

Development Of The Olympic Value Scale (OVS)

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Aim of the paper

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) established Olympic Values in its Fundamental Principles of the Olympic Charter already in 1949. Since then the number of values that were mentioned in the charter has increased. As late as in 1999, the IOC aimed to find out what values individuals associate with the Olympic Games and initiated consumer research on this topic (Dunn & Company, 1999). Although many studies followed, the IOC never developed or proposed a sound instrument to measure Olympic Values. More recently, the IOC has been criticized for not relating Olympic Values to its decisions. However, empirical evidence can only be provided if there is a valid and reliable measurement tool. Thus, the aim of our research is to develop the Olympic Value Scale (OVS), a scale that is robust across nations with different cultures.

Theoretical background

Pierre de Coubertin (1931) proposed a set of values that Olympism should stand for, represented by the Olympic Games. The importance of his work can be seen in the high number of citations of his speeches and writings. Many citations reflect the inspiration that Pierre de Coubertin gave to his successors, such as IOC representatives and presidents, but also to Olympic scholars to discuss the various facets of Olympic Values. Olympic Values have mostly been looked at from the perspective of philosophy, sociology, and anthropology. Chatziefstathiou (2005), not solely limiting her ethnographic content analysis to speeches and oeuvres by Pierre de Coubertin, but including other Olympic scholars, concludes that Olympic Values are derived by consensus construction in a global world context. Parry (1998), attempts to make principled judgments about ethical matters through the Olympic Values. He made simple statements that capture the essence of what an "ideal human being ought to be and to aspire to" in regards to the Olympic ideal (p. 160). Based on these studies, we followed typical scale development procedures to propose the OVS that assess values from the perspective of residents from different countries.

Methodology, research design, and data analysis

We develop and validate the OVS across four pre-studies and three main studies. Three criteria guided the development of the OVS: (1) the scale should only contain items that refer to values that are relevant for the Olympic Games; (2) the OVS should capture the most important dimensions of Olympic Values, sufficiently compact; and (3) the OVS should be able to explain various phenomena related to the Olympic Games. The pre-studies started collecting the potential Olympic Value items, surveying a range of stakeholders (e.g., Olympic scholars, researchers, host city residents). We then reduced the number of items via exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses (main studies).

In our main studies, we conducted representative surveys in three countries: USA, Germany, and Brazil (total $n = 3,427$). Back-and-forth translations with two native bilingual speakers were made to ensure that the translations capture the meaning of the Olympic Value items originally developed in English. In the surveys, participants rated the extent to which the 12 Olympic Value items we identified could be used to describe the Olympic Values, measured on a 7-point scale from 1 = "does not describe the Olympic Games at all" to 7 = "describes the Olympic Games very well." In all three studies, common standard convergence and discriminant validity criteria were met.

Results, discussion, and implications

We found out a robust OVS including 12 value items. The results of the analyses support the three-factor structure with the following dimensions: (1) appreciation of diversity [items: anti-discrimination, tolerance, diversity, equality], (2) friendship relations with others [items: friendship, warm relations with others, brotherhood, understanding], and (3) achievement in competition [items: achievement, competition, achieving one's personal best, effort]. The model fit of the confirmatory factor analysis is good and the 12 items describe the three factors with satisfying validity and reliability. We correlated the OVS with managerially relevant variables and found significant relationships.

The meaning of the dimensions comes close to the dimensions proposed by the IOC (2012): excellence, friendship, and respect. The usefulness and the managerial relevance of the OVS are manifold. The measurement of Olympic Values and their monitoring over time as well as the theoretical grounding of these trends are an under-researched area. We hope to contribute to partially fill this gap by proposing the OVS,

a valid, reliable, and compact measurement tool that can be used in future studies. For example, the OVS may help managers develop codes of ethics and leadership principles within their organizations.

References

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