

1 **Transcultural impact of learning to teach Sport Education on preservice teachers' perceived**  
2 **teaching competence, autonomy and academic motivation**

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6     **Transcultural impact of learning to teach Sport Education on preservice teachers' perceived**  
7                     **teaching competence, autonomy and academic motivation**

8     **Purpose.** The purpose of this study was to compare the impact of a learning to teach Sport  
9     Education experience on preservice teachers from Spain, Chile, and Mexico perceived professional  
10    competence, autonomy, and academic motivation; and to explore participants' perceptions of their  
11    country's socio-cultural and curricular aspects that may influence Sport Education implementation.

12    **Method.** Framed by the 'pedagogy of dialogue' and a 'living the curriculum' approach, three  
13    consecutive mini-seasons on invasion alternative games were enacted ( $n = 30$  lessons). A quasi-  
14    experimental pre-test-post-test mixed-methods design was followed with a total of 163 preservice  
15    teachers. Quantitative data on preservice teachers teaching competence, autonomy, and academic  
16    motivation were collected through three validated questionnaires. Focus group interviews and field  
17    notes were used to gather qualitative information.

18    **Results.** Main quantitative analysis exposed no relevant differences among the transcultural sample  
19    of preservice teachers related to the analysed variables. Qualitative analysis showed the power of  
20    contextual factors to filter their understanding of the model.

21    **Conclusion.** The dialogical nature of the approach and the mini-seasons structure, allowed the  
22    preservice teachers to achieve a better understanding of the pedagogy of Sport Education and to  
23    optimise their motivation to use it in the future. The rigidity of the national curriculum and the  
24    custodial nature of school reality however present strong barriers to this end.

25    Keywords: Teacher education, pedagogical models, teacher agency, socio-cultural background.

26

27           One of the most relevant and influential aspects for the future welfare of society is the initial  
28 education of preservice teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2006). As Weber, Gold, Prilop, and  
29 Kleinknecht (2018) recently noted, the improvement of their professional vision during college,  
30 indirectly enhances their future performance. Previous work has addressed that physical education  
31 teacher education (PETE) programs need to provide meaningful and powerful experiences to help  
32 preservice teachers examine and reframe assumptions about themselves as teachers and change  
33 agents (Tannehill & MacPhail, 2014). Conversely, authors as Darling-Hammond (2006) and  
34 Lawson (1983) emphasized the weak impact of teacher education programs, in the life of a teacher.

35           One of the challenges for PETE, is to explore its effect to support graduates' contributions to  
36 students' learning in different school contexts (O'Sullivan & Parker, 2018). In the last decade, a  
37 growing body of literature has advocated and explored the potential of pedagogical models that may  
38 be used to enact physical education curriculum (Kirk, 2013; Casey & MacPhail, 2018). Fletcher and  
39 Casey (2014) noted for example, that it is important to explore how teacher education can teach  
40 preservice teachers, to challenge their beliefs and become skillful proponents of robust and  
41 innovative approaches to teaching. The latest published review on models-based practice,  
42 highlighted that despite the improvement experienced regarding the attitude and enthusiasm of the  
43 active teachers, they felt like beginners when integrating the selected models in their teaching  
44 (Casey, 2014). The relationship between schools and universities was cited as a decisive factor to a  
45 sustained incorporation of these models (Casey & MacPhail, 2018). It has also been suggested, that  
46 teacher educators need to challenge, not only students' expectations around what it means to teach,  
47 but also their own pedagogies of teacher education (Fletcher & Casey, 2014). Nevertheless, despite  
48 the complexity of transferring learning from college to schools (Dillon, Tannehill, & O'Sullivan,  
49 2017), and some critical perspectives around the enactment of a model (or models) based approach  
50 (Landi, Fitzpatrick, & McGlasha, 2016), preservice teachers' first perceptions after being taught  
51 how to use the models at schools are quite positive and optimistic (McCaughy, Sofu, Rovegno, &  
52 Curtner-Smith, 2004).

53           The actual implementation of a model (or models) based approach in schools will be  
54 possible if teacher educators and PETE programs propose a robust and innovative approach to  
55 learning how to teach using pedagogical models (Fletcher & Casey, 2014). Currently, Sport  
56 Education and how is introduced to novice and experienced teachers has been extensively studied  
57 (Deenihan & MacPhail, 2017; Hordvik, MacPhail, & Ronglan, 2017; Hordvik, MacPhail, Ronglan,  
58 2019a; McCaughy et al. 2004; McMahon & MacPhail, 2007). It is well known that this  
59 pedagogical model considers the conception of sport from a global perspective, acquiring an  
60 intrinsic motivation towards practice which helps increase students' sporting culture, enthusiasm,  
61 and motor competence (Siedentop, Hastie, & van der Mars, 2020). In learning to teach through  
62 Sport Education, Hordvik et al. (2019a) reported that the design of "comprehensive learning  
63 experiences" (p.13) allowed preservice teachers to develop the complex understanding of teaching  
64 and learning using Sport Education. In this sense, McMahon and MacPhail (2007) also reported a  
65 focus on the social context of the classroom in the first experiences in which the model was used.  
66 Hordvik et al. (2019a) also suggested that teacher educators need to acknowledge that learning to  
67 teach Sport Education and other pedagogical models is more than learning how to deliver models of  
68 teaching. They advocated for a "continuing growth of understanding where preservice teachers  
69 develop knowledge through various teaching and learning experiences tailored around their needs  
70 and concerns" (Hordvik et al., 2019a, p.14). It is generally accepted that preservice teachers have to  
71 'live the curriculum' as a participant to gain a better appreciation of content and pedagogical  
72 content knowledge (Deenihan et al. 2011; Dillon, et al., 2017).

73           To allow for a meaningful enactment, teacher educators using the living the curriculum  
74 approach, would be required to possess considerable expertise in both the content areas they are  
75 teaching and the pedagogical models (Deenihan et al., 2011). It is also worth noting however that  
76 sometimes, living the curriculum did not appear to prepare the preservice teachers for utilizing  
77 'teachable moments' despite having experienced such teachable moments during teacher education  
78 (Dillon et al., 2017). In this sense, the true power of the living the curriculum approach might be

79 best observed when applied with preservice teachers from different countries in which the national  
80 curriculum and socio-cultural background is different. This is something that to date, has not been  
81 researched in learning to teach Sport Education. Hortigüela, Fernández-Río, González-Calvo, and  
82 Pérez-Pueyo (2018) explored the impact of Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility with  
83 physical education teachers from different countries and reported that they held different views of  
84 its effects on social goals, discipline strategies, and autonomy support. These differences were  
85 based on their socio-cultural background, the teacher education program, and their professional  
86 identity (Hortigüela et al., 2018).

87         These variables have been profoundly explored through the lens of Occupational  
88 Socialization Theory (Lawson, 1983). For instance, Richards, Templin, and Gaudreault (2013)  
89 recommended not only the involvement of teachers in discussions and reflections about physical  
90 education teacher identity, but also about the organizational challenges and the reality of school life.  
91 They suggested that PETE programs should provide preservice teachers with opportunities to  
92 dialogue about their sense of agency and voice their opinions related to teaching physical education  
93 (Richards et al., 2013). In the same vein, Jacobs, Richards, Wahl-Alexander, and Ressler (2019),  
94 highlighted the potential for preservice teachers to develop a socio-political awareness and  
95 relational skills through an outdoor education field experience. They framed as an important goal of  
96 this experience, the discussion about the socio-political challenges the preservice teachers will  
97 likely face as beginning teachers in their workplace. It is important to note however, that despite  
98 positive experiences reported in PETE about learning to teach Sport Education (McMahon &  
99 MacPhail, 2007), professional socialization is often viewed as the weakest form of socialization  
100 (Stran & Curtner-Smith, 2009). The pedagogy of dialogue (Fernández-Balboa & Marshall, 1994) is  
101 aligned with Occupational Socialization Theory. Dialogue and discussion have to be promoted  
102 among preservice teachers for a better understanding of the socialization into the teaching  
103 profession. Pascual (2006) advocated for the pedagogy of dialogue as a mechanism for PETE to  
104 develop the personal, as well as professional, preparation of preservice teachers. This dialogical



131 experience in the three countries had eight-years experience in initial teacher education and  
 132 professional development with an expertise in pedagogy, and a publication record about  
 133 pedagogical models in physical education. He travelled to the different countries and was part of the  
 134 research team (first author). The first author's University's Research Ethics Committee approved the  
 135 research protocol according to the Helsinki Declaration. In addition, the preservice teachers  
 136 completed informed consent forms (giving right to withdraw at any time and confidentiality).

137

138 Table 1

139 *Participants and study context.*

University/degree	No. of students	Course	Aim/Objective	Program description and professional socialization
Spanish University/ Bachelor's degree in Primary Education	58	Pedagogy of physical education	To comprehend the principles contributing to cultural, personal and social training through physical education.	Strategies and methods in the teaching of physical education are addressed. Professional identity as physical education teachers is generated from the experiences developed in the course and those perceived during the practicum period. Didactics and methodology are studied throughout. The program has a mix of teaching and coaching orientations.
Chilean University/ Bachelor's degree in Physical Education	55	Education for motor skills	To be able to acquire resources in order to foster the active participation in motor tasks in and out of school.	The pedagogical orientation of the program is mostly teacher-centered. There is a focus on the psychomotor development of children and biomedical aspects. The program has a strong coaching and health-related orientation.
Mexican University/ Bachelor's degree in Physical Culture and Sports	50	Pedagogical and didactic principles of physical education	To know and apply pedagogical methods to improve the levels of physical activity and sport as the main way to improve the quality of life.	Different methods and strategies to teach PE and sport are addressed. There is a clear difference between courses related to pedagogy and teaching and those related to sport performance. The program has a strong coaching and health-related orientation.

140

141 **Physical Education national curriculum and acculturation.** The three countries that

142 participated in this study varied in their educational structure and requirements. Pertinent

143 characteristics of physical education in schools include:

- 144 1. Spain: Pre-primary, primary and secondary stages. Different strands in physical education:  
145 physical fitness, sports, and corporal expression. Three hours per week in primary and two  
146 hours per week in secondary of physical education. A mix of teaching and coaching  
147 orientation is embedded within the different contexts.
- 148 2. Chile: Motor learning is very important pre-primary and primary levels from a strong  
149 discovery and exploration perspective. In secondary education, physical education tends to  
150 be equated to physical fitness. The experiential component of motor skills is lost upon  
151 arrival in secondary school. There is a strong to moderate coaching orientation and teacher  
152 directed instruction.
- 153 3. Mexico: In primary and secondary stages one hour a week of physical education occurs in  
154 public schools. In private schools they can freely choose the allocated curriculum time for  
155 physical education. The approach focuses exclusively on sport performance with a strong  
156 coaching orientation and teacher directed instruction.

### 157 **Design**

158 This study followed a pre and post-test mixed-methods design (Thomas, Nelson, &  
159 Silverman, 2015). A pre-test on preservice teachers' teaching competence, autonomy, and  
160 motivation took place before the three units began, while a post-test took place following  
161 completion of instruction (Figure 1). Three validated questionnaires were used to obtain  
162 information about participants before and after experiencing the practical workshops. Focus group  
163 interviews and field notes were also used as data collection instruments.

164

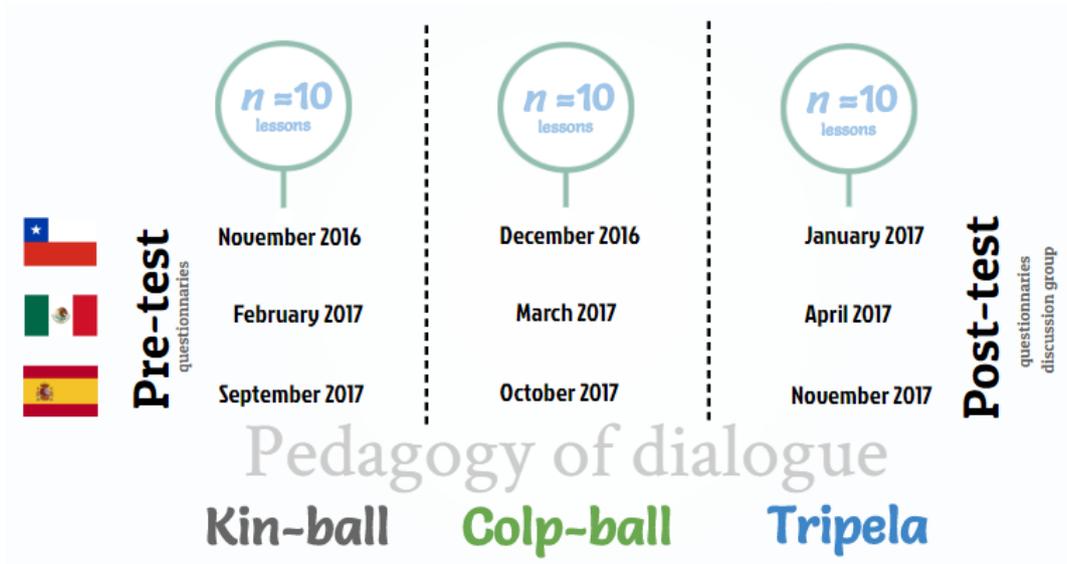


Figure 1. Research design, timeline, and data collection points in the three countries

165           **Procedure.** Following McCaughtry et al. (2004) recommendations, all the preservice  
 166 teachers experienced as participants a total of 30 lessons structured in three mini-seasons of ten  
 167 lessons each that took place over a period of one to two months (depending on the university course  
 168 timetable). Heterogeneous teams in terms of gender and ability were selected through a blind  
 169 selection process (Siedentop et al., 2020) and remained across the whole experience. None of the  
 170 preservice teachers had prior experiences with Sport Education. The five aspects that Hastie (2012)  
 171 noted to appropriately describe a particular unit in Sport Education (extended period of time,  
 172 affiliation within a persistent group, developmentally appropriate competition, taking of various  
 173 roles and responsibilities by students other than that of player, and the festivity atmosphere) were  
 174 implemented consistently across the three settings by the same teacher educator.

175           **Detailed description of the program context.** The three mini-seasons began with two  
 176 lessons, which were initially teacher directed, that focused on the skills and tactics of each game  
 177 small-sided games. In these early lessons, students were also introduced to the rules and officiating  
 178 procedures of the game (Table 2). The next three lessons constituted small-sided games within peer-  
 179 teaching instructional tasks related to the alternative sport being taught. The unit concluded with a  
 180 formal competition spanning three lessons that took the form of a no-elimination, round-robin

181 challenge, with post-competition days of practice and reinforcement of skills and tactics based on the  
182 team performance. After the final games, a closing ceremony provided a formal end to the unit and  
183 various awards were presented to students. Three alternative invasion games were selected to enact  
184 the mini-seasons (Table 3). Novelty, applicability, and alignment of the content with the respective  
185 national curriculum, were the criteria used for this selection.

186 To implement the pedagogy of dialogue, we followed Fernández-Balboa and Marshall (1994)  
187 suggestions: (1) to create a safe environment; (2) it must be ongoing and contextual process (; and  
188 (3) prompted by specific teaching scenarios. A safe environment is one in which participants could  
189 freely talk about the lesson in general, learning potential, pitfalls, going forward, learning enablers,  
190 and learning constraints explained to the preservice teachers. In order to create this safe atmosphere,  
191 as proposed, we explained the preservice teachers that they had the right to speak, the right to  
192 remain silent, and the right to regulate the dialogical process that was, acting as facilitators and  
193 prompting the dialogue. It was also an ongoing process given that it took place throughout the  
194 program and contextual given that it was framed by real teaching scenarios the preservice teachers  
195 lived during the experience. The teacher educator acted as a critical friend to prompt preservice  
196 teachers' perceptions of their country's social, cultural, and curricular aspects that might influence  
197 Sport Education implementation. This conversation took place at the end of each lesson and at the  
198 end of each mini-season. Prompting questions were related to the possibilities of applying Sport  
199 Education within the national curriculum of each country or the different school realities. Some  
200 examples were: to what extent Sport Education could be used in your classes? what challenges and  
201 enablers you envisage? Different aspects related to groupings, skill practice, content development or  
202 teacher-student interactions were also addressed. This guaranteed to properly link between each  
203 mini-season and a better understanding of the model.

204

205 Table 2

206 *Unit plan format of the three mini-seasons.*

<i>Lesson</i>	<i>Phase</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Teacher's role</i>	<i>Preservice's role</i>
1	Teacher directed:	Introduction to teaching approach. Description of daily roles. Team selection	Class leader	Participant
2	Skill development phase	Explanation of the alternative sport. Skill and tactics of the game in team activities	Class leader	Participant
3	Pre-season: work in teams within peer-teaching. Scrimmages	Modified versions of the game. 4 vs 4	Head coach Referee advisor	Coaches, players, learn duty role, practice duty roles
4		Modified versions of the game. 5 vs 5	Head coach Referee advisor	Coaches, players, learn duty role, practice duty roles
5		Modified versions of the game. 6 vs 6	Head coach Referee advisor	Coaches, players, learn duty role, practice duty roles
6	Formal competition: Day one	Tournament: 7 vs 7	Program manager	Duty team roles
7	Practice and reinforcement of skills and tactics from the competition	Student-designed games	Head coach Referee advisor	Coaches, players, learn duty role, practice duty roles
8	Formal competition: Day two	Tournament: 7 vs 7	Program manager	Duty team roles
9	Practice and reinforcement of skills and tactics from the competition	Student-designed games	Head coach Referee advisor	Coaches, players, learn duty role, practice duty roles
10	Culminating event and introducing the next sport	Exhibition day Festivity Award ceremony	Master of ceremonies	Participant

207

208 It should be noted that the first two lessons were not purely direct instruction since, although  
209 the teacher educator had an active role, he interacted with the students and resolved doubts about  
210 the roles played by each participant, the rules, and the technical and tactical aspects of the sport.  
211 Likewise, not all the skills were taught in isolation at the beginning. Game-like learning experiences

212 were used. In lessons 3, 4, and 5, specific technical and tactical aspects were worked on in game-  
 213 based situations, linked to the spatial orientation on the court, individual defense, the zonal, the  
 214 transition attack-defense and the throw to a free zone of rivals. In lesson 6 the first day of  
 215 competition was carried out in real game situation so that in lesson 7 games were developed by the  
 216 students that allowed them to better prepare for the second day of the competition in lesson 8. These  
 217 games dealt with attacking the goal and maintaining possession purposes. The same structure was  
 218 followed in lessons 9 and 10, with a culminating event that included some activities to introduce the  
 219 next mini-season and content.

220

221 Table 3

222 *Structural features of the alternative games taught.*

	Description	Objective	Equipment	Rules
Kin-Ball	An invasion and alternative game in which three mixed teams play (pink, grey and black) consisting of four people each	Throwing the ball by the attacking team and getting it to touch the ground before the receiving team can grab it	1-kg soft ball Diameter 1.2m	Prior to hitting the attacking team decides the colour of the opposite team they want to receive it.
Colp-ball	An invasion and alternative game. Two mixed teams consisting of seven players each participate in it.	The objective consists of putting a ball into the opposite goal by hitting it with the hands.	1-kg soft ball The ball has a dynamic bounce and 70cm in circumference	Players can never touch the ball twice in a row. Players can never touch the ball with the fist The ball can never be grabbed and must be bounced or
Tripela	An invasion and alternative game. Two mixed teams consisting of seven players each participate in it.	The objective consists in putting a ball into the opposite goal by hitting it with the hands.	1-kg soft ball The ball has a dynamic bounce and 70cm in circumference	The ball can be carried in the hand for a distance of three steps The ball cannot be grabbed for more than three seconds; The ball cannot be taken from your opponent's hands.

223

224 **Data collection**

225 There were three forms of data collection: (i) questionnaires, (ii) focus group interviews, and  
 226 (iii) field notes. To minimize the language issues and misunderstanding of the questions, eight  
 227 volunteer students from each country, and non-participants in this research, completed the three

228 questionnaires and participated in an online pilot focus group directed by an independent member of  
229 the research team. After this process, seven questions and three questions of the focus group were  
230 re-written.

231 **Questionnaires.** The preservice teachers completed three questionnaires twice during the  
232 research process, once before and once after the experience. Questionnaires were completed  
233 anonymously thus encouraging students to answer honestly.

234 **Teaching competence questionnaire.** It was designed and validated by Moreno-Murcia and  
235 Silveira (2015). The questionnaire consists of eight items and the questions are preceded by the  
236 following introduction: “What my physical education teachers teach me allows me to be able to...”  
237 For instance, item 4 “analyse, evaluate and assess individual and collective situations, to identify  
238 problems, to interpret data and to formulate solutions to individual or collective problems”. The  
239 responses were collected on a Likert-type scale with score ranges from between 1 (totally disagree)  
240 and 7 (totally agree). High FC = .80 and VME higher than .50 (50.46%) were obtained. The  
241 Cronbach’s alpha this scale presented was of .85. A confidence level of 95% was applied.

242 **Autonomy questionnaire.** The dimension of autonomy of the Satisfaction Scale of  
243 Psychological Needs in Education validated by León et al. (2011) was used in this case. The  
244 questionnaire consists of six items and the questions are preceded by the following introduction: “In  
245 the practical sessions of physical education...” For example, item 6 “I feel free in my decisions”.  
246 The responses were collected on a Likert-type scale with score ranges between 1 (totally disagree)  
247 and 7 (totally agree). High FC = .87 and VME slightly lower than .50 (48.12%) were obtained. The  
248 Cronbach’s alpha this scale presented was of .81. A confidence level of 95% was applied.

249 **Academic Motivation Scale.** The Spanish version of the *Academic Motivation Scale*  
250 (Vallerand et al., 1992) was used in this case. This version was validated by Núñez, Martín-Albo,  
251 and Navarro (2005). The responses were collected on a Likert-type scale whose score ranges varied  
252 between 1 (totally disagree) and 7 (totally agree). The questions are preceded by the following  
253 introduction: “Why are you studying physical education?” Seven factors are measured: a)

254 *demotivation* (four items), for example item 2: “At the time I had good reasons to go to university,  
255 but now I wonder whether I should continue attending it”; b) *external regulation* (four items), for  
256 example item 7: “Because in the future I want to have a ‘good life’”; c) *introjected regulation* (four  
257 items), for example item 12: “Because I want to prove myself that I am capable of succeeding in my  
258 studies”; d) *identified regulation* (four items), for example item 14: “Because it will possibly allow  
259 me to enter the labour market within the field I like”; e) *motivation intrinsic to knowledge* (four  
260 items), for instance item 19: “For the pleasure of knowing more about subjects that appeal me”; f)  
261 *motivation intrinsic to achievement* (four items), for example item 24: “Because university allows  
262 me to experience a personal satisfaction in my quest for excellence within my studies”; g)  
263 *motivation intrinsic to stimulating experiences* (four items), for example item 25: “Because of the  
264 intense moments I experience as I convey my own ideas to others”. High FC = .89 and VME  
265 slightly higher than .50 (50.32%) were obtained. The value of alpha obtained in this study was of  
266 .84 for *demotivation* and *external regulation*, .80 for *introjected regulation* and *identified*  
267 *regulation*, .84 for *motivation intrinsic to knowledge*, .81 for *motivation intrinsic to achievement*  
268 and .74 for *motivation intrinsic to stimulating experiences*. A confidence level of 95% was applied.

269 **Focus group interviews.** Three focus group interviews were held at the end of the  
270 experience (one in each country). Each of them consisted of eight random participants (four men  
271 and four women). The objective was to explore the thoughts and feelings of the preservice teachers  
272 from each country about the experiences after the three mini-seasons around the three dependent  
273 variables. The questions were open-ended (Table 3), allowed preservice teachers to deepen them. It  
274 all helped to create an environment of confidence and tranquillity aimed at seeking a personal  
275 dialogue based on the conversation (Patton, 2002). This structure favors a more varied and deeper  
276 exchange of ideas (Smith & Osborne, 2003). Eight participants in each focus group were considered  
277 an appropriate number within this data collection technique (Sparkes & Smith, 2014).

278

279 Table 4

280 *Basic script of the focus group*

- 
1. In what way do you think this pedagogy helps you to improve (or not) your professional teaching skills?
  2. Could you describe how the pedagogy addresses the autonomy and responsibility for students? And for teachers?
  3. What aspects of this pedagogy do you think may be more motivating or demotivating for students? And for you?
  4. Could you describe in your own words what are the main features of Sport Education?
  5. Could you tell us about the challenges you may have (or not) when applying Sport Education in your country context? What advantages or resistances could it have at a social, cultural and curricular level?
- 

281

282 **Field notes.** To detail the overall setting and provide rich context in each of the three countries,  
 283 notes about the geographic, educational and research setting, participants, and critical reflection,  
 284 were taken by the teacher (Phillipi & Lauderdale, 2017). Overall, it promoted the close monitoring  
 285 of the environment and interactions; documented researcher impressions shortly after they occurred;  
 286 encouraged researcher reflection and identification of bias thus increasing rigor and trustworthiness  
 287 and providing essential context to inform the data analysis. Field notes were also used to document  
 288 the fidelity of treatment in the three countries and to ensure that the teacher educator adhered to the  
 289 outline provided.

#### 290 **Data analysis**

291 Statistical analysis of quantitative data was conducted with the statistical package SPSS  
 292 (version 22.0), while content analysis and constant comparison were used to assess qualitative data.

293 **Questionnaires.** Within the quantitative analysis a repeated measures design (RMD) was used.  
 294 ANOVA was used for independent groups. The analysis was performed by using the statistical  
 295 package SPSS (v. 22.0). Following completion of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test ( $n > 50$ ) and  
 296 acceptance of the null hypothesis ( $p = .131$ ), it is observed that the sample responds to normality  
 297 parameters. Parametric tests were therefore performed.

298 **Focus groups interviews and field notes.** Data analysis was conducted by the second and third  
 299 authors through an amalgamation of an inductive and deductive approach. We intentionally

300 included this outsider perspectives to balance and account for the first author bias, given his role of  
301 teacher educator and researcher (Da Matta, Richards, & Hemphill, 2015). From the cross-pattern  
302 text analysis the most coinciding excerpts were codified in the initially (Saldaña, 2009). Such  
303 excerpts were grouped into categories which were related to the three pre-existing categories  
304 (teaching competence, autonomy, and academic motivation). These categories were the same  
305 factors extracted from the quantitative analysis. Within each factor, content analysis and constant  
306 comparison of answers were used for data triangulation (Libarkin & Kurdziel, 2002). The themes  
307 produced in the first independent analysis were critically examined by all the researchers through a  
308 reflexive dialogue. The reliability was supported through continuous feedback and the participative  
309 analysis by researchers, who revised and refined the subthemes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The  
310 objective was to obtain specific information that deepened and complemented quantitative data,  
311 giving thus greater comprehensibility to the obtained results. The most significant and saturated text  
312 excerpts from each of the analysis categories were presented (Strauss & Corbin, 2002).  
313 Trustworthiness was supported through participative analysis and researcher triangulation on the  
314 part of the three researchers as they reviewed the codes and descriptors (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In  
315 addition, member-checking for credibility and confirmability was done. In this case, all participants  
316 received a verbatim transcription of their interview to verify the correctness of data, clarify  
317 confusing quotes, and add/modify information (some ideas were re-written, due especially to the  
318 different words used in Latin-American and Spanish). A certified Spanish to English translator  
319 completed the translation into English.

320  
321

## **Results**

322 The findings of this study are presented in two parts. In the first, the quantitative results of  
323 the questionnaires are presented, while in the second, the qualitative results of the content analysis  
324 of the focus group interviews and field notes are reported.

325

326 *Questionnaires*

327 The pre-test showed significant differences regarding the teaching competence factor  
 328 between the group from Spain and from Mexico ( $p = .029$ ). There are two significant differences  
 329 obtained between pre-test and post-test (Table 5).

330

331 *Table 5.*332 *Comparison of means by factors for each of the groups in the pre-test-post-test.*

	Pre-test			Post-test			$F^1$	$F^2$
	Mean	SD	Var.	Mean	SD	Var.		
<b>Preservice teachers from Spain</b>								
F.1. Teaching competence	4.87 <sup>*ac</sup>	1.03	1.06	6.68 <sup>**aa</sup>	.31	.09	.89	-
F.2. Autonomy	5.35	.89	.79	6.15	.45	.20	-	-
F.3. Academic motivation	5.61	.82	.67	6.32	.39	.15	-	-
<b>Preservice teachers from Chile</b>								
F.1. Teaching competence	5.27	.74	.54	5.65 <sup>****ba</sup>	.62	.38	-	.93
F.2. Autonomy	5.12	1.1 3	1.27	6.23 <sup>***bb</sup>	.84	.70	.94	-
F.3. Academic motivation	5.85	.56	.31	6.00	.45	.20	-	-
<b>Preservice teachers from Mexico</b>								
F.1. Teaching competence	5.89	.91	.82	6.03	.75	.56	-	-
F.2. Autonomy	6.02	.45	.20	6.31	.22	.04	-	-
F.3. Academic motivation	6.13	.87	.75	6.75 <sup>****cb</sup>	.64	.41	-	.87

333 *Note:* Different superscripts between groups indicate significant differences at  $p < .05$  level;  $f^1$ : size of the pre-test-post-  
 334 test effect;  $f^2$ : size of the effect between post-tests. Measuring range in response from 1 to 7.

335

336 \*Pre-test differences between group A and group C in factor 1

337 \*\*Differences between pre-test and post-test in group A in factor 1

338 \*\*\* Differences between pre-test and post-test in group B in factor 2

339 \*\*\*\*Post-test differences between group B and A in factor 1

340 \*\*\*\*Post-test differences between groups C and B in factor 3

341

342 The first difference refers to the teaching competence factor in the Spanish group ( $p = .008$ ).  
 343 Mean values increased almost two points in this country. The second significant increase occurred  
 344 in the Chilean group regarding the autonomy factor ( $p = .024$ ). In addition, there were two  
 345 significant differences between post-tests. The first one between the Chilean and the Spanish groups  
 346 regarding the teaching competence factor ( $p = .028$ ), since values were higher in Spain. The second

347 difference was found between the Mexican and the Chilean groups regarding the academic  
348 motivation factor ( $p = .042$ ), being this factor higher in Mexico than in either of the other countries.

349 *Focus groups interviews and field notes*

350 Quantitative findings exposed that there were few if any between-country differences that  
351 were clinically important. Therefore, we have decided to focus the qualitative findings of the group  
352 as a whole. All the information extracted from the responses from the focus group interviews and  
353 the field notes was assigned to the developed subthemes within each existing category. By means of  
354 the cross-pattern analysis, the most significant literal text excerpts resulting in each category are  
355 shown together with the developed themes: Managerial features of Sport Education (Teaching  
356 competence); National curriculum constraining preservice teachers' agency (Autonomy); and  
357 Motivation tempered with caution (Academic motivation).

358 *Managerial features of Sport Education*

359 Overall, the preservice teachers from the three countries presented a high satisfaction  
360 concerning the usefulness of Sport Education to improve their teaching competence (258 text  
361 excerpts). For them, the most remarkable features deriving from this pedagogical model were the  
362 diversity of resources that allowed for management in the classroom. In particular, they highlighted  
363 the persisting teams and the roles as the most important managerial variables. As one Spanish  
364 preservice teacher emphasised: "I feel that I will be a more organized and effective teacher if I use  
365 Sport Education in the future – the idea of being in the same team for the whole unit and assuming  
366 different roles really makes a difference". This comment was common from the preservice teachers  
367 in the different countries. They felt that all the rules, routines, and accountability systems associated  
368 with Sport Education, would have an impact on themselves as future physical education teachers. A  
369 Chilean preservice teacher noted for example:

370 We were very surprised that there are such advanced pedagogies in PE for students to learn.

371 It's a pity that the (PE) teaching profession is so devalued in my country. In the end we look  
372 for career opportunities related to performance and rehabilitation because economic benefits

373 are higher and are more socially recognised. However, pedagogies as Sport Education will  
374 really improve our competence and I suppose will make us better PE teachers or health  
375 professionals.

376 This aspect was also noted by the teacher educator in his field notes. He mentioned the better  
377 managerial and instructional competence of the Spanish preservice teachers, but also the  
378 ability to articulate their ideas and reflections around the main managerial features of Sport  
379 Education and how their alignment of this idea.

380 It seems that the Spanish preservice teachers have a better understanding of basic  
381 concepts around teaching and learning. I can see this now after my earlier experience  
382 in Chile and Mexico. The dialogues that we had in Chile for example, were filtered  
383 by the strong coaching and health-related orientation of their respective programs.  
384 Nonetheless, the students also acknowledged the power of the teams and roles. (Spain  
385 field notes).

#### 386 *National curriculum constraining preservice teachers' agency*

387 In terms of autonomy (289 excerpts), preservice teachers from the three countries  
388 valued the importance of Sport Education to increase both teachers and students' autonomy  
389 within the lesson. Particularly, the Chilean and the Mexican students were very surprised  
390 in seeing no need for physical education to be taught with directive and teacher-led  
391 instruction. They all however highlighted the dramatic change of the instructional and  
392 assessment approach used in Sport Education compared to what they had previously  
393 experienced. Therefore, they were cautious about their potential implementation in their  
394 country. One Chilean preservice reported:

395 I could never imagine that teaching PE would be like this. My memories about PE  
396 were totally different. We usually followed teacher's indications and instructions.  
397 This approach is great to improve the autonomy of the students throughout the whole

398 teaching unit. However, I don't know if this innovative approach will fit in our  
399 national curriculum and if our secondary students will behave appropriately.  
400 They were constantly mentioning their respective sociocultural context and their scepticism  
401 towards an organic application of the model. The teacher educator field notes also  
402 emphasized the enthusiasm and positive feedback from the preservice teachers, but at the  
403 same time, the caution all of them had when they talked about autonomy. He wrote:

404 It is amazing the level of engagement of all of them when we talk about autonomy.  
405 Students have no doubt that this is one key feature of Sport Education, but at the same  
406 time they are sceptical about the applicability in their country, specially the preservice  
407 teachers from Chile and Mexico. (Mexico field notes).

408 *Motivation tempered with caution*

409 The preservice teachers from the three countries commented on a high level of  
410 academic motivation towards teaching when using pedagogical model such Sport  
411 Education. They commented on the meaningfulness of the experience in building their  
412 motivation and professional identity. They however reported some doubts considering  
413 some school organizational issues, for example the lack of coordination of physical  
414 education teachers in schools and the support from their principals.

415 We're used to hearing about innovative pedagogies, but never experienced and  
416 talked about them as students, so I hope that my future working school place is  
417 supportive to this kind of pedagogies, because I've heard from colleagues that some  
418 of them are not. (Spanish preservice teacher)

419 The preservice teachers appreciated the opportunity to experience Sport Education as  
420 students but especially the opportunity to discuss and reflect with other preservice teachers  
421 about their experience in each of the mini-seasons. As one Mexican preservice teacher  
422 pointed out:

423 The mini-seasons structure and the continuous dialogue was super great and very  
424 helpful to understand better the way this pedagogy operates, that was actually key in  
425 my understanding. This is amazing! However, I am kind of pessimistic when I think  
426 in the schools of my country.

427 One of the aspects that was more present in the field notes entries, was related to this  
428 subtheme. It was a common thread in the discussions their scepticism considering their  
429 respective school context. This quote from one of the final entries is an accurate  
430 representation:

431 I have mixed feelings now at the end of this amazing transcultural learning  
432 adventure. Most of the times, the level of motivation of the students in the lessons  
433 was outstanding, they've been fully engaged in the whole process. However, they  
434 always brought in our dialogues the 'dark side' of their school context. This is  
435 something that worries me, because I am well aware of the power of this factor to  
436 'wash-out' their practice.

#### 437 **Discussion**

438 In this study we present an experience of learning to teach Sport Education with preservice teachers  
439 from Spain, Chile, and Mexico. We aimed to compare the impact of a learning to teach Sport  
440 Education experience on preservice teachers' perceived professional competence, autonomy, and  
441 academic motivation; and to explore participants' perceptions of their country's socio-cultural and  
442 curricular aspects that may influence Sport Education implementation This paper constitutes the  
443 first where there are a substantial number of participants, across three different countries enacting a  
444 'living the curriculum' approach with the pedagogy of dialogue embedded. The strength of the  
445 paper, in our view, therein lies with the pedagogical approach used coupled with the consistent  
446 findings across cultures.

447 Given our purpose and the findings, Occupational Socialization Theory (Lawson, 1983) has  
448 been used to examine how the preservice teachers past teaching experiences, but especially their

449 PETE experience and the realities of their national curriculum and school culture, influenced and  
450 impacted on the experience of learning to teach Sport Education. Accordingly, two main findings  
451 are worthwhile to highlight and discuss. First, the preservice teachers' understanding of some of the  
452 core features of Sport Education and their predisposition to implement it, despite their coaching  
453 orientation and the custodial nature of their PETE program. Second, their scepticism towards a  
454 meaningful implementation, given the reality of their school context, and the rigidity of their  
455 national curriculum. In our study, the preservice teachers perceived that using some of the  
456 managerial components of Sport Education, would improve their teaching competence. In  
457 particular, they highlighted the persisting teams and the roles as the most important managerial  
458 variables (Siedentop, 2002). This is aligned with Hastie (2000), who reported on the relationship of  
459 effective teachers to have a strong managerial task system. His study showed that Sport Education  
460 involves managerial responsibility that is extended to student leadership and self-management (e.g.  
461 through peer accountability and responsibility handed over to student-captains). Considering the  
462 transcultural context of the sample, this is an important finding to highlight, given that there were  
463 no differences in this aspect. Our approach had a positive impact on their teaching competence and  
464 their understanding (Hastie, 2012). It is also relevant however to appreciate that learning to teach  
465 pedagogical models in teacher education may differ from how teaching and learning occurs in  
466 schools (Dillon et al., 2017). Especially in this research, in which the preservice teachers did not  
467 have the chance to teach using Sport Education in their respective local schools. In fact, this is a  
468 significant limitation of the study and may hinder their exploration and understanding the "complex  
469 nature of teaching and learning" (Hordvik et al. 2019b). To compensate, the mini-seasons structure  
470 allowed for an ongoing process of reflection and conversations where the preservice teachers  
471 developed knowledge through various teaching and learning experiences tailored around their needs  
472 and concerns (Hordvik, et al., 2019a). However, while the educational experiences provided  
473 generated reflection among participants, some conceptual aspects around Sport Education did not  
474 seem to be understood. Interestingly as we described, the preservice teachers equated the

475 understanding of some managerial aspects of Sport Education to good teaching and enabled them to  
476 be better teachers. It seems plausible to think that the marginalization and the status of physical  
477 education in the three countries, constrained a more holistic understanding of the model. It might be  
478 seen as an early or alternative ‘wash-out’ (Lawson, 1983).

479         The preservice teachers exposed a strong scepticism to the integration of Sport Education  
480 into their actual school context. Especially, they mentioned the rigid structure of their national  
481 curriculum, the custodial aspect of their school settings and the dominance of teacher-led  
482 pedagogies. Sport Education aims to give students shared responsibility and ownership, and that in  
483 most cases is confronted with how physical education is typically delivered where teachers are the  
484 sole decision makers (Siedentop et al., 2020). Findings already supported by Hortigüela et al.  
485 (2018) in their study focused on learning to teach the Social and Personal Responsibility model,  
486 also with a transcultural sample of preservice teachers (Spain, Chile, and Costa Rica). Currently, we  
487 know that schools with a custodial orientation can be challenging contexts for physical education  
488 teachers to navigate (Richards, et al., 2014). In our study, the ongoing dialog with the preservice  
489 teachers about the pedagogy of Sport Education and the realities of the school context, was a way of  
490 supporting them to think about innovative pedagogies and about the realities of teaching in the  
491 different school contexts. The programs from the three countries had a strong coaching-  
492 performance and health-related orientation, but a weak teaching one. That was an issue, especially  
493 for the Chilean and Mexican preservice teachers in the sample.

494         In this context as Jacobs et al. (2019) reported, dialogue and discussions have to have an  
495 important place in PETE programs to learn about socio-political contexts. Therefore, the preservice  
496 teachers will improve their ability to actively choose to accept or resist certain elements of their  
497 socialization (Richards & Templin, 2011). This is strongly connected with the ecological notion of  
498 (preservice) teacher agency. Biesta and Tedder (2007) and other relevant authors, conveyed that  
499 teachers’ ability to achieve agency varies from context to context based upon certain environmental  
500 conditions of possibility and constraint, and that an important factor in this lies in the beliefs,

501 values, and attributes that teachers mobilise in relation to particular situation (Priestley, Edwards,  
502 Priestley, & Miller, 2012). Preservice teachers from our sample, discussed about the challenges of  
503 their respective custodial school context, and about the potential confrontation with policies and  
504 physical education practices (Richards, et al., 2013). Therefore, and considering their acculturation,  
505 the orientation of their PETE program, and the rigidity of their national curriculum and school  
506 reality, their ability to achieve agency might be minimal (Priestley et al., 2012). This is another  
507 reason why theoretical dialogue is important to help preservice teachers raise their critical  
508 consciousness (Shrehan & Curtner-Smith, 2019) and in the same way, to achieve agency. In doing  
509 so, Shrehan and Curtner-Smith (2019) advocated for a “problem-posing” pedagogy to enable  
510 critical awareness of preservice teachers.

511 It is visible in the countries that the definition of traditional physical education is massively  
512 embedded in their political, social and cultural elements (Kirk, 1992; MacPhail, 2004). That was a  
513 powerful reason, why the preservice teachers, despite the positive lived learning experience learning  
514 to teach Sport Education at the PETE level, were sceptical about a successful application in their  
515 different school contexts. The marginalization of physical education programs has been and is a  
516 reality across countries and cultures for a variety of reasons (Laureano et al., 2014). Findings from  
517 Lux and McCullick (2011) for example, showed that the marginal status of physical education in  
518 the school setting, impacted the way that teachers felt about themselves and their jobs. This was  
519 evidenced in our transcultural study and while Sport Education might improve the status of physical  
520 education in their country, they were reluctant (or showed caution) in implementing it. Hortigüela et  
521 al. (2018) also reported those negative perceptions in a similar research exploring TPSR. In their  
522 research, the preservice teachers also reported high levels of attraction towards the pedagogical  
523 model, but they commented how external factors acted as barriers to its use (Hortigüela et al., 2018;  
524 McCaughy, et al., 2004). Our approach was particularly enriching for the preservice teachers to  
525 achieve a better understanding the pedagogy of Sport Education, but also to respect each other  
526 opinions and improve their relationship (Pascual, 2006). Learning experiences like the one

527 presented in this study, may have a positive impact on preservice teachers' initial motivation to  
528 teach, and this variable has been recently reported to have an impact on professional identity  
529 development (Nesje, Carrinus, & Strype, 2018).

530 The living the curriculum approach we followed, led the preservice teachers to question their  
531 PETE experience. They questioned their initial teacher education through reflection and dialogue  
532 (Enright, Coll, Ní Chronín, & Fitzpatrick, 2017) and they built an optimal academic motivation for  
533 the future. In short, the preservice teachers broadened their thinking about physical education. This  
534 experience was perceived as useful, both to improve teaching skills and to potentially transform  
535 educational curricula towards more emancipatory and pedagogical sport practices. The latter  
536 however will be a challenging endeavor.

### 537 **Conclusions**

538 The dialogical nature of the approach was particularly enriching for the preservice teachers  
539 with different socio-cultural backgrounds to achieve a better understanding the pedagogy of Sport  
540 Education and to understand the challenges of organizational socialization in their respective  
541 countries. However, their ability in achieving agency might be minimal given their acculturation,  
542 the orientation of their PETE program, and especially, the rigidness of their national curriculum and  
543 school reality. This is another reason why we, as others have done (Shrehan & Curtner-Smith,  
544 2019) advocate, for the pedagogy of dialogue to help preservice teachers raise their critical  
545 consciousness. This study reinforces the power of external elements such as the policies and  
546 national curriculum, and the ethos of each PETE program, as strong factors that condition  
547 preservice teachers' pre-disposition to use this and/or other curriculum models in the future, and to  
548 filter a holistic understanding of the model. Further work needs to be done to explore how PETE  
549 programs at a programmatic level, could counter the potential negative effects of some of the social-  
550 political elements on preservice teachers' integration of innovative pedagogies into their future  
551 teaching.

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