52 - VIEWS OF SLOVAK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ON OLYMPIC VALUES

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Abstract:
Problem Statement: Slovak schools could participate in the educational program created by the International Olympic Committee OVEP (Olympic Values Education Program). It is a program of value education through the values of Olympism, which helps participants develop their positive moral and ethical qualities. The following educational themes, aimed at transmitting a contemporized version of the Olympic principles, are the basis of the OVEP program: joy of effort, fair play, respect for oneself and others, pursuit of excellence, harmonious and balanced life of body, will, and mind
Approach: The research sample consisted of 1549 fifth- and sixth-grade students from Slovak elementary schools. The significance of differences in students' knowledge and attitudes by gender and physical activity was evaluated using the Pearson´s chi-squared test, Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA.
Purpose: The purpose of the study was to assess the level of knowledge about the ethical values of Olympism among elementary school students and their attitudes to Olympic values.
Results: Gender differences in knowledge levels suggest that boys have more knowledge about Olympic values than girls. Significant gender differences in students' attitudes towards Olympic values were observed for all values, except for friendship. Comparison between groups according to physical activity levels in the students' knowledge and attitudes showed statistically significant differences in some questionnaire items.
Conclusion: The results have shown that gender may be a factor affecting attitudes towards Olympic values. Students achieved a high percentage of correct answers for the knowledge about particular Olympic values, which indicates good levels of knowledge.
Key Words*:* Olympism, physical and sports education, fair play, excellence, respect.

Introduction

Physical and sports education should not be oriented only towards motor improvement and students' fitness levels but must also focus on the comprehensive development of students' personalities. It represents the most effective way to make available to all children and young people the skills, values and knowledge and develop the skills necessary for their lifelong participation in physical and sports activities (Antala & Olosová, 2016). The objectives of physical and sports education as a school subject in Slovakia are described in the State educational program within the educational area of Health and Exercise. The cognitive competencies of this subject include, among others, knowledge about Olympic ideals not only in theory but also the ability to follow them in your life. Within the interpersonal competencies, students should be able to resolve conflict situations rationally and behave empathetically and assertively. Attitude competencies within physical and sports education lead students in particular to the observance of the fair play principle and the coping with both wins and losses (State Educational Program 2015). Slovak schools could participate in the educational program created by the International Olympic Committee OVEP (Olympic Values Education Program). It is a program of value education through the values of Olympism, which helps

participants develop their positive moral and ethical qualities. The following educational themes, aimed at transmitting a contemporized version of the Olympic principles, are the basis of the OVEP program: joy of effort, fair play, respect for oneself and others, pursuit of excellence, harmonious and balanced life of body, will, and mind (OVEP, 2016).

Education in schools is a form of education and moral education through physical and sports education teachers, who can significantly influence students' feelings, attitudes, and responsibility for their behavior. Brock and Hastie (2003) reported that following the introduction of specific fair-play interventions, that focused on the presence (versus the absence) of specific target behaviors, significant improvements in student compliance, positive interpersonal behaviors, and leadership behaviors were achieved. The essence of physical and sports education requires awareness, observance, and creating one's own rules and moral norms. Presenting and explaining ethical pillars of society and sports lead to promoting students' behavior that follows socially acknowledged values (Mallia et al., 2017). Sports and sports activities are acknowledged by society as a whole. Therefore, their importance may be used in promoting moral education in youth at schools (Mouratidou, Goutza & Chatzopoulos, 2007). In addition to the positive aspects of sport, it is essential to point to the negative trends that the field of sport and other areas have to face. Today's sports are going through a crisis of values, which is particularly associated with the commercialization of sport (Culpan, 2019; Young, 2019). According to Palou et al. (2013), negative practices expressed as anti-social behavior such as cheating or doping become a part of the world of sport. This may support the knowledge that sport does not fulfill its functions in transmitting positive values.

The fundamental principle of sports ethics is fair play, outlining the course of the competition in two ways. The first has been defined by Lipiec (1999) as a formal way representing a command prohibiting foul play. The second definition of fair play focuses on the informal concept of the game, which is more important but also more challenging to implement in practice. It plays an essential role in moral competence levels based on a system of values determining individual behavior in real life (Bronikowska et al., 2019).

Sports activities during physical and sports education classes also promote cooperation among students in working together towards accomplishing a common goal (Vidoni & Ward, 2006) while showing mutual respect. By applying special teaching methods or strategies that have already undergone some development, this cooperation, mutual assistance, willingness, compliance, and accountability for one's own behavior can be further strengthened. The effectiveness of the Olympism-based educational program included in the Fair Play for Kids program points to the students' moral development. Still, it does not have to be linked to physical and sports education. Specially designed curricula can be a part of any subject in student education (Bronikowski & Bronikowska, 2010; Knijnik & Tavares, 2012; Naul et al., 2017). Although the principle of fair play has its origins in sports, it has spread to other areas of life. Further research suggests a significant difference in the understanding of the fair play principle between adolescent boys and girls who were physically active and those who were physically inactive (Bronikowska et al., 2019; Saenz, Gimeno, Gutierrez & Lacambra, 2019).

Physical and sports classes are ideal for implementing experiential pedagogy, where students' experiences are closest to experiencing the harmonious ideal of kalokagathia. The purpose is to highlight the ideals of antiquity as abstract concepts and slogans and inspire courage and willingness to commit to these ideals in life. Enthusiasm for the values of the past and their promotion in the present is possible if these ideals are experienced in specific situations. One accepts them not as moralistic lessons but as the content and result of captivating the struggles of living people. Understanding ethical values and verbal expression of any ideas and ideals does not mean that the ideas are actually fulfilled. There is no educational institution that can implement ethical values (e.g., kalokagathia) systematically

and daily. However, the very fact that this effort to transfer them to the current reality proves that ancient ideas are not just a utopia of theorists (Jirásek, 2005).

The purpose of the study was to assess the level of knowledge and attitudes towards ethical Olympic values among elementary school students in Slovakia from the viewpoint of gender and physical activity levels.

Material & methods

Participants

The research sample consisted of 1549 fifth- and sixth-grade students from Slovak elementary schools (boys 48.3%, *n* = 748; girls 51.7%, *n* = 801). The mean age of the students was 10.98 ± 0.97 years. The questionnaire data were assessed by gender and physical activity levels. According to these criteria, students were assigned to 3 groups. The first group S1 (*n* = 209, boys = 90, girls = 119) included students who were physically active within extracurricular activities. The second group S2 (*n* = 820, boys = 434, girls = 386) included students who were physically active in sports clubs. The third group S3 (*n* = 520, boys = 224, girls = 296) included students who did not engage in any physical or sports activities in their leisure time.

Procedure

Before conducting the study, school officials were contacted and provided with detailed information about the upcoming research. After obtaining consent from the school officials, a link to the online questionnaire "Olympic values". The Department approved the questionnaire of Physical Education (now the Department of Sports, Recreation and Tourism) of Klaipėda University. The research goal was to examine the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of fifth- and sixth-grade students regarding Olympic values. The data were collected from September to December 2020, when students attended online classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data collection and analysis

The "Olympic Values" online questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part focused on demographic data and the second part on Olympic values, namely *Excellence, Respect, Friendship, Joy of Effort, Fair Play*. The questionnaire consisted of questions focused on knowledge about a particular area and items aimed at expressing an attitude towards a particular area. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was satisfactory based on the calculation of the Cronbach's alpha (α - 0.74).

The questionnaire data were expressed as percentages. The Pearson's chi-squared test was used to determine differences in students' knowledge about particular dimensions at a 5% level of significance. The Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA was used to determine significant differences in students' attitudes by gender and physical activity levels, respectively. The commercial software STATISTICA (StatSoft, version 12) was used. Effect sizes were calculated to determine the standardized differences between two means. Using Cohen's standardized mean difference, an effect size ≥ 0.20 and ≤0.50 was considered small, ≥ 0.50 and < 0.80 was considered medium, and ≥ 0.80 was considered large.

Results

The answers provided by the students in the knowledge part of the questionnaire showed that their levels of knowledge about the Olympic values were good. For the Olympic value of excellence, 90.5% of the students provided correct answers. For the value of respect, 84.1% of students' answers were correct. For the value of friendship, 81.2% of students' answers were correct. For the Olympic value of fair play, 93.2% of students' answers were correct. For the Olympic value of the joy of effort, 81.7% of students' answers were correct. Gender differences in knowledge levels showed that boys had more knowledge about Olympic values than girls. Significant gender differences were found only for the Olympic value of respect ($\chi 2 = 15.085$; $p = .00$; d = 0.140). Girls gave more correct answers than boys only in the dimension of excellence. Table 1 shows that 91.1% of girls and 89.8% of boys

understood what excellence means. Gender differences in other studied dimensions were minimal, confirmed by low levels of practical significance (Tab. 1).

Table 1

Percentages of correct answers and significant gender differences in the knowledge about Olympic values

	∑ %	B %	G %	χ^2	*p*	*d*
excellence	90.5 %	89.80 %	91.10 %	0.61 4	0.43 3	0.02 8
respect	84.1 %	86.50 %	81.60 %	15.0 85	**0.00 0***	0.14 0
friendship	81.2 %	82%	80.5 %	1.13 3	0.28 7	0.03 8
fair play	93.2 %	93.50 %	92.90 %	0.48 9	0.48 5	0.02 5
joy of effort	81.7 %	82.90 %	81%	1.44 2	0.22 9	0.06 1

Note. χ^2 - chi-square test; *p* - level of significance; ∑ % - percentage of correct answers; B% - percentage of correct answers for boys; G% - percentage of correct answers for girls; *d* - effect size (0.0–0.2 no effect; 0.2–0.5 small effect; 0.5†–0.8† medium effect; ≥ 0.8‡ large effect).

According to the students' physical activity levels, knowledge or understanding of particular terms relating to Olympic values has been compared (Tab. 2). The results showed statistically significant differences for fair play (**χ**2 = 13.546; ***p*** = .001; ***d*** = 0.133) and joy of effort (**χ**2=7.315; ***p*** = .026; ***d*** = 0.138). Students from S1, S2, and S3 provided 92.6%, 94.7%, and 91.1% of correct answers, respectively, in response to questions concerning fair play (Tab. 2). This part of the questionnaire was the most successful in terms of the highest number of correct answers. There were also differences among groups in the joy of effort. Students from S2 (84.1%) provided the highest number of correct answers, followed by students from S3 (79.2%) and S1 (78%), respectively. From the viewpoint of understanding the Olympic value of joy of effort, students' knowledge about this value was low because only 81.7% of students provided correct answers.

Table 2

Percentages of correct answers and significant differences in the knowledge about Olympic values between physically active and inactive students

	S1	S2	S3	χ^2	*p*	*d*
excellence	92.30 %	91.60 %	88.10 %	5.507	0.064	0.12 0
respect	81.60 %	84.90 %	83.80 %	2.813	0.245	0.06 0
friendship	80.60 %	82.90 %	78.90 %	7.078	0.132	0.01 3
fair play	92.6%	94.7%	91.1%	13.54 6	**0.001 ***	0.13 3
joy of effort	78%	84.1%	79.2%	7.315	**0.026 ***	0.13 8

Note. S1 - physically active students within extracurricular activities; S2 - physically active students in sports clubs; S3 - physically inactive students; χ^2 - chi-square test; *p* - level of significance; *d* - effect size (0.0–0.2 no effect; 0.2–0.5 small effect; 0.5†–0.8† medium effect; ≥ 0.8‡ large effect).

By completing the Olympic values questionnaire, students demonstrated both their knowledge and attitudes towards particular values. Table 3 shows significant gender differences in attitudes towards Olympic values. The results showed significant differences between boys and girls for all values, except for friendship. A surprising finding was that boys showed a more positive attitude towards particular Olympic values than girls: (excellence: H = 4555003; *p* = .00, *d* = 0.747, respect: H=25557703; *p* =.00, *d* = 0.747, joy of effort: H = 2605312; *p* = .01, *d* = 0.748). However, girls demonstrated a more significantly positive attitude towards the value of fair play than boys (H = 2589510; *p* = .01, *d* = 0.750).

Table 3

Percentage assessment of students' attitudes towards particular Olympic values according to the levels of agreement on a 5-point scale (1 - strongly agree; 5 - strongly disagree)

		1	2	3	4	5	*M*	*Mdn*
excellence	Boys	50.2 %	28.5 %	12.0 %	6.4 %	2.9 %	1.83	1
	Girls	44.7 %	32.8 %	12.3 %	7.4 %	2.8 %	1.91	2
	U			4555003				
	p			**0.00***				
	d			**0.747†**				
respect	Boys	64.5 %	22.5 %	9.5 %	2.2 %	1.3 %	1.53	1
	Girls	59.4 %	25.9 %	10.3 %	2.8 %	1.6 %	1.61	1
	U			25557703				
	p			**0.00***				
	d			**0.747†**				
friendship	Boys	53.4 %	27.1 %	10.9 %	4.8 %	2.8 %	1.79	1
	Girls	50.9 %	29.0 %	12.5 %	4.8 %	2.8 %	1.8	1
	U			4696612				
	p			0.132				
	d			**0.749†**				
joy of effort	Boys	46.0 %	30.6 %	15.9 %	4.9 %	2.6 %	1.88	2
	Girls	41.8 %	33.9 %	17.7 %	5.2 %	1.4 %	1.9	2
	U			2605312				
	p			**0.034***				
	d			**0.748†**				
fair play	Boys	45.6 %	21.0 %	12.6 %	9.8 %	11.0 %	2.2	2
	Girls	47.4 %	22.5 %	13.5 %	9.4 %	7.2 %	2.07	2
	U			2589510				
	p			**0.01***				
	d			**0.750†**				

Note. 1 - strongly agree; 2 - agree; 3 - neither agree nor disagree; 4 - disagree; 5 - strongly disagree; U - Mann-Whitney test statistic; *p* - level of significance, *M* - mean; *Mdn* - median;

d - effect size (0.0–0.2 no effect; 0.2–0.5 small effect; 0.5†–0.8† medium effect; ≥ 0.8‡ large effect).

Table 4 shows students' attitudes towards particular Olympic values by organized physical activity levels. Differences in students' attitudes were statistically significant except for the value of fair play (H = 2.65; *p* = 0.27, *d* = 0.024). Students from S2 demonstrated the most positive attitude towards the value of excellence, and the difference between groups was statistically significant (H = 241.03; *p* = .00, *d* = 0.401). The attitudes of students from particular groups (S1, S2, S3) towards other Olympic values were identical. Students from S2 and S3 showed the most positive and least positive attitudes towards Olympic values, respectively (respect: H = 61.91; *p* = .00, 0.229; friendship: H = 23.39, *p* = .00, 0.118; joy of effort: H=120.45; *p* = .00, 0.324).

Table 4

Percentage assessment of physically active and inactive students' attitudes towards particular Olympic values on a 5-point scale (1 - strongly agree; 5 - strongly disagree)

		1	2	3	4	5	*M*	*Mdn*
excellence	S1	48.9 %	30.0 %	11.6 %	7.1 %	2.4 %	1.84	2
	S2	54.8 %	28.8 %	9.3 %	5.3 %	1.8 %	1.71	1
	S3	35.0 %	34.1 %	16.9 %	9.3 %	4.7 %	2.15	2
U				241.03				
p				0.00*				
d				0.401				
respect	S1	61.7 %	24.6 %	10.2 %	2.4 %	1.1 %	1.57	1
	S2	66.5 %	22.3 %	7.6 %	2.3 %	1.3 %	1.5	1
	S3	54.7 %	27.2 %	13.3 %	2.8 %	2.0 %	1.7	1
U			61.91					
p			0.00*					
d			0.229					
friendship	S1	54.0 %	28.2 %	9.7 %	4.5 %	3.6 %	1.76	1
	S2	54.1 %	28.0 %	9.6 %	4.9 %	3.4 %	1.75	1
	S3	48.3 %	28.1 %	15.7 %	4.9 %	3.0 %	1.86	2
U			23.39					
p			0.00*					
d			0.118					

joy of effort	S1	49.4 %	28.4 %	16.3 %	4.6 %	1.3 %	1.8	2
	S2	49.3 %	31.1 %	13.3 %	4.1 %	2.2 %	1.79	2
	S3	32.9 %	35.9 %	22.5 %	6.6 %	2.1 %	2.1	2
	U		120.45					
	p		0.00*					
	d		0.324					
fair play	S1	50.2 %	18.7 %	12.8 %	9.4 %	8.9 %	2.08	1
	S2	46.5 %	21.1 %	11.6 %	10.2 %	10.6 %	2.17	2
	S3	44.9 %	24.1 %	15.6 %	8.7 %	6.7 %	2.08	2
	U		2.65					
	p		0.27					
	d		0.024					

Note. 1 - strongly agree; 2 – agree; 3 - neither agree nor disagree; 4 – disagree; 5 - strongly disagree; S1 - physically active students within extracurricular activities; S2 - physically active students in sports clubs; S3 - physically inactive students; U - Mann-Whitney test statistic; *p* - level of significance; *M* - mean; *Mdn* - median; *d* - effect size (0.0–0.2 no effect; 0.2–0.5 small effect; 0.5†–0.8† medium effect; ≥ 0.8‡ large effect).

Dicussion

In the spirit of Olympic ideals, sports have an educational character and effect, educating children, adolescents, and adults. It should educate for courage, cautiousness, overcoming obstacles in everyday life, self-control, mental balance, and a sense of justice (Ráczová, 2016). Sports and physical and sports education enable children to set boundaries, goals, values and find a match between their wishes and responsibilities, to teach them the right decisions and, at the same time, to give them sufficient autonomy to become responsible personalities.

The Olympic values questionnaire completed by students also contained knowledge-oriented questions concerning values arising from the Olympic philosophy. The Olympic values studied were excellence, respect, friendship, fair play, and joy of effort. Knowledge-oriented questions were constructed so that when choosing one of three possible answers, it was clear that the student understood and was able to define a particular concept or an Olympic value correctly. An interesting finding was that boys achieved a higher percentage of correct answers in the individual parts of the questionnaire, which were focused on the mentioned Olympic values, except for the part dealing with excellence (Tab. 1). The most considerable difference between genders, which was statistically significant, was found for questions about the Olympic value of respect. Boys achieved a higher percentage (86.5%) of correct answers (Tab. 1). Physical activities performed by students in their leisure time probably had little effect on the knowledge levels. The percentages of boys and girls who engaged in organized physical activities were comparable. A total of 1029 students, which equals 66% of the entire student sample, engaged in sports activities during their leisure time. Boys and girls who were physically active accounted for 51% and 49% of the sample, respectively. Compared with girls, boys demonstrated a better understanding of respect as

a concept within Olympic education. The results have shown that students sufficiently understood the correct meanings of particular Olympic values. Given the high percentages of correct answers in the knowledge part of the questionnaire dealing with Olympic values (Tab. 1), we consider it important that students understand these concepts and apply this knowledge in real life, becoming a pillar underlying their moral decisions.

Knowledge or understanding of particular concepts of Olympic values was compared between students who were assigned to groups according to their physical activity levels. Students were assigned to three groups according to whether they engaged in physical activities within extracurricular education offered by schools (S1) or in organized after-school training (S2). The last group consisted of students who did not engage in any physical activity during their leisure time (S3). In most of the questionnaire parts concerning particular Olympic values, except for the part dealing with excellence, students from S2 (physically active children in sports clubs) achieved the highest percentage of correct answers (Tab. 2). Students who engaged in physical activity during their leisure time understood the concepts of Olympic values better than their physically inactive peers. Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of leading by example, social responsibility, and respect for general fundamental ethical principles. In the part of the questionnaire dealing with the joy of effort as an Olympic value, the differences between groups were statistically significant, and the number of correct answers was the lowest (Tab. 2). Physically active students in sports clubs and supervised by coaches better understand the joy of effort. The results show that students who train in sports clubs know that vigorous training is important, for which they have to sacrifice a lot. However, they know the good feeling that follows hard work, either in the form of a victory or extending personal boundaries.

Strong orientation of individuals to moral values such as altruism, honesty, responsibility, and dignity form the basis for expressing any statement of fair play behavior. Emphasis placed on these values since early childhood and in socially recognized activities that children and students find attractive may lead to internalization of the positive values and their manifestation in every domain of social life. Doing a sports education in the spirit of fair play leads to forming an autonomous personality of athletes (Popescu & Masari, 2011).

Students' attitudes towards particular Olympic values were assessed by gender (Tab. 3) and physical activity levels (Tab. 4). The gender differences in attitudes towards Olympic values were significant for all values, except for friendship. Students were supposed to express their attitudes towards particular values, described as situations, on a 5-point scale: strongly agree (1), agree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), disagree (4), strongly disagree (5). Categories 1 and 2 (strongly agree, agree) showed positive attitudes towards a particular Olympic value. On the contrary, categories 4 and 5 (strongly disagree, disagree) manifested negative attitudes. A positive finding was that students mostly showed a positive attitude towards each of the Olympic values. Students are at least theoretically aware of the importance of these values. However, this creates a precondition that students will transfer this positive attitude into real life and specific situations. An interesting finding is that boys had a more positive attitude than girls towards all Olympic values, except for the fair play value. Boys were able to identify with these values more in theory (Tab. 3). However, girls demonstrated a more positive attitude towards the value of fair play than boys. As with the knowledge part of the questionnaire, the percentages of physically active and inactive boys and girls were comparable. Therefore, engaging in organized sports activities does not affect gender differences. In terms of practical significance expressed by effect size, there was a medium effect of gender on attitudes towards Olympic values or ways and outcomes of education, which may differ between genders (Tab. 3). In physical education and sports classes, boys prefer to play sports games (Bebčáková et al., 2011), which shows that boys play sports games in an organized manner. When playing games, following the rules of the game becomes much more critical. Teachers who act as coaches and referees play a crucial role in ensuring that students follow the rules. Girls tend to prefer to play esthetic sports such

as dance, gymnastics, and aerobics. In their study, Balga and Antala (2015) found that female students often missed these activities during physical education and sports classes. When engaging in these activities, the referee does not play a significant role in ensuring that the rules are followed during a sports match. Therefore, it may be assumed that, in addition to gender and physical activity levels, the type of sport (individual or team sports) in particular affects students' attitudes towards specific Olympic values.

In particular sports, the conducts (determined by the rules of each specific sports branch) are learned and enforced; then these become habits and skills in the athletes' behavior. Sports and physical education represent excellent environments that provide the possibility of promoting moral behavior and athletes' and students' self-reflection, contributing to a large extent to human personality development (Popescu & Masari, 2011). Morals or human morality are significantly affected by the society where people live, adopting behavior patterns expected in life. The socialization and personality formation processes are affected considerably by the social environment, especially by family (Kowalska, 2015) and school (Fair Play and Happiness Through Sports, 2017). When adopting attitudes towards the course and results of sports activities in the context of Olympic values, the environment where students engage in sports activities also plays an important role. Both coaches and the entire social environment, which constitute a sports club, significantly affect adopting attitudes.

Table 4 shows significant differences in students' attitudes towards Olympic values by physical activity levels. Students were assigned to three groups according to whether they engaged in physical activities within extracurricular education offered by schools (S1) or in organized after-school training (S2). The last group consisted of students who did not engage in any physical activity during their leisure time (S3). There were significant differences between these groups in all values, except for the value of fair play. Fair play was the watchword of the gentleman amateur, which later established itself in professional sport. Has the notion of fair play its place in professional sport or is fair play an anachronistic survival of the old amateur ideal (Renson, 2009)? In their study, Popescu and Masari (2011) found that athletes who were identified to follow the rules and play fair in sports competitions tend to transfer the same type of behavior in social life. However, athletes who play decreased fair behavior in competition tend to have low fair play behavior in society. Identical results were reported for the ethical value of fair play, showing a correlation between fair play and moral values. Athletes who play fair behavior in competition tend to have a high orientation towards moral values and vice versa. Surprisingly, the sample studied (Tab. 4) showed the least positive attitudes towards the value of fair play. Students are often confronted with this value or notion, realizing that respecting the fair play principle requires a high degree of self-control and getting out of one's comfort zone to benefit others. "The desire to win, sometimes at all costs, appears in all performance categories. Behavior with efforts beyond the boundaries of objectivity is present in recreational, competitive and elite Olympic competitions." (Charvát, 1999, p. 58). Students from S2, who were physically active in sports clubs, demonstrated the lowest positive attitude towards the fair play value. In the performance-oriented field of sports, little emphasis is often placed on the ethical aspects of sports activities or sports encounters. In competitive sports, the ethical dimension of fair play in physically active individuals is often considered a weakness, redundancy, or something that may deteriorate performance (Charvát, 2000, p. 46).

The globalization of today's world is expressed as the emphasis on the market economy, whose effects are present in all areas of social life, including sports. The consequences are usually referred to as the commercialization of sport, which consists of applying the market economy principles to the overall concept and functions of sports. We assume that emphasizing students' ethical values, whether in the recreational or elite level of sports, may positively affect their ethical adaptation to social changes, promoting their personal development. Promoting ethical values should be included in every, not only sports-oriented educational process. The study by Piltz (1995) has shown that the longer young

football players play football in a football club, the more they are willing to see intentional fouls as fair or tolerate intentional rule violations. An interesting finding reported in the study was that cheating was more accepted by the physically active pupils than by the football players. This trend was not confirmed in our study because differences in attitudes towards fair play between physically active and inactive students were nonsignificant.

Other values included in the questionnaire were excellence, respect, friendship, and joy of effort. Jirásek (2005) classifies these values as social dimension values, transferable into everyday life, especially within interpersonal situations and relationships. As mentioned above, there were no significant differences in these values between physically active and inactive students. Physically active students training in sports clubs, assigned to the S2 group, perceived excellence most positively. We assume that students are aware that the important thing is not to win but to take part, improving and enjoying the kalokagathia-based understanding of personality development. Students from S2 also showed the most positive perception of respect, which may be defined as respect for oneself or other people, including respecting the rules, and the values of friendship and joy of effort. On the contrary, students from S3, who did not engage in any organized sports activities in their leisure time, perceived particular values (excellence, respect, friendship, joy of effort) least positively. Based on these results, young students who engage in organized sports activities benefit from their positive effects on their moral development in terms of being aware of the ethical values and adopting positive attitudes towards these values. Therefore, we think that it is critical to provide moral education based on the Olympic sports values either in physical education and sports classes or during training units of young athletes. This statement has been supported by the study of Hassandra, Goudas, Hatzigeorgiadis and Theodorakis (2007), which revealed positive effects of an intervention program aimed to develop fair play behaviors in a school Olympic Education Program. This program based on sound theoretical principles can be effective in promoting students' sociomoral development. Research comparing traditional physical education programs to programs specifically designed to promote sociomoral development showed that the latter was more efficient.

In the study by Šarkauskienė (2020), pupils had a high level of knowledge about Olympic values (excellence, respect, friendship, joy of effort, and fair play). Still, they had poorer results regarding their skills and attitudes. The levels of attitudes towards the Olympic value of Fair play were low. These conclusions correspond with the results of our study conducted at Slovak schools.

Contemporary culture is primarily a humanization effort. Because sport is a part of the culture, it features a natural humanization of human life. However, athletes' lives form a part of today's civilization processes, representing dehumanizing effects on individuals, mainly if compensated economically, financially, and socially (Oborný, 2015). Therefore, competitive and recreational athletes' thinking manifests resistance to socially recognized values such as honesty and health. We agree with Elliott and Davis (2009) that physical and sports education is essential in promoting health and personal development, including physical and moral virtues. It is one of the few subjects that allows a variety of interactions between teacher and student or between students, which goes beyond the gym. Ethical values respected in sports may thus be transferred into everyday life. Therefore, researchers have shown that the physical and sports education environment is a rich context for promoting students' sociomoral development (Drewe, 200;1Miller, Bredemeier & Shields, 1997).

Conclusions

The results have shown that gender may be a factor affecting attitudes towards Olympic values. In the sample studied, girls showed a more ambivalent attitude towards Olympic values than boys, although students from both groups demonstrated mostly positive attitudes towards Olympic values. In addition to gender and physical activity levels, the type

of sport (individual, team, contact, non-contact sport) particularly affects students' attitudes towards specific Olympic values. However, this requires further research.

The most considerable difference between genders, which was statistically significant, was found for questions about the Olympic value of respect. The comparison by physical activity levels revealed significant differences in knowledge about the values of fair play and joy of effort. Students achieved a high percentage of correct answers for the knowledge about particular Olympic values, which indicates good levels of knowledge.

We think that it is crucial to discuss Olympic values during physical education and sports lessons by providing students with specific examples from practice that will encourage them to respect and abide by these values. These examples may facilitate children and young people's inner experience of sporting activity and ethical values of sport so that the universal humanistic notion and socializing mission do not disappear. In this sense, we appeal to the education of youth, the education of future teachers and coaches. Their approach can change the negative trend in the development of sports reality. Their education plays an essential role in preserving the tradition, ideas, and mission of Olympism so that this wealth does not remain only on a theoretical level and becomes an unattainable ideal and experience. Is it possible to perceive these ideals as alive and beneficial for society? The role of teachers and trainers is to enable children and young people to experience these ideas and become examples in respecting these values.

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