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Need-Supportive Professional Development in Elementary School Physical Education: Effects of a Cluster-Randomized Control Trial on Teachers' Motivating Style and Student Physical Activity

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This cluster-randomized controlled trial investigated the efficacy of a teacher professional development (TPD) program, grounded on self-determination theory, to increase elementary school teachers' need-supportive motivating style and consequently their students' physical activity (PA) during physical education (PE) lessons. Participants were 15 elementary school teachers and their 293 students. Teachers in the treatment condition received a sports-related notebook and attended four 3-hr workshops over 1 school year; teachers in the control condition received only the notebook. Students' PA and teachers' motivating style were assessed on four occasions via accelerometers and observations, respectively. Results showed that teachers in the treatment condition increased support of their students' psychological needs for the majority of the school year, but there was a slight decrease in the fourth wave of measurement. Students in the treatment condition increased their time spent in moderate-to-vigorous PA (MVPA), independently of the sport taught, whereas their counterparts from the control condition decreased their MVPA. This is the first study to provide elementary school teachers with a PE teacher professional development program grounded in self-determination theory and demonstrate the potential of such a program to improve teachers' motivating style and student MVPA in PE.

Keywords: self-determination theory, teacher training, motivation, cluster-randomized control trial, intervention

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There is a large body of evidence demonstrating the beneficial effects of physical activity (PA) on physical and psychological health in youth (Janssen & LeBlanc, 2010). To reap these benefits, it is recommended that young people participate in at least 60 min of moderate-to-vigorous intensity of PA (MVPA) every day (World Health Organization, 2010). However, only 19% of young people undertake PA at a level that meets these PA guidelines (World Health Organization, 2010). To address this problem, the school setting has been recommended as a key environmental context for PA promotion (Pate et al., 2006). In particular, physical education (PE), being a compulsory subject that includes all members of an age cohort, is an important setting to help youth to engage in PA at levels that contribute toward meeting current PA recommendations (Bassett et al., 2013). To this end, it is important that

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schools provide regularly scheduled PE classes and that students are appropriately motivated to fully engage in them. Unfortunately, children spend on average only 32.6% of PE lesson time engaging in MVPA, as assessed by accelerometers (Hollis et al., 2016), well below the recommended 50% target (Center for Disease Control & Prevention, 2010). Thus, interventions to increase the percentage of time elementary school students spend on MVPA during PE classes are needed (Hollis et al., 2016).

In a systematic review Lonsdale, Rosenkranz, and colleagues (2013) found that engagement in teacher professional development (TPD) programs is an effective strategy to increase student PA in PE. However, less than half of the intervention studies included in that review used a theoretical framework to explain student behavior. Hence, Lonsdale et al. stressed the necessity for these studies to be informed by motivational theories that have proved useful in explaining student behavior in PE, such as self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 2002). In the present intervention study, we tested whether providing elementary school teachers with a TPD program grounded in SDT, which aimed to facilitate elementary school teachers' adoption of a more motivating style during PE lessons, would increase their students' PA.

Fostering Student MVPA in PE: The Role of Teachers' Need-Supportive Motivating Style

Over the last 2 decades, SDT has been shown to be a heuristic theoretical framework for the investigation of motivation in PE classes, explaining how teachers can improve their students' MVPA in lessons and their motivation (see Owen, Smith, Lubans, Ng, & Lonsdale, 2014; Van den Berghe, Vansteenkiste, Cardon, Kirk, & Haerens, 2014 for overviews). In the SDT framework, students are purported to have three psychological needs—autonomy (e.g., the need to experience a sense of choice and freedom to engage in an activity), competence (e.g., the need to feel able to effectively realize challenging tasks set out by the teacher), and relatedness (e.g., the need to develop meaningful relationships with their teacher or classmates). The satisfaction of these needs facilitates student engagement in PE (Wilson et al., 2012).

A critical tenet of SDT is that teachers have the capacity to support or thwart students' basic psychological needs, depending on their motivating style during instruction (Reeve, 2009). Teachers' motivating style refers to "the interpersonal sentiment and behavior a teacher uses to motivate his or her students to engage in learning activities" (Reeve et al., 2014, p. 94). A need-supportive motivating style is characterized by the provision of autonomy support, structure, and involvement, intended to nurture students' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, respectively (Reeve, 2009; Reeve, Jang, Carrell, Jeon, & Barch, 2004; Skinner & Edge, 2002). By contrast, a need-thwarting motivating style is characterized by controlling, chaotic, and hostile teaching behaviors that are assumed to undermine students' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, respectively. Some studies showed that these dimensions of need support and need thwarting are likely to be inversely related but are not necessarily bipolar (Bartholomew, Ntoumanis, & Thøgersen-Ntoumani, 2010; Smith et al., 2015). For instance, a teacher could be close to his or her students and at the same time be chaotic by giving unclear objectives.

In more detail, an *autonomy-supportive* teacher facilitates student autonomy by nurturing the students' inner motivational resources, providing them with explanatory rationales, relying on noncontrolling and informational language, displaying patience to allow time for self-paced learning, and acknowledging and accepting expressions of negative affect (Reeve, 2009). In contrast, a *controlling* teacher relies on external sources of student motivation, such as directives, outcome-contingent incentives, pressure, or threats of punishment, to get the students to behave in teacher-desired ways. *Structure* "refers to the amount and clarity of information that teachers provide to students regarding what to do and how to do it so as to develop desired skills and to achieve valued outcomes" (Reeve & Cheon, 2014, p. 298). Teachers provide structure by clearly communicating guidelines and expectations to initiate a learning activity (Jang, Reeve, & Deci, 2010; Sierens, Vansteenkiste, Goossens, Soenens, & Dochy, 2009), by offering sufficient guidance during lessons, by providing step-by-step directions following the pace of the learners (Jang et

al., 2010), and by giving positive and constructive feedback (Koka & Hein, 2005; Mouratidis, Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Sideridis, 2008) to help students build on their skills and sense of competence. In contrast, when a teacher is chaotic, the students' need for competence cannot be satisfied because the students do not know if they are performing skillfully or because their teacher provides unclear instructions and vague goals, and delivers no informational feedback. Finally, an *involved* teacher invests a considerable amount of time, energy, and resources in their students and offers affection, unconditional regard, warmth, care, and nurturance, whereas a *hostile* teacher is neglectful or even aggressive in his or her interactions with students (Skinner & Edge, 2002).

A need-supportive motivating style has been found to be related to several positive outcomes in PE classes (see Ntoumanis, 2012; Van den Berghe et al., 2014 for reviews), including higher engagement (Van den Berghe, Cardon, Tallir, Kirk, & Haerens, 2016), health-related well-being (Standage, Gillison, Ntoumanis, & Treasure, 2012) and MVPA (Perlman, 2013). In contrast, a need-thwarting motivating style has been related to student disengagement (Van den Berghe et al., 2016), fear of failure and challenge avoidance (Bartholomew et al., 2018). Although an abundant amount of literature supports the benefits for students of a need-supportive motivating style, there are studies showing that this style is not frequently in operation in PE lessons (Haerens et al., 2013). In fact, PE teachers tend to mainly use a controlling/thwarting motivating style (Sarrazin, Tessier, Pelletier, Trouilloud, & Chanal, 2006). Therefore, it is important to examine whether teachers can be trained to adopt a need-supportive motivating style and to avoid a need-thwarting motivating style, and whether such changes in teacher behaviors are associated with increases in student MVPA.

Intervention Studies Using a Self-Determination Theory Framework

The critical question posed by studies applying SDT in PE is not only whether teachers can adopt a need-supportive motivating style but also whether their students can benefit from it in terms of their MVPA during PE lessons. A meta-analysis by Su and Reeve (2011) of SDT-based studies in different life domains, including schools, showed that autonomy-supportive intervention programs are effective in changing supervisors' motivating style with a mean weighted effect size of 0.63. The effect size showed some variability as a function of the level of experience and was higher for inexperienced trainees than experienced ones. In addition, Su and Reeve identified six design features that were common to the most effective intervention programs. Specifically, these programs (a) offered a workshop that featured all aspects (rather than only one or a few) of an autonomy-supportive style (Reeve, 2009), (b) delivered training in multiple (rather than a single) sessions, (c) included a group discussion component in which teachers could express their reservations and also exchange ideas regarding instructional strategies, (d) offered teachers ongoing support throughout the intervention implementation period, (e) emphasized not only content (what to do) but also skill-based training (how to do it), and (f) addressed teachers' beliefs about motivating style and effective ways of motivating others that might conflict with the training content (Ntoumanis, Quested, Reeve, & Cheon, 2018).

In the PE context, only a few intervention studies to date have been carried out (Aelterman, Vansteenkiste, Van den Berghe, De Meyer, & Haerens, 2014; Chatzisarantis & Hagger, 2009; Cheon & Reeve, 2013, 2015; Cheon, Reeve, & Moon, 2012; Lonsdale et al., 2016; Perlman, 2015; Tessier, Sarrazin, & Ntoumanis, 2008; Tessier, Sarrazin, & Ntoumanis, 2010). On the whole, these studies examined the effects of a need-supportive motivating style training program on teacher behavior, students' basic need satisfaction and motivation in PE, and a variety of student-related cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes. With the exception of Tessier et al. (2010), these intervention studies compared teachers in an SDT-informed treatment condition with those in a control condition (i.e., standard teaching practice). Two general findings have emerged from such studies: Trained teachers can learn how to become more autonomy supportive (Chatzisarantis & Hagger, 2009; Cheon & Reeve, 2015; Cheon et al., 2012; Perlman, 2015; Tessier et al., 2008) or need supportive (Aelterman et al., 2014; Tessier et al., 2010), and, second, by doing so, trained teachers provide their students with better les-

son experience that leads to gains in terms of student engagement (Cheon & Reeve, 2015; Cheon et al., 2012) and intention to exercise during leisure time (Chatzisarantis & Hagger, 2009; Cheon et al., 2012).

However, this body of knowledge is not without its limitations. First, intervention studies focusing on the impact of teachers' motivating style on their students' MVPA are lacking. Previous intervention studies have demonstrated increased student engagement at the class level (i.e., by measuring collective engagement of the whole class; Cheon et al., 2012; Tessier et al., 2010) using self-report measures of behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and agentic engagement. However, student behavioral engagement, in terms of accelerometry-assessed MVPA, was not reported in these studies. Given the health benefits derived from MVPA, it is important to know if an SDT-informed TPD program is effective in increasing student MVPA in PE. Second, most previous intervention studies (with the exception of Lonsdale et al., 2016; Tessier et al., 2010) adopted a narrow conceptualization of motivating style that focused only on autonomy support or autonomy support and structure (Aelterman et al., 2014) rather than on all three aspects of need support (i.e., autonomy support, structure, and involvement). Given that these are complementary rather than independent dimensions of a teacher's style (Jang et al., 2010), it is important to include all three dimensions in a TPD program. A final limitation is that almost all previous studies (with the exception of Chatzisarantis & Hagger, 2009) have not addressed the possibility that participants in a treatment condition might benefit from a Hawthorne effect—that is, the tendency to work harder merely because of the additional attention paid to them by the researcher (McCambridge, Witton, & Elbourne, 2014). To prevent such an effect, teachers from the control condition should also receive attention by being offered a TPD program.

The Present Study

The purpose of this intervention study was to examine whether an 8-month long, SDT-based TPD program, aimed at training elementary school teachers to adopt a more need-supportive motivating style during PE lessons, would have a positive impact on teachers' motivating style and on their students' MVPA. This study built upon and expanded in six ways, conceptually and methodologically, on previous studies carried out in the general education context, and in PE in particular. From a conceptual perspective, rather than focusing on autonomy support only, this study targeted all three need-supportive (i.e., autonomy support, structure, and involvement) and three need-thwarting (i.e., control, chaos, and hostility) motivating styles. Second, the TPD program took into account all six design features that maximized the effectiveness of intervention programs in the meta-analytic review by Su and Reeve (2011). From a methodological perspective, given that children under 10 years of age have problems recalling their PA retrospectively (Corder, Ekelund, Steele, Wareham, & Brage, 2008), accelerometers were used in this study to obtain nonbiased estimates of the percentage of PE lesson time spent on MVPA. Also, to prevent a potential Hawthorne effect (McCambridge et al., 2014), teachers in the control condition were also provided with TPD. Similar to previous TPD programs in which teachers had access to learning and teaching resources and PE lesson plans (Morris, Gorely, Sedgwick, Nevill, & Nevill, 2013), in the present study, teachers in the control condition were given notebooks presenting a variety of learning tasks. In addition, this study was carried out with elementary school teachers and elementary-aged children. In contrast to secondary PE teachers who are PE specialists, in the French education system, elementary school teachers have several compulsory subjects to teach (e.g., mathematics, history and geography, French, and foreign languages) and thus are not specialists in the subject of PE[1]. As a result, the effectiveness of TPD programs among nonspecialist teachers is not known. Finally, the present study used observations to assess teachers' motivating style that allows for the identification of concrete, real-life examples of how teacher need

[1] In the French education system, elementary school teachers have to teach all subjects, including PE. However, within their preservice program, among the 400 hr for courses, only 40 hours are allocated to teaching PE. Thus, French elementary school teachers are not specialist in PE teaching. In contrast, secondary PE teachers attend programs focused on the pedagogical knowledge needed to teach the French PE curriculum, and hence they are PE specialists.

support manifests in the classroom (Haerens et al., 2013). Additionally, one strength of this method is to provide treatment fidelity information via the changes in the observation scores (Cheon & Reeve, 2015).

It was hypothesized that elementary school teachers who received the TPD program would increase their need-supportive motivating style (i.e., autonomy support, structure, and involvement) across the school year and decrease their need-thwarting motivating style (i.e., controlling, chaotic, and hostile teaching behaviors). In addition, given that the teachers from the control condition received notebooks with a number of examples of learning situations and detailed instructions and material, it was predicted that these teachers, similar to the teachers in the treatment condition, would improve their ability to support the students' need for competence (but not for autonomy or relatedness). Indeed, based on the aforementioned definition of "structure," it was expected that the notebook would help teachers in both conditions to provide better structure in their PE lesson by being more effective in giving their students information regarding activity planning (what activities and how and when to offer those). Finally, it was expected that the students of the teachers in the treatment condition would benefit from the intervention and display higher percentage of PE lesson spent in MVPA compared with their counterparts whose teachers were allocated to the control condition.

Method

Participants and Procedure

To reach 80% power to detect an effect of $d = 0.85$ on students' MVPA (Lonsdale et al., 2017), 46 students would have been needed in a nonclustered trial (two-tailed probability level of 0.05). We adjusted our calculations for class-level clustering using Campbell, Elbourne, Altman & the CONSORT group's (2004) formula $1 + (m - 1)\rho$, where m is the number of students per class and ρ is the intraclass correlation. With an estimated class size of 22 participating students (mean number of student in primary school in France) and an intraclass correlation of 0.07 (Lonsdale et al., 2017), an adjustment of 2.47 was required: $1 + (22 - 1) * 0.07 = 2.47$. Multiplying by the 46 participants required in nonclustered trial, 113 students would have been needed to achieve 80% power. With regard to the number of teachers needed, on the basis of the mean weighted effect size ($d = 0.63$) observed in the Su and Reeve's (2011) meta-analysis, we calculated using the G*Power (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) software that 82 teachers would have been needed to reach a power of .80. A total of 249 French elementary school administrators were contacted by e-mail at the beginning of the school year. The TPD was also included in the pool of TPDs made available to teachers by school authorities. A total of 15 full-time certified elementary school teachers (66.6% females; $M_{\text{teaching experience}} = 9.5$ years; $SD = 6.3$; range = 2–23 years) and their 293 students (51.8% of girls; $M_{\text{age}} = 8.31$; $SD = 1.13$; range = 5–11 years) from 13 state elementary schools agreed to participate to the study. Six teachers were from urban schools (i.e., three in the control condition and three in the treatment condition) and nine from rural schools (i.e., five in the control condition and four in the treatment condition). Seven teachers were from low socioeconomic status (SES) schools (i.e., three in the control condition and four in the treatment condition) and eight teachers were from high socioeconomic status schools (i.e., five in the control condition and three in the treatment condition). The teachers taught at all French elementary school levels (i.e., from the first to fifth grade).

The study was not prospectively registered, but ethical approval was obtained from the university ethics committee and the local education authority. Further, consent to participate in the study was obtained from the head teachers of the schools, teachers, and parents. An opt-out procedure was used to obtain parents' consent. A consent form was given to the parents via the students. It provided information about the purpose of the study and its protocol. Parents who did not allow their children to participate had to return it, but none did so. Students could also refuse to participate by saying so to their teacher or to the researchers. No student refused to participate. This study took place during one entire school year (see the timeline in Figure S1 in the online supplemental material). It was a parallel group, two-condition, superiority trial. Schools were assigned randomly to either a control or intervention condition (seven classes to the treatment condition and eight classes to

the control condition) with a 1:1 allocation ratio. To reduce the risk of contamination, the first author assigned all classes from the same school to the same condition (either treatment or control). The CONSORT extension for clustered trials checklist is available as supplementary material. The teachers from the treatment condition received 12 hr of TPD—3 hr in October and 3 hr a week before each school vacation. Baseline assessments at the beginning of the school year were not possible because of the delay in obtaining study approval from the local education authority. Thus, the study started 1 month after the beginning of the school year (i.e., beginning of October).

In France, the school year is divided into five periods of approximately 8 weeks, separated by 2 weeks of vacation. In PE, each period or cycle is focused on the teaching of a particular PA or sport. Consequently, teachers have to plan teaching sequences during each period, focused on specific sports. Teachers in both conditions were asked by the research team to teach four sports, namely orienteering, ultimate frisbee, dance, and rugby, at the same periods. Given that the training was intended to illustrate the need-supportive strategies in a particular teaching cycle (i.e., related to the specificities of the sport activity to be taught), four training sessions were delivered at the end of the four first periods, each one being related to the sport the teachers had to teach during the next period (see Figure S1 in the online supplemental materials). In PE, teaching is structured to allow students to explore several sports and to learn motor and technical skills. Consequently, teachers have to plan teaching sequences during each period, focused on specific sports. The data collection (i.e., the recording of student MVPA and teachers' behavior) was carried out in the middle of each of the four periods. All teachers received a notebook for each sport targeted that contained detailed instructions and material that allowed the teachers to identify the skills had to develop, which were appropriate for the grade level and the curriculum taught. The notebook also contained a systematic timetable for each sport (e.g., warm-up, technical drills, tactical situation, and game play) that standardized the time allocated to low versus high intensity activities. No SDT-related material was included in the notebooks. Only the teachers in the treatment condition attended the TPD program. The components of the TPD are presented in the supplementary material.

As with most longitudinal research, there were some missing data over the four time points (see the flow diagram in Figure S2 in the online supplemental material). All the teachers provided data at least twice, but most of them were assessed three times. The teachers who completed two or three waves of measurement did not differ significantly from the teachers who completed four waves of measurement on demographic variables, $Fs(1, 14) < 0.90$, $ps > .45$, and on raters' scores of motivating style at Time 1, $Fs(1, 14) < 2.53$, $ps > .10$.

Components of the Professional Development

The teachers in the treatment condition were invited to participate in a four × 3-hr TPD program offered by a researcher specialist in PE teaching and sport psychology. Each of the four TPD sessions was divided in three parts. In every TPD session, the first part was dedicated to presenting basic tenets of SDT; the second one consisted of implementing, in the targeted sport, the need-supportive strategies proposed during the first part of the session; and the third one consisted of implementing these strategies in practice (i.e., a teacher enacted the situation with another teacher playing the role of the student). In addition to the TPD sessions, teachers in the treatment condition benefited from onsite follow-up and individualized guidance (for more detail, see the supplementary material).

Measures

Teachers' motivating style. To assess the six dimensions of teachers' motivating style, an observational instrument grounded in SDT and Skinner and Edge's (2002) work was used. This tool comprises six specific dimensions: "Autonomy support" (e.g., providing choices and rationale), "control" (e.g., controlling use of rewards and language), "structure" (e.g., delivering instructions for the learning situation), "chaos" (e.g., giving no feedback), "involvement" (e.g., showing care/concern), and "hostility" (e.g., belittling students). Two coders blinded to the treatment conditions were provided with a list of exemplary behavioral strategies for each dimension to facilitate accurate and reliable rating. Coders were asked to rate each dimension using a potency scale ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 3 (*strong potency*),

similar to the observational instrument developed by Smith et al. (2015) in the sport context. The potency refers both to the frequency (i.e., the number of behavioral strategies used for each dimension during the coding interval) and the quality (i.e., the pervasiveness of the environment in terms of it motivational meaning) of each strategy. More details about this distinction are provided by Smith et al. (2015).

The coder training and coding protocol were identical to those developed by Smith et al. (2015). Teachers in both conditions were videotaped with a digital camcorder, and their communications with students were recorded using a small microphone fixed on the collar of their sweatshirt. During the recording of the PE lesson, there was no interaction between the researcher and the participant. In French primary schools, teachers schedule the PE lesson, as well as other subjects, whenever they want during the day. As a result, in our study, there was variability in the duration of PE lessons, from 23 min to 76 min. For coding purposes, each video of a PE lesson was divided into four equal quarters to allow for a sufficient time period on which to base the potency ratings. The coders then summed the scores of the four equal quarters to obtain a score out of 12 for each of the six dimensions of the motivating style (further details are available in the supplementary material).

Only 45 videos of the 60 intended were obtained. Missing data were not due to teacher attrition but due to technical problems (i.e., video sound problems) and scheduling problems (i.e., visits cancelled because teachers were ill, and it was impossible to reschedule). Results of the interrater agreement analysis on the 45 videos were acceptable (average weighted $k = 0.92$; ranged from 0.77 to 1, see Table S1 in the online supplemental materials).

Student physical activity levels. To assess student PE lesson time spent in MVPA, each student wore a portable accelerometer (SenseWear® pro2 Armband 6.1 BodyMedia, INC., Pittsburgh, PA) from the beginning to the end of the PE lesson. The SenseWear Armband has been validated with children between 3 and 10 years old (Andreacci, Dixon, Dube, & McConnell, 2007; Vorwerg, Petroff, Kiess, & Blüher, 2013). The sampling frequency was 1-min epochs. Outcome variables extracted from the accelerometer data were minutes in PA at different intensities (e.g., moderate and vigorous). MVPA was calculated as the sum of moderate and vigorous PA. Given that the duration of the PE classes was different from one lesson to another, the raw MVPA score was converted into a percentage of time spent in MVPA during the PE lesson. Additionally, given that the sport taught could affect student PA levels (see Fairclough & Stratton, 2006 for a review), the percentage of time spent in MVPA during the PE lesson was centered for each wave of measurement to control for "type of sport" effect. In other words, at each wave of measurement, the mean percentage of time spent in MVPA in the whole sample (i.e., both the treatment condition and the control condition data) was subtracted from each student MVPA score. As a result, the group-centered scores from one time point to the next (see Figure S3 in the online supplemental materials) could be quite different from the percentages of MVPA at the corresponding time points.

Data Analysis

Due to the nested nature of the data, multilevel analyses were performed to test our hypotheses, using the SPSS software, version 21 (SPSS Inc., IBM, Armonk, NY). To examine change in teachers' motivating style across time, data were treated as a two-level hierarchical model (i.e., the four waves of measurement at level 1 and teachers at level 2). To test the change in the percentage of time student spent in MVPA in PE lesson, data were treated as a three-level hierarchical model (i.e., the four waves of measurement at level 1, students at level 2, and teachers at level 3).

Following the strategy suggested by Singer and Willett (2003), several models were tested. In a preliminary step, an unconditional model (Model 1) was tested—with only an intercept and no explanatory variables—to partition the variance of each dependent variable into within-individual and between-individual components. This model presents the mean for the whole sample across the whole duration of the study. In step 2, the variable "time" was included in an unconditional linear growth curve model (Model 2) as a fixed parameter. This variable was centered on the first measurement (i.e., four waves of measurement, with wave 1 coded as 0, wave 2 coded as 1; wave 3 coded as 2, and wave 4 coded as 3) and represented the linear change in the treatment condition over time. In step 3,

predictors were added. To control for the effect of teacher gender and teaching experience, as well as the effects of student gender and age, these variables were added in the models. Then, two conditional models were set up: (a) the variable "condition" (a dummy variable, in which the treatment condition = 0 and the control condition = 1) and the interaction term Time × Condition were added as predictors (Model 3, linear model) and (b) the variable "time^2," and the interaction "Time^2 × Condition" (Model 4, quadratic model) were added as predictors. Model 4 was used because some previous developmental studies in secondary schools showed that growth trajectories for teacher and student motivation-related variables (Barkoukis, Ntoumanis, & Thøgersen-Ntoumani, 2010) were nonlinear over time. Consequently, linear (Model 3) and quadratic models (Model 4) were compared.

The "condition" effect tested whether the treatment condition and the control condition differed at baseline (time = 0), the interaction "Time × Condition" examined whether the linear rate of change over time differed across treatments, and the interaction "Time^2 × Condition" tested whether the curvilinear rate of change over time differed across treatments (Model 4). To compare models, the −2 log likelihood (i.e., likelihood ratio test/deviance test; Heck, Thomas, & Tabata, 2014) was used, with lower values indicating better model fit (more details about multilevel analyses are available in the online supplemental material). Because of space restrictions, only Model 1 and the model that fitted the data best for each dependent variable (i.e., Model 4 for motivating style and Model 3 for percentage of MVPA) are presented. For linear models, the effect sizes were calculated using the formula proposed by Feingold (2013): $d = (b_{time \times group} \times \text{duration})/SD_{\text{raw}}$, where $b_{time \times group}$, is the difference in rate of change between conditions per unit of time, duration is the length of the study, and SD_{raw} is the standard deviation of raw scores based on data from the first wave of measurement. For nonlinear models, effect sizes were calculated for each time measurement by working out the difference between the model-estimated means of the two groups at that time and dividing this difference score by its standard deviation (Feingold, 2013). Then, the average of the effect sizes obtained at each time point was calculated to inform about the general effect size of the intervention.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

The statistical assumptions associated with multilevel models were checked by exploring the residuals in the full conditional models. Results indicated relative normality in the distribution of the residuals and no extreme outliers. Furthermore, plotting the residuals against the predicted scores of the dependent variables showed no major signs of heteroscedasticity. Means, standard deviations, and weighted Kappas at each measurement wave and for each condition are shown in Table S1 in the online supplemental material.

At Time 1, 200 students were sampled (48% male; $M_{\text{age}} = 8.29$), 84 in the treatment condition and 116 in the control condition. At Time 2, 252 students (51% male; $M_{\text{age}} = 8.34$) were present for the data collection, 117 in the treatment and 135 in the control condition. The Time 3 sample included 183 students (50% male; $M_{\text{age}} = 8.33$), 111 in the treatment and 72 in the control condition. Finally, at Time 4, 148 students (52% male; $M_{\text{age}} = 8.40$) were present for the data collection, 52 in the treatment and 96 in the control condition. It was not possible to measure the percentage of MVPA at the fourth wave of measurement because most teachers refused to allow their students to wear an accelerometer while they were playing rugby. Given that rugby is a physical contact sport, teachers were concerned that the accelerometer device could hurt some students during the game. Thus, the analysis of the student MVPA was performed on the three first waves only.

Teachers' Motivating Style in PE Lesson

Interclass correlation coefficients from unconditional models were all above 5%, indicating that there was a hierarchical structure in the data and that multilevel analysis was appropriate (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992). In relation to controlling style, chaos, and hostility, results showed no difference between the two conditions, and absolute values of effect sizes ranged from 0.20 to 0.36 (Table 1). Regarding autonomy support, structure, and involvement, results showed that the model

Table 1
Results of the Multilevel Models for Control, Chaos, and Hostility

Predictors	Variables	Control *b* (*SE*)	Chaos *b* (*SE*)	Hostility *b* (*SE*)
Fixed effect	Intercept	3.42 (1.13)*	1.07 (1.21)	2.82 (1.08)*
	Sex	0.84 (1.02)	−1.48 (1.23)	−0.77 (0.84)
	Experience	−0.13 (0.08)	0.13 (0.10)	−0.07 (0.07)
	Condition	1.34 (1.27)	0.85 (1.32)	1.88 (1.28)
	Time	0.34 (1.21)	−0.58 (0.98)	−0.60 (1.44)
	Time^2	−0.11 (0.38)	0.28 (0.30)	0.29 (0.46)
	Time × Condition	2.17 (1.72)	0.23 (1.40)	3.06 (2.07)
	Time^2 × Condition	−0.76 (0.56)	−0.09 (0.45)	−1.25 (0.67)
Random effect (Model 1)	Level 1	3.81 (1.03)***	2.13 (0.57)***	5.67 (1.52)***
	Level 2	2.61 (1.54)†	4.99 (2.13)*	1.27 (1.35)
Random effect (Model 4)	Level 1	3.18 (0.85)***	2.08 (0.57)***	4.48 (1.24)***
	Level 2	1.83 (1.14)†	3.60 (1.71)*	0.31 (0.83)
Test of significance				
Reference model		190.350	181.044	194.891
Δ-2logV		186.138	179.939	191.072
$\chi^2(df)$		4.212 (2)	1.105 (2)	3.819 (2)
Effect size |d|		0.36	0.20	0.30

Note. Model 4: treatment condition = 0 and control condition = 1; Sex: male = 1.
† $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

that had the lowest −2 log likelihood value was the quadratic model, indicating that the trajectory of each of these variables was curvilinear. Specifically, the difference in the trajectories between the two conditions increased across time (i.e., the scores were not different at the first wave of measurement, and then scores for teachers in the treatment condition became higher than scores for teachers in the control condition in the second and third waves of measurement) and then decrease at the last wave of measurement (Table 2). Absolute values of effect sizes for all need supportive dimensions ranged from 0.57 to 0.73.

Table 2
Results of the Multilevel Models for Autonomy Support, Structure, and Involvement

Predictors	Variables	Autonomy support *b* (*SE*)	Structure *b* (*SE*)	Involvement *b* (*SE*)
Fixed effect	Intercept	4.20 (1.13)***	5.61 (0.96)***	5.20 (1.20)***
	Sex	1.75 (1.08)	0.58 (0.88)	0.93 (1.22)
	Experience	−0.07 (0.08)	−0.11 (0.07)	−0.06 (0.10)
	Condition	−0.34 (1.25)	0.55 (1.08)	1.11 (1.30)
	Time	4.37 (1.07)***	4.83 (1.00)***	1.64 (0.95)
	Time^2	−1.40 (0.34)***	−1.34 (0.31)***	−0.38 (0.30)
	Time × Condition	−4.58 (1.53)**	−2.42 (1.43)	−3.43 (1.35)*
	Time^2 × Condition	1.53 (0.50)**	0.60 (0.46)	0.98 (0.44)*
Random effect (Model 1)	Level 1	4.02 (1.07)***	4.49 (1.19)***	2.49 (0.66)***
	Level 2	3.96 (2.02)*	1.71 (1.27)	3.79 (1.68)*
Random effect (Model 4)	Level 1	2.51 (0.68)***	2.19 (0.59)***	1.93 (0.51)***
	Level 2	2.44 (1.28)*	1.42 (0.84)†	3.60 (1.55)*
Test of significance				
Reference model		195.025	188.614	182.274
Δ-2logV		181.254	171.192	177.605
$\chi^2(df)$		13.771 (2)***	17.422 (2)***	4.669 (2)†
Effect size |d|		0.73	0.76	0.57

Note. Model 4: treatment condition = 0 and control condition = 1; Sex: male = 1.
† $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

With respect to teachers' autonomy support, results showed no significant main effects for teacher gender ($b = 1.75, p = .13$) and experience ($b = -0.07, p = .39$), indicating that there were no differences in autonomy support as a function of these variables. Results also showed no significant main effects for condition ($b = -0.34, p = .79$), indicating that there was no difference in the first wave of measurement between the two conditions. Results also revealed significant main effects of time and time^2 ($b = 4.37$ and -1.40, $ps < .001$, respectively), indicating that autonomy support increased significantly over time in the treatment condition, but this increase became slower over time. More importantly, results showed significant Time × Condition ($b = -4.58, p = .006$) and Time^2 × Condition ($b = 1.53, p = .005$) interactions, indicating that the slope of change between conditions was different. Visual inspection of Figure S4a in the online supplemental material shows that autonomy support increased for the treatment condition during the first three waves of measurement and decreased at the last wave, whereas it remained relatively stable over time for the control condition.

Regarding teachers' structure, results showed no significant main effects for teacher gender ($b = 0.58, p = .52$) and experience ($b = -0.11, p = .12$), indicating that there were no differences in structure as a function of these variables. Results also showed no significant main effect for condition ($b = 0.55, p = .61$), indicating that there was no difference in the first time of measurement between the two conditions. There was a significant main effect for time and time^2 ($b = 4.82$ and -1.34, $ps < .001$, respectively), meaning that structure increased for teachers in the treatment condition, but the increase decelerated over time. Results showed a marginal Time × Condition interaction ($b = -2.41, p = .09$), indicating that the linear increase was slightly greater in the treatment condition than in the control condition. There was no Time^2 × Condition interaction ($b = 0.60, p = .21$), indicating that there was no difference between conditions in the curvature of their trajectory of change (Figure S4b in the online supplemental material).

Regarding teachers' involvement, results showed no significant main effects for teacher gender ($b = 0.93, p = .46$) and experience ($b = -0.06, p = .52$), indicating that there were no differences in involvement as a function of these variables. Results also showed no significant main effect for condition ($b = 1.11, p = .40$), indicating that there was no difference in the first wave of measurement between the two conditions. Results further revealed no significant main effects for time and time^2 ($b = 1.64, p = .09$; $b = -0.38, p = .21$; respectively), meaning that teacher involvement did not change in the treatment condition over time. However, there were significant Time × Condition ($b = -3.43, p = .02$) and Time^2 × Condition ($b = 0.98, p = .03$) interactions, indicating that the slope of change for each condition was different. Visual inspection of Figure S4c in the online supplemental material shows that involvement decreased for the control condition during the first three waves of measurement and then increased, while it remained steady over time for the treatment condition.

With the exception of involvement ($\chi^2 = 4.669$, $ps < .10$), the quadratic model fitted better compared with the linear model ($\chi^2 > 13.771$, $ps < .001$) for the other two need-supportive dimensions (i.e., autonomy support and structure; Table 2).

Student Physical Activity

With regard to PE lesson time spent in MVPA the unconditional model (Model 1) for the three-level model (i.e., the four waves of measurement at level 1, students at level 2, and teachers at level 3) revealed that only 2% of the total variation of MVPA was at level 2 (Table 3). Because the variance attributed to interindividual student differences was trivial (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992), a two-levels model was tested, with the three waves of measurement at level 1 and teachers at level 2. Model 3 (linear change) fit the data best.

Results for centered data (Table 3) showed no significant main effect for student age ($b = -1.46, p = .28$), indicating that there were no differences in the percentage of lesson time spent in MVPA as a function of this variable. Results also showed a significant main effect for student gender ($b = 7.04, p < .001$), implying that the boys' percentage of MVPA was higher than that of girls. Results also showed no significant main effect for condition ($b = 6.29, p = .32$), indicating that there was no difference in the first wave of measurement between the two conditions. There was a

Table 3
Results of the Multilevel Models for Standardized Percentage of Moderate-to-Vigorous Physical Activity

Predictors	Variables	Unconditional model—three levels *b* (*SE*)	Unconditional model—two levels *b* (*SE*)	Conditional model—two levels *b* (*SE*)
Fixed effect	Intercept	0.77 (2.81)	0.78 (2.81)	6.24 (13.20)
	Sex			7.04 (1.47)***
	Age			−1.46 (1.34)
	Condition			6.29 (6.18)
	Time			5.42 (1.38)***
	Time × Condition			−8.70 (2.01)***
Random effect	Level 1	339.00 (24.57)***	349.36 (19.85)***	325.25 (18.49)***
	Level 2	10.68 (16.48)		
	Level 3	108.94 (43.79)*	109.20 (43.75)*	120.49 (48.90)*
Test of significance				
Reference model				5540.409
Δ-2logV				5516.916
$\chi^2(df)$				23.493 (2)***
Effect size |d|				1.33

Note. Model 4: treatment condition = 0 and control condition = 1; Sex: male = 1.
* $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

significant main effect for time ($b = 5.42$, $p < .001$), meaning that time spent in MVPA increased in the treatment condition over time. In addition, results revealed a significant Time × Condition interaction ($b = -8.70$, $p < .001$), showing that the slope of change between the two conditions was different. Specifically, time spent in MVPA increased for the treatment condition and decreased for the control condition (Figure S3 in the online supplemental materials); the absolute value of the effect size was substantial ($d = 1.33$).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to test the effects of an SDT-based TPD program on elementary teachers' motivating style and their students' PA in PE. Results showed that, compared with teachers in the control condition, teachers who attended the TPD program improved their need-supportive motivating style and their students increased their time spent in MVPA.

Effect of the Intervention on Teachers' Motivating Style

Results partially supported our hypothesis. Effect sizes were moderate to large for all dimensions of need support. As expected, structure increased in both conditions but was slightly higher in the treatment condition (Figure S4b in the online supplemental material). Thus, the notebook helped teachers to structure students' learning by giving teachers clear goals and instructions and by outlining contingent and consistent learning situations. However, there was a marginal difference in favor of the treatment condition ($p = .09$), which means that the TPD brought some added value. Indeed, by providing practical experience and allowing collective discussion with other teachers, the TPD program probably offered a stronger implementation of the strategies that support the students' need for competence.

As predicted, compared with teachers in the control condition, teachers in the treatment condition increased the use of autonomy support and maintained a higher level of involvement over time; however, in the fourth wave of measurement the between-groups difference decreased. This decrease could be explained either by a regression to the mean effect or by the sport taught by the teachers. For instance, the decrease at the last wave of measurement for autonomy support may be related to the nature of the sport taught by the teachers. The sport taught in the fourth part of the study was rugby. Thus, risks related to the physical contact between players might have focused teachers more on physical safety concerns than on satisfying their students' psychological needs. The

support of students' needs requires resources from the teachers (e.g., time, attention, energy, and motivation), but when the teachers' resources are used to cope with pressures or external constraints, that is, students' safety concerns, they cannot be invested in supporting student needs (Pelletier, Séguin-Lévesque, & Legault, 2002; Reeve, 2009). In contrast, other sports offer more opportunities for student input. In dance, for example, by helping students create choreographies, teachers can encourage students to express their feelings, make their own choices, and take initiatives.

Concerning involvement, it seems that for the treatment-condition teachers, this variable showed a relatively stable pattern over the year, whereas for teachers in the control condition, this variable decreased. Thus, the TPD program seems to have had a protective effect permitting teachers to maintain their involvement at a consistent level across the year and prevent the reductions in this variable observed in the control condition. This reduction is consistent with recent results of two studies carried out in academic subjects (i.e., mathematics and English as a foreign language; Maulana, Opdenakker, Stroet, & Bosker, 2013; Stroet, Opdenakker, & Minnaert, 2015). A multitude of contextual (e.g., students' disruptive behaviors and time pressure; Taylor, Ntoumanis, & Smith, 2009; Reeve, 2009) and personal (e.g., affective states; Forgas, 2002) parameters could be invoked to explain this trend. A better understanding of how and why teachers change their involvement over the school year could be an interesting avenue for future study.

On the whole, the results are aligned with past literature (Cheon & Reeve, 2013; Cheon et al., 2012; Tessier et al., 2008, 2010), which showed that SDT-based TPD programs had a positive impact on PE teachers' autonomy support. In addition, the present study extends results of previous studies by showing that an SDT-based TPD program can be beneficial for all need-supportive dimensions, given that the trajectory of change was curvilinear (increased and then plateaued) for autonomy support and structure, and there was no decrease in involvement. Such changes in the treatment condition also imply fidelity to the intervention material; that is, teachers delivered the intervention as intended. Finally, this study is the first to demonstrate that such an SDT-based TPD program is able to improve the motivating style of elementary school teachers who are not PE specialists and attended only a few PE courses during their preservice training.

In contrast to our hypothesis, even though the scores for the need-thwarting dimensions of motivating style were lower in the treatment than in the control condition (Figure S4 days-f in the online supplemental material), these differences were not significant. These results could be due to low ratings for these dimensions at the beginning of the study (a floor effect). Moreover, these behaviors could be more difficult to change (Reeve, 2009). Research shows that several contextual factors influence whether and to what extent a person in a position of authority will display a controlling motivating style during instruction (Matosic, Ntoumanis, & Quested, 2016; Pelletier et al., 2002; Reeve, 2009). Such factors need to be taken into account by future research because they may affect how new information about motivating styles—such as the one delivered in TPD programs—is understood, integrated, accepted, or rejected (Reeve et al., 2014).

Another explanation for the lack of differences between conditions in need-thwarting behaviors is that our TPD was more focused on need-supportive motivating style than on need-thwarting. For example, for need-thwarting behaviors, teachers were provided with a detailed presentation of these behaviors and their consequences on students, but there was no practical demonstration of those behaviors. For need-supportive behaviors, teachers were provided with the same amount of information, but they also benefited from practical examples, advice, and discussion as to how to be need supportive, and they implemented these behaviors during a role play. It is possible that beliefs about need-thwarting behaviors (e.g., that these behaviors can be used concurrently with need-supportive behaviors, or that they are not always detrimental) may have not been adequately addressed in the workshops. Future studies could improve this TPD program by giving more attention to the reduction of a need-thwarting motivating style, given that this style has negative effects on student motivation (Bartholomew et al., 2018; De Meyer et al., 2014).

Effect of the Intervention on Student Physical Activity

Another aim of the current study was the assessment of the effect of the TPD program on the percentage of PE lesson time in which students were involved in MVPA. Accelerometer data showed that this percentage in our sample was higher (i.e., average 60%; Table S1 in the online supplemental materials) than the percentages presented in previous studies (see Hollis et al., 2016 for a review). However, Hollis et al. (2016) showed that in five of the 13 studies included in their review, the mean percentage of PE lesson spent in MVPA was greater than 50%. One of these five studies used the accelerometer (mean MVPA was 71%; Verstraete, Cardon, De Clercq, & De Bourdeaudhuij, 2007). Our results also showed that boys' MVPA was higher than that of girls. These results are in line with those obtained in previous studies (e.g., Verloigne et al., 2012).

In accordance with our hypotheses, multilevel analysis showed that the students in the treatment condition increased the time they spent in MVPA during the three waves of measurement, whereas for those in the control condition, MVPA time was decreased. This finding is all the more interesting given that the magnitude of the effect size was large ($d = 1.33$). In more concrete terms, compared with students in the control condition, those in the treatment condition spent on average 10% more of the PE lesson time engaging in MVPA at the third wave (Table S1 and Figure S3 in the online supplemental material).

It is noteworthy that the percentage of MVPA increased at the same measurement waves as when scores for autonomy support and structure also increased. This finding is in line with previous evidence that showed that the combination of high autonomy support and high structure results in greater student MVPA (Jang et al., 2010). It also suggests that despite the high baseline percentage of MVPA, elementary student MVPA in PE could be sensitive to changes in their teachers' motivating style. Another interesting result relates to the absence of significant random effects at the student level after the random effect of the class was taken into account (Table 3). This suggests there were no between-student differences likely to predict students' MVPA and that the potential explanatory variables could be at the teacher/class level (e.g., session organization and teacher objective motivating style during PE lessons). Overall, these results reinforce the idea that students' MVPA in PE is influenced by teachers' behaviors and that the latter could be trained to adopt a more need-supportive style and potentially to avoid a need-thwarting motivating style.

Limitations and Conclusion

The present study showed that a PE TPD program grounded on SDT could lead to several teacher and student benefits, but as with all studies, our study had some limitations. The first limitation was the small sample of teachers. Yet, we made substantial efforts to recruit a larger number of teachers by (a) contacting the administrators of 249 schools (with a potential pool of more than 1,000 teachers) and (b) adding our TPD in the pool of the 150 TPDs offered by academic authorities to the primary school teachers. Only 15 teachers chose this TPD focused on PE, whereas many more teachers were enrolled in the other ones focused on others school subjects (e.g., French, mathematics, sciences and history). As a result, the study is underpowered at the teacher level, and thus we are limited in making conclusions about the effect, or lack of it, of our TPD program (see Button et al., 2013 for an overview of low statistical power issues). Future research is clearly warranted with larger sample sizes. Moreover, additional studies should be carried out to understand why primary school teachers are not interested a lot in PE TPD. A second limitation of this study was that it was not possible to collect data at baseline (i.e., before the first TPD session). Despite the addition of several control variables, we cannot be sure that the treatment condition and control condition were equivalent before the intervention. This issue could have affected our results if one of the conditions had higher scores than the other one before the intervention. However, this is not likely to have been the case, as no difference between the conditions was found in the first wave of measurement, but the differences emerged later on in the study. Additionally, demographical variables (i.e., gender and teaching experience) were included in the models as covariates. The findings revealed that the conditions are equivalent regarding these covariates and that adding these variables in the regression analyzes does not affect the results. A third limitation was that teachers' motivating styles were only assessed by observation. If the observation of teacher styles has several

advantages to test the effectiveness of the training, it could be interesting also to examine the sensitivity of the students to the change in their teacher's motivating styles by using self-reported questionnaires validated for children. In the same vein, to have a better understanding of the mechanisms explaining the link between teachers' motivating style and students' PA behaviors, it would be relevant to assess students' psychological needs as a mediator, using a validated scale for this age range. A fourth limitation was that the teachers in the two experimental groups did not receive equal attention, but a "pragmatic" intervention was tested by giving the teachers in the control condition a minimal TPD program. A fifth limitation was that for security reasons, it was not possible to assess MVPA at the fourth wave of measurement. Consequently, the full effect of the intervention for MVPA was not known and mediation analysis could not be performed. In the same vein, the effects of the intervention on leisure-time PA were not examined. Future research could examine whether this "stand alone" intervention is sufficient to increase out-of-class PA or whether it is necessary to build comprehensive school PA programs including PE as an intervention component (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2013).

In conclusion, the results of the current study shed new light on SDT-based studies in PE by looking at the effects of a TPD program that was theory-based, had a didactical content, delivered multiple sessions of TPD, included a group discussion, offered ongoing support, and addressed teachers' beliefs about motivation. Results showed that (a) providing primary school teachers only with a notebook improved structure but was not enough to change other dimension of motivating style (i.e., results for the control condition group), (b) teachers' autonomy support and structure had an upward trajectory in the SDT-based TPD program, and (c) the students of teachers who benefited from the SDT-based TPD program showed increased physical investment. Given these findings, we conclude that (a) SDT represents a valuable theoretical framework to consider in PE TPD programs in primary schools, and (b) to have an impact on all need-supportive dimensions, it is important to incorporate all six design features for effective SDT-based TPD programs (Su & Reeve, 2011). By showing the effectiveness of a training combining motivational theory with practical lesson planning, role playing, and individualized guidance, the present study yields practical insights to guide the training of elementary school preservice or in-service teachers.

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