

# Giving students a voice – Inclusive PE in the eyes of PE students

Stefan Meier<sup>1</sup> & Sebastian Ruin<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Vienna, Department of Sport Science and Centre for Teacher Education

<sup>2</sup>Philipps-University Marburg, Department of Sport Science and Motology

## 1 Introduction

An inclusive school system strives not least equal participation of children and young people at mainstream schools, also in Physical Education (PE). In this context, the global agenda towards inclusive education claims for different perspectives on PE. For this reason, the individual views of PE students come to the fore. However, corresponding concerns were mostly constructed out of the perspectives from PE teachers. Despite the importance of PE students view towards inclusive PE, there remains a paucity of evidence on it. To date, only small evidence can be found towards PE students' perspectives regarding inclusive PE (Reuker et al., 2016; Pfitzner & Liersch, 2018) – although they are the “main actors” quantitatively. To promote inclusive PE knowledge about PE-students views on this setting, not least such with special requirements (i.e. special needs, socio-economic background), is very enriching in this context. Driven by the assumption that a critical investigation of individual perspectives on inclusive PE discloses potentials and obstacles for inclusive PE in future (Meier et al., 2017), this research seeks to reveal student's individual views on inclusive PE.

## 2 Purpose

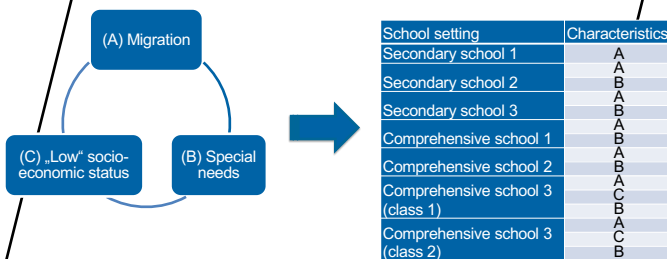
The aim of the study “Ask us! Obstacles and potentials regarding inclusive PE out of the perspective of PE students”<sup>\*</sup> is to explore the individual perspectives of PE students towards inclusive PE, regarding:

- Situations in inclusive PE, which were perceived as >special< (in a positive as well as in a negative way) to identify potentials and obstacles in the eyes of PE students
- General statements towards PE
- Body and performance as central aspects of inclusive PE

## 3 Methods

Explorative interviews in pairs based on a partly standardized questionnaire in the area of Cologne  
**Tool:** Narrative-generating interview guide towards: >Special situations<, general statements towards PE, body, performance

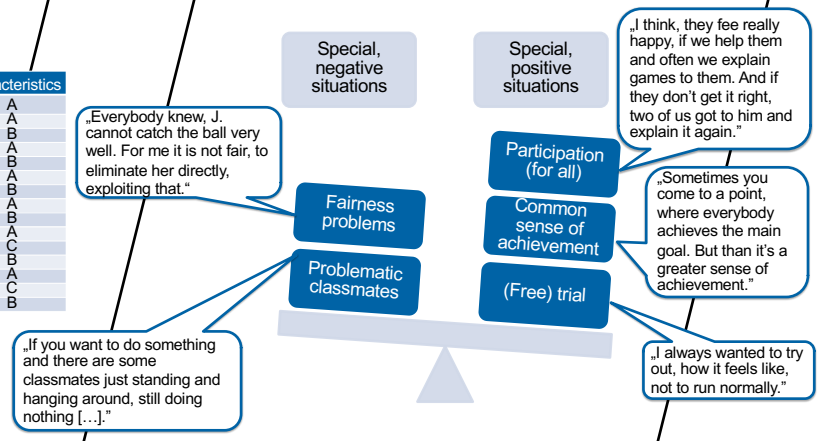
Criteria based **sample selection**



**Sample:** 41 PE students grade 7/8 (23 girls) from 7 different classes out of 6 different school settings (secondary school/comprehensive school, 3 each) with an average age of 12,8 years

## 4 Results

**Analysis:** Audio>transcription>Content related structuring qualitative content analysis, deductive-inductive (Kuckartz, 2014) by 4 independently coding persons (parts of the material was double-coded for coding compliance)



## 5 Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to explore PE students individual perspectives on inclusive PE. Here, situations in inclusive PE, which were perceived as >special< (in a positive as well as in a negative way) were investigated to identify potentials and obstacles in the eyes of PE students.

To sum up, this study shows that inclusive PE doesn't differ much from conventional PE in the eyes of PE students. There seem to be many similarities to general constructions of PE, i.e. group relationships (cf. Miehtling & Krieger, 2014).

Moreover the findings highlight the importance of the content, which pre-structures teaching and provides space for individuality (potential) or puts everyone in a straight jacket (obstacle).

In addition, frequently discussed aspects in the context of inclusion (i.e. special education needs) were rarely named by PE students. If so, those kinds of aspects were mostly entitled as potentials surprisingly. This may indicate that differentiating categories, which are often problematized in the context of inclusive PE appear less delicate in the eyes of most PE students.

Furthermore the students highlight social togetherness as a core goal. Supporting each other, care for each other and a balanced class is extremely important to them. Here, everybody picks up a role, so that everyone can participate.

Finally, the “students' perspective” pointed out a few aspects which did not receive much emphasis earlier, and which could enrich and inspire future research.

## References

- Kuckartz, U. (2014). *Qualitative content analysis*. Weinheim u.a.: Beltz Juventa.
- Meier, S., Ruin, S., & Leineweber, H. (2017). HainSL – a testing instrument to assess attitudes of (trainee) teachers regarding inclusive physical education lessons. *German Journal of Exercise and Sport Research*, 47(2), 161-170.
- Miehtling, W.-D., & Krieger, C. (2004). *Students in Physical Education*. Schorndorf: Hofmann.
- Pfitzner, M. & Liersch, J. (2018). On the way to inclusive PE – sportpedagogic-sportdidactic perspectives. In S. Ruin, F. Becker, D. Klein, H. Leineweber & S. Meier (Eds.), *Come together in sports – inclusive PE from different perspectives* (pp. 37-56). Schorndorf: Hofmann.
- Reuker, S., Rischke, A., Kämpfe, A., Schmitz, B., Teubert, H., Thissen, A. & Wiethäuper, H. (2016). Inclusion in physical education classes. An overview of international research results from 2005-2014. *German Journal of Exercise and Sport Research*, 46(2), 53-59.
- Ruin, S., & Meier, S. (2018). „Ask us!“ Obstacles and potentials regarding inclusive PE out of the perspective of PE students. *Leipziger Sportwissenschaftliche Beiträge*, 59(1), 67-87.