

Olympic Education as a Factor of Socialization of Preschoolers

Zoya S. Varfolomeeva^a, Ilya A. Surinov^a

^aCherepovets State University, Cherepovets, RUSSIA

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is theoretical substantiation and experimental confirmation of importance of the Olympic education as a socialization factor of the preschoolers. To address the study issues, theoretical methods of analysis, generalization and systematization as well as personal and activity approaches were applied. The older preschoolers (n=70) participated in our study. For establishing a degree of connection between the level of Olympic education and socialization of children's personality, a correlation analysis – calculation of Spearman's rank correlation coefficient - was used. The correlation analysis showed that the results of evaluation of Olympic education and socialization of the 6- to 7-year children has a reliable positive connection. Moreover, socialization of the preschoolers may be defined as individual, personal achievement of the Olympic education representing a balance of the appropriate understanding of sport, value of the Olympic culture, interests, and needs and value orientations defining so-called Olympic models of behavior. Results of the study can be used in the practice of subject teachers and preschool teachers; in the learning process of students, who study in sport-related higher schools; skills refreshment and re-training courses for coaches and physical training teachers.

KEYWORDS

Olympic education, preschooler's socialization, racial socialization, educational support, social development of children

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Introduction

Nowadays the Olympic education as a tool for providing social and personal development of the older preschoolers is of particular interest to researchers (Culpan, 2015; Bondar, 2015; Ren & Pope, 2015).

A significant variety of psychological and pedagogical diagnostic approaches has been developed and is widely used nowadays in teaching practice. However, there are no suggestions enabling to use diagnostics of the Olympic erudition among older preschoolers, including diagnostics by means of computer diagnostic socialization program.

Despite the fact that there is some experience of development and realization of the Olympic-oriented projects in preschool educational institutions, the Olympic

CORRESPONDENCE Zoya Semionovna Varfolomeeva ✉ varf.zoya@gmail.com

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education has not yet occupied its rightful place in the process of socialization of the older preschooler in a whole (Azimov et al, 2016; Silva et al, 2016). To date, there are some works revealing the issues of the Olympic education for preschoolers (Kozyreva, 2002; Ushakov, 2010; Kolomyichenko, 2008). At the same time, available scientific and methodological literature does not reveal the content of the notion socialization as a precondition of the Olympic erudition of the older preschooler. Moreover, it does not show formation regularities of this integrative trait in the child's identity and does not define tools for educational support of this process.

The purpose of the pedagogical enlightenment is to inculcate children into humanist ideals and values of the Olympism. More often than not, in a literature, a term Olympic education and Olympic upbringing is used. Among other terms upbringing in the spirit of the Olympism, upbringing in the spirit of the Olympic ideals and values, upbringing through the Olympic movement. This issue is of interest to many researchers.

Activation of the work on the Olympic education is in upbringing of a young generation, spread of the Olympic principles, inculcating children into the Olympic ideals (Silva et.al, 2016; Ransom, 2012). There different approaches to organization of such activity. At that it is of crucial importance to find out the answers for the following questions: To what extent and how can the need be satisfied? How well do respondents know about the Olympic movement, the Olympic Games? What do they know about the Olympic ideals and values? What is their understanding of personality of an Olympic athlete? Is any work performed on the Olympic education of children and youth at educational institutions (such as schools, universities etc.)? What exactly? What is the opinion of the respondents concerning possibility, reasonability and ways of activation of this kind of work?

Therefore, there is not just a search for tools and techniques capable of giving children knowledge of the Olympic movement, ideals and values, but also efforts to build experimental sports-grounds (at the premises of educational institutions, on the basis of sports teams and practical implementation of a so-called Sparta program (Spirituality + Sport + Art) of the Olympic education) are being made.

Particularly, in his studies, V.I. Stoliarov (1998) concludes that the following factors favor this process:

- festive, emotional and friendly atmosphere of the Sparta Games making children to be not only competition- but also unity-oriented;
- variety of competitions and challenges in the Games program as well as their connection not only to the world of sport but also art and other human activities;
- Sparta award system that significantly enlarges a championship compared to traditional one (as it allows to emphasize achievements of almost every participant) and makes children to be not only result- but also a process-oriented;
- inclusion in the program both competitive and uncompetitive games.

As a result of theoretical analysis of scientific sources, we have found out that O. Mikhnevich & E. Kulinkovich (1998) consider that the Olympic education relates to a character education through systematized knowledge, on the one hand, and through organization of cognitive activities, on the other hand. In addition, the Olympic education is a method for uniting culture, scientific knowledge and spiritual experience of the world community (Kobrinsky & Kokashynsky, 2011).

Since an erudition, as a result of education and personal trait, generally also means a level of culture, it is also worthy to consider the opinion of Kozureva (2002). She submits that the main components of the sport culture structure of the preschoolers are the following: information unit (knowledge of sport, its aspects, functions, values and norms associated therewith), motivational unit (interests, needs, sport-associated values), operation unit (talents and skills to participate in the sport competitions) and behavioural unit (sport-associated behavioural models and, more generally, life style, system of relationships with people).

Educational support envisages diagnostics, consulting, correction, system analysis of problematic situations, programming and planning of activities that are directed to allowance and coorganization of all subjects of educational process and coordination of all these functions (Mikheyeva, 2008).

Humanization as one of the most important tendencies in education defines a need for new alternative sources of education that preach the universal morality and spiritual values. The Olympism and Olympic movement serve as these sources. Olympic education is a type of education, which in modern pedagogy is considered to be a process and a result of purposeful, educationally organized and systematic human socialization (Naul, 2008). Consequently, there is a logical question about connection of Olympic education and socialization at different stages of age-related development.

According to Federal state educational standards of preschool education (2013) an educational space is a system of conditions of socialization of children; and social development is an important direction of personal development of preschool children.

Literature Review

As the theoretical analysis has shown, the socialization is defined as adaptation of a person in society, as a process and a result of assignment of social experience (Frønes, 2016). It is known that social development is carried out in two ways – by spontaneous interaction of the person with social reality and environment and in the course of purposeful familiarizing of the person with social culture. The second way of social development is carried out by means of purposeful education, which includes various aspects of social culture.

Scholars observe that preschool age is a sensitive period in social development of the person, and the program of social development can be realized in appropriate sections of education: communicative culture can be realized by means of moral education, national culture – patriotic education, ethnic culture – international education and so on (Kolomiychenko, 2008; Varfolomeeva & Surinov, 2012; Efremenkoy, 2013). However, it is well-known that all these aspects of education can be combined by means of the Olympic education.

Many researchers emphasize humanistic aspects of Olympic education, its moral, social and ethnical components. For example, P. Güzel & S. Özbey (2009) state that the main goal of Olympic education curricula is teaching such values as solidarity and tolerance based on mutual respect, protection of the environment and respect to human person, ect.

According to K. Georgiadis (2010), issues related to intercultural awareness and social behavior of young people are closely associated with school and become a part of the curriculum. These social education aspects are included in the Olympic education programs promoting both good attitude and behavior. Scholars also



emphasize the importance of the Olympic Education for the social development of the preschoolers (Kozyreva, 2002).

The issue of the Olympic education for schoolers is not novel for neither local pedagogy nor foreign education researchers.

To date, in Russia an organizational and methodological concept is implemented, the Olympic education system is formed (Kozyreva, 2002; Varfolomeeva & Surinov, 2012) as well as the issues of organization and techniques of the Olympic education for the studying youth at various levels of education are revealed (Ermolova, 2012).

In West European pedagogy the term Olympic education appeared in 1970-s. Authors emphasize that the purpose of the Olympic programs is to assimilate such values as human solidarity based on tolerance and mutual respect, respect and conservation of the environment and human identity etc. A theoretical analysis of related foreign studies has shown that despite different interpretations of the Olympic education, its humanistic orientation, moral, social, and ethnic aspects are generally emphasized (Scherbashyn, 2014).

Thus, current state of the problem of the Olympic education is characterized by deep study of its different aspects in the science and variety of approaches in educational practice. At the same time, despite obviousness of the statement that the Olympic education is one of efficient teaching technologies capable of improving social adaptation level of the schoolers, its influence on achievement of individual results of junior adolescents in physical training, according to our data, was not investigated.

In our study the Olympic education is considered as a type of education, a factor of individual development and socialization of the schoolers including junior adolescents (Varfolomeeva & Portnov, 2011).

The socialization issue of the schoolers is analyzed differently in different countries. Particularly, in USA a problem of racial socialization is noticed. For example, L.A. Leslie et al. (2013) consider that racial socialization protects adolescents from stress associated with racial discrimination. As noted, racial socialization process may be difficult for interracial adoptive families. The study obviously shows how much racial socialization by white adopters weakens connection between discrimination and stress of the adolescents. Such a permanent discrimination danger causes culturally specific stress of minority, with which people have to learn to cope.

For such racial minorities as adolescents, who are being brought up by white parents, can be difficult to cope with discrimination that can be complicated by lack or limit of racial socialization from white adopters. This leads to racial and ethnic pride and fault tolerance.

In the studies, racial socialization by parents was defined as a factor protecting the schoolers from stress resulted from discrimination (Leslie et al, 2013).

P. Döge & H. Keller (2014) examined similarity of socialization goals of a group of mothers with different cultural backgrounds and their children's respective preschool teachers in Germany.

Significant cross-cultural differences between the mothers and teachers as well as low socialization correlation between them have been revealed by questioning. However, from the perspective of the socialization issue, maternal influence was rather strong in all groups. The results point to the importance of cross-cultural

differences in child-rearing ideas in terms of the interaction between parents and child care professionals (Döge & Keller, 2014).

Qualitative early education has numerous benefits for children socialization – love for school, healthy socialization, meaty study and preparation for a kindergarten. However, in practice, parents often face enormous challenges when looking for qualitative programs corresponding to budget and other possibilities. Ranson (2012) shares parent's opinion that it is difficult to choose an appropriate preschool education to provide children with efficient socialization.

The experts assume that at the early stages of development of a schooler a problem of socialization is considered in perspectives of health, acquired habits of a healthy lifestyle, development of well socialized personality, skills for future economic success as well as preservation of cultural beliefs and values, cultural emotions (Hsueh & Hui, 2016).

Some studies demonstrate relation between parents and socialization as well as children's emotions and social competence and problems associated with children's behaviour.

It was revealed that parents assist in developing children's emotions and, consequently, socialization of the schoolers. At the same time early socialization of emotions with parents "develops" schemes of emotions, experience, expression of opinion and regulations, which children carry over wider social environment.

The study is important in that it is the first document describing mother's emotions in perspectives of socialization of the schoolers (Kolomiychenko, 2008).

Emotion regulation is a strong predictor of both short- and long-term peer relationships and social competence. But, at the same time, it is often targeted in preschool curricula.

A.T. Gilpin, M.M. Brown & J.M. Pierucci (2015) assume that future studies and training curricula have to focus on targeting fantastical pretense to assess causal mechanisms of emotion regulation development. The studies show that it can be an important contributor to the development of critical socialization skills such as emotion regulation.

A group of researchers under the leadership of E. Pahlke, R.S. Bigler & M.A. Suizzo, has studied a problem of European American parents' racial socialization.

The results of the study have shown that neither children nor their mothers could not have accurately predicted the others' views. Particularly, children's racial attitudes were unrelated to their mothers' attitudes. Those children whose mothers had a higher percentage of non-European American friends showed lower levels of racial biases than those children whose mothers had a lower percentage of non-European American friends (Pahlke, Bigler & Suizzo, 2012).

It is pertinent to point out that the education system works under the assumption that nearly every child has attended daycare before entering a preschool. This has serious implications since using these services, which help to prepare children for preschool, makes children socially differentiated. Children who have to cope with their first socialisation outside the family environment and their first encounter with the school environment at the same time face many problems (Amerijckx & Humblet, 2015).

People living in society need to be socialized. This is the opinion of E. Dereli & E.G. Akaroglu (2011), who used art education technique, which is applied in



preschool education, in his study. Through art education studying habits, taking responsibilities, cooperating, helping, developing solidarity habit and building positive relations with others are taught to the children.

The purpose of the study of A. Tsiakara & N. Digelidis (2015) was to study the effect of learning environment and type of goals on: (a) preschool children's performance during a play, (b) preschool children's perception of their performance and (c) preschool children's satisfaction. The results showed that preschool children were easier socialized as they had higher performance when the game was conducted under the presence of their classmates independently on the type of goal being set by the researchers. Furthermore, the vast majority of preschool children evaluates their performance as very good and answered that they felt happy.

Caseworkers play an integral role in children and youths' socialization. This is evidenced by studies of K.M. Kolivoski et al. (2016). Particularly, it is noted that perceptions of child welfare caseworkers are significantly higher when it is linked to young people's legal socialization and legal socialization is related to delinquent behavior. Thus, professionals should be aware of the important role of their relationships when working with children and youth.

It should be generally noted that the studies conducted over the past few decades emphasize an importance of preschooler social and emotional competence for "building" their socialization at the later stages of their development, as this influences children's academic, social and psychological achievements.

Socially and emotionally competent children have greater opportunities for socialization with their peers, it is easier for them to find new friends, have good relationships with their parents and teachers and enjoy their academic and social achievements. Children lacking social and emotional competence are at risk for reduced socialization opportunities. As a result, they experience rejection, behavioral disturbance and vagueness of life goals.

According to P.C. McCabe & M. Altamura (2011), intervention programs that target social and emotional development in preschool are ideally situated to bolster children social skills.

Aim of the Study

Considering low degree of scientific development of the issue, the importance of theoretical substantiation of educational support of establishing Olympic erudition of an older preschooler is consequently considered. So the purpose of this research is theoretical substantiation and experimental confirmation of importance of the Olympic education as a socialization factor. Furthermore, this study aims to specify a definition of socialization of the children when used with regard to establishing Olympic erudition of an older preschooler.

Research questions

The determination of the effect of Olympic education on the socialization of preschoolers has been covered insufficiently in modern studies. Therefore, it is necessary not only to diagnose the level at which preschoolers master the required skills, but also to develop a universal model that would incorporate the principles of personality-oriented education and facilitate the children's physical and moral education in preschools.

To that end, it is necessary to accomplish a number of objectives:

- to analyze the psychological and pedagogical literature and to determine the main aspects of the effect of Olympic education on child socialization;
- to assess the effect of Olympic education on the children's cognitive processes and behavioral reactions by surveying the children;
- to assess the degree of interconnection between the Olympic education of preschoolers and the level of their socialization based on a correlation analysis;
- to use the data of the empirical study to develop a model of Olympic education that would take into account the psychophysical and social characteristics of preschoolers.

Method

In this study we used such theoretical and empirical methods as data analysis, generalization, survey and expert assessment.

Empirical methods. The older preschoolers (n=70) participated in our survey. The age of the preschoolers was determined by means of the questionnaire suggested by the authors of this paper. This diagnostic tool allows to evaluate cognitive, axiological and behavioural results of the Olympic education of the children.

All questions are close-end and take into account visual thinking of older preschoolers.

Diagnosis of socialization of respondents was performed using a Readiness for studying at school technique (Varfolomeeva & Surinov, 2012). This technique is based on expert evaluation of such indicators as «Initiative and autonomy of decision-making», «Attitudes toward people», «Attitude to the world, activities», «Communicative skill» etc. To determine a degree of relation between the Olympic education level and the socialization of children's personality, the correlation analysis was used (Spearman's rank correlation coefficient).

Situation technique. A child should evaluate an action of a boy/girl. An answer is recorded and qualified according to evaluation criteria attached to each situation (0.1 or 2 scores).

1. Who is guiltier, in your opinion?

a) A boy participated in competitions and accidentally pushed his teammate, who fell and got hurt.

b) A boy deliberately pushed his teammate for failure of his team at competitions.

Evaluation criteria: considering motives of the boys or objective consequences of their actions.

2. Your friend asks you to help him to find his ball, which he lost in the yard. How will you act?

a) I will not help him as my parents have prohibited me to walk too long;

b) I will help him;

c) I will not help him, as I want to go home.

Evaluation criteria: orientation to your needs or needs of other people.



Data, Analysis, and Results

In our study, considering the aforesaid and our own scientific data (Georgiadis, 2010), we define older preschooler socialization as individual, personal result of the Olympic education generally representing a blend of knowledge (understanding) of sport, Olympic movement, values of the Olympic culture (cognitive or informational component) and interests, needs, value orientations defining “Olympic” models of behavior in sport and everyday life (“motivation-need” or axiological component). It is also defined as corresponding skills and behaviour related to compliance with the rules of “fair play” (practical or behavioural component) (Varfolomeeva & Surinov, 2012).

The main regularities for establishing the Olympic erudition of the older preschoolers may include conditioning of the content of educational activities by individual peculiarities of a child, unity of educational activity and individual activity of the child, dependence of the child’s activity on his individual peculiarities, socially determined pattern of the content and methods of educational activity.

Considering the results of the theoretical analysis of the problem and ascertaining experiment, it was hypothesized that efficiency of the Olympic education, as a means for achieving a high level of preschoolers’ socialization, will increase if the following conditions are fulfilled:

- moral and ethnic values of the Olympism are a subject of special studying;
- schoolers are involved into competition not just by quantitative but qualitative results;
- situations requiring evaluation of people’s actions and behaviour in view of the values.

The results of evaluation of both the Olympic education and socialization are shown in the table 1 below.

Table 1. Grading of the preschool children for the Olympic education and socialization levels (%)

Level	Olympic education	Socialization
Upper-intermediate	38.6	57.1
Intermediate	42.8	28.6
Pre-Intermediate	18.6	14.3

The resulting Spearman’s correlation coefficient between the results of evaluation of the Olympic education and socialization of the older preschoolers was $r_s = 0.269$ ($p < 0.05$), that points to a reliable positive connection.

Thus, presence of a good correlation suggests a causal link between the use of the Olympic education and formation of the preschoolers’ socialization. Thus, it makes sense to promote and experimentally verify the hypothesis that the Olympic education positively influences the level of the preschoolers’ socialization.

Table 2. Grading of the older preschool children for the level of socialization (%)

Level	5-year children ($n=37$)	6-year children ($n=57$)	Total ($n=94$)
Upper-Intermediate	13.5	43.9	31.9
Intermediate	45.9	47.3	51.1
Pre-Intermediate	40.6	8.8	17.0

When analyzing the test efficiency we considered our experience to develop diagnostic tools (Budreikaite, 2012; Güzel & Özbey, 2009): the efficiency index of each task was to be in a range of 0.25 to 0.75, preferably approaching averagely to 5 (for the whole questionnaire). The index lower than 0.25 showed that the task was inefficient as few children answered it correctly. At the same time the index higher than 0.75 showed that too many correct answers were received (Georgiadis, 2010).

In view of the study and using the suggested diagnostic tools, now it is possible to differentiate the socialization results according to three levels of its well-formedness.

Grading of the preschoolers for socialization levels. The study confirms that the investigated diagnostic means can serve as socialization tools, since they allow to obtain the data related to the Olympic education efficiency. Having evaluated diagnostic capabilities of the above-mentioned tests, we may consider them as tools for evaluating children socialization results when conducting corresponding studies.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study makes a contribution over the world science development by means of the author's (comprehensive and systematic) approach to the main regularities of formation of the preschoolers' Olympic erudition on the following conditions: correspondence of the content of educational activities to individual peculiarities of a child, unity of educational activity and individual activity of the child, dependence of the child's activity on his individual peculiarities, socially determined pattern of the content and methods of educational activity.

From foreign experience we may use the idea of analysis of the children socialization problem in perspectives of health, acquired habits of a healthy lifestyle, development of well socialized personality, cultural beliefs and values, cultural emotions as well as study of causal mechanisms of emotion regulation development. When selecting diagnostic methods and tools we considered the conceptual idea that the Olympic erudition, as an integral child's trait, has to be studied via combination of a low-formalized (observation, talk, expert assessment etc.) and highly-formalized examinations (tests, trials, instrumental methods) that provides objectivity and accuracy of the data.

In conceptual understanding the above-mentioned Situation technique was used. In our opinion, this technique allows to correctly evaluate maturity of motivational and value component of the Olympic erudition of the 6- to 7-year child. We give a description of the technique in our modification.

At the same time, foreign studies focus on general children's health disorders and disease prevention, and they almost completely ignore the Olympic education as personality socialization tool. There are some works also confirming positive changes in the development of moral values of adolescents based on Olympic Education (Budreykayte, 2012; Hassandra et al., 2007).

In today's social and pedagogical paradigm, that defines the necessity and possibility to form a permanent Olympic education system, development of the diagnostic tool for socialization appears to be an important scientific and practical problem.

In conclusion, determination of junior schoolers' socialization structure envisages considering some contextual and procedural peculiarities of the Olympic



education: to analyze history, regularities and principles of the Olympic movement; to establish relations between the Olympic education and sciences describing human life and activities; to develop physical activity on the basis of its motives and needs; think of adoption of moral values of the Olympic education serving as a fundamental for raising a humanistic personality.

In summary, the main criteria of the children and youths' Olympic erudition and educatedness are the following: developed system of knowledge in the field of the Olympism and Olympic movement; developed relationships and motivation system in the field of the Olympism and Olympic movement.

Thus, the study does not allow to make substantiated conclusions concerning efficiency of the above-mentioned Olympic education program as a tool for personal development of the schoolers – to make such conclusions, a longer period of time (more than a half of one semester) is needed. However, preliminary results point to some advantages of the suggested program over the traditional Olympic education program in improving junior preschoolers' socialization level.

Therefore, the study has revealed the following:

- the Olympic education, as a special kind of education, can be considered as a process of socialization of preschoolers;
- indicators of the Olympic education and children socialization positively correlate with each other;
- it is necessary to develop permanent Olympic education system and a diagnostic tool for socialization.

Implications and Recommendations

The paper determined the need for Olympic education in preschool institutions through integrated use of moral education, sports and arts, taking into account specifics of the trained contingent, which could be helpful in solving a number of social and educational tasks aimed at increasing socialization, including improving their health and fitness.

We developed the Olympic education model with regard to psychophysical and social characteristics of children studying in pre-school institutions; the basic form and content of Olympic education aimed at increasing the level of Olympic education and socialization of children studying in pre-school institutions.

The paper provided design and development of new approaches to the physical and moral education of children in preschool institutions related to the Olympic education, with a view to improve their educational, cultural and sports activities. Research results can be used: in the practice of subject teachers and preschool teachers; in the learning process of students, who study in sport-related higher schools; skills refreshment and re-training courses for coaches and physical training teachers.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes on contributors

Zoya Semionovna Varfolomeeva holds a PhD in Education and now is Head of the Faculty of Biology and Health Education at Cherepovets State University, Cherepovets, Russia.

Ilya Andreevich Surinov a researcher at Cherepovets State University, Cherepovets, Russia.

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