

# How the Bright and Dark Side of Self-Determination Theory Relate to Students' Life Skills Development Within Physical Education



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# Introduction

- Throughout the world, the personal development of students is seen as a key curricular aim of PE (Hardman, 2011)
- PE has also been proposed as an ideal setting for the development of life skills (Goudas, 2010)
- **Teachers play a key role** in young peoples' development within PE (Bailey et al., 2013)



# Introduction

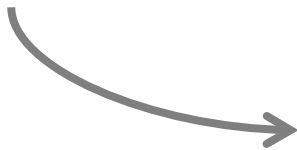
## Self-Determination Theory and Life Skills Development

- ❑ Self-Determination Theory (Ryan and Deci, 2000) is a theory of human development and wellness
- ❑ Hodge, Danish, and Martin's (2013) conceptual framework for life skills interventions suggested that Self-Determination Theory could be utilized to investigate life skills development
- ❑ Within PE, Cronin et al. (2018) found that teacher autonomy support was related to the development of eight different life skills within students

# Purpose of the Study

## Teaching Climate

- Teacher autonomy support
- Controlling teaching

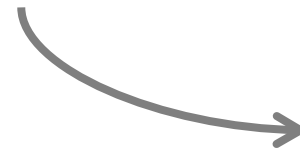


## Basic Need Satisfaction and Frustration

- Autonomy
- Competence
- Relatedness

## Life Skills

- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Communication
- Social skills
- Goal setting
- Time management
- Problem solving
- Emotional skills



Bartholomew et al. (2011)  
Haerens et al. (2015)  
Liu et al. (2017)

# Method

406 PE Students  
aged 12–17 years  
( $M_{\text{age}} = 13.71$  years)

Males ( $n = 189$ ) &  
females ( $n = 217$ )

## Participants

Average of 2.02  
hours of PE per  
week

5 schools across  
England and Ireland  
– included 39  
teachers

# Measures

## Autonomy Supportive and Controlling Teaching

- Empowering and Disempowering Motivational Climate Questionnaire (Appleton et al., 2016)
- Autonomy-Supportive Coaching Questionnaire (Conroy and Coatsworth, 2007)
- 10 items for each subscale

<b>My PE teacher....</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>				<b>Strongly agree</b>
Gives students choices and options	1	2	3	4	5
Threatens to punish students to keep them in line during PE classes	1	2	3	4	5

Alpha coefficients = .94 and .89

# Measures

## Basic Need Satisfaction and Frustration

- Basic Needs Satisfaction and Frustration Scale for PE (Haerens et al., 2015)
- 24-item scale

<b>During PE lessons...</b>	<b>Not true at all</b>			<b>Completely true</b>	
I feel a sense of choice and freedom in the things I undertake	1	2	3	4	5
I am capable at what I am doing	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that class members I care about also care about me	1	2	3	4	5
I feel obligated to do certain things	1	2	3	4	5
I feel insecure about my abilities	1	2	3	4	5
I feel excluded from the group I want to belong to	1	2	3	4	5

**Alpha coefficients** = .85 to .91

**Factorial validity** = supported via CFA

# Measures

**Life skills development** – Life Skills Scale for PE (Cronin et al., 2018)

- 43 items assessing the eight life skills listed earlier

PE classes have taught me to...	Not at all	A little	Some	A lot	Very much
Work well within a team/ group	1	2	3	4	5
Set specific goals	1	2	3	4	5
Speak clearly to others	1	2	3	4	5
Organise team/group members to work together	1	2	3	4	5

**Alpha coefficients** = .90 to .94

**Factorial validity** = supported via CFA, ESEM and bifactor analysis



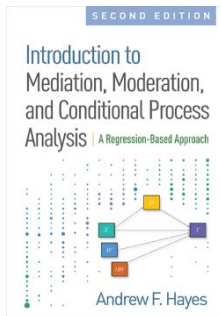
# Data Analyses



- To assess if multilevel analyses would be appropriate



- To assess the normality of the data and possible gender and age group differences
- Descriptive statistics and correlations



- Process Macro for SPSS to assess our mediational models (cross checked our findings using structural equation modelling and the results were substantively identical)

# Results

## Students' perception of their PE teacher/s?

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree	
1	2	3	★	4	5
1	2	★	3	4	5

Autonomy supportive



Controlling

# Results

## Students' perception of the PE environment?

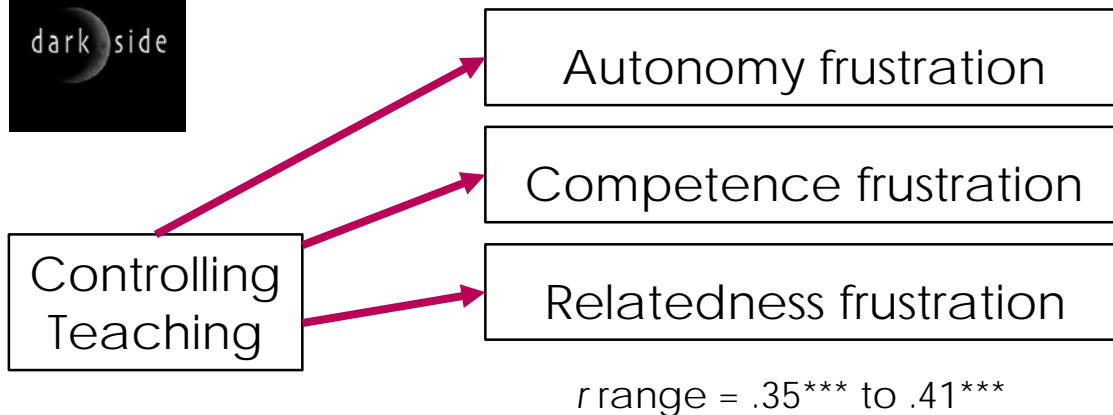
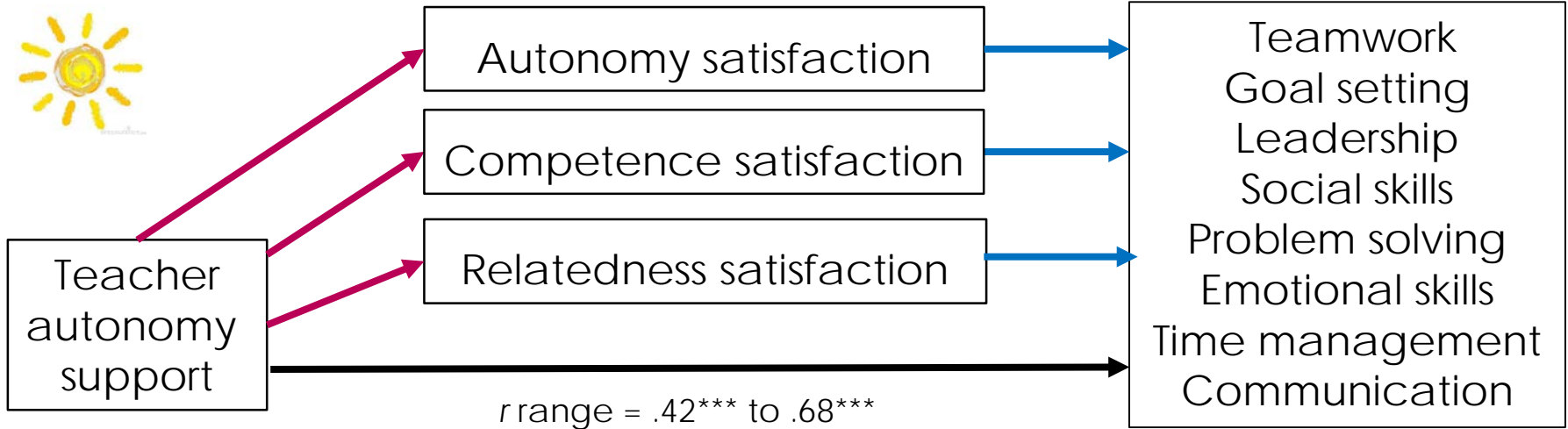
	Not true at all				Completely true
Autonomy satisfaction	1	2	3★	4	5
Competence satisfaction	1	2	3★	4	5
Relatedness satisfaction	1	2	3★	4	5
Autonomy frustration	1	2	★3	4	5
Competence frustration	1	2★	3	4	5
Relatedness frustration	1	2★	3	4	5

# Results

Students' perception of whether PE has taught them the eight different life skills?

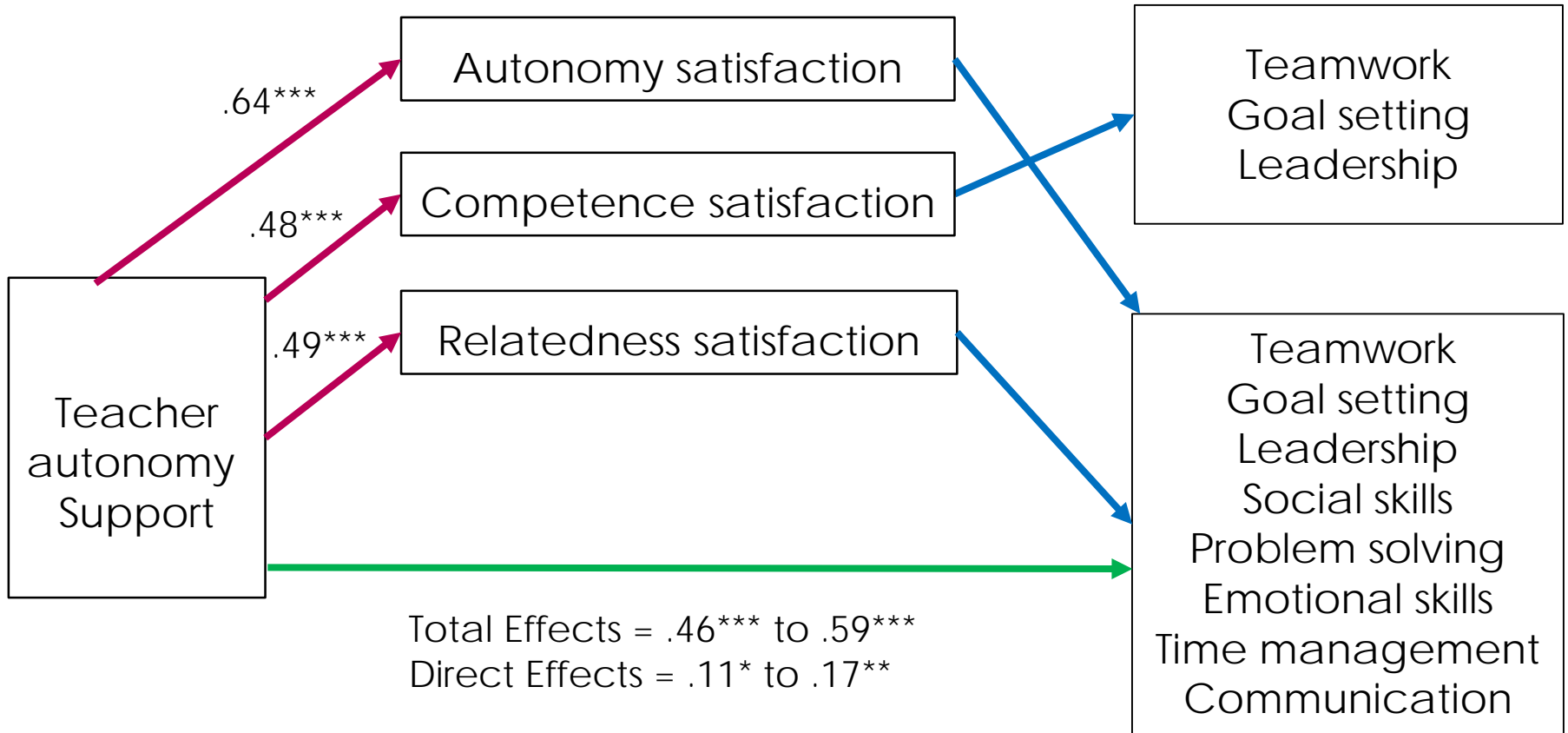
	Not at all	A little	Some	A lot	Very much
Teamwork	1	2	3 ★	4	5
Communication	1	2	3 ★	4	5
Social skills	1	2	3 ★	4	5
Leadership	1	2	3 ★	4	5
Goal setting	1	2	3 ★	4	5
Time management	1	2	★3	4	5
Problem solving	1	2	★3	4	5
Emotional skills	1	2	★ 3	4	5
Total life skills	1	2	3 ★	4	5

# Correlational Results



# Mediation Results

$\beta$  range = .12\*\*\* to .55\*\*\*



# Discussion

## Key Findings

- Bright side of the pathway is related to students development of their life skills within PE
- Dark side of the pathway is only related to need frustration

## Practical Application

- Teachers should provide an autonomy supportive climate and seek to satisfy students' three basic needs

## Limitations

- Causality could not be established
- Self-report



# Questions



For those interested in collaborating on future projects,  
contact me at: [Lorcan.Cronin@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:Lorcan.Cronin@edgehill.ac.uk)





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