Lithuanian students’ attitudes towards noble and honourable sport contest

Ramūnė Motiejūnaitė
Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences

Summary

We think that it is very important to find out, whether there are programmes on Olympism at universities and how we can spread Olympic ideas among students.

First of all, we examined the literature sources. Scientific literature analysis led to easier understanding of the importance of moral values, Olympism and Olympic education as well as enabled to reveal the peculiarities of moral values and absorb how sport activity influences moral attitudes and culture.

The aim of the study was to investigate and identify Lithuanian students’ attitudes towards noble and honourable sport contest and the values that are developed in sports.

We have interviewed 218 students from 16 higher education schools of Lithuania for the research. The research group was chosen randomly as the questionnaire was distributed in Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, and Šiauliai higher education schools.

The main part is devoted to investigate students’ attitudes towards noble and honourable sport struggle, comparing those attitudes of the ones, involved in physical activity and having Olympic event or lectures about Olympism values and norms, with other universities students’ presented data. After receiving the results, we can make a comparison of students’ opinions on honourable and noble sport fight.

In this research, quantitative and qualitative analyses have been accomplished. For the statistical procedures, there was the SPSS 15 for Windows via the setting used. For the analysis of quantitative research data, various statistical analysis methods were employed as well. Inside compatibility of questionnaire scales was determined by counting the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. Students’ attitudes towards the values of Olympic structure were estimated using the essential components of extraction and Varimax factor rotation method. Differences were considered statistically reliable at the maximum of 5% of the error (p < 0.05).

It was found that Lithuanian students associate Olympism, firstly, with honesty, secondly – as a way of respect, cultural awareness, optimism, strength of the will, generosity, tolerance towards other nations, etc. Such results are determined by opinion about the Olympic games itself. While analysing the research results, it has emerged that social values, bounded with Olympism, are important for the students. Thus, they find those aspects very important: a sense of community, heartiness, goodness, better world, gentlemanlike behaviour, body and mind harmony, etc. The most important thing is noble and honourable sport contest. Both respondent groups (who do sport activities and who do not do) understand what a noble play is.

Keywords: Olympism, Olympic education, students, values, noble, honourable.

Introduction

Sport is an important part of culture since it has a huge educational impact. P. de Coubertin had chosen sport as a mean for education. He truly believed that sport, in other words, voluntary and constant efforts to improve, may be effectively applied to the purposes of education: self-knowledge, self-control, sense of systematic work, abidance by rules, the development of nobleness and honour.

Olympism – the philosophy, developed by P. de Coubertin, emphasizes the role of sport in world development, international understanding, peaceful coexistence, and social and moral education. It considers sport as a mean to educate and cultivate the individual, i.e., as a formative and developmental influence, contributing to desirable characteristics of individual personality and social life (Girginov, Parry, 2005). Educator P. de Coubertin recognized the holistic nature of individual in the Olympic Games, as expressed in the idea of a perfect harmony between body, mind, and spirit as eurhythmy. Being a product of fin de siècle liberalism, de Coubertin
emphasized values, such as democracy, tolerance, solidarity, fairness, respect for others, freedom, and excellence (Spaaij, 2012).

Olympism in its modern sense has changed to such extent that we have to deal with a radically different object. New dimensions of space and time call for a different understanding of Olympism through dialogues between individuals, communities, scholars, athletes, etc. Similarly, it could be argued that Olympic education should be understood more broadly beyond the strict sense of education and encompass a series of actions and initiatives, which can take place in different contexts and for different tasks to fulfil (Chatziefstathiou, 2012). Contemporary versions of Olympic education and the underlying concept of Olympism draw largely on the nineteenth century writings of French aristocrat and founder of the Olympic movement Pierre de Coubertin (Lenskyj, 2012). A number of scholars (Binder, 2005; Naul, 2008) treat the Olympic movement, which is based on Olympism philosophy, as a form of education. Olympism is oriented not just towards the professional athlete but, rather, towards every individual; not just towards a short period in people’s lives but, rather, to a lifelong process; not just to sport activity but, rather, to combining in a balanced whole the qualities of mind, body, and will (Parry, 2006).

Olympic education – special pedagogical activity, designed to attract children and young people to the ideals and the values of Olympism (Stoliarov, 2007).

Some authors argue that, in order to maximize the learning benefits, associated with Olympism and its values, educational initiatives should: 1) focus less on technical aspects (functional facts and figures) of the Olympic Games; 2) put more emphasis on the philosophy practice of Olympism and on pedagogical coherence which encourages and fosters critique and debate; 3) utilise experiential physical education and sport that foster the practice of critical consumerism and social transformation; 4) acknowledge and align with a country’s national physical education curriculum requirements; 5) aim to develop a type of active citizen, who can contribute to building a more peaceful and better world (Culpan, Wigmore, 2010). D. Binder presented five themes for teachers to be used in values education: 1) body, mind, and spirit: inspiring children to participate in physical activity; 2) fair play: the spirit of sport in life and community; 3) multiculturalism: learning to live with diversity; 4) in pursuit of excellence: identity, self-confidence, and self-respect; 5) the Olympics present and past: celebrating the Olympic spirit (Binder, 2005).

The values of sport have the following features: 1) sport values define and integrate the provisions of people depending on sports activities, embodies the values that are highly appreciated by the society; 2) the system of sport values shows personality cognitive structure; 3) understanding of sport values can make influence to personal emotional condition, to sports, and closest environment expression; 4) when individual and his relatives realize what are sport values, it conditions the motivation to start exercising; 5) perceived sport values directly affect young person’s self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-realization (Zukowska, Zukowski, 2010).

The behaviours, associated with Olympism and deemed ethical in nature, are not set in stone. Yet, having ideals that one can strive towards is important, no matter how far removed the current situation is from the ideal in question. Suggesting a list of behaviours that purports to be inclusive of all ethical behaviours that respect human rights is not the solution; this task would culminate in a cumbersome listing of values and virtues, with each one requiring further unpacking beyond the scope of this paper. Instead, thinking of ethical behaviour as all actions deemed morally acceptable following critical reflection could help open dialogues in the classroom about areas of contention that remain in the Olympic Games and benefiting for students to identify injustices and unethical behaviours (Teezel, 2012).

On theoretical level, research, related to Olympism and Olympic education, is indeed significant, but the empirical data gained – much less. Lithuanian studies have examined the moral values in physical activity and studied students’ attitudes towards the Olympic values, but there has been no information about high school students. This raises the problem of how to organize the training of students in order to impart the knowledge of the Olympic Movement and Olympism and demonstrate humanistic principles of sport. We think that universities are the main medium, which should be the very first step of implementing the Olympic program, because, if students are more concerned with the Olympic movement, are aware of it, they give their knowledge and ideas to convey their children.
Moral values of sporting activities, related with the venerable sport fight, fit (morally) athletes and all persons involved in sport activities.

In the analysis of moral values of sporting activity, it is considered appropriate to exclusively discuss the concept of the dignity of sport. This is relevant, because sport generosity is often mentioned, but its meaning is rarely explained. Thus, Olympism can be viewed as a form of universal humanism, which is unique in its substantiation on education through sport of an individual character. Sport can serve as a pedagogical tool, which facilitates the formation and fulfilment of the individual as a whole. This leads us to believe that Olympism can also be characterised by a third trait, “utopianism” (Monnin, 2012).

According to N. Muller (2004), Olympism consists of a lot of values that are being much more developed while sporting than training physical strength. V. Barabanova (2010) supports the view that Olympism is based on the humanistic sports, events, and practice values. Olympism expects to get a lot of benefit from the sport, so it uses sport in developing a wide range of social values and implementing the universal principles of ethics.

Olympic education is not only the knowledge of the Olympic Games, the sporting ideal conveyance for young people and physical activity, but also honour of the principles of humanistic values, based on lifestyle and education.

We think that it is very important to find out, whether there are Olympism programmes at universities in Lithuania and how we can spread the Olympic ideas among students.

The aim of the study was to investigate and identify Lithuanian students’ attitudes towards noble and honourable sport struggle and the values that are developed in sports.

Theoretical and scientific novelty. Olympic education topic at universities has not been researched yet. Therefore, this work is significant for the first time we have investigated Lithuanian students’ attitudes towards noble and honourable sport contest.

The methods of the research

While designing the questionnaire, we aimed to submit questions that would allow gathering information to reach research connected aims.

As we wanted to explore the situation in Lithuanian universities, the Olympic questionnaire was given to 16 higher education schools in four cities. We interviewed physical education students, taking Olympism lectures, and other students, who did not have such lectures. Pedagogical study had been carried out.

We compared attitudes of students, involved in physical activity and having Olympic events or lectures for students about Olympism values and norms, with other universities students’ presented data. Considering received results, we can make students’ opinions comparison about honourable, noble sport fight.

In this research, quantitative and qualitative analyses have been accomplished. This survey is too difficult to understand using usual mathematical methods; consequently, questionnaire survey was used for the analysis. Also, to run the survey, there was a qualitative research used, i.e., there were open questions left to express individual opinions. One part of the questionnaire consisted of 10-statements scale, which was used to determine students’ attitudes towards noble and honourable sport contest. Each scale argument was measured in four-point scale from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. Some of the claims wording was negative, thus, the scores were counted in reverse order.

We employed the questionnaire from doctoral dissertation and adopted it to be suitable for students. While designing the questionnaire, we aimed to submit questions that would allow gathering information to reach research connected aims.

For the statistical procedures, there was the SPSS 15 for Windows via the setting used. For the analysis of quantitative research data, various statistical analysis methods were employed as well. Inside compatibility of questionnaire scales was determined by counting the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. Students’ attitudes towards the values of the Olympic structure were estimated using the essential components of extraction and Varimax factor rotation method. Differences were considered statistically reliable at the maximum of 5% of error ($p < 0.05$). The link was considered to be statistically significant at wider than 5% of error ($p < 0.05$).
Results and discussion

Lithuanian students were asked to answer the question of how they understand the sport contest. This question was answered by 211 students, and 17 could not answer or did not know the answer. Even 86.7% of the students declared against that athlete could consume doping in order to win an Olympic medal. 41.3% of students (90) said that the venerable sports contest was in accordance with the rules. 88 students, most engaged in sporting activities, said that the honourable contest was a contest without fraud and with honest, fair, honourable contest. This is equivalent, honest, and mutually respectful rivals' duel, after which the winner is revealed, and one, who comes off the second-best, is able to concede defeat and congratulate stronger opponent. Ethics is very important in sport. In addition, without it sport would not educate people with great moral values. Honourable contest, its embarrassment without illegal preparations requires compliance with all rules and not thinking just about winning at any cost. This is respect for the Olympic Charter. 10.1% of respondents answered simply that glorious fight was embarrassment without using the doping and various preparations.

While clarifying students' attitudes towards noble and honourable contest, there were ten statements submitted. Most students (126) indicated that in sports it was not acceptable, if someone tried to violate the rules. Even 159 students believed that in sport it was possible to win and fight honourably. 153 students were in full agreement that a noble, honourable fight in sports was an integral part of both children and adults' sports. However, it was supporting that in some sports sometimes it was impossible not to traumatize opponent (“fully agree” – 22.5%; “agree partially” – 36.2%). 21.1% believed that violence was an integral part of some of the sports. Respondents were from universities where no Olympism lectures and no Olympic Festivals were organized.

Separately interpreting students’, engaged and not engaged in physical activity, attitudes towards noble and honourable sport contest we see the similarities between the two groups of respondents, answering the ten questions. Only in the eighth statement, there were divergences. 62 sport buffs fully agreed that a noble, honourable fight in sporting was an integral part of both children and adults’ sports. “All athletes are equal to contest rules and all equally bound to respect them” – a bit less athletic students agreed with the latter statement: 48 from 72. Much less sedentary students completely agreed that in sports fight it was possible to win the fight with honour. It was supported that, in some of sports, sometimes it would be impossible not to traumatize opponent; this statement was fully accepted by 26.4% of students, who were involved in sports; 17.5% of sport fans also agreed with this statement, although 36.3% of them partially disagreed with this statement.

It is important to note, that young people already have attitudes and values, which pertain to the principles of life.

In order to analyse the results of this work problem, we divided students into two groups – young people, who had lectures on Olympism (78 students) and who did not have (140 students). We compared the two groups of respondents’ attitudes towards noble and honourable sport fight.

As mentioned above, students’ attitudes and values are formed. However, students, who had Olympism lectures at their university, were more aware of the Olympic values and attitudes. The most important thing of everything is a noble and honourable sport fight. Both groups of respondents understood, what was a fair play, but the students without lectures on Olympism were more supportive of opinion that in sports it was possible to fight with violation of the rules as it was impossible to reach the sporting heights fighting honourably.

They also agreed that there could be selfish people and that violence was an integral part of some of the sports and if the challenger competed dishonestly, it could be possibly repaid the same. In their view, the rules encourage roughness and it should be prohibited in sport. Most importantly, this group of students agreed that the athlete could consume doping in order to win an Olympic medal.

Also we compared the students’, studying in the eastern part of the country to the western, attitudes towards noble and honourable contest. Thus, the individual opinion of university students in a noble and honourable game is different, but slightly according to the statement.

Four students had minimum contact with the Olympism. Students of Physical Education program in Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences (LUES) have Olympism lectures and there are Olympics organized at the university. Also, LUES students participate actively in Lithuanian Olympic
Festival. Lithuanian Sports University is giving lectures on Olympism and students’ sport history. Students of this university also actively participate in Lithuanian Students Sports Association organized events. Klaipėda University students study Lithuanian physical education and sports history where as a part of curriculum students will study Olympism. Physical Education students of Šiauliai University also have sports history lectures that have Olympism incorporated in the curriculum. However, these two university students do not participate in Lithuanian Students’ Olympic Festival. Thus, half of the students of those 16 surveyed Lithuanian high schools do not participate in the Olympic Festival of Lithuania, where they can find some small contact with the Olympic movement. Students should be encouraged and attracted by someone to the event, so that they would understand and cherish the sense of fair play, get introduced to the Olympic values, hear what is the Olympic movement (Table).

Olympic sport, Olympic education are not only the past but also the future. Olympic education – the priority of moral values in the direction of development. It is important through different subject lectures and various events to integrate Olympic education ideas. The most important thing is students’ introduction to the Olympic values of the world that highlights common human values meaning.

Students’ attitudes towards the values of the Olympic structure was estimated using the essential components of extraction and Varimax factor rotation method. Differences were considered statistically reliable at the maximum of 5% of error (p < 0.05).

Sport trainings open possibilities to develop people’s spirituality, communication, collaboration, ethics, help, solidarity, dignity, fairness, responsibility, and tolerance towards education. Olympism is valuable for its moral values; it helps youth to become wholesome personalities. The philosophy of Olympism stimulates comprehensive harmonious person’s development, mastership, victories, inter-respect, honesty, tolerance, etc.

It was found that Lithuanian students tended to assign the values, connected with human values, and social virtues, connected with Olympism. The least important values were connected with personal development. So, the students associated Olympism, firstly, with honesty, secondly – way of respect, cultural awareness, optimism, strength of the will, generosity, tolerance towards other nations, etc. Such results are determined by an opinion about the Olympic Games itself. While analysing the research results, it has emerged that social values, bounded with Olympism, were important for the students. They found those values very important: sense of community, heartiness, goodness, better world, gentlemanlike behaviour, body and mind harmony, etc. The least connected things with the Olympic Games that students named were: personal development, artfulness, career, collaboration, etc.

Ethics is very important in sports. Most of the students stated that it was not acceptable if someone would try to break the rules. 159 students stated that it was possible to win competing honestly. 153 students agreed that honest and fair sport contest was a concurrent in both children and adults’ sport; but there were those, who agreed on that in some sports it was impossible not to traumatize the rival, that violence was a necessary part of some sports. All the athletes are equal for the rules and all of them have to obey to rules. The most important thing is noble and honourable sport contest. Both respondent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Completely agree</th>
<th>Partially agree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>No answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. In sports it is acceptable, if someone tries to violate the rules</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In some sports it is impossible not to traumatise the opponent</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. In sport it is impossible to achieve sporting success in the honourable fight</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Violence is an integral part of some of the sports</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sport activities can be won in honourable fight</td>
<td>72.9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. If a contestant is competing dishonestly, he can be paid off the same</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The rules, encouraging roughness, must be absolutely prohibited in sport</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Noble, honourable fight sport is an integral part of both children and adults’ sports</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. In sport one can be a little selfish</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. An athlete can consume doping in order to win the Olympic medal</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
groups (who did sport activities and who did not do) understood what a noble play was. Among the students, who did not have lectures on Olympism, there were those, who agreed on possibility to break the rules and that it was not possible to gain good sport results in fair play.

Conclusions

The students will experience Olympism through learning, Olympic education, sports competitions, and also through the sense of beauty of sport, alternation, depth of emotions and feelings, the bless and the underlying of the strength of values. Students as young people are full of enthusiasm, energy, drive for improvement and learning.

Olympic education topic at the universities has not been researched yet. Therefore, this work is significant that for the first time we have investigated Lithuanian students’ attitudes towards noble and honourable sport contest. It was found that Lithuanian students tend to assign the values, which are connected with human values, and social virtues, connected with Olympism. The least important values are connected with personal development. So, the students associate Olympism, firstly, with honesty, secondly – way of respect, cultural awareness, optimism, strength of the will, generosity, tolerance towards other nations, etc. Such results are determined by an opinion about the Olympic Games itself. When analysing the research results, it has emerged that social values, bounded with Olympism, are of high importance for the students. They find those values very important: a sense of community, heartiness, goodness, better world, gentlemanlike behaviour, body and mind harmony, etc. The least connected thing with the Olympic Games that the students named was personal development, heartfulness, career, collaboration, etc. Ethics is very important in sports. Most of the students believe that it is not acceptable if someone tries to break rules. Even 159 students keep an opinion that it is possible to win competing honestly. 153 students agree that honest and fair sport contest is a concurrent both among kids and adults sport; but there are those, who agree that in some sports it impossible not to traumatisise the rival, that violence is a necessary part of some sports. All the athletes are equal for the rules and all of them have to obey them. The most important thing is noble and honourable sport contest. Both respondent groups (who do sport activities and who do not do) understand what a nobly play is. Among the students, who did not have lecturers on Olympism, there is opinion on possibility to break the rules, and that it is impossible to gain good sports results in fair play.

Olympic sport, Olympic education, the humanism of competition, the conception of sport activities, and education of the personality express the greatness and beauty, highlights the significance of common values, and elevates the spirit. The global guidelines in Olympic education, Olympic pedagogics are the science about education of young people with the reference to humanistic ideals and values of Olympism, full of joy, sparkle, and belief in the future.

REFERENCES

LIETUVOS STUDENTŲ POŽIŪRIS Į KILNIĄ IR GARBINGĄ KOVĄ

Ramūnė Motiejūnaitė
Lietuvos edukologijos universitetas

SANTRAUKA

Mūsų nuomone, labai svarbu išsiaiškinti, ar universitetuose studentai yra supažindinami su olimpine programa ir olimpinėmis idėjomis. Mokslinės literatūros analizė padėjo suprasti vertžinių nuostatų reikšmę, olimpizmo ir olimpinių švietimo raidą, atskleisti vertžinių nuostatų ypatumus ir įsigilinti, kaip sportinė veikla lemia vertžines nuostatas bei kultūrą.

tyrimo tikslas – ištirti Lietuvos studentų požiūrį į kilnaus sporto ir garbingos kovos vertžinių puosėjimą


Tyrimui atlikti buvo naudojami SPSS 15 for Windows programos. Analizavimą atliekant, naudojosi įvairūs statistinės analizės metodai. Šie kriterijai įvertinti naudojant esminų komponentų išskyrimo ir Varimax veiksnio pasukimo būdą. Skirtumai laikyti statistiškai patikimais esant ne didesnei kaip 5 % paklaidai (p < 0,05). Ryšys laikytas statistiškai patikimu esant ne didesnei kaip 5 % paklaidai (p < 0,05).

Buvo nustatyta, kad Lietuvos studentai olimpizmą daugiausia sieja su atvirumu, abipuse pagarba, kultūrine nuovoka, optimizmu, ištverme, dosnumu, tolerancija kitoms tautoms ir t. t. Šitie rezultatai siejami su olimpinių žaidynių suvokimu. Analizuojant tyrimo rezultatus buvo pastebėta, kad studentai sieja socialines vertžines su olimpizmu. Niams labai svarbi bendruomenė, atvirumas, gerumas, geresnio pasaulio sąvoka, džentelmeniškumas, kūno ir minties harmonija ir t. t. Tačiau svarbiausias dalykas yra kilnas ir garbingos sporto varžybos. Abi tyrimų grupės (užsiimančiųjų sportu ir nesportuojančiųjų) suvokia, kas yra garbinga kova.

Raktažodžiai: olimpizmas, olimpinių švietimas, studentai, vertžės, kilnas, garbingas.