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Titel abstract: Profiling Secondary School Students based on their Perceived Motivational Physical Education Learning Climate

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Profiling Secondary School Students based on their Perceived Motivational Physical Education Learning Climate

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Introduction

By creating and managing a learning climate that addresses the motivational demands of students, the PE-teacher can positively influence the engagement in and attitude towards physical activity within PE (Cox et al., 2008; Haerens et al., 2010). However, a substantial heterogeneity is often present within PE-classes, not only in the cognitive and psychomotor domain but also in student motivation. The purpose of this study was therefore to provide more insight into how the PE-context can be better tailored to the individual motivational demands of students. Based on Achievement Goal Theory (AGT) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT), we examined how different constructs of student motivation for PE combine into distinct student profiles.

Methods

Data were collected among over 2.562 secondary school students, age group 12-18 years, within 24 different secondary schools in The Netherlands. Data for establishing student profiles were collected using various previously validated instruments. Students' perceived basic psychological need satisfaction and frustration were examined through items of the BPNSFS (Chen et al., 2014). Students' perceived motivational learning climate was assessed through items based on MCSYS (Smith et al., 2008). Student profiles were constructed through a two-step cluster analysis. To examine a possible link between cluster membership and background characteristics Chi-square test with post hoc testing and one-way ANOVA was conducted

Results

Cluster analysis identified three meaningful clusters with differences in perceived psychological need support/ frustration, perceived motivational climate and other background variables.

Discussion and conclusions

The results provide a basis for recommendations to better tailor PE-lessons to the motivational demands of secondary school students.

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