



Coventry
University

Experiences of Disabled Students within Physiotherapy Education

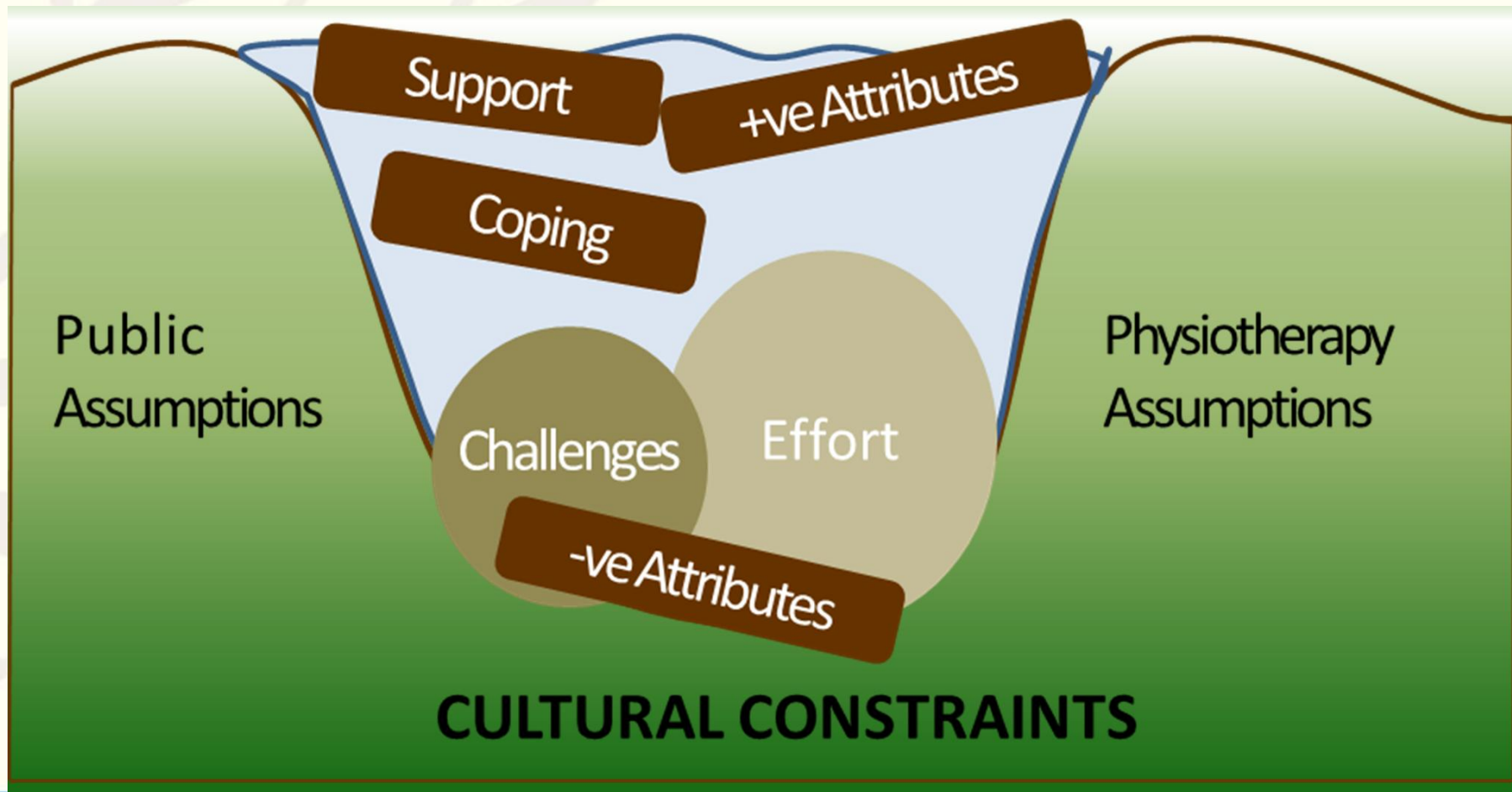
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O'Keefe; Ms E. Grace; Ms A. Karlsson

- Outline the research aims, background and methodology
- Highlight the overall findings
- Discuss 3 key findings of particular relevance to supporting disabled students

Aims of Presentation

- Aims: to gain an insight into the lived experience of physiotherapy students with a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- Methodology: Interpretative Phenomenology, Participatory research
- Narrative interviews and Kawa pictorial representations
- 10 participants: 9 female & 1 male
 - Hearing impairment; Visual Impairment; dyslexia; AD/HD; Arthritis; mental health; wheelchair user

Research Aims and methodology



Overall Findings

- Identity



‘I think it’s quite a negative word...

- Determination

I do feel disabled students are more motivated and determined to do well



- Empathy

having a disability has made me more aware not to take things for granted...[patients] feel I’m not patronising them as I’m not fully “perfect”..., so they learn to trust me quickly.

Key Findings: Personal Attributes and Coping

- Disclosure dilemma

- Admission
- Pre-clinical

- Effort

- Arranging support
- During the course

- Negative Attitudes

- Family
- Teachers
- Physiotherapists

“I didn’t know whether it was going to influence their opinion”



“climbing Everest: in bare feet”

‘the way she... picked on things wasn’t very nice’

**Attitudes
are the Real
Disability**

Key Findings: Challenges

- “I know some understand and some don’t... I think it does boil down to the individual you’re with and their understanding of the implications”.
- “its’ probably the best support I’ve ever had, because it’s actually been acknowledged”



Key Findings: Support

For Future Students

- Early preparation
 - DSA application
- Coping strategies
 - Openness
 - Determination
 - Pacing
- Potential to transform
 - Profession
 - Society in general

For the Profession

- Affirmatory information
 - Websites
 - Open days
 - Interviews
 - Information pack
 - [Emma](#)
- Open discussion
 - University
 - Pre-clinical

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