

## **SOCIAL COMPARISON PROCESSES AND PUPIL OUTCOMES IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

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Evidence suggests that different forms of social comparison can co-exist and singly, or in combination, lead to important consequences. However, little is known regarding potential moderators of comparison effects. The purpose of the present study was to determine whether consequences of different social comparisons are moderated by pupils' perceptions of the extant motivational climate in their PE classes. Five hundred and eighty-one adolescents ( $n = 271$  males;  $n = 310$  females,  $M_{\text{age}} = 14.30$ ,  $SD = 1.05$  years) from two schools in England took part in the study. Participants were asked to rate how good they were in relation to both generalised others (their PE class) and a specific chosen individual in the same class with whom they typically compared. In addition, measures were taken of the perceived task and ego motivational climate in PE, along with three pupil outcomes: physical self-concept, positive affect and self-efficacy. Multi-level regression analyses showed that perceived relative standing in class positively predicted all outcomes. Perceived ability compared to a chosen individual predicted self-efficacy. Task climate positively predicted self-efficacy and positive affect, whereas ego climate negatively predicted physical self-concept. In terms of the moderating influence of climate, perceptions of a prevailing ego climate interacted with ability compared to the chosen individual to influence physical self-concept. Specifically, higher perceived ability in relation to the individual was linked with greater self-concept at higher levels of perceived ego climate but not at lower levels of the moderator. Findings from the present study reinforce evidence in PE that class comparisons may be more important than individual comparisons for pupil outcomes.