embrace inclusion as part of their educational philosophy note the social benefits, such as increased appreciation for diversity and self-esteem. The social benefits of inclusion, such as fostering sensitivity and promoting acceptance, as described in this study for judo teachers, align with those reported by Anunah and Hodge (2005). They noted that non-disabled peers often show compassion and support, enriching the learning environment and enhancing social cohesion. They observed that students without disabilities often extend help and acceptance to their peers with disabilities, fostering a more inclusive environment. At a social level, Anunah and Hodge (2005) found that positive perceptions among

teachers were influenced by the constructive social interactions among students, with non-disabled classmates exhibiting helpfulness, acceptance, and compassion towards students with disabilities. These studies collectively affirm that inclusive practices enhance social cohesion and encourage positive social interactions, aligning with the educational objectives of fostering empathy and social inclusion. The physical, psychological, and social benefits for children with disabilities, such as improved self-esteem and better inclusion within the group, correspond closely with the holistic benefits discussed by Lienert, Sherrill, and Myers (2001). They highlighted the positive impacts of physical activities on individuals with disabilities, supporting the observations in this study. Moreover, the physical, psychological, and social benefits for participants with IDD, such as increased self-esteem and better social relationships, mirror the holistic benefits discussed by Lienert Sherrill and Myers (2001), who highlighted the comprehensive positive impacts of physical activities on individuals with disabilities. To finish our comparison of the advantages section, Zitomer (2016) studied dance teachers' perceptions regarding inclusion. Dance teachers mentioned the concept of "pedagogical awareness" by being ready to accommodate, find new strategies, and continuously engage. Showing attentiveness to the students, considering their uniqueness, and being flexible in their pedagogy to be ready to adapt their teaching approach instantly were key factors of inclusion. Also, regarding the role of other students, involving classmates, sometimes older peers appear as primordial. As for Judo, students have to choose a partner "with whom to work whom they thought they could help or could learn from," which reminds the principle of "Jita Kyoei" in Judo, the one of mutual learning/prosperity. This attentiveness to others was also a soft skill that the students would develop; the teacher mentioned the "student awareness of their mutual responsibility towards one another" and supported it by being sure that everyone had a partner. Inclusion would benefit all their students. In terms of expectations, lowering them was not an option; for one of the teachers, it would mean they would be overly cautious instead of being open-minded, which would be unfair to the child with disabilities. Inclusion benefits everyone, all students and teachers, it is a situation where everyone can learn and benefit.

Disadvantages

While dedicated to inclusive education and aware of its benefits, teachers face challenges, and mentioned disadvantages regarding inclusion. Especially in time management between SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and other students (Ammah & Hodge, 2006; La-Master et al., 1998). In the study of Morley et al. (2005), some teachers see inclusion as an ongoing process rather than a final goal, a "journey," emphasising continuous improvement rather than reaching a definitive endpoint. They acknowledge that challenges to inclusion vary, depending on both 'teacher-related variables'—their own sense of adequacy in educating children with Special Educational

Needs (SEN)—and 'child-related variables,' such as each child's specific needs. In Combs, Elliott, and Whipple (2010) study, while recognizing the potential for inclusive practices to uplift students with disabilities and foster a sense of belonging, concerns were raised about the impact on the classroom dynamic and the educational experience of other students. The educator reflected on the dilemma of balancing the benefits of inclusion against the disruptions it might cause, underlining the complexity of implementing such practices in real-world settings. Similarly to this article findings, Casebolt and Hodge (2010) described that P.E. teachers perceived negatively the fact that they might limit the time and energy spent with the other students and that it can disrupt the learning environment and become a frustrating teaching experience for the teacher and the students involved. This issue ties closely to management aspects; notably, with larger class sizes, educators had diminished capacity to offer comprehensive or personalized instruction. They also faced challenges in providing essential feedback to each student and identified increased safety concerns in these settings. Those findings are similar to Anunah, and Hodge (2005) study, where one teacher believed that for some students with disabilities, inclusion is problematic due to such interrelated challenges as greater demand on teacher's time in providing individualized attention, particularly in large classes. As well as Sato and Hodge (2009) who highlight challenges which include the increased difficulty and complexity of designing and conducting lessons that cater to a wide range of needs, especially when balancing the additional time and safety requirements for students with significant disabilities alongside motivating and managing large, diverse classes. The allocation of resources and distribution of attention, a concern also noted in the study, is echoed by Morley et al. (2005) and Sato et al. (2007), who discussed the logistical challenges and the potential slowdown in group progress if not managed adeptly. The increased mental load and preparation required, as highlighted in the judo instructors' interviews, are consistent with those found in the literature, teachers struggled to balance instructing students without disabilities with accommodating those with disabilities, leading to extra planning time and a need for strategy sharing, which was often lacking. In a 2017 study by Alves et al., researchers found that awareness of disadvantage in a classroom setting often led to an increase in teacher engagement with the entire class. Regarding the social interactions with the rest of the class, Takahiro Sato & Samuel R. Hodge (2009) found that the teachers were impacted by some students' negative behaviours towards their disabled peers and faced difficulties in truly including students with disabilities into the class, often resulting in uneven expectations and sometimes segregation. Also, in Anunah and Hodge's (2005) study, both teachers had witnessed situations where some students engaged in antisocial behaviors (e.g., derogatory name calling) toward classmates with severe disabilities, which was troubling to these teachers.

Positive Emotions

The positive emotions evocated in the interviews with judo teachers remain around the sense of pride, accomplishment, and satisfaction about observing the success and progression of all students; this provides a deep sense of fulfillment. Those findings resonate a lot with the ones of the existing literature, the positive emotions like satisfaction and fulfillment are central to teachers' experiences with inclusive education, as reflected in the studies by Casebolt and Hodge (2010). Teachers report a deep sense of meaningfulness when they see students with disabilities succeed, emphasizing the rewarding nature of inclusive teaching and its capacity to foster an environment where every student can thrive. These positive emotions are evident when teachers witness their students being successful, akin to findings by Hodge and colleagues (2009). The driving force for many teachers is the inherent satisfaction gained from aiding and observing the success of all learners, where observing the students performing in physical activities despite of their disability is the most meaningful thing. Combs, Elliott, and Whipple (2010) present a nuanced understanding of success. The researchers illuminate the teaching philosophy of one P.E. teacher who emphasizes student achievement over the pursuit of perfection. This teacher's approach is to nurture success at various levels of individual ability, promoting the joy of movement, personal challenge, and a sense of accomplishment. Further, Casebolt and Hodge (2010) explore the intrinsic motivation of teachers who advocate for the success of all students in their classes, "see that smile on the student's faces when they are having fun", particularly through giving them the best education possible. These educators find profound gratification and meaningfulness in witnessing the joy of their students and receiving acknowledgement from parents, reinforcing their dedication to teaching. Moreover, Combs, Elliott, and Whipple (2010) reveal that teacher attitudes significantly influence the educational environment. Positive attitudes among teachers are linked to the enhancement of student self-esteem, movement skills, and broader learning competencies. These teachers adopt an inclusive educational approach, particularly benefiting students with special needs. In contrast, teachers with less favorable attitudes focus on skill development for extracurricular sports, potentially neglecting the diverse needs of their students. The contrast underscores the importance of adapted physical education training in fostering inclusive and effective teaching methodologies. On a social level, Casebolt and Hodge (2010) emphasize the significance of positive social interactions within inclusive classrooms. Physical education teachers cherish the meaningful connections fostered by an inclusive atmosphere that encourages the acceptance of diversity. Such supportive dynamics—not only within, but also extending to, peer relationships—are seen as integral to the collective success of the classroom. These observations mirror those by Sato et al. (2007), who noted a shift towards more positive attitudes and interactions among students, highlighting the psychosocial advantages integral to inclusive educational practices.

Negative Emotions

The negative emotions, like the frustrations that come from the challenges described in those results, such as concerns over being able to meet diverse needs effectively and the fear of being in a position of failure to meet those needs, are also mirrored in the previous literature. Indeed, frustration emerges as a recurrent negative emotion among P.E. teachers regarding inclusive education. Casebolt and Hodge (2010) detail teachers' struggles to design fulfilling activities that ensure the success and inclusion of all students, emphasizing the pressure of making all students feel belonging to the group. The challenges of adapting lesson plans to accommodate the wide array of student needs are a significant source of stress and pressure, underscoring the necessity for ongoing modifications to support both disabled and non-disabled students' achievement. Lienert, Sherrill, and Myers (2001) highlight teachers' frustration due to the necessity of slowing down activities for some students, which contradicts the pace desired by others. This sentiment of frustration is echoed in Morley et al. (2005), where the inability to adapt activities effectively contributes to a lack of confidence among P.E. teachers, further exacerbating their frustration. It is important to note that these negative feelings, as well as any other aspect of the attitudes, can be influenced by the teachers' control beliefs, experiences, and perceived competences. Control beliefs, which refer to the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior, can significantly impact the behavioral beliefs and attitudes of teachers. Teachers who feel they have adequate training, experience, and support are likely to have more positive behavioral beliefs and fewer negative emotions. Conversely, those who feel unprepared or unsupported may experience higher levels of stress and frustration. Those aspects will be explored in future studies. Incorporating these findings within the framework of the SDGs, particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), it becomes evident that the inclusion of individuals with IDD in judo classes not only promotes equitable educational opportunities but also contributes to broader social goals of reducing inequalities. By fostering inclusive environments, judo teachers are playing a crucial role in achieving these global objectives. The study underscores the importance of targeted training and support systems to enhance positive attitudes among teachers, thereby facilitating more effective and sustainable inclusive practices in judo and other sports.

Future research

Future research will analyse the other outcomes from the same interviews regarding the other constructs of the Theory of Planned Behavior, which are about normative referents and control factors. This will give us a complete overview of the judo teachers' perceptions regarding the inclusion of participants with IDD. This study is a component of a larger research project aimed at developing a survey tool. The items for this tool are derived from the analysis of

those qualitative interviews, in accordance with Ajzen's (2006) guidelines. The ultimate goal is to examine the attitudes and intentions of judo instructors regarding the inclusion of participants with IDD through a quantitative approach.

Limitations

This study, while providing significant insights into the attitudes and behaviors of judo teachers towards the inclusion of participants with IDD, has several limitations that must be acknowledged.

Sample Size and Diversity: The sample consisted of 21 judo teachers from only three European countries: Slovenia, Portugal, and France/French Polynesia. The relatively small and geographically concentrated sample may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions and cultures where judo is practiced and where attitudes towards inclusion may differ.

Data Collection Methods: Data were collected using a combination of face-to-face interviews, video calls, and written responses. This variation in methods could potentially affect the consistency and depth of the data obtained. For instance, non-verbal cues important in qualitative research may have been missed in written responses, and the different settings could influence how questions were understood and answered.

Conclusion

This study reveals that judo teachers generally hold positive behavioral beliefs and attitudes towards the inclusion of participants with IDD in judo classes. They recognize the mutual benefits that inclusion brings, enhancing pedagogical skills, fostering empathy and patience, and promoting sensitivity and acceptance within the group. Moreover, inclusion provides participants with IDD opportunities for physical, psychological, and social growth. However, it is important to acknowledge that these behavioral beliefs and attitudes are influenced by teachers' control beliefs. Future research will focus on understanding these control beliefs in detail, exploring how they impact behavioral beliefs and identifying ways to enhance perceived control among teachers. This will help in developing targeted training and support systems to foster more effective and sustainable inclusive practices in judo and other sports.

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