

In what ways can positive feedback help motivate S1 pupils to participate in PE as a direct impact of COVID 19?

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What did you do?

- I began by comparing my two S1 classes. I added up the number of pupils in both classes who did not participate fully in PE. This was done over a three-week period (6 lessons) to account for the pupils who would normally participate but were injured/absent.
- I calculated the average number for both classes so I could compare the benefits and limitations of my enquiry at the end.
- I then taught each S1 class, using positive feedback for 'Class A' (CA) and then generic, corrective feedback for 'Class B' (CB).
- On week 5 of 6, I started to calculate the number of pupils who are now participating in PE. From this, I acquired my findings from the enquiry.

Why did you do it?

- During my previous year as a student teacher, classes were disrupted, and participation levels decreased. I accepted this was due to COVID 19 and that participation would be back to 'normal' this year.
- However, it was evident that participation rates are still suffering and that there are now classes specifically for non-participating students.
- Teare & Taks (2021) support this as they state that due to the pandemic, the participation of sport among youths has declined.
- Research from Deci and Ryan's (1985,2000) Self-Determination Theory shows that PE teachers who use a positive, supportive style of teaching can have an impact on students' motivation, engagement and learning.
- According to Standards for Registration (2021), it is our professional commitment to "critically examine how our teaching impacts on learners" and I believe that the way we engage and communicate with pupils, has a massive impact on learners.

What has happened as a result?

C.A23 pupils > Positive Feedback > Average 16 participated

C.B 23 pupils > Generic Feedback > Average 18 participated

- It took a couple of weeks to fully see the impact that both types of feedback had on the pupils. For some, this was something new and time was needed to gain confidence to participate.

- For Class A, I made sure all feedback given was positive and well informed. For example, when a pupil was dribbling a basketball but used two hands. My feedback would be "that was great control, you got from one end of the court to the other! Next time, try using one hand at a time to avoid the foul."

- As the weeks progressed, it was evident that almost all pupils had increased their confidence which in turn, improved their motivation to participate.

- One pupil said '*This is actually fun! How good was my shot? I am actually pure good at basketball!*'

- This one example shows the confidence that a pupil has gained from receiving positive feedback throughout.

- For Class B, the results did not differ greatly. The feedback given was more generic and corrective. Using the same example previously mentioned, the feedback would be "You can't dribble with two hands, that is a foul. You need to use one."

- This type of feedback can have a negative impact on students' self-esteem and motivation (Voerman et al., 2012). However, not all pupils respond negatively. Carpentier and Mageau (2013, 2016) suggest that if a teacher creates an environment that is not perceived as threatening or unfair, it can help with learner progress.

- On week 5 and 6, class participation numbers were calculated, and averages were made to determine success.

- The results show that CA has had a remarkable increase in participation averaging from 16 to 21.

- CB had a slight improvement from 18 to 19, showing positive feedback has a greater impact on motivation to participate.

C.A – 21 pupils now participate on average (out of 23)

C.B – 19 pupils now participate on average (out of 23)

What are the implications?

- It would be naïve to think giving positive feedback will make every pupil participate in sport. There are some implications to this study and further research is required.

- One of the implications of this study was the choice of activity. Some pupils were disengaged due to this which impacted the opportunity to fully use positive feedback.

- Also, De Meester et al., (2020) argued that feedback can have a greater impact on pupils with lower motor skills.

- A future study could focus on varied ability groups and one chosen activity.

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