



Educational values of sport and olympism in the opinion of students and undergraduates*

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Abstract

Knowledge on the subject of values preferred by individuals and groups is cognitively interesting and socially useful. Traditional and universal values seem to lose competition with values preferred in today's commercialised and virtual world. Thus, education according to values, particularly those timeless and universal ones, becomes an important element of the process of education as well as urgent social need both in life and in sport. The aim of this work is to present results of studies carried out by myself and regarding the hierarchy of values and opinions on the subject of educational values of sport and olympism from the point of view of a selected group of secondary school students and undergraduates. In the general hierarchy of values, the responders placed family as the most important value, and among the educational values of sport, health was indicated as most important by younger students, cooperation by older students and discipline by undergraduates. However, the values of olympism with the main principle of fair play were also mentioned, though they were placed further in the presented hierarchy of values.

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INTRODUCTION

The decline of traditional values, the bases of which we find in the fundamental categories of ethics and commonly known such as „truth” „goodness” “beauty” as well as values connected with educational role of sport, is becoming a problem of larger and larger social reception. Contemporary societies have become more interested in body worship and hunger for success, and wealth and fame have become socially desirable values. Sport, especially in its competitive-professional form, often recognized in categories of a phenomenon, as well as olympism perceived as a symbol of over time values have both found themselves in a critical situation.

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Pushing socially desirable values onto the margin of individual's and groups' functioning area in the great world of sport is becoming a fact. Values are symbols which are important regulators of social life including social life in sport. These are the dynamic social interactions regarding sport educator and educatee that influence upon shape and change of the attitudes towards the educational values of sport. However, contemporarily, sport, through the processes of commercialization and professionalization takes on more and more often, an instrumental value.

Ethical rules in sport constitute an attempt of determining a normative system in it which is particularly important in contemporary sport movement. Zbigniew Krawczyk recalls the basic categories of sport ethics which are: "valor, honor, fair play and joy" and he underlines that what "(...) joins particular rules and so decides about a specific evolutionary cycle of moral patterns in sport" (Krawczyk, 2000: 53-59). "Education that does not fill children and youth into the world of values is as a rule a half-education and hardly effective, and frequently senseless and socially harmful" (Łobocki, 2006: 102). There are a lot of classifications and systems of values, however those universal values preferred in education involve: altruism, tolerance, responsibility, freedom and justice, and the educational aims are legitimized by values.

"Values" and "aims" are notions similar in understanding and rarely exclude each other, however, these are moral values that have the priority in reaching aims in education (Łobocki, 2006: 108-119). The basis of moral education which reminds about long-lasting and timeless moral values of sport is the Olympic education which involves the main rule of "fair play". Herein I present the results of my own research, regards the hierarchy of values as well as, opinions on the educational values of sport and olympism expressed among the selected group of secondary school students of a grounded self-assessment as well as undergraduates – future creators of values.

MATERIAL and METHODS

Research Model

The aim of the present work of a qualitative character was to know the opinions of respondents – current students "receivers" as well as undergraduates, future "givers" in the process of shaping and changing attitudes, regards both values in general, as well as those educative ones located in sport and olympism. In this research applied qualitative methods of research such as: a questionnaire survey, individual and group non-directive interviews and participant observation.

Research Group

The basic research material were students of the elite secondary school and students of the second year of the non-stationary course of studies of the sport academy. The research on the targeted group of respondents were carried in April 2017. The choice of the research group was determined by age, which enabled me to acquire opinions on the subject of my interest

among younger and older students of a grounded self-assessment and future educators in the field of physical culture. The choice of research group was also conditioned by the possibility of access to the research material. In the presented surveys, there were participating 21 students of the first year course, 43 students of the four year course, both of the groups from the secondary technical school and 32 academic students, so altogether 86 respondents, and the participation was voluntary.

Data Collection

The research was of a qualitative character and there was made a survey questionnaire composed of a few questions regards general hierarchy of values and the educative values of sport. The questionnaire of the survey included two open questions, two open questions with rank and one semi-open which let develop the given answer. The respondents were, among others, asked to explain the word “value” as well as to answer the question , if, in their opinion, sport fulfills any educative role. Because, in the process of the carried pilotage, the respondents, often, did not differentiate the notions regards educative values of “sport” versus “olympism” I narrowed this range to one term “sport”.

Data Analyses

The answers of the secondary school students and undergraduates on the subject of my interest underwent mainly a qualitative analysis. Some of the results are presented in the chart, and the other answers of the respondents are included in a descriptive form. On the basis of the non-directive oral interviews are collected a few interesting observations regards understanding the notions “sport” and “value” by the participants. It occurred, that understanding of the term “sport” by the questioned is not explicit, and the recognition of its essence quite difficult.

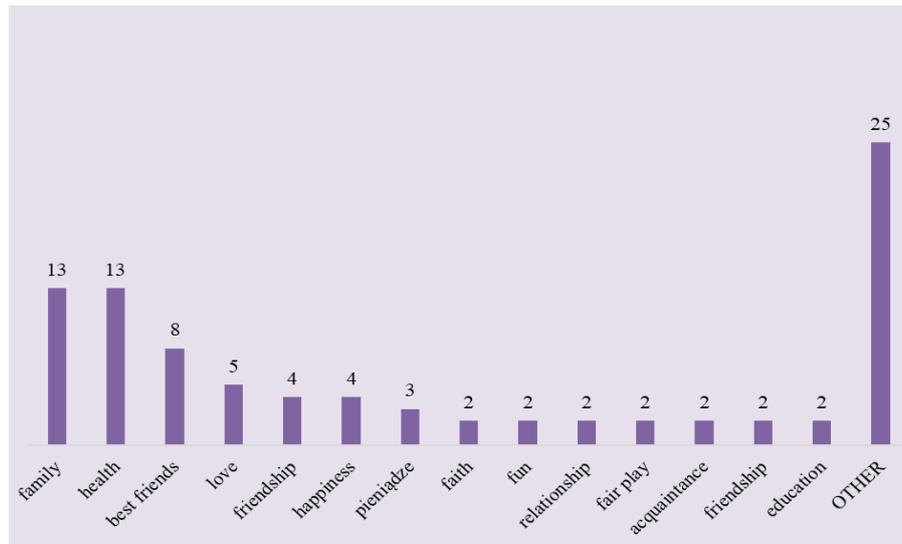
RESULTS

The answer “yes” to the main question: “Does sport educate?” by the majority of the participants was not a surprise. 100% of the undergraduates confirmed the educational role of sport, however, among students there appeared a few responses negating sport as an educational factor ex. “this is only a physical activity“, “sport does not educate. But some movement is ok”, “No, because it has not educated me”, “I am an example of the fact that I do not pay much attention to sport, and in spite of that I believe, that I am socially and morally mature”.

The responses of all the participants as for the understanding of the word “value” are very similar in general regard such definitions as “value indicates what is important and what is less important” , “it is something that a particular person considers important”, “ it is a state /object, which is precious for us”. Among students there appeared also cognitively interesting opinions such as ex. “value is a price”, “value is a relative notion”, “value is something that we hold to all our lives, that we believe in and that we are directed by”, “it is a benefit, “it is

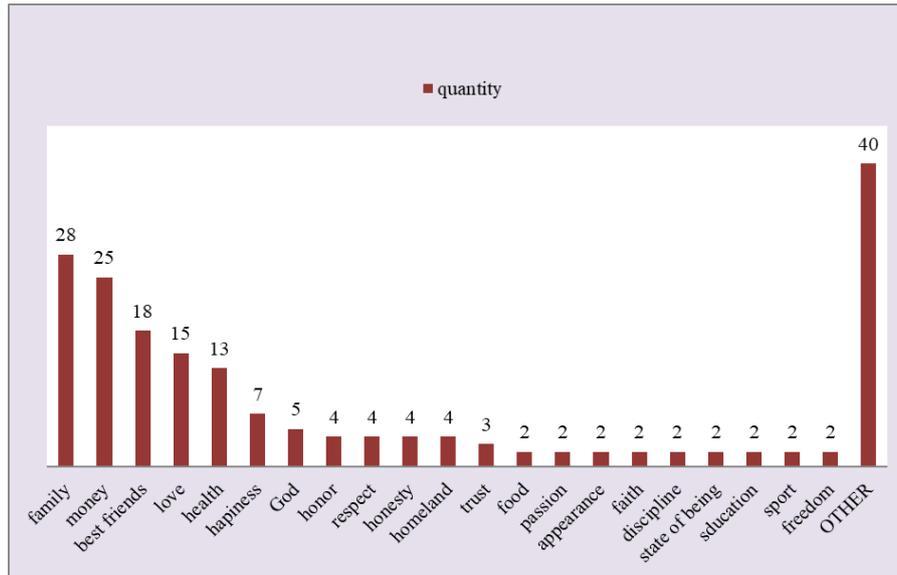
an importance of an aspect of life which creates our life attitudes”, “that is something which is worth doing and worth fighting for”.

The examples given by students indicate that value “are features and norms of behavior which are essential for a society”, “are determined by a level in a particular scale of a person or thing “, “ makes us have determined behaviors and views”, “is something we are directed by in our daily routine”, “ is a rule directing my life”. Respondents believed that “ values help us go through life in a good way and when we are directed by values we discover rules”, “value is something that we cannot buy”, “value is something that is not easy to get, something achieved by hard work”. As it is shown in the above examples, the understanding of the notion “value” is proper and identified with its generally accepted interpretation.

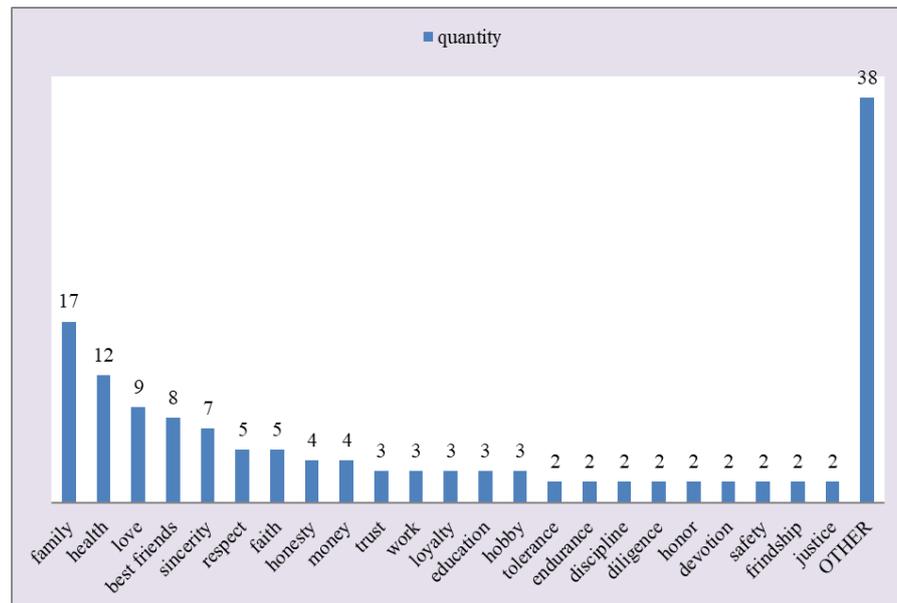


Graph 1: Hierarchy of values for the secondary school students in all (first year students)

Most of the responses regard “other” (Graph 1), because each of the participants could name in turn from the most important a few of the values and they are values which appear individually such as “science, books, adrenaline, honesty, sport, sincerity, homeland, school, wisdom, creativity, dance, hobby, joy, social life”.



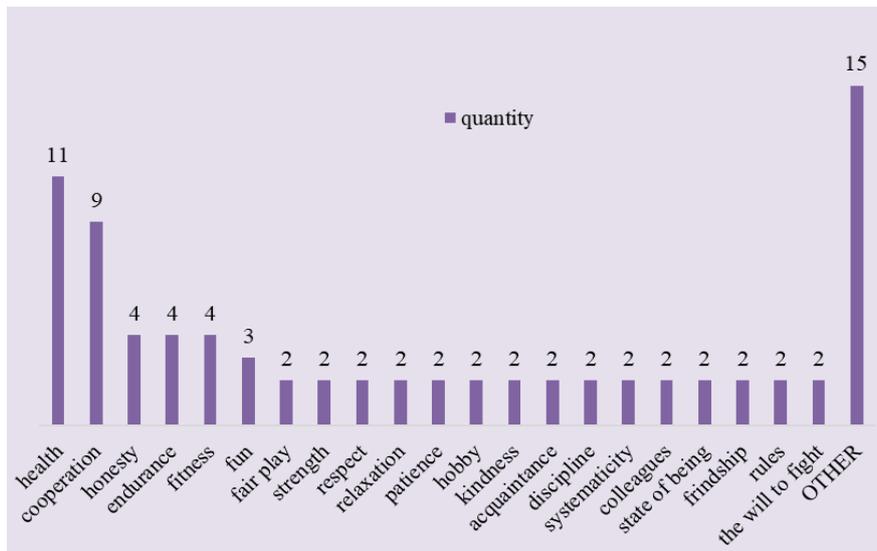
Graph 2: Hierarchy of values for the secondary school students in all (forth year students)
 In the category of “OTHER” (Graph 2) the respondents pointed out such values as: “self-acceptation, justice, education, endurance, sincerity, faithfulness, tradition, goodness of the other man, culture, career, authority, courage, modesty, responsibility, humbleness, fair play, service, work, life, generosity, civilization development, friendship”. While defining the importance of the general values one of the students disclosed in turn, that they are: ”God, honor, homeland, family and love” the other stated that they are: “God, honor, homeland and sport”.



Graph 3: The hierarchy of values for the undergraduates in all (Second year of studies)

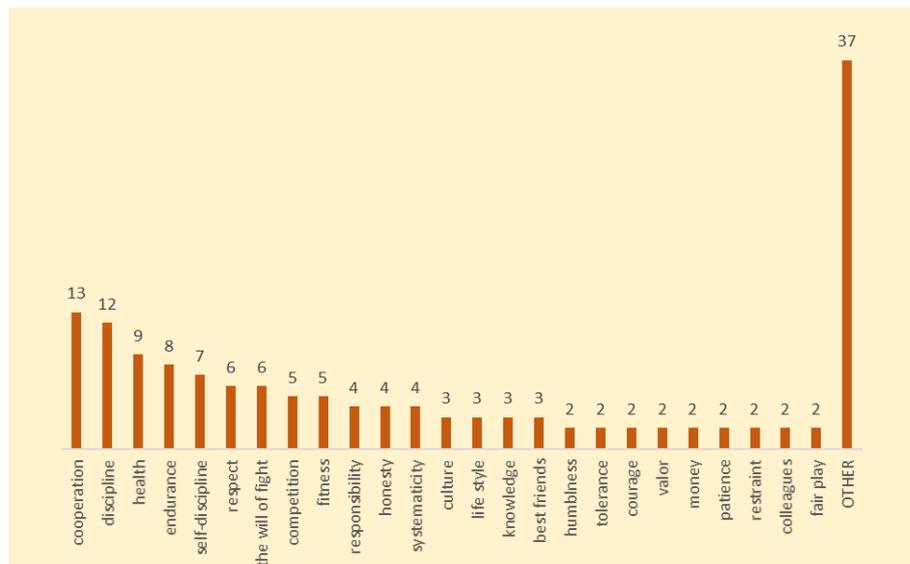
Among the “OTHER” (Graph 3) there are such values as ex.: “faithfulness, God, brotherhood, being hard working, systematicity, homeland, courage, stabilization, life, sport,

reliability, tolerance, educational values, self-discipline, tradition”. Values generally mentioned on the first five places in the three presented groups are almost identical and in all of them the most important place is taken by family. The remaining ones such as health, love, friends are mentioned by all the respondents, however on different places in the hierarchy and the first class students pointed out friendship and happiness as important, the students of fourth class – money, and the undergraduates considered sincerity as important.



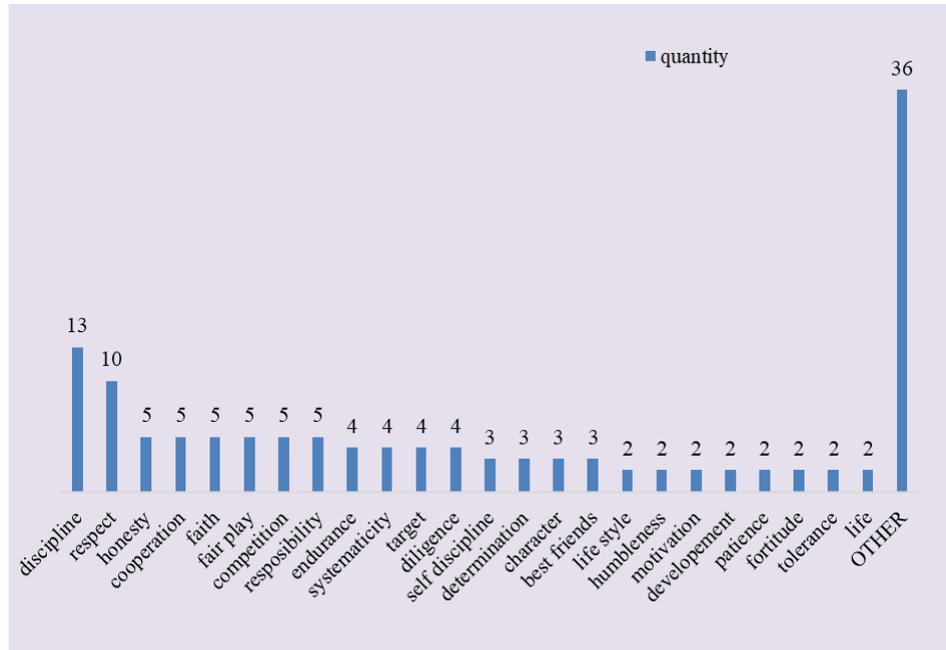
Graph 4: Educational values of sport according to secondary school students in all (first year students)

The “OTHER” educational values of sport were (Graph 4) according to younger students: humbleness, restraint, responsibility, pursuing one’s aim, energy, competition, appearance, overcoming weaknesses, sympathy and winning.



Graph 5: Educational values of sport according to secondary school students in all (fourth year students)

For the older secondary school students (Graph 5) “OTHER” were: “empathy, ambition, self development, relations, trust, passion, punctuality, reliability, loyalty, devotion, sincerity, self-confidence, honor, bravery, team work, character”.



Graph 6: Educational values of sport according to students in all (Second year of studies)

“OTHER” for undergraduates (Chart 6) included ,, resistance to failures, the will for fight, courage, self-confidence, educational values in general, social competences, perfection, generosity, strong will, decision making, self realization, overcoming weaknesses, being hardworking, sympathy, determination, engagement, altruism, health, diet, optimism, self evaluation”.

The subject “what sport is” is relatively rarely discussed at schools, and still, more rarely, in case of this range of age group, the subject of Olympic values such as e.g., fair play is being discussed. Thus, in the majority they possess only a general knowledge about this notion, they use the notion in practice but they do not know the origin of it. Moreover, they recall the weighty, over-time and universal values of olympism, mostly on the occasion of the following Olympic Games.

DISCUSSION

Knowledge on the subject of the values preferred by individuals and communities is cognitively interesting, socially useful and it involves suggestions of a practical nature. Traditional and universal values seem to lose competition against values preferred in today’s commercialized and virtual world. Education for values, especially those timeless and universal ones is becoming an important element of the process of education and a socially urgent need, both in life and sport.

In the general hierarchy of values the respondents placed family at the first place, that, as a universal European value, holds its high position. Moreover, the majority of the participants pointed out a positive role of sport in the area of shaping and changing attitudes in the process of education. Among the educational values of sport, the secondary school younger students placed health at the first position. The most important value in the presented surveys regards educational values of sport according to older secondary school students was cooperation and in the opinion of undergraduates that was discipline. In all of the compared groups the five most important values were the above mentioned ones, though in different order. A wide range of the presented values that sport involves is more than satisfactory.

The values of olympism with their main rule of fair play were also presented though placed further in the hierarchy of values. It should be indicated here, that the respondents, (mainly secondary school students) could not point out which of the values belonged to olympism. Taking all that into account it becomes obvious that the Olympic values should be passed in the course of Olympic education and that the Olympic education should become one of the important elements of realization of the core curriculum in Physical Education.

As a result of the special task of sport is its service-minded social role, which means preparation of individuals to live beyond sport, where a suitably shaped sport personality can create foundations for a properly constructed social person. Thus, in the perspective of functioning of individuals well educated for and through values, especially after having finished their sport careers, the messages of *kalokagatii* as a unity of virtues of mind, heart and body [Lipiec 1988: 7] and the statement, that “*Dignified future life demands a dignified and universal personality*” [Doktor 2002: 168] give the sense best.

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