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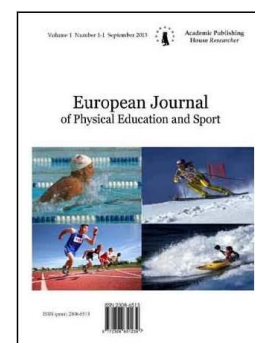
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Sports Ethics Relativity: Point of View of Athletes and Sport Community Members

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Abstract. There is a lack of scientific research and articles which analyze professional athletes' ethics. The main purpose of this article – to analyze the ethics of professional athletes and compare the results with the remaining part of the sports community. The study is based on a quantitative survey, which was conducted with 115 (65 men and 50 women) sport community members. Participants' age in this study ranged from 16-43. The respondents were divided into two groups: test and control. The population of the test group consisted of 41 (23 men and 18 women) professional athletes. The test group's age in this study ranged from 16-36. The control group consisted of 74 (42 men and 32 women) sport management and training systems students. The Control group's age ranged from 19-43. The study observed one statistically significant difference ($p < 0.01$): the test group has lower ethical evaluation of autonomy than the control group.

Keywords: philosophy of sport, morality of modern sport, sport.

Introduction

In 2002 CCSE (Canadian Centre Sport of Ethics) conducted a social survey in order to assess the impact of sport on youth values. The social survey helped by classifying youth social environments in which moral values are most successfully formed: family (50%); sports community (40%); school (32%); friends (29%); church and religion (22%); professional sports (17%); music and entertainment industry (14%) [1]. CCSE social survey revealed the contradictory public opinion. Community sports have always been received well by the general public. However professional sports receive a cynical and negative response due to corruption.

The values of professional sports and community moral values do not always coexist together. That is why sport critics have criticized the negative historic and cultural progression of modern sport for decades [2, 3, 4]. Harmony between professional sports and public moral values has been a fundamental problem in the philosophy of sport [5]. Every professional athlete has his own personal beliefs, how to behave in the community and during the game [6]. However, professional players feel the sense of responsibility to form only a positive image of a professional athlete [7, 8].

The main focus of Lithuanian sports scientists - amateur athletes and educology issues [9, 10], although professional sports are socially the most visible part of sports. Though Lithuanian sports scientists try to publish articles about the professional sports' cultural and moral issues [11], however, there is not enough extensive research or articles about moral values and behavior of professional athletes.

Scientific novelty: the present research will provide the first thorough analysis of the components of sports ethics among professional athletes.

The aim of the research is to analyze the ethics of professional athletes and compare the results with the remaining part of the sports' community.

Research methods

Participants. 41 professional athletes (22 men and 18 women), 3 basketball teams and 1 soccer club participated in the quantitative survey. These professional clubs compete at the highest sports league in Lithuania: "A lyga" (Lithuania Football League); "NKL" (National Basketball League); "LMKL" (Lithuanian Women's Basketball League). Professional athletes were assigned to test group called "players". The age of the test group ranged from 16 - 36 years.

74 students of sport management and training systems study program (42 men and 32 women) also participated in the quantitative survey. All of the students were assigned to the control group called "coaches/managers". The age of the control group ranged from 19 - 43 years. A total, 115 sports community members (65 men and 50 women) participated in the quantitative survey. The age of respondents' ranged from 16-43 years.

The questionnaire of quantitative survey was created by researchers from "Gdansk University of Sport and Physical Education" [12]. In 2012, the researchers Ziółkowski, Strzałkowska, Sakłak, Zarańska and Bonisławska, published a questionnaire of sport ethics. Its internal consistency was approved by SPSS statistical calculations (Cronbach's alpha (0.891)). The questionnaire consisted of 52 issues. The respondents had to evaluate the situations in 7 - point scale (from -3 to 3). The respondents' answers were classified in five ethical codes: ethics of autonomy; ethics of collectivism; ethics of common good; ethics of dignity; ethics of productivity.

Ethics of autonomy. Central value - goodness of another individual. Cardinal virtues - respect for prosperity, law and freedom of individuals; helping other people and loyalty towards individuals. Major sins are doing harm to others, violating rights (physical, psychological, moral) and disloyalty to people.

Ethics of collectivism. Central value – good of a social group. Cardinal virtues – respect for goodness, law and interests of a social group; sustaining group's integrity, loyalty towards the group. Major sins - acting to the detriment of a group, disloyalty, breaking group's integrity.

Ethics of common good. Central value – prosperity of a community as a whole. Cardinal virtues - respect for norms of which the society is beneficiary as a whole, even when a specific individual or social groups gain nothing or they lose. Major sins are violating norms of which the society is beneficiary, even when a subject, a specific individual or social groups gain nothing after obeying them.

Ethics of dignity. Central value – living with dignity. Cardinal virtues - spirituality, honor, contempt for material values, sustaining integrity (of class, of caste). Major sins - loss of "honorable capability", improper form, pursuit of material values, changing time - honored customs.

Ethics of productivity. Central values – production of good. Cardinal values - usefulness, effectiveness, economy, success. Major sins are lack of productivity, laziness, waste of values and time.

Participants were asked to record their sociodemographic variables such as gender, age, and sport team. The survey was conducted in compliance with the ethical principles and applicable legislation, i. e. each respondents was explained the goal of the study and was ensured that the questionnaires were anonymous. The duration of the survey was 25 minutes.

Statistical analyzes were performed by using SPSS 22.0 program for the Windows's operating system. The data were processed by Mann–Whitney U test.

Results

The mean scores results of the both groups are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean scores of five ethical codes among players (n=41) and coaches/managers (n=74)

Ethical codes	Mean scores of ethical codes among players	Mean scores of ethical codes among coaches/managers
Ethics of autonomy	3.98	4.29
Ethics of dignity	3.95	4.04
Ethics of collectivism	4.01	4.09
Ethics of common good	3.89	4.00
Ethics of productivity	4.37	4.29

After the evaluation of quantitative survey results of test group (players) and control group (coaches/managers) (Table 2) the study observed one statistically significant difference ($p < 0.01$). The test group (players) had a lower ethical evaluation of autonomy than the control group (coaches/managers). The analysis of the evaluation of dignity and common good resulted in the lower mean scores in case of players but there were no statistically significant differences between players coaches/managers (Table 2).

Table 2: Statistical comparison between players (n=41) and coaches/managers (n=74) characteristics of five ethical codes

Ethical codes	U	<i>p</i>
Ethics of autonomy	0884.50	0.00
Ethics of dignity	1277.00	0.16
Ethics of collectivism	1286.00	0.18
Ethics of common good	1193.00	0.06
Ethics of productivity	1374.50	0.40

*Note. U – Mann-Whitney U statistics score, *p* – level of significance.

Discussion

Research results confirm a provision that modern sport does not have the interface points with moral character improvement. Even if sport does promote courage, cooperation, perseverance and self-discipline, it is not clear that these character traits will transfer to other areas and contexts of life – and so count as moral virtues proper. On account of the competition, a sport tends to generate an in-group and an out-group, to whom words like 'hate' and 'beat' are often applied [13].

A significant part of people in western civilization are convinced that tolerance in the world of globalization, in the world of moving people and their cultures, is a social necessity. The necessity, natural or social, is not discussed but respected. [14]. But tolerance does not always mean moral values. It shows that at the level of values, all events, including humans, are equivalent to the extent. They can be treated as means for the sake of better life, security, greed, production, technical progress, genetic manipulation, and even social functioning [15].

The fundamental problems in ethics of autonomy are much more complex than cheating or unsporting behavior [16]. Describing some behavior as cheating is typically little more than expressing strong, but thoroughly vague and imprecise, moral disapproval or condemnation of another person or institution about a wide and ill-defined range of improper advantage-seeking behavior. For the purposes of any serious discussion about improper conduct in sport (or elsewhere), we should avoid the concept and focus on deeper issues [17].

The existence of the obligation to follow rules in sport is widely accepted, but there are only a few studies that provide accounts that justify it [18].

Conclusion

1. Cultural field of modern sport has potential to change ethical values of other community members.
2. Players had a lower ethical evaluation of autonomy than the control group (coaches/managers). Members of sports communities are not responsible for lower ethical evaluation of autonomy.

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Относительность спортивной этики: точка зрения спортсменов и представителей спортивных сообществ

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Аннотация. В настоящее время существует недостаток научных исследований, которые посвящены анализу вопросов спортивной этики. Основная цель этой статьи – проанализировать оценку спортивной этики с точки зрения спортсменов и других представителей спортивных сообществ. Объем выборки для исследования – 115 (65 мужчин и 50 женщин) представителей спортивных сообществ. Возраст участников в этом исследовании составлял от 16 до 43 лет. Респонденты были разделены на две группы: тестовую (исследуемую) и контрольную. Тестовая группа состояла из 41 (23 мужчин и 18 женщин) профессионально спортсмена. Возраст тестовой группы в данном исследовании составлял от 16–36 лет. Контрольная группа состояла из 74 (42 мужчин и 32 женщин) студентов – будущих тренеров и спортивных менеджеров. Возраст контрольной группы варьировал от 19 до 43 лет. Выявлено, что в тестовой группе получены более низкие показатели по оценке автономии, чем в контрольной группе.

Ключевые слова: философия спорта, мораль современного спорта, спорт.