

Abstract

The teaching styles physical education (PE) teachers employ may promote or undermine pupils' motivation. While reproductive styles are thought to rely on the repetition of patterns of movement teachers provide, productive styles aim for students to generate their own solutions to problems. Therefore, productive styles may promote students' basic psychological needs (BPNs), which tend to be associated with the quality of students' motivation. This mediation model was tested using structural equation models. Group invariance between Portuguese and Scottish subsamples was tested with a multigroup confirmatory factor analysis. A total of 548 secondary school PE pupils from Portugal ($n = 353$; 47.3% females) and Scotland ($n = 195$; 31.3% females) completed online measures of pupils' perceptions of teaching styles, motivation and BPNs. The data indicated that the most frequently used styles were from the reproductive cluster. Portuguese students perceived significantly greater use of reproductive styles than Scottish students. The model had an adequate fit to the data for both subsamples. Productive styles were positively associated with BPNs and BPNs were positively associated with autonomous motivation. Productive styles had a direct and indirect effect, through BPNs, on autonomous motivation. Reproductive styles also had a direct positive effect on autonomous motivation in the Portuguese sample and neither a direct nor indirect effect on controlled motivation in both samples. BPNs were positively associated with controlled motivation in the Scottish sample but negatively associated in the Portuguese sample. None of the teaching clusters were directly associated with autonomous motivation in the Scottish sample. Associations of teaching styles with motivation vary according to cultural and situational factors.