

Impediments to Moral Values in the Athletic Sphere

عوائق القيم الأخلاقية في الوسط الرياضي

Hassiba Louli

National Institute of Higher Training of Youth Executives "MADANI Souahi" Tixeraine
(Algiers), hacibalouli@gmail.com

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Abstract:

Moral values are imperative to the success of sports activities, as they seek to build the athlete's personality, both from within and outside the sports arena, as well as to preserve the integrity of the sport and its sublime objectives. addressing sporting values has become crucial after the emergence of wayward practices in the sports settings, including among sports fans, the most important of which are violence and fanaticism, as well as the use of steroids, in addition to undertaking the sports world without the availability of minimum conditions of athletic abilities and preparations. These last practices represent the most significant impediments undermining moral values in the athletic sphere whereby owing to them there is a lack of order, discipline and sportsmanship.

Keywords: moral values, sport, discipline, fitness, sportsmanship, fanaticism, steroids.

ملخص:

تعد القيم الأخلاقية ضرورة ملحة لنجاح فعاليات النشاط الرياضي، فهي تسعى إلى بناء شخصية الرياضي، سواء من داخل الساحة الرياضية أو من خارجها، وكذا إلى المحافظة على مكانة الرياضة وأهدافها السامية. إن الحديث عن القيم الرياضية بات ضروريا كذلك بعد بروز ممارسات خاطئة في الواقع الرياضي، بما فيه الجماهير الرياضية، أهمها العنف والتعصب وكذا تناول المنشطات فضلا عن التوجه إلى العالم الرياضي دون توفر أدنى شروطه، من قدرات واستعدادات

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رياضية. تأتي هذه الممارسات الأخيرة كأهم عوائق تواجه القيم الأخلاقية في الوسط الرياضي، حيث من خلالها يغيب النظام والانضباط وتغيب الروح الرياضية. كلمات مفتاحية: القيم الأخلاقية، الرياضة، الانضباط، اللياقة البدنية، الروح الرياضية، التعصب، المنشطات..

Corresponding author: Hassiba Louli

1. Introduction

Values represent a reference of a person's actions and the basic guidelines of his behaviors, their absence causes imbalance in an individual, a group or society as a whole. Being part of a social group endues an individual with its values, standards, and norms of behavior, pertaining to his membership, through a continuous social process, namely socialization, which seeks in its entirety to cultivate values in all their dimensions , moral and social, as well as the desired behaviors to build the individual's personality, by instilling values of inclusivity, discipline, collaboration, respect, etc., which are the same values that the Islamic religion, as much as other religions, encourages.

The interest in the issue of moral values in the athletic sphere is primarily due to the emergence of wayward practices among a large number of athletes, players and coaches, and among sports fans, which have become a threat to the sports setting in our society similar to other societies. The most important of which are violence and fanaticism, bad guidance, and abuse of steroids, as opposed to other noble practices that advocates in their entirety for collaboration, sportsmanship and fair competition. It emanated after some were pushed to put their personal interests before the public interest during their sports performance and after the escalation of sports corruption, as is the case in other fields. Ignorance of the athletic code of ethics and unawareness of the code of conduct that elevate this practice to preserving the integrity of the sport and its benefits are added to the latter behavior. This study amounts as an attempt to

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insinuate that sport is a tool for instilling moral values. However, it is not free from impediments and problems that obstruct its practice.

Research questions:

This study attempts to answer:

- What are the values that comprise the athletic sphere?
- What are the most significant impediments to moral values that besets the athletic sphere?
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2. Sport as a tool to instill values

Sport as a collective human activity is based on social interaction because it is "one of the most important and most effective means of achieving social maturity and spreading the sense of community among individuals due to its wide and broad fields of opportunities for encountering others, making acquaintances, to give and take, and the social foundations and principles imparted by its systems, such as working for the common good, respecting others and the necessity to control emotions in situations fraught with excitement, as happens during sports activity" (Mustafa Alsayah, 2007, pp. 30-31). It is therefore a set of values that sport strives to instill among its practitioners in order to develop a sense of inclusivity and loyalty in the community, which enhances their sense of responsibility. Through sport, it is possible to "acquire comprehensive behavioral patterns such as leadership, personal qualities and characteristics, collaboration, and general values of society such as accomplishment and competition, as well as distributed social roles such as good citizenship and skills." (Mustafa Alsayah, 2007, pp. 68-69). Such values express the ultimate objectives of social interaction because they reflect society's culture, and since sport is a tool for instilling them, they stem from the nature and content of culture.

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Sports events are a mirror through which society's culture in general and its values in particular are reflected. They are one of the indicators by which society's social and cultural progress is determined. It is because an individual's sports practice can only be explained by its socio-cultural context, where the interaction between the components of sport and its institutions takes place. Thus, embodying the educational function that seeks in its entirety to achieve balanced physical growth through health, fitness, and skill, and to achieve psychological and social growth through instilling self-control and creating a sense of collective unity and of inclusivity. Sport is therefore a vessel for the values prevailing in society. It represents the basic guidelines of social behavior, as well as attitudes and desires, inasmuch as it is a product of social interaction. "Through the process of socialization, the individual learns and acquires values, adding them to his frame of reference for behavior. It is through social interaction that an individual learns that some motives and objectives are better than others, that is, he values them more than others."(Mohamed Abdelhafid and Hussain Bahi, 2004, p. 20)

The most significant values that sport seeks to instill in individuals vary in their content. Some of them are behavioral and some are physical. We mention the most important of them as follows:

2.1 Organization and discipline

Discipline is one of the values that maintain the stability of the group and its order, as it outlines the code of conduct that the individual adheres to when performing his social roles, and to which all other members of the group adhere to so that compatibility and harmony exist between the different roles. Organization in sports makes most athletic games depend on a strict training program. By exercising periodically, according to a specific schedule, and for a prolonged period, the athlete attains what helps him outperform and win and also makes him able to achieve a balance between practicing sports and other activities.

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Discipline in the athletic field, like the educational field, is aimed at maintaining order. It does not intend for tyranny and bullying by coaches or intimidating and threatening players, but rather it intends for players' adherence to regulations, instructions, rules of polite behavior, and mutual respect between the coach and the players as well as between the players themselves, (Abdul Rahim Al-Zghoul and Aqla Almahamid, 2007, P. 22), which helps reduce problems and dispose of everything that obstructs sports activity and its course. Thus, it explains the existence of the sports discipline regulation in every country. In addition to the use of punishment for anyone who violates the regulation in order to preserve public order and the integrity of sports, especially as it seeks to build the individual mentally, psychologically, socially and physically in an integrated manner.

Subsequently, discipline is a requirement of smooth sports functioning and achieving its order, so that the sports do not turn into chaos. It is one of the priorities of sports institutions. Anyone who violates it should be punished, as it is a factor of self or attitude control, because it comprises a set of behaviors, the most important of which are maintaining hygiene, being on time, respecting timelines, and fulfilling duties. What comes to mind when musing over sports discipline is punctuality and adhering to sports instructions.

2.2 Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is also one of the values that maintains the stability of the sports community, which transcends sports and athletes to virtuous morals and sublime values away from boisterousness and fanaticism, especially when encouraging victory. Tayseer AL Kilani defines it as "the ethical behavior shown by a player, it is also playing for enjoyment while avoiding taking advantage of opportunities and situations unfairly, treating the opponent with courtesy, accepting defeat and winning with grace and tact" (Mohamed Adam, 2008, p.9). Albeit, sportsmanship in the athletic sphere is associated

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with the educational purpose of fair play that adheres to the rules of the game. As it refers to the need to exhibit an exemplary attitude when players participate in any sporting event, in order to give rise to acts of altruism, benevolence, and fondness for fair play. (feezell, 2004, p. 155)

Whenever sportsmanship prevails, sport remains an approach to moral values, given that the foundations of sports are behaviors and moral qualities that athletes and supporters must exhibit during games and competitions, in order to give an honorable image. Owing to the fact that it reflects the sportsmanship ethics that characterize these people, as well as their awareness and respect for what is enacted by sports laws and their sublime principles, and thus their commitment to them in various sports games and competitions, regardless of their results. It is the clearest and most popular expression of morals, because it is the fragrance that people will carry with them in their relations with others whom they deal with. (Keating, 2016, p. 26)

Sportsmanship often combines different moral values, including self-control, courage, and determination. It is an expression of the personality of players and fans (supporters and audiences) and a means of expressing honorable and fair competition.

Indicatively, "anti-sports behavior has spread like an epidemic; wherever a person looks, he will find it; it has become the norm, not the exception. Even at the local level, sportsmanship is suffering. Doping, deviance from athletic norms, and among other things have emerged in our courts." (Mohamed Adam, 2008, p. 10), especially after sport, in its various activities, bore witness to violent incidents on the field, in the sports arena, and outside of it, between fans (supporters), between coaches and players, as well as among the players themselves. The least you know is the lack of sportsmanship.

2.3 Fitness

Physical fitness can be defined as a set of attributes a person has that are associated with his ability to perform physical activity (Physical activity and health: A

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report of the Surgeon General, 1996). This definition links a person's ability to perform physical activity with fitness without considering a person's various physical capabilities.

Fitness is considered one of the physical values, as "a relative state of physical preparedness that enables the individual to adapt adequately to the physical duties to be performed " (Anwar Alkhali, 1996, p.86), because it is essential for public health, security, and mental and personal safety. Fitness aims to enable the individual to perform his work without excessive fatigue while retaining an excess of energy to face emergencies, as well as to exploit free time by participating in recreational activity (Al-Rekad et al., 2007, p.118), which prompts an increase in productivity. Notably, there is a direct correlation that combines physical fitness, productivity, health, mental abilities and personality.

3. Impediments to values in the athletic sphere

The sports setting is afflicted by many different problems, the negative impact of which is reflected on athletic performance and sports movement in general, and which prevented the accomplishment of the desired objectives, especially after they stood to obstruct its moral values. The impediments to these values emerge in the sports arena through a number of behaviors contrary and in opposition to the aforementioned values, the most important of which are the following:

3.1 Sports fanaticism

It is one of the most widespread phenomena in sports courts, whether among fans or among members of the sports community, especially among fans of the most popular clubs that have fanatical fans, which undermines the image of sports. Sports fanaticism is defined as "the disease of blind hatred for the competitor and at the same time it is the disease of blind love for the fanatic's team. It is a condition in which emotion overcomes reason, blinding insight to the point that irrefutable facts are unable to shake what the fanatic clings to, individually or as a group." (Bin Ali Al-Ateeq, 2017, p. 24) Similarly,

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Jamal Al-Omarji defines it as "a blind and stubborn sentiment or tendency, emotionally and intensively charged, which enables its owner to not accept evidence of the error of an opinion or judgment taken regarding a specific idea, topic, team, player, coach, referee or administrator." (Al-Amraji, 2018). It is therefore a state in which emotion overcomes reason, whereby it results in many bad manifestations of insults, ridicule, and incitement against competing sports teams. As well as much "physically offensive behavior (violence against others) and vandalism (violence against property) arising from spectators of a particular sporting event". (Cameron, 2001) These two definitions confirm that fanaticism is a psychological tendency that the individual learns and acquires in the absence of sportsmanship.

One of the most important indicators of sports intolerance is the swiftness of anger in the fan or athlete, which is explained by his lack of understanding of the loss that could befall his team and his failure to accept the victories and accomplishments of others, which prompts him to resort to insults and curses, even sometimes leading to violence and physical altercations. (Bin Ali al-Ateeq, 2017, P. 26). Lack of sportsmanship is another indicator of sports fanaticism in which results are not accepted if they are negative. This is a result of the poor level of sports culture among the player or fan, which generally calls for sportsmanship and acceptance of the results of competition, regardless of their nature, as well as the result of "the press resorting to raising regional gaps and portraying sports matches as military battles" (Abdullah Al-Darsi, 1999, p. 197). This confirms that the media bears some responsibility in stirring up sports fanaticism, especially since it is considered one of the institutions of socialization in general and sports education in particular due to its influence on the public through the sports events it broadcasts in audio and video, as sports events and competitions are often presented as a war between the two teams.

Understandably, sports fanaticism is one of the most widespread phenomena

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among young people because this social group is known for being excessively emotional when cheering for their favorite sports team and rushing to support it. In addition, it is one of the social groups that avidly uses on the media and is most influenced by its content.

3.2 Bad sports guidance

Bad guidance in the field of sports is the guidance that advocates for fame and profit through competitions without taking into account athletic abilities and skills, because according to researcher Ahmed Awad, guidance is the assistance provided by qualified and trained people to another person at any age, assistance that enables him to manage aspects of his life activities, change his thoughts and make his decisions (Ahmed Awad, 1998, p.7). Bad guidance in sports means choosing a sports activity that does not match a person's abilities and skills. It happens that he is under the illusion that his opportunity to build his future and the future of his family depends on winning sports competitions, and what he gains from it (money and championships).

Indeed, selecting the appropriate individual for a specific type of sports activity, as well as directing him to the appropriate sport that is compatible with his various aptitudes and capabilities, is the basis of sporting success and reaching championship, and not the selection and guidance based on material benefit and fame.

3.3 Abuse of Steroids

Doping is considered one of the most prominent ethical problems besetting the sports setting at the level of international and Olympic sports tournaments, where competitions are intense and varied for different types of sports. Sports steroids are defined as "any substance that, if used, gives a person more vigor than his normal energy and improves his performance." (Yassin, 2008, p. 228).

Such practice is considered cheating by athletes to improve their performance and outperform others. It is inconsistent with the moral values that advocate for fair play, because taking them increases the energy of athletes during competition, an

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unnatural energy, because they are medicines and drugs that “work to enhance physical capabilities as well as endurance abilities” (Yassin, 2008, p. 240). Their use is carried out by injection or orally, whether during training or during sports competition events, with the aim of winning championships unjustly. This makes the competition unequal and therefore unfair and dishonorable.

In fact, the use of these steroids is one of the restrictions or prohibitions in the sports arena at the international level due to their danger to the health of the athlete and because it undermines the integrity of sports and its sublime objectives. Safeguarding the athlete's health and ensuring the fairness of honorable competition, victory and obtaining the Championship, the international authorities are striving "to standardize regulation and sanctions procedures and the International Anti-Doping Agency (headquartered in Canada) has announced work on establishing general and strong foundations in the doping issue" (Yasin, 2008, p.238).

Although sport is a tool for instilling values and morals in the sports sphere, it can be a field for crime in the event of the presence of said steroids that preclude the principle of equal opportunities among athletes.

4. Conclusion

Debating values within the sports sphere prompts us to research the conditions that protect the athlete and the sports community, to perpetuate their high morals and integrity within the community. This is by adhering to sportsmanship, which advocates for compliance with integrity and acceptance of the result, whatever it may be, as it is a moral trait that is cultivated through practice, and it is considered one of the characteristics of civilized society. By complying with the rules of order and discipline, which the athlete adheres to during his role, and which the sports community adheres to in order to achieve compatibility and harmony among its members. Among them, we mention commitment to timelines, respect for the rules of the game, as well as respect

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for the basics of fitness, as a physical value striving for the safety of the individual as an integrated whole.

Such values are the bulwark that protects the athlete and the sports group in general from succumbing to everything that obstructs sports, including sports fanaticism, that is an emotional state in which the athlete and members of the sports community lack insight, leading to many aggressive behaviors that undermine the image of sports in general. As well as bad sports guidance, which suggests choosing sports activities that achieve fame and financial profit, without ever aligning with the individual's abilities and sports skills. In pursuit of fame and championship, many athletes tend to abuse steroids which enhances their physical abilities during sports competition, at the expense of their health, which is contrary to the values advocated by sport in general.

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