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## **Low Skilled adults' memories about their Physical Education Teachers**

### **Los recuerdos de adultos con baja competencia motriz sobre sus Profesores de Educación Física**

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#### **Abstract**

The main purpose of this study was to analyze retrospectively the memories of a group of adults with low skills and the relationships between their memories and their physical education teachers during their school time. Ten adults (7 women and three men) participated in this study, aged between 25 and 56 years that declared to be low skilled during their school days. In order to carry out this study, a semi-structured interview was conducted focusing the attention on obtaining memories of participants in their PE classes during their schoolage, and mainly their perceptions and feelings about their Primary and Secondary PE teachers. Results showed that the memories of behaviors and personality of their PE teachers were more important for participants than the learning from activities that their PE teachers taught. The feelings and emotions about his/her PE teachers were mostly negative, characterized by humiliation, abandonment, lack of help or indifference towards them. For these participants, their PE teachers did not live up to their needs. Knowing these memories had permitted the researchers to know a hidden part of the PE subject that is referred to a sector of the school population that shows low motor competence.

**Key words:** Autobiographical memories; Low skilled; Clumsiness, Adults; School Physical Education; Teachers.

#### **Resumen**

El objetivo principal de este estudio fue analizar retrospectivamente los recuerdos de un grupo de adultos torpes y sus relaciones con sus profesores de educación física durante su época escolar. Diez adultos (7 mujeres y tres hombres) participaron en este estudio, con edades comprendidas entre 25 y 56 años, que declararon ser poco competentes en educación física durante sus años escolares. Para llevar a cabo este estudio, se desarrolló una entrevista semi-estructurada enfocada en obtener recuerdos de los participantes en sus clases de educación física, y principalmente sus percepciones y sentimientos sobre sus profesores de educación física tanto de primaria como de secundaria. Los resultados mostraron que los recuerdos de los comportamientos y de la personalidad de sus profesores de educación física eran más importantes para los participantes que las actividades de aprendizaje que estos profesores les proponían. Estos sentimientos y emociones sobre sus profesores de educación física fueron en su mayoría negativos, caracterizados por la humillación, abandono, falta de ayuda o indiferencia hacia ellos. Para estos adultos, los profesores de educación física no supieron acometer sus necesidades. Conocer estos recuerdos permite conocer una parte oculta de la asignatura y que se refiere a un sector de la población escolar que muestra baja competencia y torpeza en las clases.

**Palabras clave:** Recuerdos autobiográficos; Baja Competencia, Torpeza, Educación Física Escolar; Adultos; Profesores.

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## Introduction

Autobiographical memories, as reported by low skilled adults, tend to emphasize the negative experiences and situations that they lived during their school days. These clumsy adults remember with strong emotions their experiences in Physical Education (PE), and how those memories, positive or negative, may affect their perception of the PE profession and the role of physical activities in their lives (Sidwell & Walls, 2014). The purpose of this research was to explore the autobiographical memories that a group of adults, who considered themselves clumsy, had about their physical education classes and especially their PE teachers.

To date Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy research has not paid much attention to know how adults lived their experiences of low motor competence in Physical Education (PE) and how was the behavior of their PE teachers. Accordingly, it remains unclear whether these experiences influenced the adoption of passive lifestyles in the adulthood (Bouffard, Watkinson & Thompson, 1996, Tal-Saban, Ornoy & Panush, 2014).

Autobiographical memory theory (AMT) tries to understand the memories for the events that occurs in one's life (Conway & Rubin, 1993). According to AMT, memories must be temporally and spatially definable (*When and where they happened?*) and related to a specific time (*school days*), and a specific place (*the PE classes*). The main question is: *what has happened at that time?* These events have an important personal significance for the individuals who remember them.

The autobiographical knowledge serves to ground the self in memories of a remembered reality (Conway, 2001). Following AMT researchers highlighted three levels of specificity (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000). Firstly, the moment associated to a certain specific period of life (*the school age*). The second related to general events (*the PE classes*) and the third one linked to exclusive particular facts (*positive or negative experiences*). Most of these memories are emotional memories that arise in their minds when a word or a key situation arises. Major components of autobiographical memory theory are: (a) narrative, (b) imagery, and (c) emotion. Methods used to explore it have included (a) recall of diary entries after months or years, (b) retrieval of memories associated with a major event (e.g., flashbulb memory of an injury in a PE class), and (c) the memory probe method in which a memory is triggered by a cue or probe. Studies of autobiographical memory have used various types of probes or cue words (e.g., an object, an activity, or affect) to trigger recall of events. Specifically, the current research used terms related to PE objects (e.g. gymnastic apparatus), actions (e.g., tasks), and behaviors (e.g., rebukes and punishments) were used. These specific prompts may call for memories that an individual has about a theme or general category of events. When autobiographical memories refer to negative experiences, the affections become the most remarkable aspect of the memory of individuals (Walls, 2001). As indicated by Boyer (2009), autobiographical memories cause individuals to re-experience situations that they experienced in past times in a kind of mental journey into the past.

Rothenberg (1994) study about school memories recollected the best and worst experiences that students had in different subjects. Worst experiences were related to feelings of humiliation. The most intense memories always present a wide range of stimuli that evoke them. Remembering a very stressful event in a PE class such as having to climb a rope in front of classmates can provoke vivid memories.

We were interested in the memories for the events that occurred to these adults during their school PE classes.

Research to date is not prolific in the exploration of adult's memories during their school PE classes. Thomas (1985) carried out a study with adult women about their experiences in PE highlighting that more than half of them hated the subject, having vivid memories of the worst moments in hockey, the most hated activities, and where in which they recognized being forced to compete with their skills handicap during the games. More recently, Sidwell and Walls (2014) explored positive and negative students' memories of PE. Some themes that emerge in this study were embarrassment (e.g., punishment), being picked the last or bullying. One aspect that their findings highlighted was how their PE teachers yelled at them in front of the whole class.

In this same line of research, different researchers tried to understand what motivated students to love or hate during PE classes (Casey & Quennerstedt, 2015; Beltran & Devis, 2019; Beltran, Devis, Peiró & Brown, 2012; Gabrus, 2014; Ntoumanis, Pensgaard, Martín & Pipe, 2004; Spencer-Cavaliere & Rintoul, 2012; Sinelnikov & Hastie, 2010, and which variables (e.g. students' characteristics, teachers, type of activities, methodologies, parents, etc.) contributed to that experience being positive or negative (Fitzpatrick & Watkinson, 2003; Kirby, Williams, Thomas & Hill, 2013, Missiuna, Moll, King, Stewart & MacDonald, 2008, Williams, Thomas & Kirby, 2015).

Physical education can generate avoidance behaviors among students when it becomes a source of negative experiences. For example, behaviors such as rejecting both the physical education subject and its teacher can cause the deployment of strategies that allow them to cope with the situations they perceive as a threat (Carlson, 1995; Henderson, Knight, Losse & Jongmans, 1991; Portman, 1995). In this sense, research suggests that PE programs with their tasks and activities, the atmosphere of the classes, the way of selecting the groups for the games or the excessive competitiveness, promotes a pedagogical climate that hinders the students' desire to participate in the classes (Ntoumanis, Pensgaard, Martín & Pipe, 2004; Thomas, 1985). Then emotional experiences are likely to become vivid memories. The negative experiences and the aforementioned situations may provoke, have a greater facility to be evoked due to the personal meaning that these experiences had for the protagonists despite long time passed.

At the core of the teaching-learning process, the PE teacher is responsible for encouraging all students to have the opportunity to develop their motor skills to the fullest, and then to reach every single student their maximum level of motor competence. Martinek (1981) clearly showed the role of PE teachers in the development of motor competence in children is to support the learning process of their students, placing them at the center of the educational process. PE teachers must create the appropriate learning climate, configure learning contexts, and select and offer the best learning experiences (Stean, 2009). In addition, teachers must generate expectations that significantly influence the perceptions that schoolchildren have of their own motor competence and give knowledge about the usefulness that this subject can have for their lives (Martinek, Holland, & Seo, 2019). Given the amount of time that individuals spend in school from kindergarten to graduation from high school, their "remembered reality" can offer a view of the breadth of experiences that have influenced their learning and future life choices. Individuals often report the long-lasting impact of the teachers' behavior during classes.

The purpose of this study was to explore the autobiographical memories of a group of low skilled adults about their PE teachers during their school age.

## Method

### *Participants*

Adult participants in this study identified themselves as clumsy in PE during their school days. To assess whether they could take part in the study they answered a questionnaire elaborated for this purpose and called *PE Questionnaire*. This *PE Questionnaire* contained 10 statements selected from a review of studies of different specialists (Kirby and Rosenblum, 2008). Examples of these questions were: *Did you avoid going to PE classes?*, *Did you consider that you were a low skilled student in PE?*, *Were you chosen the last to be part of the teams?*, *Did your classmates laugh at you for your lack of motor competence?*, *Did you have difficulties to carry out the physical exercises in the PE classes?* or *Do you think you are not good at sports?*. Members of the research team used their personal contacts to find participants. Given the difficulty of finding participants who met the established requirements, a limited snowball technique was carried out. Candidates were asked to complete de PE Questionnaire about their motor competence in PE. An affirmative answer to seven or more of the statements allowed considering that this person was appropriate for the study. Ten people were selected of 15 candidates. Five were excluded because they did not show the profile of low competence requested.

The gender of participants was skewed with six women and four men. The ages ranged from 25 to 56 years old, showing different education, lifestyles and professions. None reported having been diagnosed with disorders of motor skills or other learning difficulties during their school age. Prior to participation all of them received information about the study's objectives and voluntarily accepted to take part in tis study. They also agreed that their experiences and statements could be used to develop the report if it was well guaranteed anonymity when such declarations served as exemplification. This research was carried out considering the international ethical guidelines on human study, and the European and Spanish Law on the Protection of Personal Data. The interviews were conducted in the university's own facilities or in their private residences under a calm, close and private atmosphere.

### *Instrument*

To carry out this study, a semi-structured interview was developed focused on this specific group of people (Smith, 1995). This interview was aimed to obtain an extensive information of their subjective memories in PE classes during their school years. Several axes of interest constituted the interview. One of them was focused on the person of his/her PE teacher. The treatment received from him/her, his/her behavior in class and their feelings about their pedagogical characteristics. The interview process aimed to favoured that participants express themselves with total freedom. All interviews were recorded and transcribed *verbatim* for analysis. Questions about their PE teachers were: *How were your PE teachers with you?*, *Did you like going to his/her classes? (why or why not)*, *Did they help you to carry out the activities that caused you the most to learn? What did they do? How were they treating you in the classes? What did they say or do?*. Also, on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 the lowest score and 10 the highest score), praticipants had to answer three questions: *what score would you give to the physical education teachers you had during your school years?*, *What do you like most about your PE teacher?* and *What did you like least about your gym teacher?*

### *Procedure*

The research team conducted a pilot interview to check if the interviewee understood questions posed. The interviews were conducted in a tone of conversations in which interviewers talked with total freedom about their memories in physical education classes and their PE teachers. The interview was conducted individually in a quiet place without time limitation. The interviewees were invited to verify the transcription of the interview itself in case they wanted to change or modify something of it. The researchers were familiar with qualitative techniques and participated in data collection and analysis, which allowed the findings to be identified through a consensus.

All verbal data were read in detail several times before beginning its analysis. The analysis consisted of summarizing, synthesizing and gathering under a short word or expression of the main themes. These main themes and the most relevant topics were checked by members of the research team for inconsistencies or bias, and to check that they had not missed any topic. These themes were discussed until an agreement was reached between the components of the research group.

In this article, the focus of interest was on the memories about their PE teachers and the effect that the behavior and reactions of these teachers had on them, the value and recognition they gave to their teaching activity, and the impact of these teacher's behaviors on their desire to be active in their adult life.

## **Results**

The result of the participants' evaluation to their teachers was very low. This assessment was not focused on the specific knowledge about the subject but on his/her way of behaving in the classes (Table 1). PE teachers were remembered mainly for how they behaved in class rather than for their knowledge or pedagogical competence; although sometimes both dimensions were mixed to adopt a negative tonality as, it can be read in the textual quotations of the participants that exemplify the assessment. These statements are mainly related to their experiences in Compulsory Secondary Education.

Several major themes emerged when analyzing the interviews. One of them was a ***“lack of help and support received from their teachers to overcome their difficulties”***. For some of the participants this lack of help was the expression of their disinterest in them and their learning process, as well as their ignorance of how to cope with these circumstances:

*“My PE teacher showed no interest in my learning process or if I liked the subject”*  
(Alejandro).

*“My PE teachers were indifferent, since I did not do it well, they did not pay much attention to me, they preferred to talk more with those who did better than me, it did not matter since I went unnoticed”* (Lola).

Table 1. Value given by the participants to their Physical Education Teacher, and what they like most or least.

Participant (*)	Assessment of the PE teacher (1 to 10)	What do you like most?	What do you least like?
Alexa	4	<i>They were permissible in the evaluation (Secondary School)</i>	<i>The indifference.</i>
Celia	6	<i>.... many team sports but that were different, that is, there were no groups ... (Secondary School)</i>	-
Benjamin	4	<i>(Primary School) I always tried not to leave the last ones, the worst at the end. He always encouraged you, motivated you, ... did not force you.</i>	<i>(Secondary School) always had a damaging comment, a comment to ridicule you.</i>
Lara	3-8	<i>Except for a guy who came for a substitution (Mark 3), that I would give to at least an 8 (Secondary School).</i>	<i>The little involvement they had with us, the methodology of work ...</i>
Rosa	7	<i>I had some teacher who was very good, but others neither good nor bad. The worst were when I was younger, every day doing the same, more boring (Primary and Secondary)</i>	<i>That demanded things you could not do. But in general, I do not have a bad memory</i>
Flora	0	<i>Nothing (Primary and Secondary School)</i>	<i>His behavior, little pedagogical, I think, towards me.</i>
Lola	0	<i>No, Nothing, I do not even remember his name ... (Secondary school)</i>	<i>His indifference, his obsession with the best ...</i>
Tomás	0	<i>Nothing. It did not exist for him. (Secondary school)</i>	<i>It made you feel bad, incompetent, and inferior to the rest, uffff.</i>
Daniel	2	<i>Well I do not know, I never considered if they had anything, I could remember about them ... if I had to say something in general, they did not plan to do classes where everyone could enjoy, we all had to go through the same ring (laughs) (Primary and Secondary school)</i>	<i>Well, mmmm, they just did not press me, and they assumed that it was a lost case and they approved me, I suppose that out of pity ...</i>
Alejandro	1	<i>So.... Nothing. It did not help me at all. (Secondary school)</i>	<i>I do not know why he did not help me. Why did not take care to teach me?</i>

\*The names are fictitious

They recognize that in many occasions their teachers were aware of their problems, but either **they did not know how to deal with it** or **did not want to complicate their lives** and avoided working with them:

*“He came and said what had to be done and he approved everyone, no matter whether they tried more or less, and everyone was so happy”* (Daniel).

Memories of these adults about the behavior of their teachers have been recorded with great emotional intensity. They consider that their teachers **confused their movement difficulties** and incompetene to learn motor skills, with a **lack of interest and motivation**:

*“I will never forget once, quite old, about 13-14 years old, it was the first time they asked us to jump a gymnastic apparatus, and I do not remember attending a class before with this trampoline... and (the teacher) forced me to jump, screaming at me, using a derogatory language towards me for at least 5 minutes, I refused and I remember answering badly, I was failed and expelled from the PE class”*(Alexa).

For other participants, the concern of their teachers was to control them, not to miss class, and to behave well rather than to teach them how to master the skills of the program. Several of the participants highlighted this **controlling aspect of their teachers**:

*“The teacher controlled us intensely, I could not escape, he was always saying my name, of course, so that others would know that I was the low skilled of the class, it was humiliating as I have already mentioned before”* (Flora).

It is this lack of help and support from their teachers that they consider responsible for not improving in PE classes:

*“I think that with the help of the teacher, many of my difficulties would have been solved, but even if I said it, it only gave me courage as if that were enough to solve my problems. The truth is that the teacher I had was not very willing to help me ...”* (Tomás).

Another theme that the participants remember with sadness and regret was **the way in which their teachers formed the groups or play teams**. The traditional tendency to let the students form the teams has been the source of a great outrage to students with low motor competence:

*“... I think that this choice, giving the children this possibility, of course causes that at the end you feel a little inferior, it is normal, because maybe I took a little more antipathy, plus this that you do not want to do it, that you do not like the subject so much, because I did not feel I could do it better either, but sometimes I did not have the opportunity either”*(Lara).

*“But sometimes I felt somewhat withdrawn, a feeling of loneliness or as an outcast of the group. I did not like being chosen the last one”* (Flora).

For the participants in this study, their PE teachers were mainly responsible for their displeasure, dislike and discouragement towards the subject. All these feelings were concrete in **teachers' behaviors and reactions** that served to humiliate them, by attitudes of indifference towards their difficulties, by their contempt and lack of interest towards them, by their lack of involvement at the time of favoring their improvement, and even for ridiculing them in front of other classmates:

*“My teacher criticized me, he exposed me to others as the clumsy in the class, and I had a bad time. It made me feel the dumpy one of the class and it did not help me to play the sport I liked” (Celia)*

This was the global opinion about their PE teachers derived from their memories. Their PE teachers did not worry about them, did not teach them how to overcome the difficulties, ignored them in the class, did not want and probably did not know how help them at all. That made the classes odious for these adults:

*“He did not pay attention to me during classes. He liked to be more with those who did it well, I was invisible ... At least he was not a bad person; otherwise, he would had made me suffer. There was in the school another teacher who was very hard, and the weakest ones had a very bad time with him. I passed the subject because everyone passed it” (Benjamin).*

*“Well, it was a martyrdom. To do something that you do not like in advance makes you feel bad, and furthermore it makes you feel incompetent, and inferior to the rest, ¡uffff!” (Lola)*

However, not all the interviewees showed negative opinions about their teachers. Some expressed good memories about them:

*“Eh ... ok, and, I have good memories of them. I had about four or five (PE teachers) in my life, but I have good memories of quite a few of them” (Rosa)*

## **Discussion**

The main purpose of this study was to explore the memories that a group of low skilled adults had about their PE teachers when they were schoolchildren. Research has verified differences of how low skilled students and students without problems of motor competence, remember their PE classes.

For individuals without motor competence problems, PE classes were more pleasant (Sidewell & Walls, 2014) but clumsy students declare to have had poor pupil-teacher relationships and dislikes because teachers' lack of praise, attention or their biased to more competent students (Ntoumanis et al (2004). Different studies have shown that between 30% and 87% of clumsy children at school, continued with that low motor competence during their adulthood (Williams, Thomas & Kirby, 2015). In fact, this low motor competence might be still present in their professional activities and during their daily adult life. Streaan (2009) highlighted in his study that the memory of the personality of teachers had been for these students more important than the learning activities that he/she could present in PE classes and dropout PE subject is not an option during primary and secondary school, which is compulsory up to a certain age.

Participants in this study developed a negative attitude towards PE because their negative experiences in their classes, and these results are useful to show that teaching practices are not always the main issue for low skilled students when they refuse the PE classes. This fact is contrary to the PE teachers that consider that the problem of these low competent students is a problem of motivation or interest. The analysis of the memories of these adults shows us that the main issue is a lack of pedagogical competence on the part of the teachers to be able to tackle this type of difficulties (Ruiz, 2020).

In the present study, participants described in detail their negative memories about PE classes. These negative experiences in PE were due to: (i) their inability to respond to teachers' demands, (ii) the behavior of their peers and, especially, (iii) the behavior and lack of help from their PE teachers. These facts were evident in the memories of this group of adults. Previous findings

highlighted that during primary and secondary education many positive attitudes change to negative due to the relationships that they established with the subject and with their teachers. In this sense, schoolchildren with low motor competence are characterised by not developing a positive attitude towards this school subject (Ladwig, Vazou & Ekkerakis, 2018; Tal-Saban, Ornoy & Panush, 2014).

In recent decades, interest in clumsy schoolchildren has increased markedly (Cairney, 2015, Sugden & Chambers, 2005; Ruiz, 2018). This interest has typically been concerned on therapeutic areas, whereas studies on Physical Education are still scarce (Hands & Parker, 2019; Gómez, Ruiz & Mata, 2006; Ruiz, 2020). It should not be hidden any longer that there are schoolchildren in PE classes who present real difficulties in the learning of motor skills, and the PE teachers are the first educators who deal with this problem at the school (Ruiz, Gómez, Jiménez, Ramón & Peñaloza, 2015; Ruiz & Palomo, 2018). PE classes are social contexts where students are exposed to the eyes of others (teachers and peers), to their expectations and their assessment. This could be the reason why the memories of their classes and the lived experiences of humiliation, anxiety and contempt that they received from their teachers have been well recorded in their memories (Ruiz, Palomo, Gómez & Navia, 2018; Sidwall & Walls, 2014).

The memories provided by participants in this study allow us to infer that they have structured their autobiographical memory about their PE classes in thematic areas relevant to their personal, emotional and social lives. One of these main categories was their teachers, and with a specific reference to negative memories compared to positive ones. These memories have remained very vivid during years, showed a clear recency effect. These most vivid memories were their relationships with their teachers and classmates, the humiliations received in class, their inability to carry out the exercises, or the experience of being chosen the last ones for the teams. This indicates the importance that these kinds of experiences had on these persons for the rest of their lives. Present findings are in accordance with reported students' perceptions during the PE subject, as the embarrassment their teacher made and the constant harassment the teacher had towards them for their lack of motor competence (Ludwig, Vazou & Ekkerakis, 2018). Memories of our participants were colored by feelings and emotions that generated a pessimistic style, features of alienation and learned incompetence (Carlson, 1995, Ruiz, 2000, Spencer-Cavaliere & Rintoul, 2012). These autobiographical memories allow highlighting the role that PE teachers played in this process of hopelessness and alienation. These adults remember that their teachers didn't helped them, rather they humiliated, ridiculed or were ignored by them, and sometimes the only exit that remained were to show a hostile behavior that teachers interpreted as a problem of attitude and/or lack of motivation.

Those thoughts and behaviors were repeated in other studies carried out in different cultural contexts (Cardinal, Yan & Cardinal, 2013, Barney, Prusak, Beddoes & Eggett, 2016; Beltrán, Devis, Peiró & Brown, 2012). Although these low skilled students always try to go unnoticed in class, when they were detected by their PE teachers, they were considered students with lack of motivation and interest. PE teachers did not know how to live up to the events, their pedagogical practices were not very favorable to low skilled students and did not offered curricular adaptations (Fitzpatrick & Watkinson, 2003; Lauritsalo, Sääkslahti and Rasku-Puttonen, 2012). The humiliation received in class is a constant in most of the studies carried out. One of the most painful situations was referred to being chosen the last for teams (Cardinal, Yan & Cardinal, 2013; Carlson, 1995; Barney, Prusak, Beddoes & Eggett, 2016; Ladwig, Vazou & Ekkerakis, 2018). To let the students, organize the teams is one crystallized custom that many teachers have, it has been demonstrated that this continues to be as a source of humiliation, anxiety and fear to the less competent student.

The memories of these adults showed that they were always excluded, despised, ridiculed, and mistreated by their peers with the consent of the teacher. One of the participants used the sense of humor to narrate these painful situations, indicating with irony that when the team's organization occurred, he considered himself as a gift, a gift that nobody wanted, and that the teacher gave "this gift" obligatorily to a group that did not want it at all. Streaan (2009) manifested that PE classes are contexts in which it is easy to develop perdurable memories of great emotional content. As this researcher indicated, it was a context where it was "*robbed the taste for physical activities*". In our case, this emotional content has been mainly negative and such statements also have been declared by the participants. Nine out ten participants declared that they do not practice physical activities regularly and declare not to need them in their lives.

Despite the feelings and thoughts that the participants in this study have shown, it is important not to generalize these results, since there are more teachers who want to offer satisfactory experiences to all their students than those who cause negative experiences due to bad practice. It would be very unfair to say that physical education is a subject that generates discomfort in schoolchildren, but it is appropriate to express that it does not adequately differentiate schoolchildren with low motor competence, and does not offer them the means and attention necessary to help them overcome their difficulties. Hence the importance of knowing these circumstances to be able to offer necessary training to future teachers so that they can include all schoolchildren in their classes appropriately and favor a successful motor competence (Ruiz, 2020; Tolminson, 2015).

## Conclusions

One of the main consequences of this study is that a better understanding of low skilled students in PE is important not only from a theoretical but also from a practical perspective. It is necessary to study what low motor competence means for children and adolescents in PE (Gómez, Ruiz & Mata, 2006; Ramón & Ruiz, 2015; Ruiz, 2020).

Moving with lack of skill may have different origins. It can on the one hand, be framed in what is known as Developmental Coordination Disorders (DCD), and which are included in diagnostic's manuals (Hands & Parker, 2019). The narrations of a part of the adults of this study, indicate us that if they had been properly evaluated at school age, some of them would have been diagnosed with this difficulty.

On the other hand, it is appropriate to consider that low motor competence can be closely related to a "deficit of activity", something that has been highlighted more than two decades ago (Bouffard, Watkinson, and Thompson, 1996) and that probably nowadays is increasing very quickly among our schoolchildren. The combination of lack of experience and practice, accumulated failure, teacher malpractice and lack of motivation usually generates an atmosphere of hopelessness between them (Martinek et al., 2019). This negative combination leads them not to feel comfortable in this subject and not make the decision to try to improve their motor skills in the future. Alike, ignoring this circumstance may entail that these students fall into an incompetence cycle which is not desirable by any means (Streaan, 2009). As indicated by Cardinal, Yen and Cardinal (2013) PE classes can achieve the opposite of what is proposed. PE classes can generate an aversive reaction and hatred to everything that means to practice physical and sports activities among practitioners.

In this frame, PE teachers play a paramount role, since they have the responsibility to show the benefits that this subject has during childhood and adolescence, and at the end, they have the responsibility to offer the appropriate PE experiences according to the different levels of motor competence. Based on the current findings, it can be stated that teachers are not always inclined to help, support and facilitate the learning of the less competent. Lauritsalo, Sääkslahti

and Rasku-Puttonen (2012) found that the biggest number of adults' messages considered that PE was traumatic. PE teacher's behaviours and attitudes were the main focus of complaints for most of them. The teacher's behaviour was often mentioned. The teachers' style of teaching the subject or of treating the pupils was heavily criticized. Adults participants in Streat (2009) study declared that their physical education teachers will destroy their confidence in their motor competence. We must remember that PE teachers are responsible for establishing a positive atmosphere of teaching focused on the progression and development of student's competencies, and a task-oriented learning motivational climate. They are who should be more compassionate and avoid pedagogical behaviors that facilitate the humiliation and ridicule of the less competent. Instead, they should be more sensitive to differences, and think about the kind of decisions they make within the class, as, for example, when organizing teams or establishing the conditions of practice.

Successful experiences will attract, motivate and make them feeling high. Without a doubt, it is necessary to reflect on the profound effect that teachers' behaviors and attitudes have on their students, and especially on those who have coordination difficulties and low motor competence. However, this is the harsh reality.

As Ennis (2000) wrote "*like canaries kept in coal mines to warn miners of toxic gases, disengaged students alert us to serious problems in our physical education and teaching practices. Disengaged students often describe their plight as prisoners in an uninteresting, unjust and often unseccesful curriculum.... these students also provide an early warning system to alert us to ineffective, negative, or harmful pedagogical practices*" (p. 119-120).

Disengaged children probably will finish as disengaged adults and it is important to find out and analyze in more detail what lies behind this (Lauritsalo, Sääkslahti & Rasku-Puttonen, 2012). In fact, some daily memory studies require participants to report on memories of real events with which their memories can be compared and graded, memories of school experiences are largely not verifiable.

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