

Understanding the significance of Olympic values in adults of Chile and Argentina

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ABSTRACT

Olympic values serve as a significant educational strategy advocated by both the International Olympic Committee and National Olympic Committees globally. Despite their widespread promotion, there exists a dearth of research comparing the comprehension of Olympic values among the adult population. This study aimed to scrutinize the understanding of Olympic values among a sample of 200 Chilean and Argentine adults aged between 18 and 65 years. The investigation was conducted in the context of recent mega sporting events, specifically the Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires 2018 and the forthcoming Pan American Games in Santiago 2023. Employing the Fair Play theory and the Moral Competence Test, the research revealed a higher level of moral competence in the Argentine population compared to their Chilean counterparts. Interestingly, no discernible impact of the Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires was observed in Argentina. Parental influence emerged as the most significant factor affecting moral competence in both countries, while religion and media demonstrated comparatively less influence. These findings contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between Olympic values, moral competence, and contextual factors in adult populations across different nations.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The significance of sports in ancient Hellenic societies is well-documented, serving as a foundational element for education and cultural enrichment [1]. These activities transcended mere physical exertion, merging physical prowess with mental and moral growth, integral to the holistic development of individuals. This multifaceted approach was epitomized in the palaistra-gymnasium, symbolizing the Hellenic vision of physical activities as vital avenues for comprehensive personal development [2].

However, the introduction of the Roman era marked a significant departure from these Hellenic ideals. The emergence of gladiatorial contests highlighted a shift in focus from the educational and humanistic values of sports to entertainment that often lacked earlier ethical and cultural values. This period saw sports becoming more akin to public spectacles, devoid of the ethical and cultural richness that was once prevalent [3].

The revival of the ancient Olympic Games after the Greek revolution represents a notable effort to reclaim these lost ideals. Evangelos Zappas and others played pivotal roles through initiatives like the Zappas Games, aimed at reviving national sentiment and the educational value of sports. These efforts laid the groundwork for Pierre de Coubertin, who, inspired by the educational values of ancient Hellenic society and sports curricula from the United Kingdom and the United States, established the modern Olympic Games [4], [5].

This era ushered in the philosophy of Olympism, detailed in the Olympic Charter, advocating for the harmonization of sport with culture and education. Olympism promotes a comprehensive lifestyle that emphasizes the balance of body, will, and mind, fostering joy, social responsibility, and adherence to ethical principles. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has been key in promoting these values, notably through the Olympic Values Education Program, which aims to disseminate Olympic ideals globally [6], [7].

The approach to Olympic Education (OE) has significantly transformed sports, physical education (PE), and extracurricular activities, turning them into platforms for holistic development [8], [9]. Collaborations with global entities like the United Nations and World Health Organization underscore the potential of sports to contribute to broader social outcomes, including health, education, and peace [10]–[13]. However, the literature indicates a gap in research concerning the impact of Olympic values on adult populations, suggesting a need for more inclusive educational strategies [1], [14], [15].

The integration of OE and PE is crucial for fostering a deep understanding of sports as tools for personal and societal development, moving beyond the pursuit of medals. The principles of Olympism serve as a powerful framework for this endeavor, aiming for a positive impact on society [16]–[20]. Studies have emphasized the significant role of sports and Olympic values in educational settings, particularly in shaping adolescent development and promoting peace and human development through educational programs [21]–[28].

In South America, organizations such as the National Olympic Committee (NOC) and National Olympic Academies (NOA) in countries like Argentina and Chile are instrumental in promoting Olympic values. By hosting international sporting events, these nations not only foster national pride but also promote cultural heritage and influence the behavior of residents in host cities, demonstrating the extensive impact of such mega-events [29], [30]. This research seeks to delve into the appreciation and understanding of Olympic values, particularly Fair Play, among adults in Chile and Argentina, offering a novel comparison of these values' perception in the context of their recent hosting experiences [20], [31]–[33].

2. METHOD

2.1. Design and participants

This non-experimental research adopts a cross-sectional and descriptive approach. The study considered a sample of adults from Chile and Argentina ($n=200$). The Chilean sample was 100 (44 male and 56 female), while the Argentinian was 100 (55 male and 45 female). The participants were classified into four groups: 18-35 years ($n=104$; 52%), 36-50 years ($n=59$; 29.5%), 51-64 years ($n=24$; 12%) and 65-75 years ($n=6.5\%$). The inclusion criteria to be part of the sample were: i) being of legal age; ii) living in Argentina or Chile; iii) having access to the internet; and iv) being registered in a social network or having an email.

2.2. Instrument

The survey's construction was meticulously underpinned by a methodological adherence to frameworks from two key scholarly works, namely: "Fair play in physical education and beyond" [16], [34], and "The level of moral competencies of pre-service PE teachers—A reason to worry?" [35]. These foundational texts provided a solid theoretical basis for the development of the Moral Competence Test (MCT), anchoring it in Kohlberg's structural-developmental theory of morality [36]. The MCT was designed as a diagnostic tool to assess individuals' capacity for ethical decision-making and reflective discourse in complex scenarios [37].

For this study, we utilized the Spanish version of Lind's MCT to ensure linguistic validation and methodological fidelity [38]. The survey, hosted on the Google Survey platform, presented participants with two morally challenging dilemmas, each comprising 12 statements. Participants responded to these statements, which were a mix of affirmations and oppositions, on a 9-point Likert-type scale, facilitating a nuanced assessment of moral reasoning in line with Kohlberg's developmental stages [37].

Upon collecting data, the C-Index was employed as a comprehensive scoring system to quantify participants' moral competencies, with scores ranging from 1 to 100 to categorize moral competence levels [36], [37]. The survey also explored factors influencing moral competence, such as religion and education, asking participants to rate their impact. Specifically, the Fair Play component of the survey was developed based on Parry's conceptual frameworks [34], [35], encouraging participants to reflect on their understanding of Fair Play in different contexts.

The survey was structured into three sections to collect a wide range of data efficiently. Section A focused on gathering essential demographic information from participants. Section B explored the various

factors that influence moral competence, while Section C, the heart of the survey, featured the MCT with its dilemmas and questions aimed at evaluating moral reasoning skills.

2.3. Procedure

The study adopted an intentional non-probabilistic sampling method to achieve a 95% confidence level, targeting 200 participants through a Google Forms survey conducted between August and October 2020. This sampling approach facilitated the collection of a diverse range of responses by distributing the survey across social media platforms and via mass emailing, striving to mirror the broader population's diversity in terms of gender and age, starting from 18 years old. The sample was carefully stratified by gender and age quotas to ensure balanced representation.

Participants were required to agree to an online informed consent form before participating in the study. This form, aligned with the ethical guidelines of the Singapore Declaration [39] and the Helsinki Declaration [40], informed participants about the study's nature and their rights. Signing this form was mandatory, safeguarding ethical standards and participant autonomy throughout the research process.

2.4. Statistical analysis

The analytical process initiated with the meticulous organization of collected data into an Excel matrix before its refinement and transfer to an SPSS matrix using IBM SPSS software version 21.0. This preliminary stage was essential for enhancing data clarity and accessibility, thereby laying a robust foundation for subsequent in-depth statistical analysis. Emphasizing the precision in data handling was crucial to maintain the integrity and reliability of statistical evaluations, supporting the validity of the research findings. The initial descriptive statistical analysis of datasets from Argentina and Chile focused on key metrics such as mean values, frequencies, and standard deviations (SD), providing a preliminary data overview that prepared the ground for a more detailed comparative analysis. This was followed by a differential analysis using the T-Student test for independent samples, selected for its suitability with scalar and ordinal variables, and preceded by the Levene test to confirm variances' homogeneity across groups, ensuring the statistical rigor of the comparative assessment.

The analytical journey culminated with the establishment of significance thresholds at Z values corresponding to probabilities of 0.05 and 0.01, allowing for the identification of statistically significant differences between the datasets. This methodological approach, incorporating standardized residue analysis, highlighted specific variable combinations with significant disparities. The findings were methodically organized in tables, clarifying the categories with the lowest and highest response proportions for each significant pair. This organization offered clear and intuitive insights into the comparative nuances between the Argentine and Chilean samples, demonstrating the intricate differences and similarities within the context of the study's broader investigative goals.

3. RESULTS

The survey engaged 200 participants, evenly split between Chile ($n_1=100$) and Argentina ($n_2=100$), spanning ages 18 to over 70 years. It revealed a higher participation rate of female in Chile compared to Argentina, whereas male were more actively involved in both Argentina and Chile. Specifically, in Argentina, half of the participants were aged 18 to 35, with a smaller number, eight participants, being between 65 to 75 years old, as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Residence and gender in Chile and Argentina

Gender	Residence (%)	
	Argentina	Chile
Male	54.87%	45.13%
Female	43.68%	56.32%

In Chile, the 18 to 35 age group represented 45% of the participants, marking the highest participation rate, while the 36 to 50 age group also showed significant involvement with 34% participation. The Chilean data spanned up to 75 years old and included a participant younger than 17 years old as presented in Table 2. Comparative gender analysis showed distinct participation patterns. In Argentina, 34% of male and 24% of female participants were aged 18 to 35. In Chile, participation rates between male and female were nearly equal, with 22% of male and 23% of female in the same age group. However, for the 36 to 50 age range, Chile saw higher female participation (20%) compared to male (14%), while in Argentina, male's participation was 15% versus female's 10%.

Table 2. Age characteristics and demographic in Chile and Argentina

Age ranges	Argentina (n)		Chile (n)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
18-35 years	34	24	23	23
36-50 years	15	10	14	20
51-64 years	7	2	10	5
65-75 years	6	2	4	1

3.1. Understanding the significance of Fair Play

Participants' understanding of Fair Play reflects varied opinions on its significance in both Chile and Argentina, highlighting the diversity of perspectives regarding this principle. This variation is illustrated in Table 3, which categorizes Fair Play understanding into three levels. Level 3 represents the highest understanding, where Fair Play is seen as embodying all the desirable behaviors of sportspersons, both in their sports and daily lives. Conversely, Level 2 relates to the adherence to codified sporting rules during competitions and the adoption of behaviors stemming from professional etiquette among athletes.

The analysis of Fair Play perceptions across both countries shows a nuanced understanding among participants. In Argentina, 2% of males and none of the females align with Level 1, the most basic interpretation of Fair Play. Chile shows a contrasting picture, with no males and 9% of females identifying with Level 1. For Level 2, 28% of Argentine males and 16% of females, and in Chile, an equal 21% of both genders, recognize this understanding. Level 3 sees the highest agreement, with 32% of Argentine males and 22% of females; and in Chile, 30% of males and 19% of females, indicating a broader consensus on the importance of incorporating Fair Play into both sports and daily life. This distribution suggests that most participants value the comprehensive embodiment of Fair Play, with a minority viewing it in its simplest form. These findings underscore the complexity and variability of Fair Play understanding across different demographics, suggesting a need for targeted educational efforts to foster a deeper, more uniform appreciation of Fair Play principles in sports and beyond.

Table 3. Fair play level for age of the participants

Age range	Argentina (n)			Chile (n)		
	Fair Play L ₁	Fair Play L ₂	Fair Play L ₃	Fair Play L ₁	Fair Play L ₂	Fair Play L ₃
18-35 years	2	30	26	4	18	24
36-50 years	0	9	16	4	18	12
51-64 years	0	1	8	0	6	9
65-75 years	0	4	4	1	0	4

3.2. Sources of influence on moral competence

The moral competence survey included a detailed evaluation where participants assessed the impact of several factors on moral values through a Likert scale, covering school, parents, PE teachers, peers, media, education, and religion. As analyzed in Table 4, this section offered mean and standard deviation (SD) values for the influence of each factor, rating them from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). This structured approach allowed for a nuanced comparison of how these factors affect moral values in Chile and Argentina, highlighting noticeable differences between male and female perceptions and underscoring the need to investigate how diverse influencers shape moral values across varying age groups and genders.

Physical education teachers stood out in the findings, particularly valued by those aged 51-64 years, with an average influence rating of 3.46, signifying their integral role in moral education for this age group. In contrast, the influence of media was observed to be significantly lower, at a rating of 2.43, prompting reflections on its effectiveness in a digitally connected era. Meanwhile, religion's influence was measured at 2.77, and schools were highly rated at 3.47, marking them as a crucial source of moral guidance. These results indicate the broad spectrum of influences on moral education, suggesting that moral values in Chile and Argentina are cultivated through a variety of sources, reflecting the complex interplay of educational, familial, and societal factors in shaping individual moral frameworks.

The survey's insights highlight a complex terrain of moral education, where the roles of PE teachers, schools, and family are emphasized, but the impact of media and religion varies. Understanding these diverse influences is key for developing targeted educational strategies that resonate with the specific needs and cultural contexts of individuals in Chile and Argentina. Acknowledging the distinct contributions of these factors to moral development can guide the creation of more effective moral education programs, aimed at bridging gaps across different demographics and enhancing the overall moral competence of the population.

Table 4. Sources of influence on moral competence by gender, age and country

Gender	Residence	Age (n)	Religion (n)	School (n)	Parents (n)	PE teachers (n)	Peers (n)	Media (n)	Education (n)	
Male	Argentina	18-35	2.47	3.18	4.47	3.38	3.47	2.53	3.76	
		36-50	2.47	3	4.53	3.33	3.53	2.93	3.87	
		51-64	2.29	3.43	3.71	4.14	3.14	2.86	3.71	
		65-75	1.67	4.17	4.33	3.17	3.33	2.5	4	
		18-35	2.73	3.95	4.77	3.95	3.82	2.68	4.27	
	Chile	36-50	2.71	3.79	4.86	3.79	3.93	2.43	3.93	
		51-64	2.7	3.6	4.9	3.8	3.3	2.2	3.9	
		65-75	1.67	2.67	5	4.67	4.33	1.67	4.67	
		18-35	3.17	3.92	4.79	3.29	3.54	2.71	4.08	
		36-50	4.1	3.9	4.7	4.4	3.7	2.5	4.3	
Female	Argentina	51-64	4.5	3.5	4.5	3	4	4	4.5	
		65-75	2	3	3	2.5	3	2	3	
		18-35	3.14	3.71	4.48	3.57	3.52	2.48	4	
		36-50	3.25	3.5	4.65	3.3	3.45	2.2	3.5	
		51-64	2.4	3.2	4.8	3	3.2	2.2	4.4	
	Chile	65-75	3	3	4	2	2	1	3	
		Total average		2.77	3.47	4.47	3.46	3.45	2.43	3.93

The same question using the values of the moral level competence in the MCT and the C-index result, show the three different levels by moral, low, medium and high by the country as presented in Table 5. In Argentina, the average C-index is low at 7.94 and in Chile 7.81. At the level, the parents influence is the higher value. In medium level, the Argentina PE teacher has a high importance 4.36 average, while in Chile is only 3.33. In the high moral level, in Argentina, the peers is 4.80 average and in Chile is 3.67. The religion in high level in Chile is low 1.00 and Argentina is 2.60. In all the levels, the parent factor is close to the most common in relevance.

Table 5. C-index low, medium, and high and sources of influence on moral competence by gender and country

Factors	Low (n)		Medium (n)		High (n)	
	Argentina	Chile	Argentina	Chile	Argentina	Chile
Average C-index	7.94	7.81	24.11	23.77	34.2	33.16
Religion	2.73	3.15	3.07	1.87	2.6	1
School	3.33	3.75	4	3.2	4.4	3
Parents	4.43	4.7	4.79	4.8	4.6	4.67
PE teachers	3.26	3.65	4.36	3.33	4.4	4.33
Peers	3.42	3.63	3.43	3.33	4.8	3.67
Media	2.78	2.36	2.36	2.4	1.8	2.33
Education	3.93	3.89	3.79	4.13	4.2	4.67

The correlation values for the three levels (low, medium, high) of moral competence are negative and positive depending on the variables as presented in Tables 6-8. The moderate correlations are in the school and religion in all three levels (low competence $r=0.26$, medium $r=0.24$, and high $r=0.29$). Has a moderate correlation in media and religion (low $r=0.19$, medium $r=0.20$, and high $r=0.19$). In moderate correlation also are the variables education and media (low $r=0.23$, medium $r=0.22$, and high $r=0.24$). A moderate correlation was noted between media and PE teachers in medium $r=0.21$ and high $r=0.23$ with a strong correlation in low competence group $r=0.35$. In correlation between peer and PE teachers observed a high correlation in medium level $r=0.54$ and high $r=0.48$, but in the low competence the correlation is medium $r=0.29$.

Table 6. The correlation values for the low level of moral competence

Average of C-index	Average of C-index						
	Religion (n)	School (n)	Parents (n)	PE teachers (n)	Peers (n)	Media (n)	Education (n)
Religion	-0.19	0.12	0.11	0.2	0.1	-0.13	0.1
School		0.26	0.2	0.04	0.04	0.19	0.06
Parents			0.19	0.1	-0.18	0.16	-0.03
PE Teachers				0.48	0.17	0.18	-0.05
Peers					0.29	0.35	-0.02
Media						0.23	0.03
Education							0.23

Table 7. The correlation values for the medium level of moral competence

Average of C-index	Average of C-index						
	Religion (n)	School (n)	Parents (n)	PE teachers (n)	Peers (n)	Media (n)	Education (n)
Religion	-0.19	0.14	0.08	0.2	0.1	-0.09	0.14
School		0.24	0.22	-0.01	0.05	0.2	0.06
Parents			0.32	0.35	0.42	0.21	0.43
PE Teachers				0.18	0.15	-0.13	0.22
Peers					0.54	0.21	0.22
Media						0.33	0.35
Education							0.22

Table 8. The correlation values for the high level of moral competence

Average of C-index	Average of C-index						
	Religion (n)	School (n)	Parents (n)	PE teachers (n)	Peers (n)	Media (n)	Education (n)
School	-0.18	0.09	0.08	0.19	0.08	-0.09	0.08
Parents			0.34	0.37	0.4	0.25	0.43
PE Teachers				0.2	0.11	-0.15	0.15
Peers					0.48	0.23	0.19
Media						0.35	0.37
Education							0.24

4. DISCUSSION

The primary aim of this research was to conduct a detailed comparative analysis to explore the understanding of Olympic values, particularly focusing on Fair Play, among adult populations in Chile and Argentina during the COVID-19 quarantine period. This exploration was vital against the backdrop of global concerns regarding the alignment of sports events with their proclaimed organizational values, amid criticisms for their failure to embody these values [41], [42]. The discourse around the Philosophy of Olympism being a controversial construct [43], and the critique that Coubertin's initial vision was more about using sport for educational reform than creating sporting spectacles, sets the context for this study [44].

Utilizing a questionnaire based on Parry's conceptualization of Fair Play [34], [35], this study aimed to dissect Fair Play as an ethical virtue requiring unwavering adherence to competition rules, categorizing it into three distinct understanding levels [16], [34]. The methodology was designed to uncover the nuances of Fair Play, providing a comprehensive view of its perception across the targeted demographics. This approach sought not only to assess Fair Play adherence but also to understand its ethical implications within the competitive realm.

The research findings indicated that a majority of participants from both Chile and Argentina predominantly aligned with the highest level of Fair Play understanding (L_3), while a smaller fraction identified with the lowest level (L_1), echoing results from previous studies in adolescent populations [23], [45]. Among millennials in Argentina, a notable percentage leaned towards the intermediate definition of Fair Play (L_2), contrasting with Chilean participants, especially those over 35, who largely endorsed the L_1 concept. This variation highlights a complex relationship between age, cultural context, and Fair Play comprehension, suggesting a nuanced landscape that could benefit from targeted educational efforts.

Further investigation into the influences on participants' moral perspectives identified parents, PE teachers, and religious beliefs as key factors. This aligns with earlier research underscoring sports' role in fostering social values [12], [23], [42], emphasizing the layered nature of moral education where different societal agents play a crucial role in ethical development, especially in the sportsmanship and Fair Play context.

An age and country segmented analysis revealed distinct preferences: the 18-35 age group in Argentina favored the L_2 Fair Play definition, while the 51-64 cohort leaned towards L_3 . In Chile, the influence of PE teachers was highlighted, particularly in the 51-64 demographic, showcasing their importance in imparting Olympic values, historically promoted within educational settings worldwide [46]. This segmentation offers key insights into effectively spreading Olympic values, pointing towards the necessity of age-specific educational strategies.

The study underlines the significance of customizing Olympic education to suit different age groups, advocating for PE teachers' professional development to enhance their contribution to moral education [21]. It suggests a collaborative model involving educational institutions and families to build a solid ethical foundation [47], reflecting on societal, educational, and personal factors' combined impact in shaping moral competence, with a spotlight on parents as primary allies [48]. This holistic approach to moral education maximizes the strengths of various societal agents, aiming to instill a profound respect and appreciation for Fair Play among adults.

Providing insights for refining educational practices and policies in Chile and Argentina, the research aims to improve the understanding and practice of Olympic values, especially Fair Play, among adults. It suggests that, alongside adhering to IOC guidelines, considering factors like socioeconomic conditions,

cultural/social contexts, and educational systems is crucial [15], [18]. This comprehensive strategy is essential for effectively conveying the philosophical essence of Olympism and its values to diverse populations, fostering an ethically rich and value-driven sports culture.

5. CONCLUSION

The study concludes by emphasizing the essentiality of adopting educational strategies tailored to the specific age-related needs of individuals in Chile and Argentina. It underscores the significant influence of parents, PE teachers—particularly those within the 51 to 64 age brackets—and religious beliefs in molding ethical perspectives. Highlighting the need for targeted professional development for PE teachers, the study points out the critical role such training plays in bolstering the efficacy of moral education, especially as the influence of parental guidance wanes with age, suggesting the introduction of alternative moral guidance sources for older demographics.

Collaborative efforts between educational institutions and parents are heralded as vital for the effective integration of moral education initiatives. This partnership is aimed at enhancing communication and ensuring active parental involvement, which is considered crucial for the comprehensive development of learners' ethical values. By advocating for a holistic and integrated approach to moral education, where ethical values are interwoven throughout the curriculum, the study acknowledges the intricate dynamics between societal influences, educational settings, and individual factors in fostering moral growth.

The research further highlights the significance of examining the effects of historical and notable sports events on moral values, particularly noting Argentina's nuanced understanding potentially linked to its rich history of hosting such events. These findings lay a groundwork for shaping educational policies and strategies that promote ethical values and deepen the understanding of Olympic ideals within the complex cultural milieu of Chile and Argentina. Proposing a strategy for enhancing educational practices, the study envisions a future where ethical values and a deep appreciation of Olympic ideals are integral to the cultural fabric.





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