



Perception of Olympic Values by High School Students: A Qualitative Approach

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Abstract: The International Olympic Committee designed the Olympic Value Education program (OVEP) in which participants are encouraged to experience value-based learning and to enhance their understanding of Olympism. To provide a unique perspective on the development of OVEP, the article explored the opinions and experiences of Chinese high school students surrounding the five educational Olympic Values in OVEP. Following an interpretative phenomenological approach, this article examined the perceived beliefs and thoughts regarding Olympic Values in the background of 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games. Results suggested that participants valued pursuing of excellence and fair play very much in the context of sports activities with some exceptions. Joy of Effort and Practicing Respect were also identified as important core Olympic Values given participants' own sport experiences. Balance of Body, Will and Mind was the least addressed theme and participants found it rather difficult to implement considering the stressful academic pressure that Chinese high school students faced in excess. The findings of this article provided novel insights for Olympic Values research, and can build towards establishing OVEP in the Chinese education system.

Keywords: Olympic Values, high school students, Pursuing of Excellence, Fair Play, Joy of Effort

1. INTRODUCTION

The Modern Olympic Movement was re-initiated in 1894, and has played a crucial part in educating young people in a process described in the Olympic Charter as “Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of good examples, social responsibility and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles.” (IOC, 2021). The Olympics go far beyond sports competitions themselves to become a ubiquitous socio-cultural event, and its influence which cannot be characterized by sports alone. As the wheels of history turn, however, the spiritual values of the Olympics are becoming less recognized by societal groups, especially the younger generation. This has led to a decline in the number of cities filing in their bids to apply for the position of hosting the Olympic games, as local groups show less approval towards this event. Besides economic and environmental implications, a key cause of dissent might be that people are doubting whether or not the Olympic games are still promoting positive values, helping to change society for the better, or benefiting them in the process.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has sought to address this problem, attempting to reignite interest in the Olympics, especially targeting the young generation as important stakeholders. It was specifically stated in the IOC's 2020 agenda that its mission was to promote sports and Olympic values throughout society, with a focus on young people (IOC, 2014). A structural implementation of perceived values is deemed one of the most important skills an educational process needs to provide in order for the successful development of a healthy personality. Education is the foundation of modern society: “The future of our civilization does not rest on political or economic foundations. It wholly depends on the direction given to education” (IOC, 2017). Sports provides much needed physical exercise for an increasing population of obese children, and shapes the mentality of children in impoverished and deprived communities by giving them hope and achievements through hard work. Having an integral impact in both physical and mental spectrums, sports have an important role in modern society.

To achieve these desired results, the IOC formulated 5 new education themes centered around Olympic Values: Joy of Effort, Fair Play, Practicing Respect, Pursuit of Excellence, and Balance Between Body, Will and Mind. As integral parts of the Olympic Values Education Program (OVEP), an educational curriculum based on the spirit of Olympism and the approach of “Education through Sports”, OVEP addresses the issue of participation, supporting the theme of “Education for All”, so that more people across the world can be connected by sports. They can learn from their role models, and opportunities for global citizenship can shape one into becoming a well-rounded person in both sports and everyday life. (IOC, 2017). Sport is a fundamental right for everyone, as is detailed in the fundamental Principles of Olympism: everyone should have the opportunity to participate on a level playing field, free from any kind of discrimination. This requires a widespread appreciation of the Olympic spirit, where people understand each other, engaging in acts of friendship, solidarity and mutual respect.

The IOC president Jacques Rogge once commented that “The unique strength of the Olympic Movement lies in its capacity to enthuse a dream in successive young generations” (IOC, 2017), something widely agreed upon by educators across the world. The five newfound themes are values that can be developed by consistent participation in sports. However, social narratives that place victory as the most important goal of sports competition sometimes deter Olympic values such as fair play from being exercised. It is important, therefore to provide young athletes with a platform to openly discuss the implications and consequences of their behaviors, so that they can understand how Olympic Values and societal expectation conflict with each other, and explore their personal ideas and perspectives.

OVEP is an instrumental tool that can help educate young students into active global citizens that contribute to the development of humanity as a whole, and is built around the interiorization of values (Naul et al, 2017). Such value-centered education in an Olympic context can both celebrate and transcend the differences between people by focusing on a common goal—to provide the growing younger generation with physical and mental health, to advocate values of fair play and mutual respect, to be their best self and achieve their full potential. The program is also adaptive, with a flexible learning process that corresponds to the local situation. Many concepts in OVEP are universally applied across the world, in many other educational curriculums: themes such as respect and fairness are applied to all levels of education. With all this as a contextualized background, this paper aims to investigate the perception of Olympic Values among Chinese high school students, and to explore their relevant values and beliefs, especially considering the recent 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games, in order to provide support for the future development of Olympic value-based educational activities in a variety of subject areas. Only by identifying the current status of Olympic Values in the eyes of the young generation, can the shared objectives of OVEP in schools be improved for the moral and physical development of all participants.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In social science research, Olympic Values have mostly been conceptualized from philosophy, psychology and anthropology. The Olympic Charter with a constitutional nature specifies Olympic Values as following: Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of good example, social responsibility and respect for universal fundamental ethical principle (IOC, 2021). Chatziefestathiou (2005) concludes that Olympic values in a global world context to be: equity, excellence, fair play, amateurism, universalism, internationalism, multiculturalism and environmentalism. Other authors focus on ethical concerns. Milton-Smith’s (2002) uses the Olympic games to discuss global ethics and finds out those who represent the Olympic icon often share these virtues: courage, dedication, perseverance, humility, civic duty, altruism, empathy, loyalty, team commitment and moral strength. He also states that the Olympic Games is “a platform for building a framework of global values to counterbalance the economic priorities which have dictated the pattern of globalization to date”. This research has identified Olympic Values based on the exploration of previous Olympic scholars from an ethnographic perspective.

The IOC has commissioned various scholar to conduct research regarding how individuals connect certain attributes with the Olympic Values. In 2012 the IOC rearranged the dimensions as excellence,

friendship and respect and has not changed ever since (IOC, 2021). Building on these works, the IOC has launched its Olympic Value Education Program, further created dimensions of Olympic Values to reduce complexity and to increase the application of Olympic Values in different settings especially as communication to youth. Furthermore, the OVEP promotes the cultivation of its core concepts based on Olympic values as: Joy of effort, fair play, respect, pursuit of excellence, balance between body, will and mind. (IOC, 2017)

Pursuing excellence requires giving the best of oneself in every context of life and it can help young people to make positive, healthy choices, and strive to become the best that they can be in whatever they do (IOC, 2017). The greatest legacy that Olympic Games can leave for the society is athlete as a modern hero, their determination and fighting for excellent performance. Those athletes carry the symbol of heroism especially for the young generation to inspire them to believe in themselves, to train as hard as possible and to challenge themselves all the time, even against their physical and emotional limitations to ultimately see the best possible outcomes (Perez & Rubio, 2014). From this perspective, sports provide a context of great educational potential that can be used as an instrument of ethical attitudes and values needed to social and individual life.

Alongside with pursuing excellence, Joy of effort underlines that young people develop and practice physical, behavioral and intellectual skills by challenging themselves and each other in physical activities, movement, games and sport. Nevertheless, the competitive nature of sports may bring in some negative effects and prevent people from obtaining joy of effort. Serrano-Durá (2020) argued that competition is consubstantial with sport and eagerness for victory is a legitimate attitude for participants and it could even be considered essential in order to ensure that sporting contests have a true meaning. Actually, the emphasis on the value of victory has become a central point of sport, and winning is more important than anything else and achieving victory legitimizes any approach taken to obtain it. However, some scholars have opposed this winning regardless of any costs point of view and point out the competitive nature of sports sets the foundations for ethical principles and transmits desirable values (Simon, 2010).

Fair play is a sports concept, but it is applied worldwide today in many different ways. Valler and et al (1996) define it as a central concept which is multi-dimensional in nature and hugely involves: sports; the rules of the game and referees; social conventions; the opponent; a positive way of understanding sports to avoid winning at all costs. Nlandu (2017) indicates that the essence of fair play can't only be expressed by an abstract and simplistic definition and the margin of victory is not an ethical question intrinsic to sporting competition. Instead, it is considered that the margin of victory itself does not have to be humiliating, but forms part of the performance of sportspeople given that it helps their own prestige. This concept considers that it is the result of a misconception of sport, firstly, to think that winning is the only important issue and, secondly, to give greater importance than warranted to heavy defeats (Serrano-Durá, 2020).

Learning to play fair in sports can lead to the development and reinforcement of fair play behavior in one's community and in one's life. Sporting competition is considered to be the key element of fair play. The development of a fair competition means that athletes must not only comply with rules and regulations, but also commit to the ethical principles on which such competition is based (Serrano-Durá, 2020). Furthermore, fair play can be generically defined as a way of behaving honestly and nobly in competition whilst different characterizations are found. Many sports organizations are concerned about issues such as disrespectful behavior by athletes and spectators, and the "win at any cost" attitude exhibited by some people in their sport. Therefore, the way to address these problems is to develop a "fair play culture" and a fair play culture benefits everyone.

Fair play is also related with rule breaking and financial inequality of sports both for clubs and individuals and with the link to inequality in classification systems for questions of gender, diversity and the planning of competition schedule. Previous research has focus on the relationship with equity when categorizing according to disability level in swimming (Uscinowicz et al., 2013) and the standardization of equipment in Paralympic winter sports (Burkett, 2012). In this sense, fair play is built on the pleasure of participation rather than the result obtained.

Practicing respect indicates when young people who live in a multicultural world learn to accept and respect diversity and practice peaceful personal behavior, they promote peace and international understanding. Respect is above all a feeling that takes into account another person. Perez & Rubio

(2014) further pointed out that more than obedience, respect implies recognition of the virtues presented by another and is the basic condition of social life which involves not only compliance with the rule, but essentially the incorporation of values in order not to require forms of external regulation for its compliance. More specifically, Loland (2007) argued practicing respect in sports is based on the respect for the rules of participation (beyond their application by a referee), respect for the rivals (beyond the field of play) and respect for oneself (beyond improving personal results). In sportsmanship, victory at all costs is rejected. Practicing respect promotes a fair contest through the maintenance of the equality of opportunities and conserving a dignified attitude as much in the face of defeat as in victory (Sheridan, 2003). The friendship based on such mutual respect forms the central point of Olympic Value through which an exchange among all parties involved and is associated with further values such as diversity and solidarity. Multicultural education should embrace principles as all people—including women, children, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities—have human rights and violence is not the best way to solve conflicts (IOC 2017).

Balance between body will and mind suggests that learning takes place in the whole body, not just in the mind, and physical literacy and learning through movement contributes to the development of both moral and intellectual learning (IOC, 2014). Pierre de Coubertin (1894) also argued that “modern education has allowed itself to be carried away by extreme compartmentalization. Each strength works in isolation, without any link or contact with its neighbor. If the topic is muscles, they only want to see animal function. The brain is furnished as though it were made up of tiny, air-tight compartments.” Activity also provides benefits for mental and spiritual well-being, for example improved mood, a sense of achievement, relaxation or release from daily stress. This has been proved to be especially important for young people, for their physical, cognitive and social development. The OVEP has been analyzed from many different perspectives, most studies relating to youth sports are focusing on the athletes and few studies have shed light on the local young people.

Summarizing the literature related to Olympic Values, the research is lacking regarding questions of how the youth in the communities of the Olympic Games host country have influenced in their perceptions of Olympic Values. Considering the research gap, this study is going to explore the local youth's perception of the Olympic Values three months after the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games was staged. Young people's perception of Olympic Values is heavily molded by their own sports participation and watching experiences and those experiences can influence their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Understanding how they feel, behave and perceive the core Olympic Values can provide novel insights into the IOC'S Olympic Value Education Program.

3. METHODOLOGY

IPA (Interpretative phenomenological analysis) uses an approach to conduct qualitative research with an idiographic focus. It aims to provide insights into participants' think and feel in a certain context, such as a major event of significance, based on their speech (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Originated from phenomenology and hermeneutics, IPA has become one of the most important approaches to qualitative research in attempting to understand participant's personal experiences (Malone et al. 2014). Its distinction compared with other approaches lies in its combination of psychological and interpretative components to recognize participants' experiences and allowing researchers to seek to make sense of participant' interpretive processes (Smith et al. 2009). In addition, IPA studies adopt an idiographic approach, focusing on a detailed analysis of each participant's experience (Tuffour, 2017). This study adopted IPA as the methodological approach to explore Chinese high school students' perceptions on the Olympic Values in the background of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games. It aimed to analyze participants' lived experiences from the theoretical perspective of Olympic Values, which justified the IPA approach is appropriate to use for this study because of its phenomenological and interpretative nature.

Purposive sampling was employed to choose information-rich case that suits the research goals because it can offer the researcher some meaningful insight into the topic of the study when participants are invited to take part in the interview precisely (Smith & Osborn, 2008). A preliminary survey was conducted to recruit qualified participants according to the following criteria: participants should be: (1) between 15-18 years old and currently studying in high school; (2) have participated sports regularly; (3) have paid attention to 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games. The researcher identified qualified participants from friends, school classmates, team mates from various sports

clubs. Ten participants were interviewed in May and June 2022, all of them were from the author's network and they all provided insights into the findings of this study. Smith and Osborn (2008) suggest that small sample sizes should be used while IPA studies are adopted and the small-scale nature of an IPA study shows how something is understood in a given context from a shared perspective when they have certain common experiences. There are quite a few factors that can exert influence for the sample size of qualitative interviews such as purpose of the study, data quality (Creswell, 2015). In the case of the amount of useful information may vary among different participants, this study's sample size (N=10) was regarded sufficient to understand participants' subjective experience.

In IPA, qualitative data from research participant is usually collected using techniques such as interview, diaries or focus group and from a position of flexible and open-ended inquiry (Smith & Osburn, 2008). Semi-structured interview was employed in this study for the purpose of data collection. All interviews were video-recorded and turned into a detailed verbatim transcript, which was allowed by all the participants. Each interview consisted of four parts. The first part was about the interviewee's experience with regular sport participation and feelings about 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games and this part also helped to prove the participant's eligibility. The second part focused on their beliefs on the core Olympic value of "joy of effort" and "pursuit of excellence", mainly their thoughts on winning at any cost; and their perceptions of how important the result was: in the whole participating process or merely lying in the final results. The third part pertained to participants' perception on the issue of "fair play" and "respect". Participants were asked about the role of fair play playing in their own experience and weather they had previously done anything to sabotage the principle of fair play or not showing respect to their opponents due to their failure in competition. The last part of the interview was about participants' thoughts of balance between body, will and mind. In this part, some particular questions about physical training at home and how it could be beneficial for the participants since the interview was adopted while the whole city was under a two-month lockdown. All participants provided answers according to the initial questions in each part and follow-up questions prompted elaboration on what how participants would react under some specific situation.

A good analysis in IPA is aiming to balance phenomenological description with insightful interpretation and anchors these interpretations in the participants' accounts and it may also maintain an idiographic focus so that particular variation is not lost (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Transcript analysis was conducted between May and July, after reviewing each transcript for multiple times, a systematic search was used to identify relevant themes; Finally, connections between themes were analyzed and clustered into super ordinate themes.

4. DISCUSSION

Olympic values exist in a certain form through the perspective of young people. Participants in this study demonstrate their understanding of those core values both from their own sports related experiences and through observations. In the article, such values were divided into four parts: Joy of Effort and Pursuing Excellence, Fair Play, Respect, and Balance between Body, Mind and Will. Those values were characterized by participants carefully and the response showed that they made these values the foundation for their activities not only in sports, but also in life.

4.1. Joy of Effort and Excellence

Participants reported the meaning of Joy of Effort as the entertaining aspects of sports—challenging but fruitful and enjoyable. By valuing winning as very important, participants intended to show their desire for a positive result when it came to a competitive match because of the sense of happiness and fulfillment winning can bring them. Some participants considered it as the biggest priority since the hard training they put in resulted in the exhilaration at the winning moment. Meanwhile, participants also reported feelings while watching great athletes pursuing excellence in Olympic Games. They thought sometimes those athletes act as role models, not being satisfied with average or previous performance and always committed to excellence and perfection, which provide huge motivation for them as students to push themselves further. It implied the highest degree of quality and to overcome difficulties for the best of oneself. Great athletes represent the value of inspiration to encourage new generations not only to pursue excellence in sports, but also to overcome difficulties in various

areas— “The sky is the limit.” Participants mentioned the inspiration strengthens the connection between themselves and their ultimate goal, “It might make hard problems look easier and help someone to be resilient when facing difficult situations.” said Jimmy.

The desire of pursuing excellence can be extended to many areas of life outside sports which would ultimately be applied to social transformation. “Excellence is an attitude”, said Terry, “Achieving in life is bettered in the commitment to excellence, regardless of the where one plays.” Most of them agreed that focusing on excellence could help young people make positive, healthy choices and strive to become the best that they can be in whatever they do. Pursuing excellence could simply mean that you have fulfilled a commitment regardless of any obstacles. As revealed in this study, most participants mentioned they enjoy the process just as much as obtaining the result of winning. For instance, Alice said, “Winning itself will be great, I will try my best to win the game. But I do value the experience of playing as well.” Participants reported though winning was very important, but the process of trying to win also mattered, since it gave them joy and a sense of team pride. Joining in sports was also a good social event, helping them make new friends and strengthening existing friendships. In conclusion, participants valued enjoyment of playing a sport more than winning. Especially as an amateur, the whole process outweighed the results in many aspects.

Winning and losing are both parts of sport competitions, as well as success and failure in our lives. Many participants stated that facing lose can be very disappointing, in particular when feeling responsible for a team competition. When asked where do they think this sort of feeling was coming from, answers varied. It involved regret that they should have practice more; feeling that past hard training was all for naught, or even feeling guilty for letting the team down. But most participants mentioned that they should learn from the failure, by watching the winners playing or practicing more in the future to improve. Bob explained that “After losing a game, we don’t look down, we look up instead; learning from the failure is far more important. Frustration is not gonna make me a better player.” These statements represented a rather mature attitude for high school students. Sports, and life, can often present us with dilemmas. As students grow and mature, they can draw on more of their own experiences to help them to deal with unfavorable situations. Participating in sport competitions clearly helped them manage those hard issues earlier in life compared with those who do not attend sport activities and to develop thoughts and skills which will give them moral clarity on complex issues emerging in both sports and everyday life.

4.2. Fair Play

Fair play is another theme centered in Olympic Values and is used as a synonym of good behavior on many occasions. With respect to the consideration of fair play from a psychosocial perspective, examination of goal orientation and the intrinsic motivation related to sportsmanship stands out (Serrano-Durá, 2020). On one hand, participants valued winning very much and enjoyed the process of competition as well, indicating that they would try their best to win as previously stated. On the other hand, when asked about if they would try to win at any cost, most of them clearly expressed their disagreement but with different explanations. Alice argued, “I don’t think just because you need to win, you are justified to take drugs or like cheating to achieve your results.” Bob described one occasion when he watched a soccer game, “Fans in the stadium actually used some laser to distract the opposite team's players, and he finally missed the penalty. It’s absolutely unfair since the penalty was a decisive chance and then he missed it because of the laser!” Some participants reported certain compromise despite not in favor of the idea of “to win at any cost. Ricky explained, “it is acceptable to violate the rules a little bit, but not too much over the line.” “But this kind of behavior is still not ethical.” He added later. However, Terry believed that players can and should try to win at any cost “as long as they don’t compromise safety or fairness.” Some participants mentioned other issues like legal affairs or risk. Generally, “to win at all costs” was regarded by most participants as unacceptable—a line should always be drawn at a certain cost.

Participants’ attitudes echoed previous research findings about fair play as a central concept of Olympic Values that was multidimensional in nature and involved a positive way of understanding sport—to avoid winning at all costs (Nlandu, 2017). The conditional acceptance of winning at all cost reflected participants’ intention to achieve good results and protect oneself as well. Here costs were interpreted differently and may refer to hurting participant’s health by challenging their body limits like dangerous levels of training or using illegal drugs. All these concerns were related to the

participants' own health and safety. In addition to the sense of fair play towards "winning at any cost", participants developed further about this value by answering : will you lie or hurt others to win? Given an assumed situation like "when self-referred in a match, will you report your opponent's ball honestly particularly when it matters the result of the whole competition?" Most participants responded to this situation as "no". John said, "I will ask to play again. It is unnecessary to lie and it will ruin the sport." Participants believed being honest was a symbol of sportsmanship and should always tell the truth to keep the integrity. Some participants recalled watching players faking injury to win a penalty, "it is morally correct to tell referee the truth, especially in adult games like Olympic Games or commercial match since they should hold higher spirit", said Bob.

However, fair play when view holistically is a more complex term related to justice and equality. According to Loland (2007), formal justice in sport consists of three pillars, and the first of these is "equal opportunities", referring to inequalities regarding financial resources, gender, age, race and other external conditions. Fair play has already received global recognition as a basic principle of human rights. Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. Participants mentioned equal participation and diversity of representation of great importance. Sunshine said, "I think sports should be for everyone, and everyone is entitled to be enjoying it, and not only people who can afford expensive training and equipment." Some participants stated they felt it is hard to maintain absolute fairness. For instance, Terry said, "I believe the nature of people is not to act fairly because you know that someone else may act unfairly, so that kind of incentive makes you want to compromise to protect yourself". Fair play does not happen automatically when children and youth participate in team or group activities. Thus it is an important part of youth's development to learn skills that give them moral clarity on complex issues that emerge in sports.

4.3. Respect

Implying recognition of virtues presented, respect is considered to be the core of sportsmanship and involves not only compliance with the rules, but essentially the incorporation of values that lift or reduce the necessity for mandatory regulations to be enforced (Pérez-Triviño, 2012). Participants mentioned the most important criteria for sportsmanship is respect. Paying respect to rules, coaches, referees, opponents, audiences were all considered to be essential. One issue was specifically mentioned by many participants, which was the player's behaviors after losing the game. A decent player with respect would leave the court with dignity and showed courtesy by shaking hands with opponents, and waving to the audience members. But participants also recognized some inappropriate behavior which were considered to be disrespectful. Sam said, "some players got mad after losing the game, and use violence on people around. This is unacceptable, and shows their lack of sportsmanship".

Participants showed understanding of negativity after losing, but also believed that it should not be used as an excuse to disrespect the opponents or audiences. Terry mentioned, "I think a player should never be angry towards opponents, and should always show respect to others including the coach and teammates." Through sports, the individual's moral formation became complete, interacting with robust institutions like family and school. Participants reported high moral expectations for world class players and think they should always showed respect especially after losing games. "They should control themselves, walk on, train harder and then come back instead of smashing phones or reacting with violence." Said John.

4.4. Balance of Body, Will and Mind

Embracing Olympic values can help young people achieve a well-balanced approach to life, and an international revival of the Olympic Games would stimulate interest in sport and physical activity among young people (IOC, 2017). Participants frequently reported the perceived value of sports outside physical meaning, referring to a comprehensive package including both intellectual and physical aspects. For instance, Sunshine said, "Sports can act as a very good mental training as well, especially when you meet few difficulties in your life. When facing a really close competition and a strong opponent, you have to keep telling yourself to never give up, and you will definitely benefit from this kind of persistence outside sports as well." Body-kinesthetic intelligence is the foundation of human perception, since it is through our sensory-motor experiences that we experience life. The

courage and determination displayed by some competitors in sports can inspire us all. Ricky mentioned, “Sometimes mental states outweigh physical abilities—like in the NBA, not always the tallest and the strongest win”.

Another issue raised by participants about Olympic Value was friendship, which referred to the willingness to integrate culture difference, involving respect and affection even in the situations where competition was paramount. Alice said, “The friends I make within sport are true and healthy, and that is something I will never forget.” Participants mentioned even with opponents the value of friendship would emerge and make the competition fairer. Friendship played a key role in coexistence and competition, promoting equal access to opportunities despite in the face of social prejudice situation. The establishment of friendship also made sport an instrument of social integration, reflecting the quality of life. Participants reported their opinions on the Olympic Game as a perfect occasion for people from different countries to generate love and friendship, to enhance mutual understanding, to promote culture integration and hence improve international relationships between countries. For instance, James said “Olympic Games is a very large platform...especially for small countries where they rarely make their stands in international negotiation.when you raise your flag in the Olympic Games, your country is really heard by the world.”

Facing the dilemma of managing time in the matter of physical or intellectual activities, many participants reported that as high school students, they still needed to give academic work priorities, especially when the two conflicted. Even though they all admitted the importance of sports to their well-being, they still chose academia as their primary focus. However, they also mentioned that they wanted to improve the situation in the future, which meant more physical activities would be considered to achieve the balance of body, will and mind development.

5. CONCLUSION

This article illuminated the perceived Olympic Values—particularly those educational themes promoted by the IOC—and conceptualized Chinese high school students’ experiences from their own sports participation and observation after 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games. Adopting an IPA approach, this study identified four categories of values characterized defined by the IOC, which are Pursuing Excellence and Joy of Effort, Fair Play, Respect, Balance of body, will and mind. While the magnitude and salience of each value varied according to their own experiences, participants’ beliefs and attitudes were pervasive.

By presenting high school students’ perception as novel theoretical leans, this article contributed to the literature of Olympic Values research. The construct is useful in investigating general population’s perception of values in relation to the Olympic Games, but it is also important to understand how these perceptions are existing in a certain group such as the youth. IOC’s OVEP is specifically aiming to educate young people and spread the idea of education through sport around the world. Therefore, understanding young people’s beliefs and perceptions with regard to Olympic Values may have the potential to generate new theories for related research, which few previous studies have explored and it thus can help improve OVEP by evaluating the current situations.

The Olympic Value is multidimensional and dynamic. This study expands the value paradigm by investigating a specific group of stakeholders, namely high school students and it extends the literature by offering alternative explanations for empirical findings related to Olympic Value. Education in any age group can be built upon the Olympic Values, with the goal of influencing the personality development of individuals beyond basic sporting activities. Educators should particularly consider educational tools that increase appreciation of diversity—a fact that is not promoted as a priority now (IOC, 2017). Furthermore, participants in this study demonstrated a tendency to accept human rights as a key issue of fair play in sports during their own experiences or by watching competitions.

Interviewees raised issues of Olympism should emphasize participation and team work against anxiety, not just express advanced physical abilities. The Olympic Games should be held for everyone regardless of race, gender, age and financial abilities. People’s desire of winning at any cost lied in the psychological thoughts of all result-oriented behavior and regard winning as the only results that matters. However, no underlying mechanism was identified. Findings of this article indicated the thoughts behind not in favor of winning at any cost may be originated from participants’ concern

about his own health and safety, leading to no direct relationship with the means planned to take and the desired winning results. Researchers should continue to investigate the possible different perceptions in other target group and analyze the beliefs and perceptions behind their behaviors.

This study draws a realistic picture of perceived Olympic Values of high school students and offers important practical implications for future development of the OVEP. The OVEP aims to guide young people to find a common ground and engage in activities which embrace the core Olympic Values of Excellence, Respect and Friendship. Consequently, the IOC focuses on promoting universal participation in sport and physical activities, as well as the development of appropriate educational tools to engage and empower young people. The OVEP also underlines the need of ensuring a uniform delivery of global value-based learning with the added flexibility to adapt to the local situation. Findings of this study offered practical implications for the OVEP to seek opportunities to reconsider the program they offer worldwide. For instance, the concept of fair play has been widely acknowledged, but participants also mentioned quite a few exceptions with which they could cross the line of fair play. In addition, results of this study indicated that students were frequently concerned about equal participation as human rights in sports, but diversity has not been mentioned as an issue by any students which showed the OVEP still has a long way to go in terms of guiding young people to truly understand and embrace the core Olympic Values.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study demonstrated the perceived beliefs of high school students regarding Olympic Values, with several limitations. First, it focused primarily on high school students' (aged 15-18) experiences and did not uncover how participants in different age group actually felt or behaved, which could differ from current participants' perception. In future studies, it would be interesting to explore Olympic Values through other age groups such as primary students or middle school students, and to compare between different age group can reveal a more holistic picture of the Olympic Values. Second, this study identified distinct categories of Olympic values, yet associations between the values were not thoroughly examined. Subsequent work can investigate the relationship between different Olympic Values. Third, because of the nature of IPA, subjectivity was inevitable when participants shared interpretations of their experiences and when researchers processed interview commentary. Last, data for this study were gathered during a two-month lockdown in Shanghai, which might affect the finding's authenticity.

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