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Østerlie, Ove; Jusslin, Sofia

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Editorial: Cultivating inclusive, engagement, and meaningful learning experiences in physical education and the arts education

Ove Østerlie^{1*} & Sofia Jusslin²

¹NTNU, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway; ²Åbo Akademi University, Finland

Education is in constant evolution, seeking ways to foster inclusion, engagement, and meaningful learning experiences. Physical education (PE) and arts education hold transformative potential, yet achieving inclusive, supportive, and effective learning environments requires innovative pedagogical approaches and critical reflection on existing practices. This issue of the *Journal for Research in Arts and Sports Education* presents three studies that contribute to this discourse, addressing cooperative learning (CL) for inclusion in PE, teacher support for self-regulated learning, and student teachers' engagement with the arts through The Cultural Schoolbag (TCS) initiative.

The first article *Cooperative Learning: A Suitable Approach for More Inclusive Physical Education?*² is by Jens-Erik Furulund and Lars Bjørke. Research indicates that PE often falls short in including all students equally. To address this, Furulund and Bjørke examine whether CL can create a more inclusive classroom environment. Their action research study, conducted over six sessions with secondary school students, utilizes reflective thematic analysis to explore the experiences of teachers and students with CL. The findings highlight the importance of individual accountability and positive interdependence in developing inclusive practices. Despite challenges, the study concludes that CL can promote inclusivity and offers new insights into how teachers can foster inclusive practices in PE.

In the next contribution, *The Impact of Teacher Learning Support on Students' Self-Regulated Learning in Norwegian Physical Education – Mediated Through Students' Self-Efficacy and Goal Orientations*, Bendik Brekke Thorfinnsson and Ingar Mehus

*Correspondence: Ove Østerlie, e-mail: ove.osterlie@ntnu.no

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investigate the relationship between teacher learning support, students' self-efficacy, goal orientations, and self-regulated learning in PE. Their study, involving 480 students from Norwegian schools, employs a structural equation model to analyse the data. The results reveal that teacher learning support is crucial for students' self-regulated learning, directly and indirectly through enhanced self-efficacy. The study also finds that mastery goals are positively associated with self-regulated learning, while performance goals are not. These findings emphasize the significant role teachers play in supporting students' learning processes.

Finally, Lisbet Skregelid and Helene Illeris' article *'Had Few Expectations, Was Positively Surprised': Student Teachers' Encounters with The Cultural School Bag in an Art Museum Context* explores student teachers' experiences with TCS during an art museum visit. This initiative aims to provide pupils with art and cultural experiences. The study highlights the tension between the school and cultural sectors in TCS and the lack of education-based prerequisites for teachers. The educational approach in the exhibition emphasized active participation and interaction, which the student teachers greatly appreciated. The study argues for the importance of firsthand art experiences for student teachers to effectively engage in TCS and promote arts-based teaching. It advocates for an education system that values equality and freedom both within and outside the TCS context.

A common thread across these studies is the emphasis on creating learning environments that are inclusive, student-centred, and supportive of autonomy. Furulund and Bjørke highlight how CL can enable all students to participate meaningfully in PE, aligning with Thorfinnsson and Mehus' findings that teacher support enhances students' self-regulation and confidence in learning. Meanwhile, Skregelid and Illeris' work demonstrates the power of experiential learning in transforming student teachers' perceptions of the arts and their pedagogical potential.

These insights are particularly relevant in today's educational landscape, where inclusion and autonomy are critical to fostering lifelong learning. The studies collectively reinforce the importance of educators adopting participatory, reflective, and student-centred pedagogies to cultivate engaged and confident learners. By integrating cooperative learning, self-regulation strategies, and experiential learning, we can shape more equitable and enriching learning experiences in PE and the arts.

Moreover, these studies demonstrate that inclusion and autonomy are not isolated phenomena but interconnected elements that strengthen each other. Cooperative learning provides a structured yet flexible approach that allows students to support one another while engaging in shared learning experiences. Self-regulated learning, in turn, empowers students to take ownership of their learning, reinforcing the benefits of inclusion. The study building on experiences from an art museum context further illustrates how experiential and participatory approaches can encourage students to embrace learning environments characterized by openness, creativity, and agency.

As educational systems worldwide seek to address persistent challenges of exclusion, disengagement, and passive learning, these contributions highlight pathways forward. They emphasize that when students feel supported, involved, and able to navigate their learning journeys, they are more likely to thrive holistically. By fostering inclusive practices, strengthening self-regulation, and embracing experiential education, researchers and educators can work together to ensure learning environments that are dynamic, meaningful, and accessible to all.

As the field of arts and sports education continues to evolve, these contributions underscore the need for ongoing research and innovation in pedagogical practice. They offer valuable perspectives for educators, policymakers, and researchers seeking to bridge gaps in inclusion, student autonomy, and interdisciplinary learning. Through such efforts, we move closer to an educational paradigm that empowers all students, regardless of background or discipline, to thrive in dynamic and meaningful learning environments.