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# THE PHYSICAL EDUCATOR

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## SPORT

# An Exploratory Study of Youth Track and Field Athletes' Participation Motivation Factors

Zhenhao Howard Zeng

## Abstract

*Using the Adapted Youth Track and Field Athletes' Participation Motivation Factors Questionnaire (AYTFAPMFQ), this study examined and analyzed the characteristics and relationships among high-school track and field (T&F) athletes' participation motivation Factors (PMFs), and four healthy-related elements. Participants were 133 youth athletes from fifteen high-school T&F teams of New York City public schools. Data analyses involved 2x2x2x2 factorial MANOVA, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and multiple regression analyses (MRA). Results included: 1.) The top four motivation factors (MFs) were: MF3 (For a Healthier Body); MF11 (To Foster Self-Esteem); MF1(High Technical Content and Unique Value); MF2 (For Fun and Happy). These four MFs possess the highest impact on these participants' PMs. 2.) Genders (male/female) and Supporting (by parents or by school) had significant impacts on these athletes' PMs, but Goal-settings ('for professional' or 'for non-professional') and 'Years engage in T&F competition' (one to two years or three and four years) did not. 3.) Through the analyses of EFA and MRA, the characteristics and relationships among these high-school T&F athletes' participation motivations were correlations were identified. Further, the traits of the four healthy related elements associated with their basic psychological*

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*needs were also identified, and verified these traits were predictable. Last, meaningful recommendations on how to apply these findings to youth sports education were also provided.*

## **Introduction**

It was known that track and field sports are considered the oldest athletic events on the earth and serve as the foundation of all types of competitive sports. Scholarly literature regards the sports of track and field (T&F) as an individual sport category because usually, the participants compete with one another individually rather than in a team format, even if there are arguments in this regard, such as “any sport can create/form a team competition by combining the results of several individual competitors or by having team members take turns to compete” (e.g., Jordan, 2019; Naar, 2021). In fact, individual and team sports have been defined clearly; for example, individual sports were defined as activities in which competing as a part of a team isn’t required. Naar (2021) stated that individual sports require very strong competitive capability; the athlete competes with others and oneself, and individual sports require a high level of self-motivation, etc.

Conversely, team sports involve a larger group of people working together and competing against another large group (or numerous team members). Often, the most popular sports to play and the most entertaining to watch are team sports such as football, basketball, and baseball, which have large fan bases (Naar, 2021). According to Official Report (2010), a new international sports event worth paying attention to is the Youth Olympic Games (YOG). Since 2010, the YOG has become a global sports event held every four years inspiring youth who dream of becoming sports stars. Theoretically, the youth athletes who competed in the YOG will most likely enter a higher competitive sports arena or obtain a scholarship to compete at the college/university level. In the USA, these youth athletes will have a high probability of being enrolled in those top colleges/universities and regularly compete in their division’s competition conference of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA, 2018).

According to the report by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA, 2018), thousands of high school athletes have been enrolled in colleges or universities because

of their athletic accomplishments and experienced their collegiate athlete journey. This statistic is one of the reasons why research studies in recent years aimed at middle and high school student-athletes have become increasingly broader and deeper (NYSPHSAA, 2018). According to the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL, 2020), “The mission of the Public Schools Athletic League is to provide opportunities for educating students in physical fitness, character development, and socialization skills through an athletic program that fosters teamwork, discipline, and sportsmanship” (p. 1).

Regarding the domain of public school sports, the literature review showed that researchers have attributed the primarily driven factors that motivated youth athletes who participate in sports practices and competitions as Enjoyment, Physical health, Having fun, Fostering self-esteem, Friendship, Passion, or love of the game, Peer acceptance, To contest winners, To become a coach, To satisfy family’s will, Entertainment, and Competitive and playful (e.g., Chen et al., 2014; Claver et al., 2017; Geidne et al., 2013; Miguel & Machar, 2007; Stillion & Sinclair, 2013; Zeng, 2018; Zeng, 2019). Specifically, Miguel and Machar (2007) found that the top three important motivational factors for the success of youth tennis players were 1) factors of enjoyment, 2) having fun, and 3) passion for the sport. At the same time, ‘Improving performance, ‘Keeping fit,’ and ‘Keeping socialized’ were listed as the basic reasons for keeping them involved in the sport.

Moreover, Miguel and Machar (2007) indicated that the third group of important influence factors for the youth tennis players continuing in the sport were feeling important, remaining popular, and earning rewards. Additionally, school/team atmosphere and a good relationship with the coach were ranked as less important factors. Last, Miguel and Machar (2007) indicated that the ‘Team atmosphere’ has a positive relationship with players’ participation motivations, implying that the closer/stronger the team atmosphere, the higher participation motivations.

Cohn and Cohn (2016) indicated that the ‘Team atmosphere’ has a positive relationship with players’ participation motivations, implying that the closer/stronger the team atmosphere, the higher participation motivations.

Cohn and Cohn (2016) indicated that to motivate youth athletes, every coach must know what factors get their athletes motivated. Based on their research findings, they listed the following factors or reasons: 1) Love to practice and compete; 2) Like to work on weaknesses to assist their teammates to improve; 3) Get excited about competition; 4) Want to win and hate to lose; 5) Have high expectations for their performance; 6) Remain dedicated to their selected sport; 7) Stay committed, even when challenged, and 8) Go after goals with intensity.

Concerning how motivation factors impact youth martial arts athletes, Duricek and Cynarski (2017) described that the motivational incentives in martial arts were “based on the capability to stage situations that are attractive, interesting, entertaining, competitive and playful (p. 10)”. The authors found that when participants were allowed to decide which activities they preferred, they experienced greater motivation to participate. Furthermore, Zeng et al. (2019) discovered that the top five factors that truly motivated youth soccer players were 1) technical content and unique value, 2) having fun, 3) making new friends, 4) looking good in my biography, and 5) establishing prestige. The other five factors possessed impact but less power on those youth soccer players’ motivation: 1) to get recognition, 2) to improve health, 3) for one unique skill, 4) to reduce troubles, and 5) to be a professional.

As seen in the scholarly research listed above, most of those studies focused on team sports. Even though martial arts and tennis were included (Zeng, 2019; Zeng et al., 2019), track and field sports were not covered. Hence, conducting the current study appears to be highly necessary.

### **Theoretical framework of this study**

A comprehensive theory named ‘self-determination theory’ (SDT) was employed as this study’s theoretical framework; the SDT comprises two major branches: the theory of intrinsic motivation and the theory of extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Ryan and Deci (2000) indicated that humans are motivated by three basic psychological needs: competence, relatedness, and autonomy. The competence needs in the SDT model are called effectiveness motivation; the relatedness need refers to people’s need to belong and to feel accepted by others; the autonomy need refers to people’s need

to feel self-determined, which is the source of their action (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In terms of organismic needs, energize intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, according to Deci and Ryan (2002) and Pintrich and Schunk (2002), the concept of need itself is too general and too vague to illustrate the engagement in particular behaviors to guide empirical research is difficult as well (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Geidne et al., 2013; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). A few models, therefore, describe how different motivations triggered by the need to manifest intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in specific aspects or activities were developed (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Ryan et al., 1997).

Smith et al. (2006) also indicated that the research literature is quite consistent regarding the benefits of intrinsic motivation to learning and development; that is, engagement based on intrinsic motivation does not need external incentives/rewards and can enhance the motivations necessary to engage in the same activity again and again in the future. Other researchers also indicated that engagements based on intrinsic motivations relate to improved comprehension, creativity, cognitive flexibility, accomplishment, and so on (Claver et al., 2017; Smith et al., 2006).

Further insights by multiple researchers suggested that intrinsic motivation could be defined as participating in a sport for fun or enjoyment, while extrinsic motivation included participating in a sport to gain rewards (Cohn & Cohn, 2016; Duricek & Cynarski, 2017; Smith et al., 2006). Additionally, researchers indicated that when athletes begin to engage in a particular sport, they are not only motivated by intrinsic motivations but also by extrinsic motivations (Claver et al., 2017; Kaplan, 2010). Some particular sports, however, may be more dependent on intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivations that demonstrate different types of sports need different types of motivations (Cohn & Cohn, 2016; Duricek & Cynarski, 2017; Smith et al., 2006).

Researchers illustrated that athletes' intrinsic motivations usually predict attendance and adherence to a particular sport (Chen et al., 2014; Claver et al., 2017; Ryan et al., 1997). Additionally, the research literature is quite consistent concerning the benefits of intrinsic motivations' linkage to learning and development; that is, engagement based on intrinsic motivations does not need external incentives or rewards and can enhance the motivations necessary to engage in the

same activity repetitively (Ryan et al., 1997; Zeng, 2018; Zeng et al., 2018; Zeng, 2019). In the present study, youth athletes who are intrinsically motivated would be those who go to practice their track or field techniques and fitness regularly for fun and self-satisfaction, whereas those youth athletes who are extrinsically motivated would be those who go to practice to become better track/field athletes for winning a medal in the competition (Jordan, 2019; Kaplan, 2010; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Smith et al., 2006). Multiple research studies have confirmed that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations affect youth athletes differently (e.g., Kaplan, 2010; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan et al., 1997; Smith et al., 2006; Zeng et al., 2019).

Based on all points introduced above, the present study would focus on the following research hypotheses and questions: 1) No significant differences would exist in the motivation elements between the 'gender' (male, female). 2) No significant differences would exist in the 'financing support' (by parents/myself or school/team). 3) No significant differences would exist in the motivation elements between the 'goal settings' (for professional or non-professional). 4) No significant differences would exist in 'Years engage in T&F competition' (1/2 year versus 3/4 years) among participants. 5) Whether or not the characteristics and the relationships among their participation motivation could be identified and predicted. 6) Could the traits and relationships among the participation motivations and the three basic psychological needs be identified and predicted?

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The study's participants included 133 high school T&F athletes (from 15 high school T&F teams), considered representatives of 18,000-35,000 high school students. The procedures for recruiting the participants were: 1) Obtaining approval for conducting this survey study from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the author's college; 2) following the guidelines for surveying within the 15 high schools selected (Note: the students' numbers of these high schools varied from 1,200 to 2,500, but all 15 had a school track and field team, and regular training and attend competition within the New York City High school track and field sports conferences); 3) submitting required documentation to these high schools' administrators;

4) recruiting 200 volunteer participants from 15 high schools T&F team; 5) contacting all volunteers and have the “Inform Consent” signed, and 6) delivering 200 “Questionnaire” to the athletes who voluntarily participate in this survey study. As a result, among the Questionnaires returned, 133 were correctly completed/answered (return/effect rate of 66.5%).

## **Measurements/Instrumentation**

The Adapted Youth Track and Field Athletes’ Participation Motivations and Healthy Related Elements Questionnaire (AYTFAPMHREQ) was used to collect data (Zeng, 2019). The AYTFAPMHREQ consists of 27 items, of which eight items investigated participants’ general information; the other 19 questions examined what reasons/factors (RFs) have motivated the athletes to participate in the track and field sports training and competitions.

The instrument included a Likert’s 5-point scale, which allowed the participant to determine his/her answer to each of the questions using the following point system: 5 points = Strongly agree, 4 points = Agree, 3 points = some agree, 2 points = little agree, and 1-point = Disagree. Examples of additional questions included: “How long have you officially engaged in track & field training and competition?” “Financially, who supported your engagement in track & field training and competitions?” “What factors or reasons motivated you to continually take part in track & field training and competitions?” The Part II of the questionnaire contained 10 intrinsic motivation factors (i.e., items 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 15, and 17) and nine extrinsic motivation factors (i.e., items 3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 16, 18, and 19). In other words, just like Deci and Ryan (2002) described in the “Handbook of Self-determination Research,” all three basic psychological needs (competence, relatedness, and autonomy) were included.

## **Data Analyses**

To obtain the answers to the hypotheses and questions stated above, the research methods and data analyses have used: a) a 2x2x2x2 factorial multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), including Gender (male or female) x Financing supported (by-parents or by-school/team); ‘Goal-settings’ (for professional versus for none professional) and ‘Years in T&F competition’ (1/2 year vs. 3/4 years). b) The exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and c) the multiple regres-

sion analyses (MRA). The SPSS version 25.0 (SPSS, 2020) was utilized for statistical analyses.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive Statistics of the Participants (N =133, 81 Male, 52 Female)*

Motivation Factors (MFs)	Mean $\pm$ S.D	Sum	Rank
MF1 High technical content and unique value.	4.023 $\pm$ .609	535.000	3
MF2 For the fun and get rid of boredom.	3.879 $\pm$ .953	516.000	4
MF3 For getting healthier whole body.	4.436 $\pm$ .801	590.000	1
MF4 For the enjoyment and have happiness.	3.443 $\pm$ 1.356	458.000	11
MF5 To meet my friends.	3.789 $\pm$ 1.155	504.000	6
MF6 For make new friends.	3.639 $\pm$ 1.182	484.000	8
MF7 For contest winners.	3.105 $\pm$ 1.017	484.000	14
MF8 For shape the body.	3.857 $\pm$ 1.291	513.000	5
MF9 For improve physical health.	2.797 $\pm$ 1.496	372.000	15
MF10 For become a professional athlete.	2.714 $\pm$ 1.131	361.000	16
MF11 For foster self-esteem.	4.045 $\pm$ 0.983	538.000	2
MF12 For improve my own reputation.	3.443 $\pm$ 1.251	458.000	10
MF13 For establish prestige among my friends.	3.444 $\pm$ 1.215	459.000	9
MF14 For get the recognition from my coach.	3.707 $\pm$ 1.198	493.000	7
MF15 For reduce the learning/working pressure.	3.353 $\pm$ 1.175	446.000	13
MF16 For reduce the troubles from learning/work.	3.421 $\pm$ 1.226	455.000	12
MF 17 For develop a unique sport skills.	2.263 $\pm$ 1.180	301.000	18
MF 18 Hope to become a T&F coach in the future.	2.037 $\pm$ 0.874	271.000	19
MF 19 For satisfy the will of family.	2.744 $\pm$ 0.982	365.000	17

## Results

The findings/results were presented in Table 1 to Table 3: Table 1 exhibits the descriptive statistics of participants, mean scores, standard deviations, and rank order of the 19 MFs; it reflects the participation motivations status of the participants.

Besides the data in the tables, the participants possess the following unique characteristics: 1) Their duration of officially received track/field training was one year 8.3%, two years 23.3%, three years 42.8%, and four or more years 25.6% separately. 2) Responding to "Who supported you engaged in T&F practices and competitions?" 39.8% answered "By my parents," and 60.2% answered "By my school/team." 3) In response to "What is your goal of engaging in track/field practices and competitions?" 31.8% reported "To become a professional T&F athlete," and 68.2% chose "To become a non-professional T&T athlete."

**Table 2**

*Comparison of the Youth Athletes' Motivation Scores after the 2x2x2x2 MANOVA Significant Difference Effects Showed in 'Gender' and 'Supports' Elements)*

Motivations Factors (MF)	Gender <i>Mean (SD)</i>		Supports <i>Mean (SD)</i>	
	Male (n=81)	Female (n=52)	By parents (n=53)	By school (n=80)
MF 1.	3.876 ± .509	3.250 ± .682*	3.868 ± .621	4.125 ±0.582*
MF 2.	3.889 ±1.118	3.865 ± .627	4.038 ± .854*	3.775 ±1.006
MF 3.	4.531 ± .881*	4.288 ± .636	4.604 ± .742*	4.325 ± .823
MF 4.	209 ±1.455	3.807 ±1.103*	3.604 ±1.276*	3.337 ±1.404
MF 5.	3.593 ±1.272	4.096 ± .869*	4.038 ± .869**	3.625 ±1.256
MF 6.	3.481 ±1.305	3.884 ± .921*	3.679 ±1.139	3.612 ±1.217
MF 7.	2.938 ±1.122	3.365 ± .767**	3.151 ± .928	3.075 ±1.076
MF 8.	3.938 ±1.354*	3.730 ±1.190	3.811 ±1.301	3.887 ±1.292
MF 9.	2.444 ±1.058	3.346 ±1.312**	3.000 ±1.480*	2.662 ±1.500
MF 10.	2.716 ±1.039*	2.711 ±1.427	2.698 ±1.170	2.725 ±1.136
MF 11.	4.099 ±1.056	3.961 ±0.862	4.189 ± .942*	3.950 ±1.005
MF 12.	3.197 ±1.336	3.827 ±1.004*	3.151 ±1.350	3.637 ±1.150*
MF 13.	3.148 ±1.246	3.903 ±1.014**	3.264 ±1.374	3.562 ±1.089*
MF 14.	3.370 ±1.279	4.231 ±0.831**	3.755 ±1.142	3.675 ±1.240
MF 15.	3.469 ±1.245*	3.173 ±1.042	3.453 ±1.066	3.287 ±1.234
MF 16.	3.951 ±0.907**	2.595 ±1.208	3.660 ±1.125*	3.262 ±1.270
MF 17.	2.111 ±1.284	2.500 ±0.959	2.302 ±1.171	2.273 ±1.105
MF 18.	2.173 ±0.891*	1.827 ±0.809	2.075 ±0.937	2.012 ±0.834
MF 19.	2.605 ± .931	2.961 ±1.028*	2.396 ±0.967	2.975 ±0.927*

The results from the 2x2x2x2 factorial MANOVA (Gender x Supports x Years in T&F Competition x Goal-settings) revealed that significant differences were found in Gender ( $p < .01$ ,  $\Lambda = .594$ ,  $F = 3.561$ ) and Supports ( $p < .01$ ,  $\Lambda = .637$ ,  $F = 2.972$ ), however, no significant differences exist in 'Goal-setting' ( $p < .05$ ,  $\Lambda = .863$ ,  $F = 824$ ); and 'Years in T&F Competition' <sup>Note</sup> ( $p > .05$ ,  $\Lambda = .795$ ,  $F = 1,367$ ). After significant findings, a follow-up MANOVA test was executed. This follow-up test was able to determine not only which motivation factors motivated these high school T&F athletes engaged in their practices and competitions but also able to determine which related elements have a stronger or weaker impact on their participation motivations.

Below were some further interpretations for Table 2: 1) In the 'Gender' element, 17 out of 19 comparisons showed significant differences, with females scoring higher than males in seven comparisons reaching a significant  $p < .05$  level; and four comparisons reached

**Table 3**

*Unstandardized Regression Coefficients (Beta in parentheses) for Participants' Motivation Factors (MF) Standardized Score (N = 133, Male = 81, Female = 52)*

Predictor Variables <sup>Note</sup> DV:	Model I Gender	Model II Supports	Model III Years in T&F
<b>Competence Needs variable</b>	--	--	--
MF3. For healthier whole body	.021 (.035)	-.050 (-.082)	-.021(-.034)
MF7. In order to contest winners	-.005 (-.011)	-.007 (-.014)	.097(.204)
MF8. In order to shape the body	-.023 (-.060)	.055 (.144)	.031(.084)
MF13. In order to establish prestige	.086 (.215)	.018 (.045)	.021(.054)
MF14. For recognition from coach	.104 (.255)	-.023 (-.056)	.057(-.128)
<b>Relatedness Needs variable</b>	--	--	--
MF2. Having fun not boredom	-.055 (-.106)	-.043 (-.084)	.029 (.058)
MF4. For enjoyment & happiness	.015 (.041)	-.034 (-.095)	-.005 (-.015)
MF12. To improve my reputation	-.017 (-.044)	.100 (.256)	-.066 (-.171)
MF18. To become a T & F coach	-.066 (-.118)	-.004 (-.007)	-.006 (-.010)
MF19. To satisfy the will of family	.100 (.200)	.154 (.308)	-.118 (-.241)
<b>Autonomy Need variable</b>			
MF9. To improve physical health	.037 (.114)	-.063 (-.191)	-.025 (-.077)
MF11. To foster self-esteem	-.025 (-.051)	-.057 (-.115)	-.063 (-.128)
MF15. To reduce learning pressure	-.062 (-.148)	.035(.083)	-.075 (-.184)
MF17. For a unique sport skill.	-.030 (-.072)	.011(.027)	.016 (.039)
Constant	1.002*	1.338**	2.067**
$\Delta R^2$	.412	.273	.213
F	6.233**	2.991**	2.071**

a significant  $p < .01$  level; although overall the male scored lower than the females, there are also in six comparisons male scored significantly higher than the female at  $p < .05$ , wherein one comparison reached the  $p < .01$  level; 2) In the 'Supports' element, overall, there are 11 out of 19 comparisons reached significant differences ( $p < .05$ ) level with seven comparisons Support by parents score higher than Support by the school/team, but there are also four comparisons showed that Support by school/team score higher than the Support by parents.

### **Internal Consistencies and Correlation Analysis**

For the internal consistencies and correlation analyses, according to the suggestions of Child (1990) and Zhu (2012), we used Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Multiple Regression Analyses (MRA). The criteria of correlation degree for low correlation is  $r = .20 - .39$ ; for moderate correlation is  $r = .40 - .59$ ; for moderately high

correlation is  $r = .61-.79$ ; and for high correlation is  $r \geq .80$  (31). According to their recommendation and criteria, the current study revealed that from the 171 correlation coefficients examined, 71 correlation coefficients reached significant levels (at  $p = .05$  and  $p = .01$  levels separately). Hence, this study's internal consistencies were between the 'acceptable' and 'good' levels.

Besides these, multiple research groups have indicated that these youth athletes' sports participation motivations could be effectively predicted through the EFA and the MRA (Chen et al., 2014; Child, 1990; Duricek & Cynarski, 2017; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Zeng, 2018; Zeng et al., 2018; Zeng, 2019). Following their methodology, the current study also implemented these two analysis methods. Following the self-determination theory and the principles of EFA and MRA, the findings were that 14 out of 19 original participation-motivation variables met these principles and were selected to enter the multiple regression analyses.

Therefore, based on the features of this research design and topic, three models of MRA were set and calculated separately: model one was for predicting the three psychological needs (i.e., Competence, Relatedness, and Autonomy) separately by 'Gender'; model two was for predicting the three psychological needs separately through 'Supports', model three was for predicting the three psychological needs to use the 'Years in T&F competition'. Results from each of the regression equations are exhibited in Table 3. Predictor variables were entered to determine the variance accounted for through inference in the motivations of high school T&F athletes' participation in each regression analysis.

In the first set of regression analyses, the motivation factors' standardized score was the dependent variable, and the satisfaction degrees of Competence, Relatedness, and Autonomy were based on those motivation factors' scores. Results showed a significant regression,  $F(6.233)$ , at  $p < .01$  level; the combined accounted variance for the three psychological needs satisfaction from the Gender element was 41%. In other words, this satisfaction level is higher than people expect.

A significant regression result appeared from the Supporting element  $F(2.991)$  at  $p < .01$  level; this means the combination accounted variance for the three psychological needs satisfaction from

the Supporting element was about 27%, which is in the satisfaction level just as people anticipated, this result implied that: Support by parents even have more impact power than Supporting by their teams. Last, the regression analysis on the 'Years engage in T&F competition' element reached a significant  $F(2.071)$  at  $p < .01$  levels; this contribution to the satisfaction of the three psychological needs from this element was about 21%; this result seems to differ from what people expected, but it is reasonable. The fact is those athletes who have more years (three to four years) of training in the track or field need to maintain their participation motivation levels to perform as well as they should be in the competitions. In comparison, athletes with fewer years (one to two years) of training in the track and field have to work harder to improve their performance degree to reach or catch up with those junior/seniors (three to four years) athletes' skill performance levels, etc.

Therefore, all three psychological needs categories reached a significant level (one at  $p < .05$  level, and two at  $p < .01$  level), and the total satisfaction percentage was 89%, or the "Total Variance Explained" from the EFA revealed that these 14 variables accepted to enter the regression reach a level of 89%. This finding implicated that the educators (coaches and instructors) and administrators (managers or program directors) have done a good job cultivating and managing their athletes/students. Their ways of coaching their track/field athletes might be a successful example for encouraging and maintaining the youth athletes to continually participate in their track/field practices and competitions.

## **Discussion**

This study aimed to explore the characteristics and relationships among high-school T&F athletes' PMs, the four related elements, and the kinds of PMs that motivated these youth athletes to participate continually in their T&F practices and competitions. First, the status and characteristics of these high school T&F athletes' motivations for participation were discovered. Second, the present study identified the correlation relationship characteristics among the 19 independent variables; among the 171 correlation coefficients, a total of 71 MFs' correlation coefficients reached a significant level. Third, our findings did show significant differences exist among the participants' motivation factors score; it was related to the 'Gender' and

'Supporting' two elements (reached  $p < .05$  and  $p < .01$  Levels), but no significant differences ( $p > .05$  level) exist in the 'Goal-settings' and 'Years in T&F competition' elements. Fourth, the findings from the present study confirmed that positive correlations are the characteristics of the relationship between the three psychological needs and the motivation factors score, and those traits are predictable.

The MRA results exposed that the satisfaction degrees on three basic psychological needs (Competence, Relatedness, and Autonomy) reached an 89% contribution rate. These findings extended the research literature on this topic. Specifically, many of these characteristics have not been deeply explored among the age 15-18 years, high school track and field athletes' participation motivations.

Likewise, according to the SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan et al., 1997), the results of the present study show those high school T&F athletes' participation motivations were more tended toward intrinsic motivation, and this type of motivation was their core motivation, and enable them to participate in T&F training and competitions continually (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan et al., 1997). Moreover, the findings from the present study were consistent with the recommendations from the self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan et al., 1997) and found that the participants' decision on whether or not to participate in T&F training continually and competitions was based on their intrinsic motivations, not the extrinsic motivations, and these motivations can be predicted effectively (Stellion & Sinclair, 2013; Zeng, 2018).

In summary, 1) regarding these high school T&F athletes' participation motivations characteristics, the Intrinsic factors and the Extrinsic factors appear to possess similar impact power on these high school T&F athletes' participation motivations; 2) although the impact powers of both Intrinsic motivations and Extrinsic motivations do not have significant differences, the ten Intrinsic motivations in the AYTFAPMHREQ (Zeng, 2019) are still rated as the core motivation motivations factor (see Table 2); 3) some motivation factors or reasons possess higher impact power than other factors, but some motivation factors or reasons possess less impact power than the other factors as well. The findings from the present study

are consistent with the findings of the previous studies (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Zeng, 2018; Zeng et al., 2019); and support what the previous studies described that all humans possess three psychological needs; the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Duricek & Cynarski, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Smith et al., 2006).

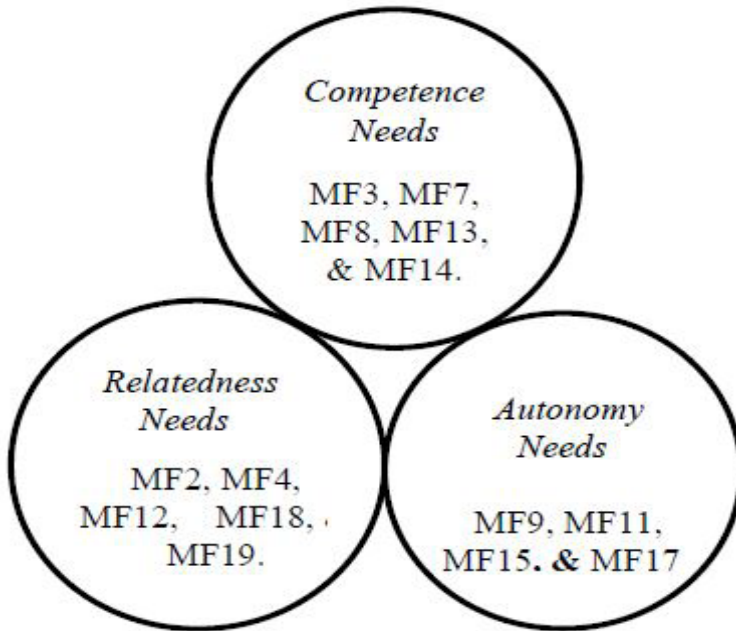
Additionally, the findings of the present study are consistent with the previous studies and provide support to what Deci and Ryan (2002) stated: the experience of Autonomy and Competence are both theoretically suggested to be necessary conditions for maintaining and enhancing the Intrinsic Motivation, and environmental such as conditions of practices and competitions that support feelings of Autonomy and Competence are expected to facilitate the intrinsic motivations. Based on the present findings, the high school T&F coaches, trainers, or administrators should fully diagnose and analyze their athletes' specific situations and carefully implement them accordingly. The participation motivations traits of these samples' youth T&F athletes are summarized and illustrated in Figure 1.

Regarding the hypotheses in the current study, some further interpretations were a) hypotheses 1 and 2 were not true because the findings revealed that female athletes possess significantly higher participation motivations than male athletes; the athletes who financing supported by parents possess significantly higher participation motivations than those athletes who financing supported by their school/team). b) The hypotheses 3 and 4 were true because in the 'Years in T&F competition' and the 'Goal-settings' elements, the findings did show no significant differences were found on the MFs score among the High-school T&F athletes. c) To the two research questions, by using the Exploration Factor Analysis and Multiple Regression Analysis techniques, the answers were: (1) the characteristics and relationships among the participants' participation motivations can be effectively identified (see Table 2 and 3), and (2) the participants' traits in their participation motivations, relationships among the three basic psychological needs could be identified and able to predict effectively.

These findings (Figure 1) were consistent with the point of view of youth athletes' motivations that need to be supported, and among the sources of support, the parents' support was rated as the highest

**Figure 1**

*Characteristics of Three Basic Psychological Needs of the Participants (N = 133)*



level (Chen et al., 2014; Geidne et al., 2013; Miguel & Machar, 2007; Stellion & Sinclair, 2013; Zeng, 2019; Zeng et al., 2019). Additionally, among the sources of satisfaction factors for motivating youth athletes to be involved in sports participation, family satisfaction was rated as one of the most important factors as well (Chen et al., 2014; Geidne et al., 2013; Miguel & Machar, 2007; Stellion & Sinclair, 2013; Zeng, 2019; Zeng et al., 2019).

The study also agrees with what those previous studies pointed out: building up healthy public policy in youth sports is very important for maintaining their participation motivations; various youth sports organizations should recognize and match up with the changes in health regulations (especially after our society experienced COVID-19), and then implement these regulations to different types of youth sports schools/teams because these public health policies possess positive impacts on fostering youth athletes' sport participation motivations.

Moreover, the follow-up test on the 2x2 (Gender x Supports) factorial MANOVA determined what motivation factors motivated

these high school T&F athletes to engage in their training and competitions. The findings discovered that 17 out of 19 comparisons showed significant differences within the 'Gender' element, and 11 out of 19 comparisons reached significant differences ( $p < .05$ ) level in the 'Supports' element (see Table 3 for details), here no need to re-describe. These findings imply that even if 28 out of 38 comparisons reached significance levels, it did not mean those 28 motivation factors play a much more important role in the participants' participation motivations. The other motivation factors can be ignored. That is, to better develop or improve the participants' participation motivations, the professionals/educators still need to continually reinforce the needs of competence, relatedness, and autonomy. That is, have the three basic psychological needs as a complete development process (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Miguel & Machar, 2007; Smith et al., 2006; Stellion & Sinclair, 2013; Zeng et al., 2018; Zeng et al., 2019).

On the other hand, besides specific differences between the present study and those previous studies, there are some similarities, such as using previous studies on youth volleyball and football (Zeng, 2018; Zeng et al., 2019). It is not hard to find out that those differences and similarities exist simultaneously. First, in the youth volleyball players' motivation study, the researcher indicated that the six highest factors that motivated the youth volleyball athletes engaged in their practices and competition were: 'Technical content and unique value;' 'Become a volleyball coach;' 'To meet friends;' 'To make new friends;' 'To establish prestige;' and 'For building my biography' (Zeng, 2018). Second, in the youth soccer players' participation motivation study, the researchers summarized that the top six factors were: 'Technical content and unique value;' 'To developing extraordinary skills;' 'To getting healthier;' 'For enjoyment and happiness;' 'For improving my biography;' and to improve my physical fitness (Zeng et al., 2019).

Furthermore, researchers in their studies also summarized that a) Enjoyment, having fun, and Passion for the sport was rated as the top three important motivation factors for the success of youth tennis players (Zeng, 2018). b) Factors like 'Improving performance level,' 'Keeping Fit,' and 'Keeping Socialized' were rated as the basic reasons for them to keep involved in sports (Zeng et al., 2018; Zeng et al., 2019). c) Feeling important and popular and earning rewards

were ranked as lower influence motivations (Zeng et al., 2018; Zeng et al., 2019). d) School/team atmosphere and good relationship with the coach were also ranked as lower important factors in players' motivations (Stellion & Sinclair, 2013; Zeng, 2018; Zeng et al., 2018; Zeng et al., 2019). e) Team atmosphere has a positive relationship with players' participation motivations, which means that the closer the team atmosphere, the higher the participation motivations (Naar, 2021; Smith et al., 2006; Zeng et al., 2018; Zeng et al., 2019).

Next, by comparing the findings on the top six motivation factors from the four different research projects (Note. using the grand mean scores only), the researchers found that Soccer MGrand = 4.40; Volleyball MGrand 4.25; Tennis MGrand = 4.23; and Martial arts MGrand = 3.82. Soccer ranked No. 1, Volleyball No. 2, Tennis No. 3, and Martial arts No. 4. This result may relate to the atmosphere of these sports/teams. Soccer and volleyball are team sports with a stronger team atmosphere; tennis and martial arts are not team sports. Even though sports categorized scholars said the sports of martial arts and track or field can create a team to compete by combining several individual athletes' competition results or by arranging their team members to take turns to compete against the other teams; however, teamwork atmospheres still are not as strong and natural as in those real team sports (e.g., soccer, volleyball, and basketball). Hence, people have to say that it is the reality and real situations in the sports domain that people must consider.

Moreover, researchers in their studies also summarized that a) Enjoyment, having fun, and Passion for the sport were rated as the top three important motivation factors for the success of youth tennis players (Zeng, 2018; Zeng et al., 2018; Zeng, 2019). b) 'Improving performance level,' 'Keeping fit,' and 'Keeping socializing' were rated as the basic reasons for them to keep involved in the sport (Stellion & Sinclair, 2013; Zeng, 2018; Zeng et al., 2018; Zeng, 2019). c) Feeling important and popular and earning rewards were ranked as lower influence motivations (Stellion & Sinclair, 2013; Zeng, 2018; Zeng et al., 2018; Zeng, 2019; Zeng, 2020). d) School/team atmosphere and having a good relationship with the coach were also ranked as the least important factors in players' motivations (Zeng, 2018; Zeng et al., 2018; Zeng, 2019). e) Team atmosphere has a positive relationship with players' participation motivations, which means that the

closer the team atmosphere, the higher the participation motivations (Stellion & Sinclair, 2013; Zeng, 2018; Zeng et al., 2018; Zeng, 2019; Zeng).

## **Conclusions**

Based on the discussions described above, the present study has come up with the following conclusions:

1) Based on the impact power from high to low, the following 14 motivation factors (MFs) were crucial and play more important roles in the participation motivation functions, these MFs are MF3 For a healthier body; MF7 To contest winners; MF8 To shape body; MF13 To establish prestige; MF14 To get recognition from the coach; MF2 Having fun not boredom; MF4 For enjoyment and happiness; MF12 To improve my reputation; MF18 To become a T&F coach; MF19 To satisfy the will of the family; MF11 To foster self-esteem; MF15 To reduce learning pressure; MF17 For developing a unique sport skill.

2) Significant positive correlation coefficients among the 19 MF variables can be identified.

3) The questionnaire's Intrinsic and Extrinsic motivation factors are important for establishing and maintaining high school T&F athletes' participation motivations; how to weigh and implement these 19 MFs will depend on the specific season and the athletes' motor skills developmental stage.

4) The findings of this study revealed the elements of 'Goal-setting' and 'Years in T&F competition' are not the determining factors, but 'Gender' and 'Supports' elements are, which means to maintain and improve the high school T&F athletes' participation motivations level, professionals/educators who were working in high school T&F teams need to make sure there are enough Support powers from parents and the school/team; especially the support from their parents.

5)The findings discovered that the Intrinsic factors possess a slightly higher impact/influence power than the Extrinsic factors. Such as MF2 for having fun not boredom, and MF8 to shape the body are crucial to forming these high school T&F athletes' participation motivations. High school T&F professionals/educators must analyze their athletes' situations and apply these research findings.

6) Exploratory Factor analysis and Multiple regressions techniques are effective ways to predict the T&F athletes' participation

motivations, and this way not only can use for helping the professionals and educators establish an effective way to reinforce and manage their T&F teams/programs but also can use for assisting their athletes maintaining and enhancing their participation motivations.

### **Application in Youth Sports and Recommendations**

First, by providing new evidence/findings on the psychological mechanism associated with high school T&F athletes' participation motivation factors, this study extends the literature on youth athletes' study. Using the Exploratory Factor analysis and Multiple regressions techniques can effectively predict the relationships between the three basic psychological needs (i.e., Competence, Relatedness, and Autonomy needs) and participants' key-related elements (e.g., 'Gender', 'Supports', 'Goal-settings', and 'Years in competition'), the results of this study supported that the three basic psychological needs are the essential factors contributing to youth T&F athletes' participation motivations, and can be predicted effectively. Second, these findings are lively and meaningful and can serve as examples for sports pedagogy, sports management, or physical education teacher education classes. Third, by applying these findings or research methodologies from this study, coaches and managers in youth T& F teams will be able to develop more suitable coaching strategies, enhance their athletes' participation motivations, and improve their management capability in this area.

### **Acknowledgment**

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## PEDAGOGY

# Dual Undergraduate Majors of Health and Physical Education: Do They Have the Same Passion for Both Subject Areas?

*Erin Sweeney and Jena Cottam*

### Abstract

*Little is known about the passion of health and physical education preservice teachers. Being passionate about your content areas is crucial to effective teaching, so do dual-enrolled students have the same passion for health and physical education? This study aimed to collect and compare data on undergraduate dual majors' passion for physical education and health education. An electronic survey was given to dual majors across the United States based on the passion scale created by Sigmundson et al. (2020). Responses from participants revealed that undergraduate dual majors have a significantly higher passion for physical education than health education. These findings show that more research needs to be done to eliminate this possible gap in passion so that students graduating from a health and physical education program are effective teachers in both content areas. Universities may want to determine if their preparatory programs are curating quality, passionate educators who are suited to teach both subject areas.*

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## Introduction

“Passion can be defined as a strong feeling toward a value or preference that motivates intentions and behaviors to express that certain value or preference” (Sigmundsson et al., 2020, p. 2). In education, passion is a crucial component for effective teaching and the longevity of teachers in the profession. Some research has been conducted regarding passion in current physical education teachers (Castillo et al., 2017), but there’s little about the preservice teachers of the future. Regarding health education or the dual health and physical education (HPE) degree, passion levels are unknown, and little to no research has been done about these topics.

Studies have found that physical education teachers show high passion for their subject and low levels of perceived burnout (Castillo et al., 2017). This could result from programs focusing mainly on physical education in their dual HPE programs. Also, in current teachers, it has been found that the more teaching experience a teacher has attained, the more passion they have regarding their profession (Prates et al., 2019). However, are those pursuing their degree in this field passionate about health and physical education? This study hopes to scope out data that can attest to the passion levels of undergraduate dual HPE students.

We need to look at undergraduate students because they are the building blocks for this profession. If they don’t have passion, then as universities, we are not developing quality, passionate teachers who can go into education systems. The COVID-19 pandemic faced teachers with the challenge of having their PE curriculums completely virtual, which has resulted in less fondness for the profession (González-Calvo et al., 2022). This is placing a much bigger significance on curating passionate teachers and preparing them for challenges in their future profession during their undergraduate degree. Overall, this study is looking to collect data on current levels of passion in the dual health and physical education programs, as there are minimal studies on this topic.

## Methods

### Participants

The participants of this study consisted of undergraduate students enrolled in a dual health and physical education degree program at their respective universities. The participants were over the age of 19 and of any sex/gender.

### Instrumentation

The passion scale created by Sigmundson et al. (2020) aims to quantify passion related to becoming proficient in an area or skill. Findings from Sigmundson et al. (2020) showed that the passion scale was found to be both reliable (intra-class correlation coefficients  $>.53$ ) and valid ( $\alpha=.86$ ). Using the passion scale, the questionnaire consisted of eight modified passion scale questions regarding physical education and eight modified passion scale question regarding health education. Participants were asked to rate their passion on a five-point scale ranging from “Not at all like me” (1) to “Very much like me” (5). Included with these Likert-scale questions, the questionnaire had four demographic questions.

### Procedure

Participants were recruited through an email invitation forwarded via their department chair. The email included a link to the survey along with information related to the study, including the rights of the participants and the ability to exclude themselves from the survey at any time. Demographic or identifying information was aggregated in reports to protect the participants' privacy. Subjects were asked to complete a closed-format survey through Qualtrics that assessed their passion for their dual major. After successfully completing the survey, participants were provided with a link to provide their information to enter a random drawing for a \$10 gift card. If a student answered at the beginning of the survey that they were a graduate student or not currently enrolled in both health education and physical education, they were immediately exited from the survey.

## Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. The level of significance was set at  $p < 0.05$ . Descriptive statistics were used to describe demographic variables and passion scale items. Because there was a small sample size, a Shapiro-Wilk test was performed and showed that the distribution of all variables departed significantly from normality ( $p$ -value  $< 0.01$ ). Therefore, non-parametric tests such as the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test were used to compare physical education and health education passion scales.

## Results

A total of 59 participants responded. Health and physical education undergraduate majors were asked for a few demographic details (Figures 1-4). The majority of respondents were freshmen (36%), from the Northeast (34%), and Caucasian (86%).

When looking at the results of the passion scale, all means for passion regarding physical education were higher than passion for health education (Table 1). A Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test reported that there was a significant difference in passion between health education and physical education ( $Z = -4.669, -2.706, p < .008$ ), with students having more passion for physical education in all areas of the passion scale (Table 2). The passion between health education and physical education did not vary by geographical region, gender, class standing, or ethnicity.

## Discussion

This is the first study to look at the passion of students who are concurrently majoring in health and physical education. This exploratory study found that passion among dual majors is significantly higher in the physical education area. This is a substantial finding because these majors will go on to be licensed to teach both health education and physical education, and we want them to excel in teaching both areas. However, we do not know the reasons behind the higher passion in physical education. This gap could be a result of preparation programs focusing on physical education more than health education, and therefore, students feel more prepared to teach physical education. Universities should examine their dual

programs to ensure students are given enough preparation courses in both areas of study.

Even though more freshmen took the survey, there was no difference in passion by class standing, so we cannot conclude that freshmen haven't had any health or other major courses yet. The lower passion for health education was evident in all class standings. The largest difference in passion was "I work hard enough to do well in my (health or physical) education courses." More research is needed to examine why dual majors do not put as much effort into their health courses as physical education courses.

The findings of this study once again raise the question of whether health education and physical education should be their own entities or should we continue to try to bridge the gap between the two areas? Are students who are interested in physical education just adding to the health education area to make themselves more marketable, but don't really want to teach that subject area?

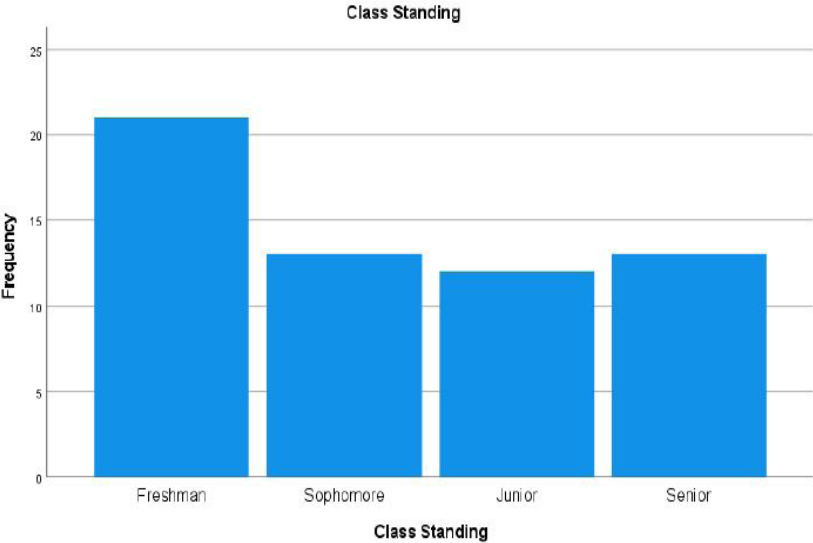
### **Future Implications**

While the findings of this study may leave us with more questions than answers, this is a good starting point for examining health and physical education professional preparation programs. Universities should advocate more for health education and the importance of this content area. Current health and physical education teachers should also be surveyed on the passion scale to see if experience in the field helps lessen the gap between passion for health education and physical education.

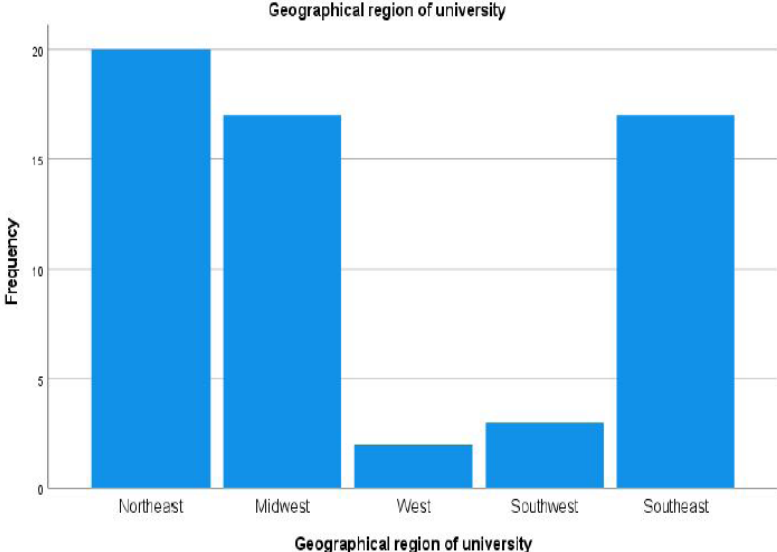
### **Limitations**

Due to snowball sampling (depending on department chairs to email the survey to their students), we had a lower response rate than expected. Therefore, this study cannot be generalized to all undergraduate dual majors. The survey was in a closed format; additional information was not elicited and may have kept students from providing important information related to their passion for physical education and health education.

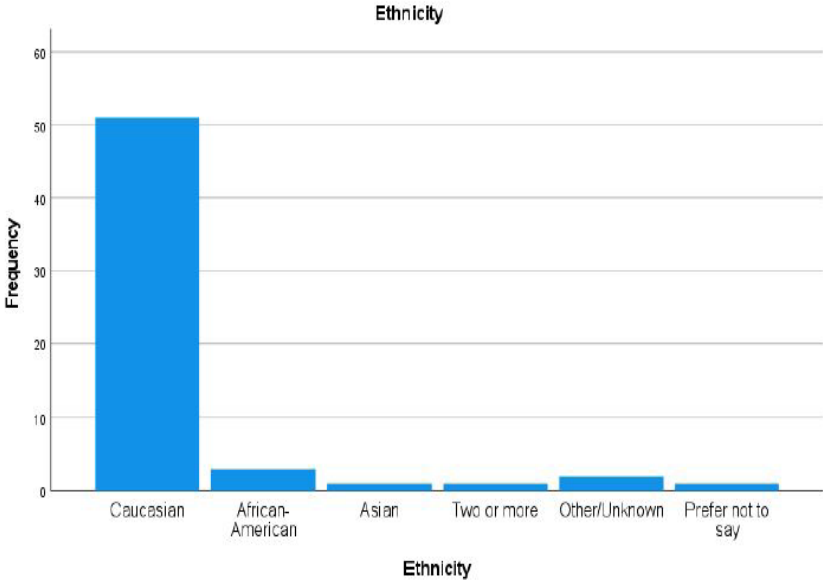
**Figure 1**  
*Demographics by Class*



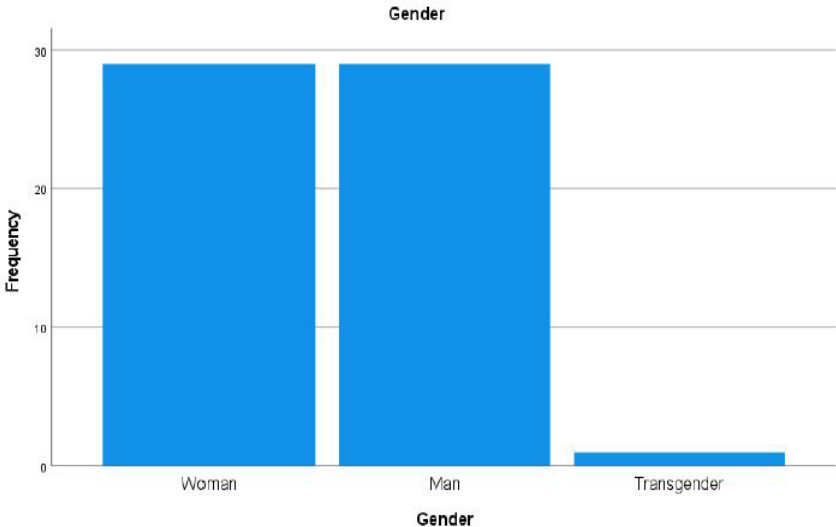
**Figure 2**  
*Demographics by Geographical Region*



**Figure 3**  
*Demographics by Ethnicity*



**Figure 4**  
*Demographics by Gender*



**Table 1**  
*Passion Scale Means*

	Physical Education Mean	Health Education Mean
I have an area of _____ education I am really passionate about	4.45	4.04
I would like to use a lot of time to become good in teaching _____ education	4.48	4.15
I think I could be an expert in _____ education	4.36	3.97
I have passion enough to become very good in teaching _____ education	4.71	4.25
I work hard enough to do well in my _____ education courses	4.84	4.35
I have a burning passion for _____ education	4.45	3.88
I spend a lot of time on _____ education projects/assignments	4.34	4.02
My passion for _____ education is important for me	4.71	4.13

**Table 2**  
*Comparison of Passion of Health Education and PE*

	I have an area of health education I am really passionate about	I would like to use a lot of time to become good in teaching physical education.	I think I could be an expert in physical education	I have passion enough to become very good in teaching physical education	I work hard enough to do well in my physical education courses	I have a burning passion for health education	I spend a lot of time on health education projects/assignments	My passion for health education is important for me.
Z	-2.706 <sup>b</sup>	-2.873 <sup>b</sup>	-2.651 <sup>b</sup>	-3.666 <sup>b</sup>	-4.669 <sup>b</sup>	-3.792 <sup>b</sup>	-2.876 <sup>b</sup>	-3.976 <sup>b</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.004	.008	<.001	<.001	<.001	.004	<.001

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## PEDAGOGY

# Competitive Situations in Physical Education: Is It Useful in Students' Everyday Lives?

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### Abstract

*Dealing with competitive situations is part of our everyday lives. Learning to participate constructively in competitive situations may, therefore, be important for citizens in a society. Although physical education may help in such an endeavor, competitive activities inspired by sports competition may not be the best solution. This article seeks to contribute to the discussion of competitive activities in PE. The aim of this study was to investigate how and why competitive activities in PE are presented and to explore students' experiences and actions in competitive situations within these competitive activities. The aim was to answer the following questions: How are competitive activities facilitated in PE? What are the teacher's intentions of facilitating competitive activities in certain ways? What are the students' experiences and actions in competitive situations within competitive activities? The creation of such knowledge through different cases creates the opportunity to discuss whether the competitive activities presented in this study were useful in students' everyday lives. The participants comprised 25 students (13-15 years old) and their teacher from one secondary school in Norway. The methods included a triangulation of 1. Students' written narratives were conducted after each of*

*the eight PE lessons. 2. Observations and video recordings of eight PE lessons (600 minutes). 3. Interviews of 13 students and their PE teacher. The data was inductively analyzed using thematic analysis. The results showed that PE activities adapted elements from sports competitions in different ways. For instance, the aim of winning was adapted into PE but not the opportunity to practice over time towards the competition. The aim of winning triumphed an educational outcome. The teacher intended to use the competitive aspect of winning to produce engagement and high physical exertion and to create positive experiences for the students. Due to students' different physical skills and, therefore, different opportunities to win, the teacher adapted competitive activities to make physical skills less relevant or the students' performance less visible. The students' experiences and actions showed that they were still aware of their performance in relation to other students and that replacing the importance of physical skills on performance with chance concerning success in the activity caused frustration, leading students to act out the frustration in the activity. The frustration resulted from a lack of possibility to improve one's performance. In addition, the findings indicated the difficulty of seeing whether students had positive experiences of an activity only by observation. The article discussed the opportunity to disconnect competition from sports from competitive situations in PE. Instead, competitive situations in PE could be connected to the relevance of students' everyday lives. As such, it was discussed the opportunity to start with an educational outcome such as helping students to handle competitive situations in their lives or learning about trustworthy actions relevant to the students' general growth in their lives. The article also discussed the difficulty and importance of evaluating whether the learning outcome and the competitive situations are moving students in an educative direction.*

## **Introduction**

Competition is part of our everyday lives. We compete to get into schools, get jobs, get a spouse, in sports, etc. Although we compete in our everyday lives, sports are particularly covered in the media, where sports and the media work together to increase earnings and popularity (Jeanrenaud & Kèsenne, 2006). As such, one may understand that physical education (PE) in Norway may be influenced by sports, especially by competition or 'looks-like-competition' from sports (Larsson & Karlefors, 2015; Ward & Quennerstedt, 2016;

Aasland et al., 2020; Aggerholm et al., 2018; Erdvik, 2020). However, PE competitions provide negative and positive student experiences (Hovdal et al., 2021a). Aggerholm et al. (2018) compared competition in PE with competition in sports and pointed out: 1. Students may not consent to competition in PE, as they do in sports. 2. In sports, one regulates competitions to achieve fair opportunities, whereas PE students are more heterogeneous in relation to skills and/or experiences in sports. These authors follow up by introducing four key arguments concerning competition in PE. The implications concerning teachers' actions in PE will be mentioned here: 1. We should AVOID competitive activities in physical education. 2. We should ASK students if they want to engage in competitive activities with others. 3. We should ADAPT competitive activities to secure fair opportunities for all. 4. We should ACCEPT negative experiences in competitive activities if the students get to reflect on their experiences. The possible consequences of teachers choosing one of these actions are the focus of this article. As one may see, the ASK and ACCEPT arguments indicate that teachers organize and implement competition similarly to sports. In contrast, the AVOID argument does not provide the opportunity to educate students on handling sports competitions in their everyday lives (Dewey, 2015). As such, the ADAPT argument may be more useful in PE. However, adapting competition into PE from sports may result in unexpected consequences concerning students' experiences and actions and is not necessarily educative and useful for the students in their everyday lives. One needs to consider what Dewey (2015) called educative experiences to become educative for the students. In short, by interpreting the work of Dewey (2015), we can see that humans live in a series of situations where humans and the environment reciprocally influence each other in a holistic way. Through the mutual influence of humans and the environment, an experience occurs. The subjective experience by humans may be reflected upon or not reflected upon. From these series of situations, there is a continuity in experience from one situation to the next. The world expands or contracts when humans go from one situation to the next. If the world expands, one may talk about growth. At this point, we need to include learning. Through these experiences in a series of situations, humans learn consciously or unconsciously a certain kind of behavior, and

this behavior strengthens over time and becomes a habit. Habits may form through blind desires or intellectual control. Forming habits out of intellectual control includes that students reflect upon possible consequences of one's actions related to a certain end-in-view. The term end-in-view 'keeps our attention on the ends of the task at hand and reminds us that ends are always provisional and changing throughout the course of educational experiences' (Hildreth, 2011, p. 34). Further, for experiences to become educative, one needs to discriminate growth. A continuous experience of lying and stealing through situations may lead to growth in the case of becoming better at such actions, but growth in such a direction would hinder growth in general. It will contract the world to humans. It will impede the kind of persons one may interact with and the quality of the interactions due to mistrust. As such, educative experiences should result in a general growth of experiences and effective dealing with future situations (Dewey, 2015).

A recent study showed that competitive situations within activities in PE may be used to educate students (Hovdal et al., 2021a). In such a way, the students' goals may still include winning in the competitive activities, influenced by the media presenting mostly winners and losers from sports. Still, the teacher, through the design of the activities, directs the students' attention to the learning within the activities and learning how to compete constructively in society. The term learning, in this sense, may be connected to educative experiences (Dewey, 2015). Learning may be considered as changing one's predisposition to act in further situations (Quennerstedt et al., 2011), and the student's predisposition to act in further competitive situations should result in general growth of experiences and by dealing effectively in future situations (Dewey, 2015). Further, it is the teacher's role as an educator to decide whether the student's predisposition to act in further situations is educative, and it is the teacher's role to facilitate competitive activities in a way that leads to educative experiences for the students (Dewey, 2015). In other words, the teacher shall educate the students and make the subject meaningful in the students' everyday lives (Beni et al., 2017; Dewey, 2015; ; Fletcher & Chròinìn, 2022; Hovdal et al., 2021a). For instance, the teacher helps students explore and reflect on their experiences in competitive situations in PE to provide a deeper understanding of

themselves in society and competitive situations. Further, the teachers are helping to broaden the students' repertoire to acting in the world, leading to general growth. This way of looking at PE competition differs from the ADAPT argument proposed by Aggerholm et al. (2018). The ADAPT argument includes the rationale that 'since competition is such a big part of Western capitalist societies, children should learn to compete well and in moderate forms' (Aggerholm et al., 2018, p. 12). Although these perspectives seem similar at first glance, Aggerholm et al. (2018) argue that emphasizing an aspect of participation other than winning (for instance, personal development) may conflict with formal requirements for contests, such as the principle of fair opportunity, which may result in pseudo-competition with no balanced opposition and no real attempt to win. In contrast, Hovdal et al. (2021a) do not seem to be interested in the requirements for competition per se, or competition in general for that matter. They are more interested in educating students on how to constructively deal with competitive situations in their everyday lives. For instance, Hovdal et al. (2021a) argued that in a series of competitive situations, it may be rational for students to give up or reduce their effort in situations they think they would lose to save energy if the aim is to win as much as possible. In contrast, it may not be rational in the long-term concerning the students' mindsets when facing obstacles later in life. Although not every obstacle may be relevant for students to overcome, learning important strategies and setting individual goals may lead students to persist and deal effectively when facing obstacles worthwhile to overcome. By creating a habit of investigating how to overcome obstacles and to persist in such endeavors, it may lead to further general growth for students. Creating habits of giving up or reducing effort when facing obstacles may hamper or be negative for a general growth (Dewey, 2015). As such, one may understand their alternative use of the term *competitive situations* instead of *competition* in PE. Changing the vocabulary (in a limited sense) in this way makes it difficult to merge these two articles meaningfully. The reason is that while Aggerholm et al. (2018) use the term *competition* in a traditional and *correct* way, Hovdal et al. (2021a) disconnect *competition* from sports and show another way of looking at situations where people compete in PE. The alternative way of looking at competitive situations in PE was

based on the use of handling competitive situations in peoples' everyday lives—not just in sports like competitions.

One may look at the above-mentioned differences as semantic or a philosophical discussion. Still, the point here is similar to (but not the same as) when Rorty (1989) shows us another way of looking at the world. Instead of participating in philosophical discussions concerning what is true knowledge from a positivist, phenomenology, or constructionism perspective, Rorty seems to argue that such philosophical perspectives, with their tools to investigate the world, are different vocabularies that help us to do different things in the world. None of the vocabulary with their tools is better for describing the world as it is, but they influence how we conduct our investigations. As such, the tools one chooses must be based on what one wants to achieve (Rorty, 1989). In the case of competition as a tool in PE, the question would not become whether the tool is useful but to what end-in-view the tool should serve. As such, one may take a starting point in what happens in everyday real-life competitions in PE instead of taking a starting point in the existing ways of looking at competition in PE. In this way, one can show other ways of looking at competition in PE. A way that considers the usefulness of competition in PE in students' everyday lives (being educative). Therefore, it may be useful to investigate such situations in terms of the use by Hovdal et al. (2021a) of competitive situations and see how such situations may be relevant to the students' everyday lives. The present article will, therefore, follow up on the research by Hovdal et al. (2021a).

Hovdal et al. (2021a) investigated two different competitive activities in PE, showing one activity where the teacher focused on social comparison and winning and another activity where the teacher focused on learning and improvement. The focus on social comparison led to a high effort if the students did not know whether they would win, a reduced effort if they knew they would win, or giving up if they knew they would lose. The focus on learning and improvement led to high student effort because the students would see whether they improved and if their training had worked (Hovdal et al., 2021a). While one cannot generalize from these findings, they indicated the possible consequences of different ways of facilitating competitive activities in PE. Further, Hovdal et al. (2021a) focused

on competitive activities in general by separating the focus on winning and the focus on learning. They did not differentiate further between different ways of facilitating competitive activities. The present study identified different competitive activities in one class from a wider research project and described competitive situations within the activity. Further, students were interviewed about these situations to analyze the possible consequences of these competitive situations. While Hovdal et al. (2021a) emphasized that students had both positive and negative experiences of competitions, they argued that it was not just about the activity but also about how it was facilitated. As such, the present study aimed to identify different kinds of competitive activities, investigate the students' actions and mainly negative experiences of competitive situations within these activities, and explore whether such situations were educative for the students. Doing such research in a meaningful sense would, therefore, need a detailed description of the competitive situations and to include both the teacher's and students' perspectives in the activities. The questions sought to be answered were:

- How are competitive activities facilitated in PE?
- What are the teacher's intentions of facilitating competitive activities in certain ways?
- What are the students' experiences and actions in competitive situations within competitive activities?

The aim of this study was, therefore, to investigate how and why competitive activities in PE were presented and to explore students' experiences and actions from these competitive activities. The creation of such knowledge allows the opportunity to discuss whether the competitive activities presented in this study were useful in students' everyday lives.

## **Method**

The present study formed part of a larger research project investigating experiences and learning in PE. The project included written narratives and observations combined with video recordings and interviews. The study took a starting point in actual situations in PE, as proposed by Dewey (1938): "Any problem of scientific inquiry that does not grow out of actual (or "practical") social conditions is facti-

tious; it is arbitrarily set by the inquirer instead of being objectively produced and controlled” (p. 499). Data relevant to competitive activities were extracted and came from the narratives, observations, video recordings, and interviews. The data were further analyzed and triangulated. The triangulation of the methods (Abdalla et al., 2018) was based on philosophical pragmatism and pragmatist methodology (Allmark & Machaczek, 2018; Feilzer, 2010; Morgan, 2007; Rorty, 1982). In philosophical pragmatism, one is interested in investigating human needs and addressing those needs (Rorty, 1982). In the present study, the investigation of human needs came because of the students’ experiences (mentioned in narratives conducted after each PE lesson) of competitive activities and the observations of the students’ actions in such activities. To investigate students’ thinking in specific situations, students were interviewed about video clips of competitive PE situations, similar to stimulated recall interviews (Aarskog et al., 2019; Dempsey, 2010). The students were chosen to be interviewed based on their actions from observations and their experiences mentioned in the narratives concerning the competitive activities.

## **Participants**

The data creation period started at the beginning of the students’ ninth grade and was completed at the end of their ninth grade. The participants came from one secondary class in the south of Norway. There were 25 students (13 girls and 12 boys), and their male PE teacher, who was also the main teacher for the class, participated in the study.

## **Ethical Considerations**

The students, teacher, and school principal were informed about the study verbally and in writing, and the students’ guardians were notified in writing. The teacher, students, and the students’ guardians gave their written consent to the present study. The study was approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD-58504)

## **Data Creation**

The data consisted of observation and video recordings of eight PE lessons (600 minutes), written narratives conducted at the end of each PE lesson (25 students), and interviews of 13 students and

their teacher. The students' narratives included their most positive and negative experiences from (all, not just competitive) situations in the finished PE lesson, what happened in the situations, and why they found the mentioned situations negative or positive. Different competitive situations were extracted in the observation and video recording part of the study. In the interviews of the students, the students were interviewed about these competitive situations based on video clips of the situations (e.g., their experiences, actions, and what they had learned), and the interview of the teacher concerning the intentions of choosing activities and further context of the situations. The interest in investigating different competitive activities arose from the students' narratives, where some competitive activities were experienced as frustrating or boring, in addition to the student's observed behavior in such activities. Although these students' experiences of such competitive activities were of particular interest, other students in these activities were also interviewed to shed light on some complexity of the situations.

## **Data Analysis**

To take a starting point in the social condition of competitive situations in PE, the narratives, the transcription of the video clips, and the interviews were inductively thematically analyzed using the six basic steps by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2019). Familiarizing with the data included reading observation notes and students' narratives and watching video recordings to identify competitive situations. Competitive situations were coded (initial codes), and themes were searched for (finding similarities of competitive situations). These themes were reviewed, and new more appropriate names of the themes were selected (Table 1). The last step, producing the report, was not conducted in this analysis phase. The transcription of the interviews with the students (and teacher) was analyzed in similar ways but within different kinds of competitive situations. These overall analyses were used in the production of the report. Due to relevance and having space to add some complexity of competitive situations, only two competitive activities will be presented in Table 1. Table 1 shows the results of the analyses in these two activities. Due to the complexity and amount of data produced in the study, the students' actions will only be presented in the results section.

## **Strengths and Limitations of the Study**

An important strength of the study was the investigation of the students' real-world setting of PE lessons, and the triangulation between the narratives, observations and video recordings, and the interviews in the study. However, one important limitation was that the study could not investigate the students' learning. The study only investigated students' actions in particular situations, and the students' expressed learning from the situations. To explore students' learning, one must observe a change in students' thoughts and/or actions in further situations (Dewey, 2015; Hovdal et al., 2021b).

## **Results**

This study aimed to investigate how and why competitive activities in PE are presented and to explore students' experiences and actions in competitive situations within these competitive activities. Based on the triangulation of the students' written narratives, the students' and teacher's interviews, observations, and video recordings, the results will be presented under two headlines: 1. Adapting competition in PE to produce engagement and reduce students' negative experiences due to visibility. 2. Adapting competition in PE to produce positive experiences and reduce the importance of physical skills on performance. The aim of the study will be answered through these two headlines. For instance, describing how the competitive activities were facilitated, the teacher's intentions for adapting competitive aspects from sports into competitive activities in PE, and students' experiences and actions in competitive situations. The first presented competitive activity will mainly focus on what happened before the activity started, what the activity was, and the students' narratives and interviews afterward. The second presented activity will mainly focus on the activity itself and one student's actions, experiences, and learning in and from the activity.

### **Adapting Competition in PE to Produce Engagement and to Reduce Students' Negative Experiences Due to Visibility**

Under this headline, the focus will be on the pursuit racing activity and will start by describing the teacher's intention for the activity. The teacher's intention was to produce engagement among

**Table 1***Creation of Sub-themes and Main Themes from the Data Creation Stages*

Data from each data creation stage	Sub themes	Main themes
<p><b>Observation/video recordings/field notes:</b> Pursuit racing. Students are divided into teams and run laps. If a team is caught up by another team, they are out of the contest (see result section)</p> <p><b>Written narratives:</b> I did not like the pursuit race thing, that thing where we ran after each other and tried to catch each other. Because it is boring to be the person that is caught, and the whole team becomes disappointed. You feel really bad, even though it was not me who got caught today</p> <p><b>Interview students:</b> It is like I wrote [in the narrative after the PE lesson], even if it is a team competition when one is running... the goal is to catch up with each other, and one feels bad when it is oneself that is disappointing the whole team... that is not fun (Cassandra)</p> <p><b>Written narratives:</b> I liked it when we were running in a square and exchanged who was running. I like to run</p> <p><b>Interview students:</b> I get a highly competitive instinct on that activity. It is a lot of movement in a short time. It is really intervals, I feel</p> <p><b>Interview teacher:</b> It creates a lot of engagement. When the activity is organized as it is, I experience that it is less visual who is slower than the rest, kind of. But, of course, you cannot hide that, the slowest student in class is still the slowest. It is not like that, however. It has worked surprisingly well. I think it has been a good activity</p>	<p>Losing leads to elimination</p> <p>Negative experience of competitive activity</p> <p>Positive experience of competitive activity</p> <p>Creating engagement</p> <p>Reduce the negative impact</p>	<p>Adapting competition in PE to produce engagement and to reduce students' negative experiences due to visibility</p>
<p><b>Observation/video recordings/field notes:</b> Rock, scissors, paper. Students are divided into two teams. One student on each team jumps with their legs together from one ring on the floor to the next. When the student from each team meets an opposing student, they perform rock, scissors, paper, and the loser must go back to his/her team and the winner continues (see result section)</p> <p><b>Written narratives:</b> When we were jumping in those rings, I thought it was boring since we only jumped into some rings and performed rock, scissors, paper</p> <p><b>Interview students:</b> I would prefer not to have rock, scissors, paper. Because it was not fun. But I am still participating in the game</p> <p><b>Written narratives:</b> Jumping in the rings. It was fun and something new</p> <p><b>Interview students:</b> Nobody commented, and I managed to do it</p> <p><b>Interview teacher:</b> [It is a] game, competition, fun. Just a fun activity. You have a 50% chance of winning, everyone can win, regardless of who you are. The weakest may win against the strongest. It is 50/50. As such, it is not always the physical part that decides [who wins]</p>	<p>Losing does not lead to elimination</p> <p>Negative experience of competitive activity</p> <p>Positive experience of competitive activity</p> <p>Having fun</p> <p>Arbitrary winners</p>	<p>Adapting competition in PE to produce positive experiences and to reduce the importance of physical skills on performance</p>

the students through competition, thereby influencing students to produce high physical exertion in the running activity. The teacher was aware of the possible negative impact of competition on some of the students' experiences. He, therefore, wanted to reduce the possibility of these negative experiences by facilitating the competitive

activity in a way that made it less visual who was the fastest or slowest runner. The researcher noted during the observation that every student performed high physical exertion during the activity. This observation contrasted with other competitive activities in the PE lessons where students might reduce physical exertion or give up during competitive activities. The students and the teacher called this activity 'pursuit racing.'

### **Pursuit Racing**

The activity consists of four teams (3-4 students on each team) starting at each of the four cones arranged as a quadratic field with approximately 20 meters between each cone. One student from each team starts to run and tries to tap the students from the other teams to eliminate these students and their teams from the contest. After one lap, the students exchange with another student on their team. The competition is finished when there is only one team remaining.

The PE lesson started with the students arranged at the grandstand while the teacher told them about the day's activities and other information. One of the students raised his hand to ask whether they could have the pursuit racing in the current lesson. Another student replied, "Yes," and the teacher responded with, "It is great fun," and got the immediate response from the previous student, "Yes, it is." The teacher responded with, "So we might include this activity after a while." Later in the PE lesson, the pursuit racing activity was included. The students were divided into teams of three or four students, and a student mentioned that they needed one more boy on their team, where the teacher responded, "No, you don't need that," and then explained how and where to make an exchange on the teams. The activity was finished before only one team remained, making no clear winners in the activity.

From the observer's perspective (researcher), the pursuit of racing provided both high physical exertion (the running in the activity) and enjoyment of the activity (students initiated the activity and the positive response before the activity). However, from the students' narratives written at the end of each PE lesson, several students mentioned pursuit racing as the activity they liked the least in the PE lesson. In the interviews, two students said:

It is like I wrote [in the narrative after the PE lesson], even if it is a team competition when one is running... the goal is to catch up with each other, and one feels bad when it is oneself that is disappointing the whole team... that is not fun. (Cassandra)

That activity, in particular, is something I do not like that much. Because one is on a team, but if you cannot do it, or if someone catches up with you, then it is your fault. I think it is very stupid because it gets noticed if it happens again and again. No, I. Even though I am not always the reason that we get eliminated, it is kind of, no, I don't know. (Silje)

These two students had negative experiences with the competition because of their possible contribution to the team's elimination from the activity. Regarding learning, Cassandra answered that she "practiced running, of course, and how to make exchanges fast. I don't think I learned anything else."

### **Adapting Competition in PE to Produce Positive Experiences and to Reduce the Importance of Physical Skills on Performance**

These competitive activities were identified through the arbitrary results of the students' actions on their success in the activity. There was no point in practicing the activity, as it would not improve the students' performance. In the interview, the teacher said the "jumping followed by rock, scissors, paper" was used for "play, competition, fun, just a fun activity."

#### **Jumping, Followed by Rock, Scissors, Paper**

The students are grouped into two teams. The activity consists of 10 rings in a half circle, where each team is placed in front of each side of the beginning half circle. The first student of each team jumps with legs together in the rings until they meet their opponent (student on the other team). The students then do rock, scissors, paper, and the winner is allowed to continue jumping to the following rings, while the loser must leave the ring and go back in the line for her/his team. If a student reaches the last ring, their team receives one point.

From the observer's perspective on the activity and the student's body language (e.g., smiling, throwing arms in the air), students could enjoy themselves and get frustrated. A few minutes into the activity, some students might take a longer time to leave the ring after losing the rock, scissors, paper match, pushing their opponents out of the way, and cheating in rock, scissors, paper (which resulted in the teacher demanding a replay). In other words, some students got a bit frustrated with the activity. An example of a student who got frustrated and was later interviewed about the activity will be presented below.

Joachim started the activity on his team and lost his first round of rock, scissors, and paper. The situation lasted eight seconds, and he had to wait 1 minute and 23 seconds until his next turn. Joachim lost his four first rounds. In his fifth round, he lost again and threw out his arms downwards, seemingly frustrated (3 minutes and 53 seconds into the activity). In his sixth round, Joachim landed in the same ring as his opponent and pushed his opponent, to which the teacher responded, "Joachim, calm down." Joachim wins this and the next round, seemingly a bit frustrated and irritated because he pushes his opponents before they can leave the ring. The last opponent Joachim needed to win against to score a point for his team chose not to start her round and let Joachim score a point. Joachim is the only one who cheers. Joachim lost his first match in the next round and pushed the student, who almost fell to the ground. This student claps Joachim's back and goes back to his team. The competitive activity lasted 8 minutes, and Joachim's team won.

Although some students expressed positive experiences of the rock, scissors, and paper activity in their narrative and interview, Joachim said he liked this activity the least in the PE lesson because it was boring. During the video clip of these situations, Joachim said, "I lost all the time," and when he scored a point, he laughed and said, "I cheered, finally I succeeded." He also said in the interview that he got frustrated when he could not win. When asked what he did not like about the activity, he said, "It is luck, it is luck. But it [the activity] was well made. I guess other [students] liked the activity." Joachim said that he learned that he had to try harder in the competition. When asked how, he answered: "You can't do that [try harder] in rock, scissors, paper, it is just the same thing... It is easier

in, for example football, to try harder. Because you can run and work harder.” As such, the activity did not bore the student in the sense of reduced activation of the nervous system; rather, it seemed to heighten the activation of the nervous system by producing frustration for the student. As such, the term “boring” seemed to express negative experiences of/in the activity.

The competitive activity with “jumping followed by rock, scissors, paper” provided arbitrary success and positive experiences (from narratives) but also frustration and cheating. The activity could become frustrating because it did not help to “try harder.”

## Discussion

ADAPTING competition from sports to physical education may not necessarily provide the educational end-in-view we want for the students. The schools in Norway shall provide a foundation for students to understand themselves, others, and the world and make good choices in life (Udir, 2019b). In contrast, one aim of sports is to win (Aggerholm et al., 2018). Based on the presented competitive activities in the result section, the teacher was more concerned about winning to motivate students instead of helping students understand themselves, others, and the world and make good choices in life. However, the teacher considered The Norwegian PE curriculum, which states that “PE is a central subject to stimulate a lifelong enjoyment of movement and a physically active lifestyle based on one’s own capabilities” (Udir, 2019a, p. 2a). The teacher seemed to use competition and the aim of winning to motivate students, and, at the same time, adapting the competitive activities in a way, to create enjoyment and positive experiences and reducing negative experiences for the students. Thus, combining part of the PE curriculum and part of the competition aims to include the best of two worlds. However, the teacher’s good intentions may work on paper but still provide negative experiences for several students. With respect to these activities being relevant to the students’ everyday lives, facing obstacles or losing in activities in PE and not being able to do anything about it, may create habits of accepting or not trying to do anything about failure. In other words, it might influence the students towards a fixed mindset or a habit of giving up when facing obstacles (Dewey, 2015; Dweck, 2019). Although there is no certainty here, the teacher’s role as an educator is, according to Dewey (2015), to

“be on the alert to see what attitudes and habitual tendencies are being created. In this direction he must, if he is an educator, be able to judge what attitudes are actually conducive to continued growth and what are detrimental” (p. 39).

As such, facilitating situations where practice or effort is of no use may be detrimental to students’ continued growth (unless there are some explicit educational reasons for doing it). Perhaps it is better to disconnect competition from sports entirely from competitive situations in PE due to the difficulty of bringing the best of two worlds and being useful in students’ everyday lives. The following discussion concerns the AVOID, ASK, ACCEPT, and ADAPT arguments presented by Aggerholm et al. (2018) and whether there are other ways of looking at competitive activities in PE disconnected from sports. Thereafter, the discussion includes what kind of aim and vocabulary we need in PE to disconnect competitive activities in PE from sports. The shift of vocabulary is exemplified by discussing the concept of trust.

### **AVOID, ASK, ACCEPT, ADAPT, or...**

At first glance, it is better to practice competition in PE as one does in sports instead of trying to provide both the aim of winning and reducing the negative effects in terms of experiences. Although presenting competition in PE as one does in sports may provide negative experiences for several students, it would at least be useful to increase one’s effort and to practice producing better performance. Hence, the ACCEPT argument by Aggerholm et al. (2018) may be the most beneficial in PE. However, accepting negative experiences does not open up further growth for the students if they avoid competitive situations in their everyday lives because they find out that competition is not something for them. As such, one could AVOID competition altogether in PE. However, avoiding competition in PE is not educative for students if competitive situations exist in the world. It does not provide a foundation for students to understand themselves, others, and the world and make good choices in life (Udir, 2019b). As mentioned in the introduction, we need to compete in several areas in our everyday lives. The AVOID argument would, therefore, not be very educative for the students. In a similar way, the ASK argument would not be very educative for the students because they could just say no and AVOID competitive activities. As

such, none of the arguments—AVOID, ASK, ACCEPT, or ADAPT if adapted as in this study—would be educational for the students. Instead, we need to do something else. By reading the article of Hovdal et al. (2021a) and including the work by Dewey (2015), one may be inspired to find alternative ways of using competitive activities in PE, so it becomes educative and relevant to students' everyday lives.

### **Choosing Learning Outcomes in Competitive Activities**

Redelius et al. (2015) indicated the importance of expressing the learning outcome to the students so that students perceive PE as a subject for learning. In the running pursuit activity, it was one student who suggested the activity. One may problematize whether it is only the loudest students or the students who are confident enough to suggest activities that should decide what happens in the PE lessons (Aarskog et al., 2022; Brock et al., 2009). Nevertheless, the teacher letting some students decide the activity makes it difficult to have a clear learning outcome in front of the activity. It may further be difficult for teachers to evaluate whether their teaching is working (Hattie, 2012) since there is no educational aim to evaluate the students' actions and reflections. Further, evaluating PE lessons may be difficult because, as seen in the present study, both the teacher and researcher misinterpreted the running pursuit activity, thinking the students found the activity more enjoyable than the students did. Such findings indicate the need to include students' expressed experiences in addition to students' behavior in activities. For instance, teachers may get information from more students than in this study through variations of the think-pair-share strategy (Cooper et al., 2021; Fernandez-Rio et al., 2017).

### **Learning About Trust Through Competitive Situations**

One of the end-in-view of competitive situations in PE may be to learn how to face obstacles in competitive situations that are useful in students' everyday lives (Hovdal et al., 2021a). Another end-in-view in competitive situations in PE may be to act constructively that are also useful in students' everyday lives. As such, the concept of trust may be useful —while avoiding the concept of fair play in sports (Fretland et al., 2020; Simon, 2018).

Validated trust may, for instance, help us to get better relationships, live better lives, and fulfill our goals in life (de Fine Licht & Brülde, 2021). Introducing the concept of trust in PE may, therefore, help students to act and reflect upon trustworthy actions by themselves and others. Thus, providing a foundation for students to understand oneself, others, and the world, and to make good choices in life (Udir, 2019b). Trust has been philosophically discussed elsewhere (Nickel, 2017). The importance of trust in present article includes trustworthy actions which may be achieved through continuous situations over time (e.g., Dewey, 2015). Through continuous situations, trust may be stronger, weaker, or lead to mistrust through the following narrative: “Watch what I do as I watch what you do as part of what we are doing to achieve common goals in shared futures” (Weigert, 2011, p. 326). Such a way of looking at trust may be useful in competitive situations in PE. For instance, the educational aim of competitive activities in PE may be learning to handle competitive situations in the students’ everyday lives. However, when students are acting out their frustration or cheat in activities, then an educational aim of learning about trust may be put in the foreground.

As we saw in the present study’s rock, scissor, and paper activity, students could cheat and violate the rules. The consequences of such actions seemed to be a longer period of waiting due to retaking on rock, scissors, and paper and that a student chose not to start her round due to the aggressive behavior. In other words, cheating and violating the rules ruined the activity for other students. The teacher, therefore, corrected the students’ behavior in accordance with the expected behavior of the activity. However, such actions do not educate the students about the possible long-term consequences. As such, the question at stake is not how to get students to follow the rules in a compliant way, but to see what attitudes are being created and whether these attitudes are conducive to continued growth (Dewey, 2015). The teacher could use the situations with cheating and violating the rules to help students learn about trust. For instance, how one should act in competitive situations and how to react when other people are cheating or misbehaving in competitive situations. Further, one may reflect on whether one should trust people who cheat in competitive or other stressful situations and the possible consequences of being known as a person who cheats and

whom other people cannot trust. If a person is known for cheating, it may deprive the person of interacting and broaden one's experiences with people who avoid persons who are considered unreliable (Dewey, 2015; Hovdal, 2022). Opposite, trustworthy students should avoid untrustworthy students due to the possibility of reduced quality of relationships and lives and the less possibility of fulfilling goals in life (de Fine Licht & Brülde, 2021). Students should avoid going in a direction that may hamper general growth (Dewey, 2015). Helping students to see the bigger picture concerning possible long-term consequences of being considered trustworthy or untrustworthy, may help direct students' actions in a trustworthy direction (Dewey, 2015; Fujita, 2008). To help students become trustworthy through competitive situations in PE, the teacher could facilitate a discussion concerning the consequences of being considered trustworthy or untrustworthy and what kind of actions might be considered trustworthy. For instance: 1. If someone cheats in stressful situations such as competitive situations in PE, can one trust the same student not to cheat in other areas when facing stressful situations? 2. If I cheat, would others believe that I will do what I say if I am in a stressful situation? 3. What may be the short- and long-term consequences of being considered a person who cheats? 4. What kind of actions in competitive situations are suitable to be considered trustworthy? 5. How would it influence my life, being around people I can or cannot trust?

## **Conclusion**

We compete in our everyday lives, and physical education may be helpful to do so in an educative way. The results showed that PE activities adapted elements from sports competitions in different ways. For instance, the aim of winning was adapted into PE but not the opportunity to practice over time towards the competition. The aim of winning triumphed an educational outcome. The teacher intended to use the competitive aspect of winning to produce engagement and high physical exertion and create positive student experiences. Due to students' different physical skills and, therefore, different opportunities to win, the teacher adapted competitive activities in a way that made physical skills less relevant or the performance less visible. The students' experiences and actions showed that students were still aware of their performance in relation to other students, and

that replacing the importance of physical skills on performance with chance concerning success in the activity caused frustration, which led students to act out the frustration in the activity. The frustration resulted from a lack of possibility to improve one's performance. In addition, the findings indicated the difficulty of seeing whether students had positive experiences of an activity only by observation. It was suggested that competition adapted from sports be disconnected from competitive situations in PE. Instead, teachers may focus on how competitive situations in PE may be useful in students' everyday lives. It was discussed that teachers preferably select the competitive activities because a clear learning outcome should lead them, and teachers need to include ways of getting students' experiences of the activities in addition to observation when evaluating whether their teaching is working. One learning outcome or end-in-view in competitive situations may be to learn how to face obstacles in competitive situations, which are useful in students' everyday lives. Another end-in-view may be to help students learn about trustworthy actions in competitive and stressful situations. Thus, helping students to understand themselves, others, and the world and to make good choices in life (Udir, 2019b).

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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## PEDAGOGY

# Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) Majors' Perceptions of Participating in a Semester-Long High School PE Practicum

*David Barney, Brandon Weekes, Karina Beus, and Jack Stalnaker*

### Abstract

*Many courses Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) majors take are all considered valuable and important to the PETE majors before entering the profession of teaching physical education (PE). The practicum course is probably the most important for PETE majors. The practicum course typically consists of an elementary, middle school, and high school teaching experience. This study aimed to investigate PETE majors' perceptions of teaching before (pre) and after (post) they participated in a high school PE practicum. For this study, 14 senior PETE majors were interviewed before and after participating in their high school PE practicum. It was generally found that before participating in the practicum, the PETE majors were concerned about classroom management issues and dealing with the unknown before teaching. After the practicum, the students felt that being prepared with the lessons was important for their success, and the PETE students weren't anxious regarding the student teaching ex-*

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*perience. These findings affirm the practicum's importance in the PETE majors' preparation to teach PE.*

## **Introduction**

A physical education teacher education (PETE) major's preparation includes classes covering Introduction to Physical Education, Physiology, Motor Learning, and Methods of Teaching PE in elementary and secondary PE. The Method of Teaching PE course has a practicum experience, usually in elementary, middle, and high school PE. The practicum experiences are provided to help students better understand teaching and their role as professional teachers working with students (Barney & Christenson, 2009).

The practicum can be considered an early field experience. The early field experience is defined as an off-campus teaching episode for preservice teachers, which involves working in the school environment with groups of students. These experiences occur prior to the final student teaching experience (Dodds, 1989). The practicum is the first experience the PETE majors have with 'real students' (Barney & Pleban, 2006). Paese (1989) has stated that the PE practicum experience provides PETE majors with seven advantages. They are (a) preservice teachers can make better career choices, (b) field experiences can bridge the gap between theory and practice, (c) courses within the curriculum become more meaningful, (d) preservice teachers gain a better understanding of children, (e) preservice teachers gain a better understanding of their responsibilities as teachers, (f) preservice teachers gain a better understanding of their ability to teach children and adolescents and have the opportunity to develop teaching skills, and (g) preservice teachers realize that there is more to teaching than telling children what to do.

When it comes to practicum placements, university professors must consider the schools and PE classrooms in which the PETE student is being placed. The school and the PE classrooms need to align with what the PETE faculty teaches and exposes their students to at the university. Curtner-Smith (1996) offers six suggestions for practicum students. They are (a) take place at schools in which PETE programmatic messages are reinforced, (b) are closely supervised by PETE faculty and trained quality PE teachers, (c) are linked tightly with on-campus methods courses, (d) focus on specific teaching

skills derived from teacher effectiveness research, and (e) are presented in a manner such that the PETE majors view the messages as practical and useful.

From the literature that the PE practicum experience has been studied, for example, Sofo and Curtner-Smith (2010) studied the effects of the PE practicum on the PETE major's value orientation. Briefly, value orientation refers to beliefs of educational priorities from which teachers engage in content selection, teaching methods adoption, learning goal conceptualization, and assessment decisions at both philosophical and implemental levels (Ennis, 1992). For this study, the participants in their practicum taught 10 lessons to middle school students. The participants from this study had coaching experience. Thus, the data sources from this study indicated that the value orientations of the participants with coaching experience were not affected by their practicum experience, not receiving beneficial experiences teaching in the schools.

A second study investigated the team of PETE majors teaching in a junior high PE early field experience (Barney & Christenson, 2009). For this study, 26 PETE majors participated in team teaching with a classmate, observing two lessons from the classroom teacher and two lessons in the school with themselves and their classmates. At the conclusion of this early field experience, the participants were interviewed about their experiences in school. From the interviews, the participants stated the importance of using a loud gym voice for the purpose of instructing students, the importance of planning with an emphasis on overplanning or having a backup plan, and using music in their lesson and how it impacted the activities they had the students participate in, with the plans of implementing music in their own teaching for increased student movement and enjoyment.

Another study dealing with PETE majors' experiences during a practicum investigated PETE majors' perceptions before and after they participated in their elementary PE practicum (Barney & Pleban, 2006). For this study, 20 PETE majors (11 males and nine females) participated in this study. Interview themes in both the before and after interviews were classroom management, classroom preparedness, specific to lesson planning, student learning, and making the PE class enjoyable. These studies highlight the importance of students having "real-world" experiences before undertaking the

student teaching experience. Thus, this study aimed to investigate PETE majors' perceptions of teaching before (pre) and after (post) they participated in a high school PE practicum.

## **Methods**

### **Participants and Context**

For this study, 14 senior PETE majors voluntarily participated in this study. The 14 PETE majors were enrolled in a fall semester high school PE practicum class required for graduation. The PETE majors' ages ranged from 20 to 28 years. The PETE majors were seniors in academic standing. The PETE majors self-identified their ethnicity as white, Hispanic, and Polynesian. Nine PETE majors were on track to student teach the following winter semester. The other five PETE majors would fulfill their student teaching requirements the following academic year. Before participating in this high school PE practicum, the PETE majors had participated in the elementary and middle school practicums.

The PETE majors were placed with four veteran high school female PE teachers in schools close to the university. The teaching experience of the high school PE teachers ranged from five to 30 years. The roles of the high school PE teachers were to supervise and give feedback after the PETE majors' lesson. The PETE majors were placed in groups of three or four students. Each student had the opportunity to teach four or five lessons by themselves. When one student was teaching, another student observed and eventually gave feedback to the classmates teaching. The other students were filming/recording the teaching PETE of their classmates (Barney & Beddoes, 2022).

University Institutional Board (IRB) approval was obtained prior to the start of the study. All PETE majors signed informed consent to participate in this study after IRB approval. Additionally, PETE majors were assured study participation would not affect their final grade or class standing and had the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time for any reason.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

For this study, the PETE majors were interviewed a week before they began their practicum experience and interviewed again after

completing the practicum. The researchers constructed six pre-practicum interview questions and seven post-practicum interview questions. The interviews were audio recorded. Three qualified and experienced HS PE teachers reviewed the interview questions for clarity and understanding. The pre-practicum interview questions began with the following stem, “As you begin your HS practicum...” Conversely, for the post-practicum interview questions, the following stem began with, “Now that you have completed your HS practicum...” Interviews were conducted in the lead researcher’s office on a one-to-one basis. After the pre- and post-practicum interviews were completed and each interview was transcribed, the researchers read and re-read the data until common and reoccurring themes became evident (Mueller & Skamp, 2003; O’Sullivan & Tsangaridou, 1992). A qualitative thematic content analysis was utilized to determine relevant pre- and post-practicum interview themes. Sarvela and McDermott (1993) stated that qualitative thematic content analysis is a technique for objectively and systematically making inferences by identifying specified message characteristics. Simply put, content analysis is a strategy for studying the content of messages.

## **Results**

The PETE majors’ interview statements regarding their high school PE practicum were divided into pre- and post-practicum responses. The researchers read and re-read the interview transcripts to identify themes.

### **Pre-Practicum Interview Responses**

The themes that emerged from the pre-practicum interviews were: (1) connection with the students, (2) classroom management, (3) concerns dealing with the “unknowns” of the practicum, and (4) making lessons and activities applicable to students throughout their lives.

#### **Connection With Students**

The first theme that came from the interviews dealt with PETE majors connecting with the students they were to teach. A PETE major stated: “Caring for the students I will teach is important to me. I had some PE teachers that were just there and didn’t care for the students. Many of them were coaches first and PE teachers second

and so they would make sure we didn't get hurt in class. A good PE teacher is active and talks with the students. This is one thing I want to do during this practicum." A second student said, "Someone that can relate to the students but still have a level of respect as an authority figure." A third student responded by saying, "Have a good relationship with your students."

### **Classroom Management**

The second theme from the student interview was classroom management. Student responses to this theme were typically phrases or one-word replies. For example, one student stated they were "nervous," and another used the word "concerned." One last student stated, "I am nervous about management issues because I have never taught high school students."

### **Dealing With the Unknown of the Practicum**

The third theme from the student interviews was not knowing what to expect when teaching in their practicum. A female student stated, "I am concerned with the class time. The length. I haven't taught this long, and I want enough to do in this time. I don't want the students to be bored." A second student said, "I am afraid that if I don't have enough for the students they may get bored."

### **Lessons and Activities Applicable for Students Throughout Their Lives**

The fourth and final theme from the pre-practicum interviews was making their lessons and activities applicable to students that could be used throughout their lives. One student stated, "Something that is applicable that they [the students] can take away from the lesson. You could teach kickball, but how much will they use kickball after high school. Your lesson needs to be applicable, so the students care about the lesson. When we went THS and the students were doing longboard and riding a bike, those things are applicable." A second student said, "A good lesson is something they will improve on and that they can use in their everyday life." A third student stated, "Teach students lifelong skills. I love football, but these students are not going to be playing football their whole life. But they will be playing pickleball, being active in fitness activities. Things they can do."

## **Post-Practicum Responses**

The themes from the post-practicum interviews were (1) the students saw improvement in their teaching, (2) the importance of being prepared, and (3) they were less anxious regarding their upcoming student teaching.

### **Students Saw Improvement in Their Teaching**

The first theme in the post-practicum interviews was the PETE majors seeing improvement in their teaching. A student stated, “Good because I was able to notice certain things from my lessons and make the changes for my next lesson.” A second student stated, “My first lesson wasn’t that good. But my second and third lessons were much better.” A third student said, “Gradually my lessons got better and my confidence increased.”

### **Importance of Being Prepared**

The second theme from the student interviews was the importance of being prepared. One student said, “Be prepared for your lesson and be prepared when things don’t go as expected. Students come up and say they are sick, or they don’t want to do the activity. So, you will have to do some adjustments.” A second student said, “I learned to be prepared. There were times when the lesson was going along as I had planned, and an activity went longer or shorter I had to make adjustments in the lesson. It was nice to know that I could adjust either way because I was prepared.” A third student stated, “Taking the time to prepare allowed me to go ahead and teach and enjoy myself as I taught my lesson.”

### **PETE Majors Less Anxious Going into Their Student Teaching**

The final theme from the post-practicum interviews dealt with the PETE majors being less anxious going into their student teaching experience. One student stated, “If I didn’t do this practicum, I would be going into my student teaching blind. I now have a better sense of the high school dynamic. It isn’t as complex as teaching elementary PE.” A second student said, “It gave me real-life experience. It was a good preview. I better understand this age group. I also better understand the skill level of the high school students.” Finally, a third student stated, “I am excited for student teaching now. I am

ready to jump in. At the beginning of the practicum, I was scared to teach. I feel a lot better now.”

## Discussion

This study aimed to investigate PETE majors’ perceptions of teaching before (pre) and after (post) they participated in a high school PE practicum. The study’s results generally found the high school PE practicum to be a beneficial experience in preparation for the student teaching experience. From the pre-practicum data, one of the themes from the pre-practicum interviews was the PETE majors being concerned with classroom management. O’Sullivan and Tsangaridou (1992) also found that PE practicum students were more concerned with controlling students than student learning. From this study, classroom management was also a concern for the PETE majors going into their practicum. Students stated they were ‘concerned’ and ‘nervous’ about classroom management with high school students. Another student stated, “I am nervous about management issues because I have never taught high school students.” A second theme from the pre-practicum interviews was connecting with the students they would teach. LaMaster (2001) studied the practicum experience as a service-learning component for PETE majors. One of the participants in the study stated, “the experience [the practicum] was good for students because they got more attention from us.” From this study, one of the PETE majors stated, “Being involved with the students so the students can feel safe in class and in the activities.” A second student stated, “Someone that can relate to the students, but still have a level of respect as an authority figure.” From the post-practicum interviews, the PETE majors discussed the importance of being prepared for their lessons. Barney and Pleban (2006) were interested in PETE majors’ experiences in a semester-long elementary PE practicum. For this study, the PETE majors felt that being prepared for their lessons was important. One student stated, “If I am prepared for my lesson (equipment set out and lesson plan in hand) that is one less thing that I have to worry about. Then, if there is a management problem, I can address the situation, without it negatively affecting the lesson.” Another student stated, “Taking the time to prepare allowed me to go ahead and teach and enjoy myself as I taught my lesson.” A second theme from the post-practicum interviews was that the PETE majors were less anxious going into

their student teaching experience. Barney and Christenson (2009) investigated the early field experience of PETE majors team teaching in a junior high school PE context. Many students stated that teaching ‘real students’ was beneficial for them before they began their student teaching. Another student stated, “It gave me real-life experience. It was a good preview. I better understand this age group. I also better understand the skill level of the high school students.” These pre- and post-practicum themes help shed light on concerns and benefits that can be gained from PETE majors as they participate in their high school practicum experience.

### **Implications of This Study**

After analyzing the pre- and post-practicum interviews, the researchers feel that the high school PE practicum is a beneficial method to better prepare PETE majors for their student teaching experience and their “real work” as PE teachers (Barney & Pleban, 2006). The high school practicum experience is the final opportunity for the PETE majors to implement what has been taught in the PE courses and the elementary and middle school practicums. One student explained it this way: “The practicum in the elementary school was tough, but my teaching in the middle school got better, and this high school practicum went so well.” PETE faculty need to know that the practicum experience for their PETE majors will help build confidence going into their student teaching.

A second implication of this study was a better understanding of what the students learn during the high school PE practicum. From this study, the actual face-to-face teaching that the PETE majors experienced from the practicum and all that it includes putting them in a position to see the working of HS PE context. For example, the importance of being prepared and exposed to the unexpected that the PETE majors would face. This study once again reinforces the value that the high school PE practicum can play in a PETE major’s preparation before their student teaching and eventually teaching their classes.

### **Limitations**

There are two main limitations of this study. First, the PETE majors came from one university. Second, the research study was conducted at a private university. These factors may not be a repre-

sentative sample of participants from other colleges and universities, public or private, or of various geographical regions, which may limit the findings' generalizability. The conclusions and implications are limited and perhaps most applicable to those participants' demographics. Thus, further research with a broader demographic would give a richer data set to ascertain the generalizability of the conclusions and implications found in the study.

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## PEDAGOGY

# Call Me by My Name: The Impact of Instructor Knowing Student Names on Inclusion

*John Miller, Chris Croft, and Sarah Stokowski*

### Abstract

*Being able to call on students during class increases the likelihood of instructor immediacy. As a result, due to a decrease of distance between students and the instructor which may increase the likelihood of creating an inclusive environment. An inclusive pedagogical strategy that has been shown to be effective in knowing student names is the use of name tents. The results of this study revealed that through the use of name tents, students felt vested and valued by other students and the instructors, which are critical in building relationships in an inclusive atmosphere. Furthermore, the results indicated that recognizing the different social identities listed on the name tents was effective in creating an inclusive environment in as well as outside of the classroom.*

### Introduction

The lyrics of a popular television show in the 1980s related that people wanted to go to where everybody knew their name. While the lyrics could apply to a college classroom setting, instructors may

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find it challenging to remember and correctly pronounce students' names when there are 50 or more in the class (Jiang et al., 2020). In addition to being a good teaching strategy, knowing and pronouncing students' names correctly is a significant way to provide an inclusive environment in the classroom setting (Cooper, 2017; Marrun, 2018). Conversely, should instructors make little attempt to know student names or be able to pronounce the names correctly, they create an environment that is not inclusive (Bagar-Fraley, 2020; Marrun, 2018).

A theory that faculty may use to promote classroom inclusivity is instructor immediacy (Faulkner et al., 2021). Mehrabian (1967) first developed the theory of instructor immediacy as an affective expression of emotional attachment, feelings of liking, and being close to another person. The theory of instructor immediacy relates that when instructors approach students with teacher immediacy signals, students sense that the instructor is conveying an affinity or liking towards them (Kerssen-Griep & Witt, 2012). Calling on student names in class is part of instructor immediacy because it decreases the distance between students and the instructor (Tanner, 2013).

A traditionally successful strategy to create a positive and inclusive relationship is for instructors to know their students' names (Glenz, 2014). Strategies to learn student names may include seating charts, name games, or mnemonic devices. However, another strategy that has been shown to be effectively used to establish instructor immediacy by learning student names is using name tents (Cooper et al., 2020a; Cooper et al., 2017; Killpack & Melon, 2020; Tanner, 2011). While it is a simple pedagogical concept, using name tents has been shown to be an effective method for providing an "inclusive and equitable classroom is a manifestation of that respect and care" (Bagar-Fraley, 2020, para. 2).

To clarify the purposes of this study, while diversity describes the differences between individuals, inclusion explains how individuals can relate to each other across those differences (Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, 2023). Although diversity and equity are important components, this study focused on student inclusion to determine whether students believed they were valued and welcome, among other items, due to the instructor's knowledge of their names using name tents in an active learning environment.

Research into the use of name tents has been conducted to determine class inclusion in a variety of areas, including large biology (Cooper et al., 2017), as well as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) classes (Cooper et al., 2018). Furthermore, the use of name tents has been identified by the Association College and University Educators (ACUE; 2023) as an outstanding way to increase inclusion by learning and pronouncing student names properly. Despite support from such sources, name tents have not been employed to determine if they impact inclusion in undergraduate sport management classes. Thus, the purpose was to determine if using name tents effectively increased inclusion in large undergraduate sport management classes (i.e., 50 or more students).

## **Review of Literature**

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

The terms diversity, equity, and inclusion are often used interchangeably. However, each term may be defined differently. For example, diversity may connote the variety of students' experiences, identities, backgrounds, and perspectives in a classroom setting (Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, 2023). Equity indicates the fair treatment of students by addressing perceived disparities and biases that may be present in a classroom (Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, 2023). Inclusion represents the establishment of a classroom environment in which the students feel their participation in class is welcomed, supported, respected, and valued (Faulkner et al., 2021). Inclusion also offers students who are considered to be historically marginalized (i.e., first-generation or gender) the opportunity to feel comfortable in participating in class discussions (Tavares, 2017).

In part due to the COVID-19 pandemic and increases in diversity, college students are different today than they were five years ago. Classrooms have been referred to as being a microcosm of greater society (Fuentes et al., 2021). As such, it is important for educators to adopt pedagogies and techniques that allow the inclusion of "culturally diverse and underrepresented students" (Atay & Trebing, 2017, p. 3) to feel comfortable in the classroom setting.

## **Inclusive Pedagogy**

Florian (2012) stated, “The increasing cultural, linguistic, and developmental diversity of today’s classrooms demands more inclusive approaches to schooling” (p. 275). Inclusive pedagogy considers learner diversity to prevent the relegation of some students as community classroom members (Spratt & Florian, 2015). Rather than denying differences between students, an inclusive pedagogical approach seeks supportive ways of accommodating diversity (Florian, 2010).

An inclusive pedagogical approach occurs when classroom practices promote teamwork between students in active learning opportunities to generate a perceived inclusive community to learn together (Spratt & Florian, 2015). Developing a connection with students is a basic component of inclusive teaching as the instructor becomes better informed about the student’s experiences and future goals (Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, 2023). As a result, inclusion may leverage the diversity of students and faculty to enhance the learning experiences of everyone (Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, 2023)

## **Instructor Immediacy**

Previous studies have indicated that instructor immediacy can lead to positive student results (Hussain et al., 2021; Ledbetter & Finn, 2018; Sheybani, 2019). Instructor immediacy was perceived as the nonverbal actions of the instructor that either add or subtract the extent of psychological closeness between teacher and students (Andersen, 1979). Andersen (1979) defined non-verbal immediacy as “communication behaviors that reduce physical and/or psychological distance between teachers and students” (p. 543). Non-verbal immediacy behavior would include making eye contact and smiling (Hsu, 2010), which may produce more effective interactions (Zheng, 2021).

Instructor immediacy was later expanded to include teacher verbal behaviors (Gorham, 1988). Verbal immediacy by an instructor relates to such communication behaviors as referring to the students by their names or referring generically as “we” or “us” (Seifu & Gebru, 2012). Furthermore, the instructor’s verbal immediacy may increase students’ interaction with each other and the instructor outside the

class (Liu, 2021). Liu (2021) revealed that instructors who employed both nonverbal and verbal immediacy behaviors were more likely to motivate students than instructors who chose not to use immediacy actions. These findings support the idea that learning students' names may increase student motivation and trust due to instructor verbal immediacy. Baker (2010) reported that students believed that instructor immediacy was a significant motivational factor when the instructor knew their names in an instructional-learning environment. By knowing their names, students in large classes may view the instructor and other students as caring about their success, which may lead to building a trusting relationship.

## **Active Learning**

In contrast to traditional lectures, students in active-learning classrooms are expected to interact frequently with one another and the instructor (Cooper & Brownell, 2020b; Eddy et al., 2015; Seidel et al., 2015). While lectures have been shown to communicate information efficiently between instructor and student (Struyven et al., 2008), active learning is a teaching strategy in which students actively participate in understanding facts, ideas, and skills by completing assignments, often in class. Generally, active learning may employ class discussion, writing, problem-solving, and practicing skills. However, the consistent aspect of active learning is that students participate cognitively and interpersonally (Bredow et al., 2021).

## **Types of Active Learning Strategies**

Bligh (2000) states that active learning occurs in the classroom when students are doing anything other than listening passively to a lecture. Furthermore, active learning may challenge the students to think critically or creatively and address others in a group or class setting. However, caution should be taken when using the same active strategy throughout the semester. While there are various types of active learning strategies that an instructor may employ, the instructors in this study used think-pair-share, brainstorming, or round-robin activities.

### ***Think-Pair-Share***

Think-pair-share is an active learning strategy that is intended to provide students time to reflect (think) about a question posed

by the instructor (Lyman, 1981). The students then are paired into groups by the instructor, in which they discuss their perceptions of the question. Lastly, the instructor calls on students to share their perceptions with the entire class.

### *Traditional Brainstorming*

Brainstorming is an active learning strategy in which students are asked to recall what they know about a subject by generating related terms and ideas. Students are instructed to begin with what they know to be true and systematically work toward formulating relationships they had not considered before. Brainstorming at the beginning of a lecture to gain students' attention and prepare them to receive the day's material, or it can be used at the end of a lecture to summarize and help students formulate connections between what they have just learned and the world outside the classroom.

### *Round Robin*

Round robin is a type of brainstorming activity in which students are provided opportunities to express their opinions on an assigned topic (Kagan & Kagan, 2009). Round-robin brainstorming is unique as it strongly encourages students to participate equally in the discussion (Namken & Rapp, 1997). Furthermore, the instructor assigns the groups to be as inclusive as possible.

## **Purpose of the Study**

During these uncertain times in which enrollments fluctuate, issues regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion are receiving substantial attention at universities and colleges in the United States (Fuentes et al., 2021). Although student equity and diversity are crucial elements, this study focused on inclusion to determine if students felt included in an active learning environment by the instructor knowing their names from using name tents. While a number of previous studies have related active learning to inclusion, this study is unique to sports management as no previous studies have associated active learning and knowing student names in large-enrollment (i.e., 50 or more students) courses to inclusion. Using name tents has increased interactions with instructors and peers, increasing student sense of inclusion (Cooper et al., 2017; Tanner, 2013). Thus, the purpose of this study was to determine if using name tents had an

impact on student inclusion in large undergraduate sports management classes.

## **Methods**

### **Participants and Procedures**

Participants were undergraduate sport management students who were recruited from two upper-level classes at a research-intensive university in the southern part of the United States. The class sizes of these undergraduate sport management classes were considered large with more than 50 students enrolled in the courses (Flaherty, 2020). The overall number of students enrolled in the two undergraduate sport management classes was 108, with an average of 54 students per class.

After receiving approval from the university's IRB, a questionnaire was distributed to the students online over four weeks using Qualtrics. The respondents were informed that participation in the study was completely voluntary, and no extra credit would be supplied (primarily to maintain student anonymity). Furthermore, the respondents were informed they could not complete the questionnaire more than once. Nowhere on the questionnaire did the respondents need to either identify themselves or the class in which they were enrolled. As a result, there were no incentives for students to respond to the questionnaire.

All responses were kept completely confidential, as they were anonymously entered into database software. Of the 108 students who were asked to participate in the study, 42 fully completed it, for an acceptable return rate of 39% (Baruch, 1999).

### **Course Description**

The courses were taught by two instructors with more than 30 years of experience teaching at the university level. Additionally, both instructors were committed to using a student-centered, active learning approach to instruction. Before the start of the semester, the instructors of the courses agreed to use a think-pair-share, brainstorming, or round-robin designed to be student-centered instruction at least once per week throughout the semester. The classes met three times per week for 50 minutes each over a 16-week semester.

On the first day of class, the students were given name tents with only their names on the front and back of the cardstock. After instructor introductions, the instructor randomly assigned the students to groups of no more than three. This procedure was done to minimize the likelihood that the students knew each other.

Since names are primary components of a person's identity, the students were asked, but not required, to write their social identities, such as hobbies, gender, or sexual orientation, at the bottom of their name tents if they felt comfortable doing so. This option provided an occasion for student members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersexual, or asexual (LGBTQIA) community to offer their pronouns should they desire (Cooper et al., 2020). The prompt identified the term "pronouns" as a replacement for "preferred gender pronouns." This was done to recognize that pronouns are "not a preference but a personal truth and to acknowledge that some students do not identify with any gender" (Killpack & Melón, 2020, p. 3). Additionally, offering name tents to the class could substantially increase instructor verbal and nonverbal immediacy (Cooper et al., 2020). Finally, the instructors also identified aspects of their own background on the name tent to share with students.

It should be noted that the instructors considered other ways to know the names of the students, however, the name tent strategy was employed for two reasons. First, using seating charts would require the students to sit in the same seat for the entire semester, which was perceived as restrictive. Additionally, when students participate in in-class groups activities, they may not know the others prior to the assignment. Secondly, a mnemonic strategy could be used, however, with more than 50 students in each class, it was agreed that using such a strategy could be an onerous impediment on the instructor's memory.

## **Instrument**

A 25-item questionnaire using a 1-5 Likert scale (1= Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree) was used for this study. The statements were guided by a combination of existing literature on classroom practices that create a positive and active classroom atmosphere (Cooper et al., 2017; Cooper et al., 2020; Eddy et al., 2015; Seidel, 2015; Sheybani, 2019). Nine of the questions related to the respondents' perceptions of using name tents. Eight statements were

associated with building relationships with other students. Nine statements dealt with building relationships with the instructor. The Likert scale statements were randomly placed to prevent group answers.

A pilot test was conducted to establish question sensitivity, understanding, and appropriateness (Patten & Newhart, 2018). The input from the pilot study was gleaned from four graduate students and four faculty members with experience in survey analysis. All items were measured, revealing good internal consistency and reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.82, which was deemed acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were employed to analyze the data.

## Results

### Perceptions of Using Name Tents

Of the 42 responses, 40 (95%,  $M=4.69$ ,  $SD=.56$ ) of the respondents perceived it was important for the instructor to know their name. Only seven ( $M=1.83$ ,  $SD=.377$ ) of the students indicated that they had used name tents in previous classes at the university. Sixteen respondents (36%,  $M=2.98$ ,  $SD=1.09$ ) revealed that they felt comfortable revealing their pronouns on the name tent. Twenty-eight (66%,  $M=3.86$ ,  $SD=1.05$ ) revealed that they were comfortable identifying their social hobbies such as favorite teams, food, or high school attended, etc.... Thirty-seven (88%,  $M=4.26$ ,  $SD=.56$ ) believed that using name tents was an effective approach to learn the instructor. Furthermore, 39 (92%,  $M=4.31$ ,  $SD=.66$ ) reported that the name tents were an effective way to know the names of their classmate's names. Additionally, 33 (93%,  $M=4.29$ ,  $SD=.81$ ) would like future classes to use name tents or a similar strategy.

### Building Relationships with Other Students

Of the 42 respondents, 29 (69%,  $M=.169$ ,  $SD=.47$ ) did not know the names of the majority of students in class prior to the semester. Additionally, 37 (88%,  $M=4.56$ ,  $SD=.86$ ) perceived that knowing the names of other students increased the likelihood of creating an inclusive environment. Furthermore, 38 (90%,  $M=4.29$ ,  $SD=.80$ )

**Table 1**  
*Name Tent Usage Perceptions*

Statement	Mean	SD
I have had previous classes that used name tents at the university	1.83	.38
I felt comfortable identifying my pronoun on the name tent	2.98	1.09
I felt comfortable identifying my social identity such as favorite teams, food, music, hometown, high school etc... on the name tent	3.86	1.05
I would like future classes to use name tents or similar strategy	4.21	1.12
Using name tents is an effective way to learn about my instructor	4.26	.56
I would like name tents or similar strategy to be used in future classes	4.29	.81
Using name tents is an effective way to learn about my classmates	4.31	.66
It is important to me that the instructor knows my name	4.69	.56

related that using name tents was an effective way to build relationships with other students beyond the classroom.

Thirty-seven (88%,  $M=4.33$ ,  $SD=.81$ ) of the respondents indicated that using name tents helped them recognize the different social identities, such as beliefs, pronouns, and affiliations. Moreover, 36 (86%,  $M=4.30$ ,  $SD=.77$ ) of the students felt that knowing the social identities of other students helped generate positive in-class discussions. Additionally, 39 (91%,  $M=4.24$ ,  $SD=.73$ ) reported that being able to have class-related discussions outside of class increased. Thirty-six (86%,  $M=4.14$ ,  $SD=.85$ ) answered that they were more likely to attend class because other students knew their names. Finally, 37 (88%,  $M=4.31$ ,  $SD=.75$ ) felt valued, while 36 (86%,  $M=4.17$ ,  $SD=.78$ ) felt vested in the class because other students knew their names.

### **Building Relationships with Instructor**

Among the most important reasons for advancing the ability of the instructor and student to form a trusting relationship was knowing names, thereby increasing the likelihood of an inclusive environment. Of the 42 respondents, 35 (83%;  $M=1.83$ ,  $SD=.38$ ) indicated that they had not had the instructor in any previous classes. Moreover, 39 (93%,  $M=4.45$ ,  $SD=.06$ ) of the respondents believed

**Table 2**  
*Building Relationships with Other Students*

Statement	Mean	SD
I knew the names of most of the other students in this class previously	1.69	.47
I am more likely to attend class because other students knew my name	4.15	.85
I felt vested in the class because other students knew my name	4.17	.78
Knowing the names and social identities of other students helped generate positive out-of-class discussions.	4.24	.73
The in-class active learning activities helped me get to know other students beyond the classroom	4.29	.80
Knowing the names and social identities of other students helped generate positive in-class discussions.	4.30	.77
I felt valued in the class because other students knew my name	4.31	.75
Using strategies like name tents helped me recognize the different social identities such as beliefs, pronouns, and affiliations	4.33	.81
Knowing the names of students assisted in building an inclusive classroom community	4.56	.86

that the instructors cared about them because they were familiar with their names. Furthermore, 37 (88%,  $M=4.32$ ,  $SD=.72$ ) perceived that they felt more vested in the class as a result of the instructor knowing their names. Finally, 36 (86%,  $M=4.30$ ,  $SD=.87$ ) felt valued because the instructor knew their names, and 28 (67%,  $M=4.00$ ,  $SD=1.03$ ) reported that knowing the student's names helped build an inclusive classroom community.

Thirty-three (78%,  $M=4.10$ ,  $SD=.73$ ) indicated that the instructor was more approachable due to knowing their names. The results of this study also indicated that 31 (73%,  $M=4.27$ ,  $SD=.47$ ) of the respondents felt that name tents assisted in building positive student-instructor relationships. Furthermore, 32 ( $M=3.98$ ,  $SD=.87$ ) were comfortable seeking advice from the instructor on class and other academic issues. Finally, 28 (67%,  $M=3.81$ ,  $SD=.97$ ) of the respondents revealed that because the instructor knew their names, they were more likely to attend class.

**Table 3**  
*Building Relationships with Instructor*

Statement	Mean	SD
I have taken classes from the present instructor.	1.83	.38
I am more likely to attend class because the instructor knew my name	3.81	.97
Using name tents helped me feel comfortable asking advice from the instructor about class and other academic issues	3.98	.87
The instructor knowing our names helped create an inclusive environment	4.00	1.03
The instructor was more approachable because he/she knew our names	4.10	.73
Using name tents helped to create positive student-instructor relationships	4.27	.47
I feel valued in this class because the instructor knew my name	4.30	.87
I feel more vested in this class because the instructor knew my name	4.32	.72
The instructor cared about me because he knew my name	4.45	.06

## Discussion

Einstein (2011) once stated that “Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler” (p. 385). While it is a simple pedagogical strategy, using name tents has been shown to be an effective method for learning a student’s name (Cooper et al., 2020; Cooper et al., 2017; Tanner, 2011). Furthermore, Stoffi et al. (2022) perceived Occam’s Razor to claim that if everything is equal, the more straightforward approach is preferred to a more convoluted one. Thus, while using name tents may be considered a relatively simple and low-tech strategy for knowing student names, it has been shown to be effective when used to establish instructor immediacy (Cooper et al., 2018; Cooper, 2020).

This study was not meant to offer a universal set of strategies that may be implemented to provide an inclusive environment. Rather, the study focused on how a relatively simple method could develop relationships between students and instructors for an inclusive environment. As such, the descriptive analysis of this study indicated that the students felt the use of name tents was important to developing an inclusive atmosphere in the class.

The results also revealed that active learning was important in creating an inclusive atmosphere. Bonwell and Eison (1991) referred to active learning as one that “involves students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing” (p. 2). As it applied to this study, active learning strategies (e.g., think-pair-share, barnstorming, and round robin) were used to enhance communication with others in their groups and the entire class. Additionally, active learning opportunities can help students generate friendships and increase peer support to establish connections to various social university communities (Braxton et al., 2000).

Cooper et al. (2017) suggested that for inclusion to occur, students’ personal interactions should be evident with their peers as well as with their instructors. The students in the courses in this study may possess a range of identities, gender expressions/presentations, and related pronouns. Using their pronouns (e.g., he, she, ze, they) provides the students with levels of understanding, respect, and validation (Armstrong, 2023). Furthermore, possible misgendering by the instructor or other students may create an environment of disrespect and unwelcomeness (Killpack & Melón, 2020). The results of this study indicated that the students were unsure about sharing their pronouns on the name tent. However, they believed that using name tents allowed them to understand and respect the different identities of other students. This finding supports Faulkner et al. (2021) contention that making “students feel welcome is about creating an environment of inclusion with instructor-student relationships as the foundation, taking into consideration age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ability, and socioeconomic status” (p. 108). Previous research has indicated that students tend to trust their teachers, which relates to immediacy, which is the closeness and trust a student feels with their instructor. As such, a key to developing peer relationships is the ability of the students to communicate and trust each other.

Using students’ names is part of instructor immediacy because it can decrease the sense of distance between students and the instructor (Tanner, 2013). Additionally, knowing the names of other students by hearing the instructor refer to them during class may stimulate communication with their peers (Cooper et al., 2020; Cooper et al., 2017). Ballester (2013) indicated that interactions

with other students increase the “willingness to engage students in communication, among others” (p.11). Furthermore, students tend to feel valued and trusted when their peers address them by their names (Cooper et al., 2020). Thus, the results of this study indicated that building relationships with other students and instructors, feeling valued and vested, may be applied to instructor immediacy and the use of name tents.

## **Limitations and Future Research**

This research was limited in design by using only upper-level sport management classes. Additionally, the present sample did not include a wide array of various classifications or majors from multiple universities. Therefore, attention must be observed concerning the generalizability of the research findings. Moreover, the use of active learning strategies is often easier in classes that have smaller enrollments. As a result, another limitation concerned the design of the classroom as larger, lecture-style classes which may make it difficult for the instructor to answer questions.

Future research could expand on this study by quantitatively examining how knowing student names using a strategy such as name tents would increase inclusion as well as diversity and equity at other universities. Moreover, several studies have indicated that when students know the names of other students, friendships may develop, which could have broader implications for student retention in college (Sandstrom & Rawn, 2015; Tinto, 1993; Tinto, 1997). Additionally, a qualitative analysis (i.e., interviewing class students) could be incorporated to examine further explanations of their answers. This type of analysis would allow researchers and university administration to gain a more thorough understanding of what students’ gauge on using name tents. Finally, inclusive teaching practices have been shown to be beneficial for marginalized populations. As such a study could analyze the perceptions of marginalized populations such as international, first-generation minority or nonbinary students.

## **Conclusion**

College classrooms have become increasingly diverse. As such, it is essential for instructors to use students’ preferred names and pronounce student names correctly to create an inclusive environ-

ment. While student inclusion has become a hot topic at universities in the United States, the use of name tents in class has been shown to increase interactions between faculty and students (Cooper et al., 2018; Cooper et al. 2020). Tinto (1997) suggested that for inclusion to occur, it must start in the classroom. When instructors do not engage with students through verbal or non-verbal immediacy, students are less likely to remain at the university (Ai & Giang, 2018; Solis & Turner, 2017). Cooper et al. (2017) reported that for inclusion to take place on a consistent basis, instructor immediacy and name tents may be used to develop an understanding and trust between the students and instructor.

As noted at the beginning of this paper, there has been a steady and recent decline in university enrollment nationally. Such a decline has further heightened the importance of university retention measures by instructors with consistent student interactions. This present research study showed the positive perception of students of faculty using name tents to facilitate learning. This “extra touch” by faculty reiterated previous studies before COVID-19 and added reinforcement of using name tents to promote a trusting relationship between faculty and students.

While other strategies may be used, the use of name tents offers an uncomplicated yet powerful pedagogical strategy that encourages student exchanges and in and out-of-class connections. Furthermore, the use of teaching strategies such as name tents offers instructor immediacy that may increase student retention (DellAntonio, 2017). By reemphasizing Occum’s Razor principle that the simplest solutions are more effective, employing name tents sends direct and indirect messages to the class that the instructor cares enough about the students to learn and use their names. These factors greatly contribute to the overall success of university retention in terms of the number of students and financial funding for the university.

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## METHODOLOGY

# Tactical Games: An Inclusive Pedagogical Model for K-12 Students in Physical Education

*Clancy M. Seymour, Jeffrey Lindauer, and Stephen Harvey*

## Abstract

*The literature regarding K-12 student experiences in physical education (PE) has long identified issues regarding curriculum and social justice. Contributing to this narrative, the most widely used pedagogical model in K-12 PE programs in the U.S. and worldwide is the multi-activity (MA) or physical-education-as-sport techniques approach. Conversely, alternative options like the Tactical Games (TG) model have been shown to be effective in motivating students and increasing activity levels during physical education (PE) lessons. The TG model prioritizes student tactical understanding and skill development using modified games and/or simulations so all students may experience success. Therefore, in partnership between a PE Teacher Education (PETE) program and an all-girls private high school (HS) in the Northeast United States, a pilot study was designed to explore the implementation of the TG model as an alternative to MA. By practicing a TG lesson several times during the intervention, participating PE pre-service candidates reported better comfort with and more likely*

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*use of TG in the future. At the same time, most HS student participants reported high levels of enjoyment and limited previous experiences with the TG lesson structure. Results suggest the TG pedagogical model may be an inclusive option for physical educators to consider for diverse K-12 students and learning environments today.*

## **Introduction**

According to the Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) America (2013), “The goal of physical education is to develop physically literate individuals who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity.” (p.1). To meet this goal, physical educators must create and deliver a meaningful and enjoyable curriculum that meets the needs of all students. The physical education (PE) profession has long recognized this issue from a curricular and social justice perspective (Bainville et al., 2021; Olafson, 2002).

From a curricular context, the predominant pedagogical model used in PE programs in the United States and around the world is multi-activity (MA) (Ennis, 2006; Kirk, 2009; 2013) or physical-education-as-sports-techniques (Kirk, 2009, 2013). The model is a skills-in-isolation ‘*molecular*’ approach that many middle and high school (HS) students dread (Ennis, 2006; Kirk, 2009, 2013). Despite these perspectives, the hope is that traditional decontextualized practice will improve student performance in ensuing authentic play (Kirk, 2009; Moy et al., 2023). However, PE’s limited offerings (one to three times per week) in K-12 schools, along with MA’s short bouts of skill practice, instead cater to the highly skilled while limiting opportunities for participation and success with the majority of students. Furthermore, the MA model is widely criticized for its ‘*one-size-fits-all*’ tendency to disenfranchise and/or marginalize girls and lower-skilled students (Ennis, 2006; Gosset, 2019; Kirk, 2009; Portman, 1995).

## **The Tactical Games Model**

Tactical Games (TG) is a pedagogical model PE teachers use to enhance students’ strategic and tactical understanding of the game (Griffin et al., 1997; Mitchell et al., 2006). A practitioner implementing the model begins PE class with a modified or small-sided game

simulation designed to present a problem or challenge for students. The ensuing teacher-facilitated student inquiry session is a key feature of TG. It targets student discovery of skill(s), tactic(s), and concept(s) important for success in the game. The lesson concludes with the same game played at the beginning of the class while students practice the skill(s), tactic(s), and/or concept(s) highlighted in the prior discussion (Dyson et al., 2004). Models like TG provide physical educators with an alternative to “skills and drills” MA that prevail in many PE programs, allowing students to learn skills, practice strategies, and game concepts (Dyson et al., 2004).

Numerous Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) programs provide instruction on TG, but researchers (Harvey & Pill, 2016; Kinnerk et al., 2018) have reported that few PE teachers use the approach due to confusion with competing versions (ie., TGfU, Games Sense) and the lack of hands-on practice and professional development applying the model. Transferring the model from peer teaching to field experiences and professional induction has also proved to be a challenge for PETE pre-service candidates (noted hereafter as “candidates”) (Moy et al., 2023). Acknowledging candidates, high school students, and local physical educators’ limited experiences with TG, PETE faculty from a regional comprehensive university in the Northeast United States partnered with an all-girls private high school (HS) to explore how the TG model may be a possible alternative pedagogy to the predominant MA curriculum utilized in K-12 PE programs.

An intentional pilot project to integrate the TG model was designed and conducted by two PETE faculty with over 30 years of combined teaching and candidate preparation experience. The pilot study was developed to address whether the TG model may be a realistic alternative pedagogy to MA in PE class. The second goal of the pilot study was to provide candidates an opportunity to practice utilizing the TG model in an authentic K-12 PE setting. The results and reflections from this pilot will be presented in this paper.

## **Method**

To ensure success at all levels, the project included several phases detailed below. This began with candidate knowledge of TGs (training and mock lesson), followed by participatory experiences in TG lessons, and culminated with two opportunities to teach a TG les-

son—one to fellow peers (candidate peer teaching) and one to HS students including observation by current practitioners (candidate co-teaching).

## **Participants**

Three distinct sets of subjects participated in this pilot study. The first group included candidates in a secondary PE methods course with both undergraduate ( $n=11$ ) and graduate ( $n=15$ ) candidates (total  $n=26$ ), one or two semesters away from student-teaching. Five female and six male undergraduate students were enrolled in the class, while the graduate level included four females and 11 males, respectively. The second group of subjects who participated in the study were two female HS PE teachers. The HS students ( $n=65$ ) were the final group who participated in the project. All HS students were female and divided into three classes of 20-24 students in grades 9-12.

## **Data Collection and Instrumentation**

The study included video-recorded lessons with subsequent fidelity, interobserver agreement analysis, and a collection of survey data from each set of subjects (candidates, HS students, HS PE teachers). All candidates were surveyed twice during the project—once after the mock lesson and a second time after the co-teaching lesson. The two teachers in the study also completed an electronic survey after the pilot. In each instance, the surveys were brief and included three to four questions designed to solicit feedback and insight related to the use of TG. Questions polled subject groups regarding the TG model's application (observed or applied), perceived rates of physical activity, and whether the model would be welcomed or utilized in the future.

## **Training and Mock Lesson**

Initial candidate training included assigned readings and lectures on the TG model by a PETE faculty member. During the lecture, the model's theoretical foundation, purpose and structure, and effectiveness of the research were presented to candidates. The following class, the professor delivered a mock TG rugby lesson, during which candidates, acting as HS students, participated in a TG lesson.

## **Candidate Peer Teaching**

During a methods class before the co-teaching experience at the HS, candidate groups were allowed to plan and practice (peer teach) their assigned group lesson. Every candidate was required to teach a practice lesson lasting approximately 15-20 minutes. The rotation for the peer-teaching practice session included one group presenting their lesson, four groups participating as students, and the next group preparing and setting up their lesson on the adjacent court.

The two PETE faculty observed each candidate group, and feedback regarding lesson delivery and fidelity to the TG model structure was provided after all practice lessons were completed. Generally, candidates were successful with the assigned TG practice lessons but were provided constructive feedback to improve their subsequent co-teaching lessons at the HS. The inability of candidates to effectively facilitate the TG model's inquiry session, which is crucial to the discovery of important gameplay skills and concepts, was the primary critique from the two PETE faculty. Candidates were encouraged to use a combination of primer and open-ended questions to augment learning and further discussion. To conclude the debriefing session, candidates were asked to take notes, reflect, and make necessary adjustments for their upcoming HS co-teaching lessons.

## **Candidate Co-Teaching**

The pilot study also provided candidates with an opportunity to teach the six TG lessons over a two-week period. The high school's proximity to the PETE campus and demographics enabled the researchers to facilitate the study's goals. Three lessons were taught in weeks one and two.

The candidates were divided into six groups of four to five. Each was assigned a TG model lesson (basketball, rugby, soccer) from the *Teaching Sport Concepts and Skills: A Tactical Games Approach* textbook (Mitchell et al., 2006). Two groups of candidates taught sequential rugby lessons to a grade 9 class of 20 students. Similarly, sequential basketball lessons were taught by two groups of candidates to a grade 11-12 class of 24 students. The remaining two groups of candidates taught sequential lessons in soccer to 21 students in a combined grade 10, 11, and 12 PE class.

The candidates used the same lessons from their previous peer-teaching exercise adopted from Mitchell et al. (2006). All co-teaching lessons were observed by one of the PETE faculty and also video recorded. Additionally, a debrief session conducted between the professor and candidates to discuss TG model successes and challenges during the co-teaching lesson. The standardized PETE institutional lesson observation form utilized for all field experiences was also used for formative purposes.

Overall, the PETE faculty member who attended the co-teaching sessions observed an improvement in candidates' TG lesson model delivery and structure compared to the previous peer-teaching session. The HS students were also clearly engaged and enjoyed the experience. However, the questioning and comfort with refining or extending small-sided simulations aligned to learning targets was still a general weakness with many candidates. Watching the recorded lesson provided candidates with an opportunity to reflect on strengths and areas for future improvement.

### **Treatment Fidelity**

Fidelity to the TG model was also an important consideration in the pilot. Research regarding the accuracy of treatments in the PE profession is limited and often underreported (Stylianou et al., 2016). Therefore, this pilot included steps to evaluate model fidelity. Feedback provided by PETE faculty throughout the pilot study always targeted TG accuracy and lesson delivery. Before reaching the final phase of the pilot, PETE faculty required candidate groups during the peer teaching lesson to demonstrate each of the following four critical features of the TG model: 1) game 1; 2) debrief and inquiry session; 3) drills and tasks; and 4) game 2 (modified or replicated from game 1). This was accomplished successfully by all candidate groups, allowing progression to the last phase of the project, where candidates co-taught their TG lessons to students.

After the co-teaching lessons were implemented, fidelity was further assessed by conducting a model benchmarks analysis established by Metzler (2011). Three video-recorded co-teaching lessons were randomly selected for review by two PETE faculty (coders) using the same teacher and student benchmarks established by Gurvitch et al. (2008). The teacher benchmarks included: 1) the use of tactical problems as the organizing center for the learning tasks; 2) beginning

each lesson with a game form to assess students' knowledge; 3) the use of deductive questions to get students to solve tactical problems; and, 4) the use of high rates of guides and feedback during situated learning tasks. The following student benchmarks were also utilized: 1) students provided time to think about deductive questions regarding the tactical problem; 2) students make situated tactical decisions; 3) game modifications are developmentally appropriate; and 4) students increase tactical knowledge as they progress through tasks/activities. Both teacher and student benchmarks were checked following Gurvitch et al.'s (2008) 3-point rating scale (*Not at all, Ok, and Very Well*), and because of its simplified options, interobserver agreement was set at 70% (Osbourne, 2008).

### **Interobserver Agreement**

Interobserver agreement (IOA) was established by reviewing three random video-recorded co-teaching lessons and aggregating three-point rankings for each candidate and student model benchmarks between both coders. Strong agreement was observed when both coders reported the same ranking (*Not at all, Ok, and Very Well*). Agreement was observed when both coders used a combination of *Ok* and *Very Well*, and disagreement was observed when one coder scored the video with *Not at all*, while the other scored an *Ok* or *Very Well* ranking.

During co-teaching lessons, teacher benchmarks were met in all three randomly selected video recordings with a 100% IOA rating. During observation of video recordings, coders reported the same ranking on 9/12 (75%) and agreement (combination of *Ok* and *Very Well*) on 3/12 (25%) on teacher benchmarks. There were no instances of disagreement (a combination of *Not at all*, and *Ok*, or *Very Well*). Similarly, student benchmarks were consistently observed with approximately a 92.7% (11/12) IOA rating. On 10/12 (83.3%) student benchmarks, coders reported the same ranking compared to one case each (1/12 or 8.3%) of agreement (combination of *Ok* and *Very Well*) and disagreement (a combination of *Not at all*, and *Ok*, or *Very Well*).

Together, the coders reported the same rankings on 19/24 (79%) teacher and student benchmarks. Agreement (combination of *Ok* and *Very Well*) was observed by coders on 4/24 (17%) of the model benchmarks cumulatively with one instance (1/24 or 4%) of dis-

agreement (combination of *Not at all*, and *Ok*, or *Very Well*). Overall, the aggregate IOA between the coders with model benchmarks was 96%. This was calculated by adding coder instances of the same rankings (19/24 or 79%) along with cases where both coders either scored *Ok* or *Very Well* (4/24 or 17%) on model benchmarks.

## Results

Survey findings collected during the practice phases of this pilot have been categorized into themes for further discussion. The themes include 1) Activity/Involvement/Engagement; 2) Lesson Structure; 3) Inquiry/Reflection; and 4) Content Knowledge.

### Activity/Involvement/Engagement

During the co-teaching lessons, most candidates surveyed perceived that students were moderately to vigorously active during the lesson. Four candidates reported that students were providing maximum effort (feels almost impossible to keep going, completely out of breath, unable to talk; cannot maintain for more than a very short time) or very hard (very difficult to maintain exercise intensity; can barely breathe and speak only a few words). Six candidates reported students to be vigorously active (borderline uncomfortable; short of breath, can speak a sentence), and 12 candidates indicated that the students were moderately active (breathing heavily, can hold a short conversation; still somewhat comfortable, but becoming noticeably more challenging). Only two candidates reported that students demonstrated light activity (it feels like you can maintain it for hours; it is easy to breathe and carry a conversation).

These results were consistent with teachers and students' ratings of perceived exertion. For example, both teachers reported favorable student levels of moderate to vigorous activity during the lessons while nearly 65% of the students also indicated moderate to vigorous activity during the lessons.

Other similar themes prevalent throughout the pilot study were also noted. Candidates responded positively regarding the authentic experience at the HS. There were many comments related to student engagement and learning, with candidate 7 reporting that, "*girls seemed engaged in the lesson and we're giving effort throughout the class,*" candidate 2 reporting, "*the students were very engaged and into what they were learning which is always a plus in PE,*" and candidate

4 reporting “*students learned objectives, were able to explain the rules of the game and enjoyed rugby.*” Students were also reportedly enthusiastic with participant 14 responding, “*It was soooo much fun, and very interactive,*” participant 8 reporting, “*It was a little different because we had to communicate with each other,*” and participant 48 reporting that the lesson was *different because there was more one-on-one help.*” Overall, most students (63%) surveyed were positive about the experience, with many expressing how much they enjoyed participating in the TG model lessons taught by candidates.

### **Lesson Structure**

The pilot’s participants also highlighted the unique features of the TG model. Candidates were generally unfamiliar with the model, with fourteen (56%) reporting that TG was unique or different from what was previously experienced in K-12 PE or witnessed in field or practicum placements. A small group of candidates identified some of the distinct features of the TG model, with candidate 23 stating that the lesson “*was very different—starting with a game then going to drills to improve the game then back to the original exercise to hopefully do a better job performing*” and another candidate 1 identifying a difference because “*we played a game, then worked through drills instead of working through drills to eventually play the game.*”

Comparatively, the teachers were excited about the unique TG model lesson structure. The immediate exposure to a game situation rather than a typical PE lesson structure (presenting, practicing, and playing games with skill) was particularly appealing to both PE teachers. Most students (66%) also noticed that the TG lessons taught by the candidates were unique.

### **Inquiry and Reflection**

Another noticeable theme prevalent was feedback regarding inquiry and reflection. Candidates throughout the experience referenced the importance of these features and how they facilitated learning: Candidate 23 noted, “*This helped the class understand what we were going to work on in the drills that followed but also help in first drill*” and candidate 12 reported, “*It relates by introducing strategies to get open without the ball. It made the students figure it out.*” Two candidates also reinforced the importance of the TG questioning intermediary session: Candidate 20 responded, “*The reflection period*

*helped us create the skills we truly need for the activity,”* and candidate 1 responded, *“We talked about tactics on how to be more successful, worked on drills to be better, then we played the original game better the 2nd time.”* At the same time, candidates were reflective, recognizing the need to improve their questioning skills. Candidate 3 reported, *“we could ask better questions to the students,”* candidate 11 suggested, *“spend more time on the questioning aspect,”* and candidate 22 recommended, *“be more detailed on my questioning.”*

A majority of HS students (67%) indicated the debrief session after the first game helped improve gameplay later in the lesson. Responses included, *“it gave me a chance to understand what we were doing”* (participant 45), *“it helped me learn what I needed to do differently to play better”* (participant 52), *“and it helped me understand and play the game more consciously”* (participant 14). Another student was able to apply broader connections as a result of the inquiry task: *“we would meet in the middle and talk about new skills or components of the game to work on and then when we went back to our baskets to play 3 v 3 we would work in that skill”* (Participant 54).

## **Content Knowledge**

Comments and feedback associated with the content knowledge necessary to deliver the model with high fidelity was the last major theme reported among candidates in the pilot study. While candidates were intrigued with TG, many stressed the need for adequate content knowledge of the sport or physical activity and pedagogical knowledge of the TG model to conduct a lesson effectively. For example, candidates suggested more requisite knowledge of the game was crucial for TG success: *“Rules of the game you’re teaching, effective strategies, practicing it myself”* (Candidate 9), and *“You should know the rules/objectives of the game of rugby”* (Candidate 20). Candidates also recommended a better understanding of the competencies and progressions within the sport: *“More info on rugby to have a better understanding”* (Candidate 1), and *“How to develop individual exercises and segments to help students to be proficient in the game”* (Candidate 24). Further supporting the need for a strong comprehension of the model, some candidates provided comments displaying a lack of understanding of TG related to traditional experiences in PE. For example, Candidate 18 conveyed confusion by questioning, *“Beginning the class with a game instead of a drill,”* while

both candidates 12 and 8 also asked why “*there was no warm-up or any gross motor skills going on*” (Candidate 12) and “*there was much more movement going on by everyone participating*” (Candidate 8).

## Discussion

The purpose of this pilot study was to explore the potential of TG as a possible pedagogical model to consider instead of MA for K-12 students and current PE teachers. Additionally, providing candidates with authentic practice experiences utilizing TG was the study’s second goal.

At the end of the TG pilot study, teachers, along with the candidates, reported students to be active and engaged with the lessons. More importantly, students also enjoyed the opportunity to be connected to the learning experience. This outcome is supported in the literature, where the social aspects of the game lead to more engagement and enjoyment (Harvey et al., 2017; Mandigo et al., 2008). Similarly, the inquiry and reflection inherent within TG were well-received by all participants. This feature (inquiry and reflection) provides space for questioning. It enriches the student learning experience by integrating the psychological and social aspects of a constructivist teaching environment where learning is holistic, involving both the mind and the body (Harvey et al., 2017; Light, 2008).

At the same time, the lesson structure of TG was reported to be unique for most participants. This can be seen as both a positive and negative finding. First, the TG model is not a new approach and yet may still not be well-known or utilized in K-12 PE settings. This highlights the sustained dominance of MA and the continued socialization of the model in PE programs (Lindauer & Seymour, 2021). More research regarding practitioner knowledge and TG usage in K-12 settings would be helpful moving forward.

Conversely, the lesson structure of the TG model drew enthusiasm from most participants, particularly the students. The opportunity to begin with a game followed by inquiry and reflection was a welcomed change reported by students, candidates, and teachers. The manipulation of learning conditions to promote inquiry and interaction with the pupil, others socially, and the environment was critical for physical activity or sport development while allowing for a more authentic learning experience (Light, 2008). In addition, the

success of utilizing the TG model with an all-girls HS PE program in this pilot should not be ignored, given the aforementioned criticisms of MA, which historically has alienated lower-skilled and female K-12 students in PE (Ennis, 2006; Kirk, 2009; Lindauer & Seymour, 2021). Therefore, further investigation of TG as an inclusive or socially just pedagogy is warranted (Jones et al., 2023).

Finally, the need to be well-versed in sport content knowledge was also stressed by candidates. The training of candidates and/or teachers to design and manipulate the learning environment meeting the developmental needs of K-12 students while simultaneously being able to transition between games and practice tasks fluidly is crucial for TG success, a point that has been consistently advanced in the TG literature (Harvey & Pill, 2016; Kinnerk et al., 2018).

Moy et al. (2023) provide the same recommendations but suggest that training with models like TG during PETE programs must be layered and dynamic. In many cases, candidates are not equipped to try new approaches and/or counter the obstacles they may face during fieldwork or induction (Moy et al., 2023; O’Leary, 2016). This includes the beliefs or philosophies toward PE of current mentors/colleagues, the quality of the PE program, and/or the priority of PE within the school district itself (Moy et al., 2023). Therefore, as demonstrated in this study, providing candidates with hands-on experiences to work with K-12 students is critical but not enough. Intentionally embedding multiple practice experiences with alternative pedagogies like TG at various PETE program stages could help change candidates’ de facto reliance on MA. This also includes integrating TG model support, reinforcement, and reflection from candidates, peers, mentor teachers, and PETE faculty (Harvey & Pill, 2016; Moy et al., 2023). The use of models like TG helps candidates develop their foundational teaching knowledge and provides a supportive environment with much-needed feedback and confidence to try new pedagogies. Lindauer and Seymour (2021) refer to the above process as integral in disrupting the continued socialization of MA in K-12 PE settings and thus subsequently becoming pedagogically fluent in a new pedagogical language—in this case, TG.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, the TG model pilot study was successful. Candidates could experience all facets of the TG model while authentically

delivering sample lessons to HS students. Candidates also reported a very likely use of the model in future teaching. Similarly, HS PE teachers responded favorably to TG and liked the game-practice-game structure of the model itself.

While the pilot study was designed for implementation at an all-girls private HS, the findings are useful and provide future lines of inquiry to investigate. For example, a majority of the students who participated in the project reported enjoyment of the TG lesson experience. This is promising given the limited exposure to the TG model within the intervention and suggests that TG may be a more relevant and inclusive option for physical educators to use. Moreover, the TG model may help beginning teachers succeed in settings with diverse populations, providing candidates with the knowledge and skills to be successful teachers. This is an important consideration given the literature regarding induction into the PE teaching profession which reveals high turnover rates for beginning teachers who are under-prepared or unable to connect with K-12 students who differ from a sociodemographic and/or geographic context (Silwa et al., 2017).

Relatedly, future research exploring specific features of the TG model that may promote inclusion and unity among K-12 students could be fruitful. For example, the modification of rules and features of a task during TG could go beyond skill and tactical emphasis and address social issues like power relations (Jones et al., 2023). As a result, the built-in discussion phase of the TG model may provide K-12 students with an opportunity for discourse and social inquiry (Jones et al., 2023). Kirk (2020) refers to these model types as *pedagogies of affect* and defines the “...term affect to refer to the ‘affective domain’, of (among other things) interest, motivation, perseverance, valuing, caring, resilience, and joy” (p. 151). Pedagogical models like Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility, Sport Education, and other activist approaches are given high praise, but additional research exploring TG as an inclusive approach and making its case to be added to this distinguished group are needed.

In conclusion, the positive results of this pilot study are useful and align with previous TG research (Harvey et al., 2017; Harvey et al., 2015; Hodges et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2015). The limited disruption to existing curricula and/or PE programs, along with the potential to eradicate many curricular and social justice issues exac-

erbated by MA, make TG a possible inclusive model for candidates, current physical educators, and the vast group of K-12 students in the many disparate PE programs of today.

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## YOU AND THE LAW

# Sports Injury: Is It Always a Cause for Litigation?

*Thomas H. Sawyer and Tonya L. Sawyer*

### Introduction

Literally millions of Americans, young and old, are injured while playing sports each year, and many of these participants are hospitalized. Sports injuries range from concussions and broken bones to joint damage and soft tissue injuries. High-contact sports such as baseball, basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, lacrosse, rugby, soccer, and softball tend to produce more frequent and severe injuries. Victims can incur substantial medical bills, lost income, and other costs while suffering severe pain. They may wonder whether they can file a legal claim for compensation, as with many other types of injuries.

Unfortunately, most ordinary sports injuries do not provide grounds for legal action. This is because people who participate in a sport understand (or should understand) that accidental injuries are possible. In legal terms, they “assume the risk” of harm by voluntarily playing the sport. For example, someone playing football or rugby should know they might collide with another player. Someone who plays baseball or softball should know that a ball might strike them.

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## **Releases of Liability**

A person or entity overseeing a sports activity may ask people to sign a release of liability before they can play the sport. (For sports involving children, parents sign these forms.) The release provides that participants cannot sue if they are injured. However, these releases are not always enforceable if injuries result from negligent or intentional conduct rather than a mere accident.

On the other hand, a victim often can sue for compensation if their injury resulted from a risk not inherent to the sport. Common causes of sports injuries that may lead to legal claims include:

- Intentional misconduct
- Negligent coaching
- Defective sports equipment
- Unsafe sports facilities

### **Intentional Misconduct Causing Sports Injuries**

While some sports inherently involve physical contact, the conduct of athletes and spectators sometimes crosses a line. If someone playing a sport is physically attacked outside the normal course of play, they may be able to bring a personal injury claim based on assault and battery. A spectator who is injured in a fight at a sports arena may also be able to bring an assault and battery claim against an aggressor, who may face criminal charges as well. People or entities that permitted intentional misconduct to occur when they should have prevented it may also be held liable. These may include a coach or facility owner who was aware that someone had a history of violence but continued to allow them to participate in the activity despite the risk.

### **Negligent Coaching Causing Sports Injuries**

While coaches cannot prevent all injuries to people who play a sport, they should adopt and follow basic safety measures. Coaches should give players appropriate rest breaks, allow them to hydrate properly, and give them functioning equipment. They should also explain how to play the sport safely, describe common risks that players should understand, and oversee players to the extent needed to reasonably protect their safety.

When a player suffers a sports injury, a coach should know how to handle the situation. They should be able to recognize medical emergencies and respond to them immediately. Failing to take reasonable precautions and provide the same response that a reasonable coach would provide in the same situation will likely lead to liability.

## **Defective Equipment or Unsafe Facilities Causing Sports Injuries**

Player safety in many sports depends on protective equipment, such as helmets or masks. If this equipment is not properly manufactured or designed, a victim can bring a product liability claim against the manufacturer and anyone else in the distribution chain. This is also true if playing equipment, such as bats or balls, contains defects. Claims based on defective products often use strict liability theories, meaning that the victim must show only that the product suffered from a manufacturing or design flaw and that the defect caused the injury.

Meanwhile, premises liability laws across the U.S. provide that property owners must keep their premises reasonably safe for people who are lawfully on them. If a victim suffers an injury due to a dangerous property condition while playing a sport, they might pursue a premises liability claim against the property owner. For example, they might establish liability if the owner of a facility failed to clean up debris on the playing surface or failed to fix a hole.

## **Injuries in School and Non-Profit Organization Sports**

Schools and non-profit organizations, as well as their employees and authorized volunteers, must protect the children entrusted to them. They do not need to absolutely guarantee the safety of a child, but they must make reasonable efforts to prevent foreseeable injuries. These include obtaining proper equipment and maintaining it as needed, ensuring that facilities used for sports are in safe condition, and supervising children to ensure that they are playing the sport safely. A parent of an injured child can hold a school or non-profit organization liable if a schools or non-profit organizations employee or authorized volunteer failed to use reasonable care, causing the injury.

## **Instructions for Authors**

### *The Physical Educator*

Author manuscripts must be submitted online (<https://js.sagamorepub.com/pe/index>) and meet the following guidelines:

Manuscripts must be double spaced in Times New Roman 12-point font in a Microsoft Office Word document. Number the lines of the manuscript, including the references. Manuscripts should be 25 pages or fewer in length, including charts, graphs, graphics, pictures, and tables. Please follow APA 7th edition style guidelines consistently throughout the manuscript.

The first page of the manuscript must include the title of the article only. Do not include your name, affiliation, or other identifying information. An abstract must accompany each manuscript.

Label all charts, graphs, and tables and place them on separate pages. Submit all images 300 dpi with appropriate captions. Number the pages beginning with the title page followed by text, references, figure captions, tables, and figures. Figures must be clean and legible. Freehand art or lettering is not acceptable.

Carefully check references to ensure they are correct, included only when they are cited in the text using APA 7th edition style guidelines. Only include references that have been published or accepted for publication.

Upon submission, authors will be sent an email of receipt. Manuscripts are read by the editor and three reviewers using a blind review process that takes up to 90 days. Authors will be notified about the disposition of their manuscripts as soon as reviewers have returned their reviews. Depending on the outcome of the review, authors will receive one of the following notices:

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