Original research article

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE OLYMPIC EDUCATION IN SERBIA

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SUMMARY

The roots of the idea of Olympic education can be seen even in the opinion of Baron Pierre de Coubertin. The motive for the renewal of the Olympic idea is found in the fact that the ancient Greek society paid a lot of attention to education and youth in every way. The International Olympic Committee founded a special committee that deals with Olympic education focused in two directions: the study of Olympism (academic world) and teaching through Olympism (children, athletes and adolescents). In Serbia, the school system has had a 35 years long tradition of competing, which has been conducted under the name of "Olympic Students Sport Games Republic of Serbia". In order to promote the Olympic values Serbia is organizing the competitions encouraged by the Olympic idea. Faculties where sports science is taught, included the subject of Olympic education, with the view of young teachers and researchers spreading the idea of Olympism.

The aim of the research is to influence the development of scientific thought in the field of education by considering the Olympic values, which would primarily affect the interest and improvement in specialization of the experts. The main methods used in this paper are based on theoretical analysis and historical method.

Keywords: Olympism, School System, Serbia

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INTRODUCTION

The modern Olympic Games and Olympism as a global movement abide by the principles of The Festivities in Olympia (The Ancient Olympic Games). However, modern times using all the new technology (training, pharmacological, communication etc.) solves the existing and at the same time brings new issues. The fundamental Olympic principles tend to be forgotten in attempt to reach new records, at any cost, leading to dehumanization of sport. The well-known Olympic principle - **It is important to participate and not to win** has been abused so many times, therefore it should be applied, not just quoted in vain. For these very reasons it is important for all people, not just children and youth to acquire basic knowledge of The Olympic Games, and the Olympic movement on the whole and to accept fundamental principles of the Olympism and behave accordingly.

Educational role of The Ancient Olympic Games was pointed out by Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović in his work **Body rehabilitation**: “The Olympic Games meant the most glorious festival of body and according to those festivals the Greek counted their time. All the cultural life of Greek people focused on these Games. The memory of the Games passed and their heroes inspired the youth, while the preparation for the victory at the forthcoming Games fulfilled the major part of their upbringing. To develop a healthy body and healthy spirit within such a body was the goal of upbringing in Sparta as well as in Athens”

Due to the intensive development of political, economic, social, cultural and other factors, The Olympic Games today have become one of the most significant events related to contemporary sport and physical education as well as the important factor in the development of every society. International Olympic Committee (IOC) strives to stimulate sport development. It cooperates with other sport organisations with the view of putting sport at service of humankind. The IOC carries out the principles of Olympism in compliance with The Olympic charter through a large number of its commissions and projects.

The subject of this research relates to the educational aspect of the Olympic movement. The aim of the research is to influence the development of scientific thought in the field of education by considering the Olympic values, which would primarily affect the interest and improvement in specialization of the experts. The task was to explore, explain and analyse this aspect in order to establish a

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1 Николай Велимировић. Реабилитация тела (Пирот: ПИ-ПРЕСС, 2000), p. 52
dialectical unity of theory and practice. The main methods used in this paper are based on theoretical analysis and historical method.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The roots of the Olympic education ideas can be traced back in the thoughts of Baron Pierre de Coubertin. He thought of himself as a pedagogue. His motive for renewal the Olympic ideas, he found in the fact that ancient Greek society devoted significant attention to all aspects of education of their youth. Agonistic\(^2\) approach and gymnastics brought about the ideal of kalokagathia, i.e. the harmony of well-developed body and spiritual wealth, and with realisation of that ideal robust and bodily strong people of healthy spirit was created. Pierre de Coubertin believed that sport should be a part of education of each young individual, in the very same way as science, literature and art. His goal was to offer harmonized education regarding both, body and spirit, as ancient Greeks used to have. The Olympic Games enabled that Coubertin’s educational ideas become visible through out the world and reach the goal. The organisation of modern Olympic Games enabled that such an idea became long-lasting and independent over the years. The Olympic movement today still supports Coubertin’s principles because education through Olympism is therefore universal and fundamental based on essential human values.

THE OLYMPIC EDUCATION IN THE WORLD

Having in mind the fact that over the times, the Olympic movement has faced more and more aberration from the essential Olympic ideals during the last hundred years of modern Olympic Games, at the celebration of the 100\(^{th}\) anniversary of the modern Olympic movement as well as the decision of renewal of the Olympic Games, the resolution was made to devote more attention to the education and upbringing in the Olympic spirit.

The idea of return to forgotten Olympic ideals and values came from Greece. The President of the Greek Olympic Committee, Antonio Zikas, developed the idea of the Olympic education upbringing at the conference of EOC in Athens, in November 1995. At the celebration of the 100\(^{th}\) anniversary of the modern Olympic Games held at Panathenaikon stadium, April 6, 1996, he said:

\(^2\) Ancient Greek consider agonistic to compete in all fields.
“The Olympic Games held every four years are recognised throughout the world and make the vision of peaceful coexistence among all the people of the world close to us. Therefore, let us devote the next century of the Games, to children and their education about Olympism and sport. Let us introduce the laws which will enable the important messages of the Olympism and true sport be thought at the preschool level, if possible, and received by children around the world. Let us, at the dawn of new century, from this ground, send the most cordial greetings full of love to children, the stars of the world.”

The planning of international initiative for the Olympic education started in 1996, at the First Preliminary World Conference held at the place of the International Olympic Academy in ancient Olympia. During two following conferences (the one in Nauru and the other in Kalavrita) held in 1997 and 1998 respectively, the educators and pedagogues of the Olympism and sport made the following statements regarding the Olympic education:

1. We believe that integration of the Olympic ideals into the educational system presents an effective pedagogical method which will be gladly accepted by young participants.
2. We feel that the Olympic education is an important part of world education and encourages the wish of all the people to make it a part of peaceful world.
3. We understand that the Olympic education is an integral part of general education, which meets the demands of school system through potential incorporated in sport, in accordance to values of the Olympism and humanism.
4. The Olympic Games, physical activity and sport, when harmonized with the basis of Olympism philosophy, are integral, not the sole element of the Olympic education.

The activities of the Olympic education programme tend to:

1. Enrich human personality through physical activity and sport which are connected with culture. It is hoped that this activity will be lifelong one.
2. Develop solidarity, tolerance and mutual respect which are connected with fair-play.

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Inspire peace, mutual understanding, respect for cultural diversity, environment protection, and essential human values with regard to regional and national needs.

Encourage aspiration towards the highest achievements in line with the fundamental Olympic ideals.

Develop the appreciation for human civilization continuity and through research of the ancient as well as modern Olympic history.

These basic goals stimulate development of physical education curriculum, health and life skills within most of educational systems in the world. The process of international evaluation preceded release of chosen material confirming that the above mentioned activities will be useful in the classrooms on the all continents of the world.

Since late 1990s many people from all over the world including IOC, UNESCO, FOSE5; helped the beginning of introducing philosophy of the Olympism into schools. The project started in Greece with publishing of the first manual and continued in other countries in the world. FOSE are aware of the fact that it is impossible that one manual could fulfil the needs of all the schools in the world which belong to different educational systems as well as different cultures. A long term strategic plan has been made in order to carry out this idea throughout the 21st century. FOSE together with its associates believe that there are people everywhere in the world wishing to help next generation make significant changes in their lifestyle. These people feel the need to learn and at the same time to teach “how to leave peacefully together”6. FOSE believes that stimulative educational activities can help children develop good personality.

The success of the project depends on teachers’ engagement, imagination and sensibility, as well as on application of materials developed to encourage children to participate in the programme.

The material is designed to offer important information on the history of the Olympic Games as well as strategy to create blend of social values, the Olympic spirit, with innate gifts children have, enabling them to grow up with the feeling of self-respect and integrity. This material also includes stories and anecdotes from all over the world. In the attempt to reach all the children worldwide, the pilot

FOSE – Foundation of Olympic and Sport Education

materials sent to every continent received significant response and terrific suggestions.

FOSE expects cooperation with the ministries of education from different parts of the world in order to ensure high quality translation of this international teacher's manual which is originally published in English. The guidelines will be provided for those organisations wishing to translate this book for the purpose of schools in their countries.

THE OLYMPIC EDUCATION WITHIN MOC

There is a special Committee within MOC, engaged in the Olympic education which includes two directions: research on the Olympism (academic world) and education through the Olympism (children, adolescents and athletes).

- Academic programmes
- Youth programmes

The Olympic Studies Centre (OSC), founded by MOC and situated in the Olympic Museum in Lausanne, is one of the largest centres dedicated to preservation of memory and spreading the idea of the Olympic movement as well as research coordination and improvement, teaching and publishing relevant materials. This centre offers information in written, visual and audio form. The purpose of OSC is to make the collections of the Olympic heritage (that are taken care of within 5 out of its 7 sectors) available to public.

The written documents and audio-visuals are competence of the following sectors:

- The historic archives of MOC
- Library
- Information Centre
- Images and sounds
- Department of photography

Besides, the purpose of the OSC is to promote the research regarding the Olympism through:

- Programme grants
- Documents for on-line research

Also, the Centre encourages a variety of academic activities related to the Olympism:

- Conferences and symposiums
- Different cooperation programmes
Looking for ways to develop and enable contacts and exchange between researchers and institutions studying the Olympism.

The Olympic Museum has special space devoted to its young visitors. There are special programmes meant to encourage discovering the Olympism and the Games designed to fulfil expectations of children, adolescents, school groups etc. The programmes include educational thematic visits to permanent exhibitions as well as to temporary ones, educational materials etc.

THE OLYMPIC VALUES

The Olympic values represent the basis of the Olympic movement. They are incorporated in every action and decision and the viability of these values have played an important role for long-lasting success of the Olympic movement. Three basic values of the Olympic movement are excellence, friendship and respect.

Excellence means to do one's best in chosen profession. It does not refer only to achieving victory, but to participation and improvement in order to reach personal goals in everyday life by putting into work together strong body, mind and will.

Friendship encourages the view that sport is the means of mutual understanding among individuals and people from all over the world. The Olympic Games inspire people to make an effort to overcome political, economic, gender-related, racial or religious differences and establish friendship despite these diversities.

Respect includes: self-respect, respect for someone's body, complying to the rules and regulations, respect for sport and environment. When related to sport, respect implies fair-play and struggle against using drugs and any form of unethical behaviour.

These values appear within six primary fields of interest of the Olympic movement:

- Sport for all
- Development through sport
- Education through sport
- Women and sport
- Achieving peace through sport
- Sport and environment
THE OLYMPIC UPBRINGING AND EDUCATION IN SERBIA

Though the Olympic spirit was cherished within the previously mentioned system of sport competitions, the basic aims were not fully achieved. After the initiative originated in Greece in 1996, considering conclusions made at three expert conferences regarding the aims, dynamic as well as the means of introduction of the Olympic upbringing and education into schools, certain changes have happened regarding the system of sport events in our country.

The support of Yugoslav Olympic Committee is given through the resolutions made in February 1997 which refer to continuation of organizing the Olympic sport games of school youth of Serbia together with starting the initiative for organizing the Sport games of the Balkan countries students.

Some parts of new programme were partially realized through the previously established system of sport competitions. The experiences acquired can help in further realization of the programme and also in participating in the world Olympic movement. The Association of School Sport and the Olympic Upbringing had to cooperate with the Yugoslav Olympic Committee regarding the realization of the Olympic upbringing programme. The above mentioned Association also had to establish connection with UNESCO’s Department for School Sport Development and the International Association for School Sport.

The Olympic sport games of school youth of the Republic of Serbia

School competitions bring joy due to the participation itself and besides that encourage students to practice systematically. These competitions also contribute to establishing closeness and friendship among young people and developing fair-play relation. School competitions have an important role in upbringing and education of children and young people.

The Olympic sport games of school youth are the lasting system of sport competitions with participation of schoolchildren at the primary and secondary school level competing in 12 events:

1. Swimming
2. Shooting
3. Table tennis
4. Gymnastics
5. Volleyball
6. Basketball
7. Handball
8. Futsal
9. Rhythmic gymnastics
10. Skiing
11. Athletics
12. Spring cross-country

The Olympic sport games of school youth of Serbia are organized every four years. So far, there have been School Olympic Games as follows:

- I Kragujevac (1980)
- II Kruševo (1984)
- III Belgrade (1988)
- IV Arandjelovac (1992)
- V the games were not organized
- VI Zrenjanin (2000)
- VIII Niš (2008)
- IX Sremska Mitrovica (2012)

The Winter Olympic Games for Schoolchildren were always organized on Kopaonik with the exception of those in 1992 when the games were organized on Brezovica.

The competitions are organized and managed by the Association of School Sport and the Olympic Uprising of Serbia. It designs and realizes school sport development programmes, cherishes and respects sport spirit and morals and spreads the ideas and spirit of the Olympism. Teachers of physical education, who are together with their students directly included in the system of competitions, play a significant role in carrying out the programmes of the Association. The number of (student) participants at all levels during one school year goes up to 350,000.

The following Commissions are formed within the Association:
- Competition Commission
- Disciplinary Commission
- Information Commission
- Marketing and Advertising Commission

The system of competitions is divided into 5 levels:
- School level (the competition among the classes within a school)
- Municipality level
- District or town or city level
- Regional level
- State level
There are general and specific provisions included in the Book of Rules for School Competition Organization. All full time students (boys and girls) of primary and secondary schools are allowed to participate in competitions. Depending on the sport event, participants can be divided into 2 to 5 age groups. The Association Administrative Board decides on the calendar of sport events in September for the current academic year and the schedule has to be carried out. This system of school competitions (through all the levels) comprises of various independently conducted sport competitions, in line with the established calendar for the given academic year.

Schools themselves set the dates for the first level of competitions considering the established calendar of events, at least a week prior to the municipality level events.

The places of events at the higher level competitions (districts/town/city/regional) are precisely appointed in advance.

The Book of Rules for School Competition Organization defines the following:

- the way of entering the competition
- health care of participants
- participants' clothes and footwear
- competition organizers' duties
- duties of judges/referees/umpires and delegates
- the procedures regarding disputes and complaints
- competition funding
- information on competitions.

There are sets of competition rules for all the sports.

The programme named "Little Olympic Games" consists of various activities for students of primary school junior years:

- fun playground activities meant for the first-graders,
- skill-oriented playground activities for the second-graders,
- advanced skill-oriented playground for the third/fourth-graders.

Compulsory programmes are defined for each item of equipment in gymnastics competitions for boys and girls respectively, as well as the rules for grading their performance.

The Association has also established the Rules for awarding schools, teams and individuals for achievements accomplished in the competitions at the Olympic sport games of school youth in Serbia.
The above mentioned organization and system of school competitions provide incentive to develop massive sport participation among schoolchildren, creating possibility for them to express their individual and team potentials.

Unfortunately, besides the fact that teachers of physical education and other people involved in the organization of these competitions put tremendous effort and enthusiasm, school sport does not receive the necessary attention of the society, causing participants and organizers to face significant problems at all competition levels. This fact is reflected in negative quantitative outcomes of the research in the secondary school final year students in Serbia carried out in 2005.

The results of the research demonstrated that the senior students of secondary schools had lacked up to a high degree knowledge on the Olympic sport games of school youth in Serbia. It could be assumed that such a situation was the consequence of inadequate approach, stressing out the need that theoretical approach should become a part of psychical education curriculum, as well as necessity to scale up the number of lessons per week and/or introduce the subject the Olympic upbringing and education, which has already been done in many countries due to the initiative and support of MOC and FOSE.

**Mini Olympic Games at the Faculty of Sport Management**

The aim of this event was to support the idea of school sport development and devotion to sport spirit and moral through sport competitions with the view of extending the Olympic ideas and the spirit of Olympism. Such an event stimulates massive participation in sport enabling possibility to express individual and team potentials of young sport contestants. Besides the fact that these events bring together young people, they also encourage systematic exercise, fair-play relations, and have important educational role.

Mini Olympic Games were organized in 2004 and 2008 inspired by the summer Olympic Games held in Athens and Beijing respectively. Mini Olympic Games of 2008 included the press conference at which the importance of spreading the Olympic Games was highlighted. The programme of the sport events at the same Games held on Ada Ciganlija made an attempt to connect the ancient and modern times. The athletic events carried out in the manner the ancient athletes used to compete brought the memory of the past, while the

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7 Виолета Шпенка: “Утврђивање гносеолошких вредности ученика о олимпијским спортским играма школске ослобођене Србије”, (paper presented at Међународна конференција "Менаџмент у спорту", Београд, Србија, 24. мај, 2005.)
football, basketball tournaments as well as rowing races symbolised the modern Olympic Games.

CONCLUSION

The length of 28 centuries that have passed since the first Olympic Games in the ancient Greece impose an obligation to cherish them expressing duly respect for all those people and individuals who started and make them thrive. That poses necessity for comprehensive consideration of their further development through Olympic upbringing and education. The Faculties teaching sport science have already introduced the subject of the Olympic education into their curriculum, hoping that future pedagogues and researchers will spread the idea of Olympism.

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ИСТОРИЈСКИ РАЗВОЈ ОЛИМПИЈСКОГ ОБРАЗОВАЊА У СРБИЈИ

САЖЕТАК

Корене идеје олимпијског образовања назику се још у размишљањима барона Пјера де Кубертена. Мотив за обновљење Олимпијских идеја напсто је у чињеници да је старогрчки друштво велику важност покољало образовању олимпијског образовања олимпијским идејама и току у свом погледу. У Међународном олимпијском комитету посебна Комисија која се бави олимпијским образовањем усмерена је у два правца: на истраживања о олимпијским идејама (академски свет) и подучавање кроз олимписам (деца, адолесенти и спортсти). У Србији систем школских такмичења има традицију дугу 35 година, која се спроводи под називом „Олимпијске спортске игре ученика Републике Србије”. У циљу афирмације олимпийских вредности, у Србији се организују и такмичења подстакнута олимпијским идејама. Факултети на којима се изучавају спортске науке су у
DEARROLLD HISTÓRICO DE LA EDUCACIÓN OLÍMPICA
EN SERBIA RESUMEN

Los orígenes de la idea de la Educación Olímpica pueden verse aún en los pensamientos del barón Pierre de Cuberún. El encuentra el motivo de la renovación del idea olímpica en el hecho de que la sociedad griega antigua prestaba mucha atención a la educación del juventud en todos los aspectos. El Comité Olímpico Internacional fundó un comité especial, que se ocupó de la educación olímpica y se centra en dos direcciones: el estudio del Olímpismo (mundo académico) y la enseñanza a través del Olímpismo (niños, adolescentes y atletas). En Serbia, el sistema educativo tiene una tradición de 35 años de competición, que se está llevando a cabo bajo el nombre de "Juegos deportivos olímpicos de los estudiantes de la República de Serbia". Con el fin de promover los valores olímpicos, en Serbia se organizan estas competiciones animados por la idea olímpica. Las facultades en las que se estudian las ciencias del deporte en su plan de estudios incluyen el tema de la educación olímpica, con el fin de que los futuros pedagogos e investigadores puedan propagar la idea del Olímpismo.

Tomando en consideración los valores olímpicos, el objetivo de la investigación es influir en el desarrollo del pensamiento científico en el campo de la educación, lo que afectaría principalmente el interés y la mejora de sus profesionales. Los principales métodos utilizados en este documento se basan en el método del análisis teórico y en el método histórico.

Palabras clave: Olímpismo, educación, Serbia