Values and Value Education in Physical Education

Concepts, Evidence and Implications

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Summary

This chapter gives an overview of the available body of research in the field of values and Value Education in Physical Education (PE). After retrieving relevant publications via searching common databases, conceptual approaches, empirical evidence, and implications from the PE teacher’s perspective are outlined. Conceptual approaches include: Education through/via PE, Holistic Approaches, Comprehensive Approaches, Movement Cultures, Curricular Concepts, and Value of PE. Although empirical evidence is very limited, there is a trend towards a positive impact of PE on students’ values and moral development. Implications concern the following areas: question of “purposes”, “practical approaches”, Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) programs, and future research directions.

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1 Premise and Research Question

Among school subjects, Physical Education (PE) resides as only one subject in a pool of about twenty-something other subjects. Nonetheless, PE holds a strong grasp on conceptually and purposefully serving all learning domains, which means the psychomotor, the cognitive, and the affective learning domain (Rink 2013).

1.1 Premise

Via its self-defining physical activity core, however, PE’s primary focus is on the psychomotor domain, addressing human movement and physical activity.

According to policy recommendations of the European Union (EU), PE “imperatively” also intends fostering “healthy lifestyle behaviors and general psycho-social, cultural and moral positive attitudes of young people” (Hardman 2007).

In regard to the pairing of the cognitive domain with the psychomotor one, PE provides a unique and valuable opportunity to foster students’ development of positive values (Bailey 2006).

In general, the research and practice field of values and Value Education in PE is tackled from various perspectives, which basically originate from the lenses of Philosophy, General Education/Pedagogy (with an emphasis on youth and/or school), and/or PE/Health Education (HE)/Sport(s) Education. Perspectives may intertwine in some cases.

1.2 Research Question

The purpose of this chapter is to systematically review the available body of research on values (in a broader sense) and Value Education in PE, including conceptual approaches, and emphasizing empirical evidence on the subject matter. The available evidence will be critically discussed according to its application to everyday PE classes.