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Sport and The globalization issues

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to provide an overview of sports and the Olympic movement in the context of various globalization issues, particularly socio-cultural issues such as cultural identity, national identity, alienation, and some issues specific to athletes, such as migration, naturalization, and other phenomena associated with the era. In addition, the role of the Olympic movement within the global system will be explored, as it is the largest non-governmental sports organization with branches around the world and has its own programs and policies, The article explores how this organization can exert control over various local sports bodies.

Keywords: Sports; Globalization; Cultural Identity; Alienation; Olympic movement.

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1. INTRODUCTION

There are various interpretations of the globalization of sports, which can be found in literature. The modernization thesis, imperialist and Americanization accounts, figuration/process sociology, and globalization perspectives are some of the approaches that have been used to explain this phenomenon (Chatziefstathiou,2005)

Throughout history, from the ancient Greeks and Romans to the present globalized and capitalist world, sports have served multiple purposes such as exercise, artistry, competition, and entertainment. However, sports have also been utilized for other functions, including displaying national and ideological dominance, controlling, and diverting the masses, and promoting a collective identity among diverse groups. As a result, it is evident that sports play a crucial role in shaping people's identities globally, and thus, it is reasonable to examine the mechanisms and structures within the field of ICC that influence these identities in the world of sports (Coolman,2010)

Sport encompasses many values that are highly relevant to conflict resolution and peace-building efforts. Organized sports activities teach individuals important values such as respect, honesty, empathy, adherence to rules, communication skills, and cooperation, which are essential in resolving conflicts. Thus, sport has the ability to foster trust and respect among people, especially young individuals, and serve as a fun and engaging way to convey these values. Achieving social development in conflict-stricken areas necessitates a robust and viable civil society that can provide secure living conditions. The use of sports is an excellent example of bottom-up societal building, and promoting voluntary sports activities is part of the process of creating a society's infrastructure. Besides being crucial for human development, sport also stimulates economic development by driving productivity, preventing diseases, reducing welfare expenditure, and enhancing people's chances in the labor market (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs,2005)

For sport practitioners and organizations, the importance of sport has been a long-standing concern. Topics such as the role of competition in sports, ethical considerations relating to violence and doping, and the various social and psychological advantages that sports provide have been instrumental in shaping sporting programs and initiatives. In light of the growing economic significance of sports as a form of entertainment, these issues have become even more crucial and pressing (Policy Research Group,2010)



Sport is not merely a byproduct of development; rather, it is a powerful driver of development itself. Effective implementation of sports programs can foster social integration, dialogue, and tolerance. For instance, sports serve as an effective tool in public awareness and information campaigns. Well-organized sports activities are a pragmatic and cost-efficient approach to attaining peace and development goals market (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs,2005).

2. The globalization context

The context of globalization has become increasingly prevalent in various contexts around the world today. It has generated much concern and debate among scholars and experts in the fields of politics, economics, and culture. The term "globalization" was first coined by Marshal McLuhan in his book "War and Peace in the Global Village". Since then, the concept of globalization has been widely studied in disciplines such as political and social sciences, leading to the development of new theories. However, due to its multidimensional and complex nature, globalization remains a buzzword with multiple definitions across different scopes. Thus, providing a scientific and precise definition of globalization is challenging. So far, globalization has been defined in various ways, including "world compression," "increased global connectivity," "westernization and homogenization of cultures," "global economic integration," "spread and influence of social reactions," and "reduced state boundaries and limitations on international activity" (Moghri & Ramachandrappa,2012). Waters (2001) argues that; while globalization has been a process that has been ongoing throughout history, it has accelerated in recent times. He also suggests that globalization is closely linked with modernization, the development of capitalism, and other social processes such as post-industrialization and post-modernization. All definitions of globalization share the common understanding that it is a process that impacts politics, economics, society, culture, and the lives of individuals and states both materially and spiritually. Furthermore, it is widely acknowledged that globalization is a complex and ongoing phenomenon that has been occurring since the past and continues to accelerate and expand at present (Moghri & Ramachandrappa,2012).

3. The globalization dimensions

The dimensions of globalization can be summarized as follows:

- Technological dimension: This includes the development of communication technologies, such as computer networks and the internet, which have led to the flow of information across borders and created new opportunities



for global interaction.

- **Economic dimension:** Economic globalization involves various aspects such as trade globalization, foreign investment, international division of labor, economic liberalization, multinational companies, and labor migration. It has a significant impact on other dimensions of globalization.

- **Political dimension:** Political globalization refers to the shift of political matters from the internal scope of nation-states to the global level. This includes issues such as globalization and the role of the nation-state, the emergence of new political actors, common global political problems, human rights, and the development of a modern political culture.

- **Cultural dimension:** Cultural globalization involves the compression of time and space, which has created new conditions for cultural exchange and interaction. It includes issues such as the formation of global culture and identity, the development of communication technologies, the commercialization of culture, and the formation of national, local, and ethnic cultures.

- **Social dimension:** The social dimension of globalization includes the formation of new identities, such as hybrid and supranational identities, the development of cosmopolitan interests, the emergence of social movements, increased migration, and the focus on global environmental problems. It also involves the formation of supranational social organizations that work towards addressing global issues (Moghri & Ramachandrappa,2012).

4. Sport and transnational dimensions of globalization

Sports and global processes are closely interlinked, as sport historians have pointed out. The globalization of sport can be traced back to the 1870s, when British imperial outposts were colonized by the "games revolution," such as cricket in Asia and Australasia. Football also underwent mass diffusion along British trading and educational routes, and indigenous sports were invented as part of the invention of national traditions in emerging modern societies, such as baseball and American football in the United States. In recent times, the transnational status of sport is most prominently reflected in the raw data and political conflicts generated by sporting mega-events and their controlling bodies. The Olympic Games, for example, have global dimensions that are hard to ignore. The 2004 Olympics in Athens were watched, at least in part, by 3.9 billion of the world's population, producing a cumulative global audience of around 40 billion for the 17-day event. The Olympics are also a major transnational industry, with projected revenues for the Beijing 2008 event standing at \$3 billion. Olympism



has a global political reach, with 203 National Olympic Committees affiliated to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), giving 11 more national members than the United Nations. The Olympic movement has also been instrumental in advancing sport's public status as a human right, as well as a medium for development and humanitarian work among NGOs. However, Olympism has also been criticized by new social movements and investigative journalists for alleged corruption, and the implicit toleration of athlete harm and infringement of civil liberties. Regardless of one's opinion on Olympism and other sporting realms as cultural forms, it is clear that their transnational importance and salience to social science cannot be ignored (Giulianotti , & Robertson,2007).

5. Sport, and some socio-cultural effect of globalization

5.1 sports ,cultural identity and globalization

The term "identity" refers to an individual's understanding and awareness of their own nature, as well as the political, cultural, and social aspects of themselves and the world around them. Identity is characterized by traits such as difference, fixity, stability, collectivity, and time. There are two paradoxical dimensions to identity: the first is similarity and harmony, while the second is difference from others (Moghri & Ramachandrappa,2012). Cultural identity refers to the shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that characterize a group or society. It is shaped by historical, social, and cultural factors and reflects the shared experiences, traditions, and knowledge of a particular group of people. Cultural identity can be expressed through language, food, art, music, literature, religion, and other cultural practices. It is important to recognize and respect cultural identity as it contributes to a person's sense of belonging and helps to preserve cultural diversity (Kaul,2012). According to Petkova, cultural identity can be categorized into three main types: material culture, spiritual or mental culture, and spacio-temporal elements. Material culture includes aspects such as the food, clothing, architecture, and tools of a culture. Spiritual or mental culture refers to a culture's symbols, traditions, customs, values, behavior, and attitude. Spacio-temporal elements are not time and space themselves, but rather how they are perceived, understood, and interpreted within a culture. It is important to note that all three categories are subject to stereotyping (Coolman,2010). That statement suggests that identities related to sports are formed through a process of creating, understanding, and negotiating the significance of social interactions related to sports, not just formal participation in organized sports teams but also informal play, watching sports events, and even engaging in leisure activities



related to sports. In other words, one's identity related to sports can be shaped by a range of experiences and activities related to sports, not just direct involvement in sports teams (Miller,2009). However, others argue that globalization can also be a positive force for cultural identity. It can provide access to diverse cultural experiences, new forms of expression, and opportunities for cultural exchange and dialogue. In this view, globalization can enhance cultural identity by exposing individuals and communities to new ideas and perspectives, and by encouraging the development of hybrid cultural forms that combine elements from different cultures. Nonetheless, it is important to recognize that globalization can also have negative impacts on cultural identity, particularly when it results in the loss of cultural diversity and the homogenization of cultural practices. Moreover, cultural identity can be a contested and politically charged concept, as it is often intertwined with issues of power, inequality, and social exclusion. Therefore, the relationship between culture and globalization is complex and multifaceted and requires ongoing critical analysis and engagement (Kaul,2012). a nuanced analysis in terms of its role in globalization and preserving cultural identity. While sport can contribute to the homogenization of culture and the spread of a dominant Western consumer culture, it can also play a crucial role in preserving cultural identity and promoting diversity. This can be done through promoting and reviving traditional and local sports, integrating physical education and sports into schools to transfer cultural values, organizing sports festivals during national and religious events, highlighting cultural differences through national sports teams, and showcasing cultural diversity through international sports events. Overall, sport can be a powerful tool for cultural preservation and diversity promotion, as long as it is used thoughtfully and intentionally.

5.2 Sports, Nationalism and Globalization

National identity refers to the sense of belonging and identification with a particular nation or country. It is often based on shared cultural, linguistic, historical, and political characteristics that distinguish one nation from another. National identity can play an important role in shaping a person's sense of self and belonging, as well as their attitudes and behaviors towards other nations and cultures. However, it is also important to recognize that national identity is not a fixed or static concept, but rather one that is shaped and influenced by various factors, including social, economic, and political changes (Coolman,2010). Sport has become a means to express national sentiment, reflecting the significance of national identity. Hobsbawm recognized this, noting that the emergence of certain



nationally-specific sports created novel ways of expressing nationalism. Sports have played a significant role in promoting nationalism as they provide a platform for dominant groups to construct national identities that people can identify with. Different sports are believed to represent individuals, communities, regions, and nations, and are used by various groups to represent, maintain, and/or challenge identities. However, in the post-modernization era, the link between nationalism and sports is weakening due to the forces of globalization and consumer capitalism. Athletes are increasingly migrating from one nation-state to another, adopting new sporting nationalities, and showing more loyalty to their clubs and corporate sponsors than to their birth nations. This has raised concerns about the long-term significance of nations and established sports clubs. While caution is necessary when discussing the transformation of modern society into a globalized post-modernity, it is essential to differentiate between nationality and national identity. Nationality refers to the nation-state to which a person is assigned, while national identity is a sense of belonging to a nation-state (Wismer,2011). In the relatively short history of modern sports, players have frequently represented nations other than their own, a practice that is not entirely new. For example, the legendary soccer player Alfredo Di Stefano, who was born in Argentina to Italian immigrants, played for three different national teams including Argentina, Colombia, and Spain during the 1940s-1960s. This exemplifies how modern sport has always raised questions about the concepts of nationality and national identity. Despite this, the majority of athletes who represent their countries in sports have strong ties to their nation of origin, either through birth or acquiring citizenship. Fans, too, often have deep emotional ties to their national teams and players, as sports help construct and reinforce particularistic identities, in contrast to the idea of a global culture. The relationship between sports and nations remains strong, though it can manifest in a variety of ways. While sports can bolster a nation's image, it can also bring shame and financial ruin. Additionally, sports can unite a nation or become a symbol of a submerged nation's continued existence and can resist cultural homogenization. However, sports can also serve the interests of global capitalism. Much like nationalism, sports can have both positive and negative effects, making their continued relationship complex and multifaceted (Bairner,2008)

5.3 The Globalization of Sport and the Intricacy of Cross-National Athletes' Identities

The globalization of sports has made the ways in which individuals and



communities form and internalize their identities through sport more complex. The rise of cross-national athletes, who transcend national and cultural borders, adds to this complexity. These athletes act as ambassadors of the globalization of sports, representing global citizenship and identity. Their identities are often seen as products of the market de-regulation, deterritorialization, and hybridization that have characterized the globalization of sports. However, they also maintain their unique national identities, making them local sport celebrities and national delegates to global competitions. Cross-national athletes' identities can be understood within the global-glocal theoretical framework, which considers the interplay between global and local forces. Some athletes, like David Beckham, Michael Jordan, and Tiger Woods, have been strategically marketed as globalized athletes with global appeal. Others, like Wayne Gretzky, Yao Ming, and Ichiro Suzuki, are recognized for their unique national identities, indicating tensions between the global and the local. The media plays a crucial role in the globalization or glocalization of cross-national athletes. Sport programs that are broadcast globally have facilitated the universal consumption of sports, and the media often grant cross-national athletes cultural meanings and idealized representations that become their public identities. These mass-mediated identities allow sport fans to associate and identify themselves with symbolic meanings embedded in them. In turn, fan identification and commercial opportunities are the goals of today's global sport management network that interweaves cross-national athletes, corporations, sport organizations, and the media. (Jun & Lee, 2012).

5.4 The Migration of Athletes and the globalization

In the global economy, it is common for workers to move freely between countries, which is often encouraged. Similarly, in sports, the migration of athletes refers to the movement of athletes from one country to another to access better resources, such as financial compensation, coaching, equipment, and support services. It may also facilitate their chances of being selected for a country's Olympic team or joining a professional league. In the context of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the recruitment of international athletes can be likened to sports' version of free trade, according to Weston (2006). The increasing presence of international athletes is generally seen as welcome and beneficial, as it expands the talent pool and improves the quality of competition for fans and the strength of athletic programs at universities and colleges (Thibault, 2009)



5.5 Sport, alienation and globalization

The concept of alienation has been linked to capitalist modernity for a long time. It refers to the state where individuals are disconnected or estranged from their true selves or their essence (Comor,2010).

Marx identified four main characteristics of alienation: humanity's alienation from nature, from humanity or the species, from oneself, and from others. He believed that all forms of alienation were different aspects of self-alienation. Unlike Hegel and Feurbach, who viewed alienation as purely an intellectual phenomenon, Marx saw it as a material and social process that arose from the division of labor. In his critique of Feurbach, Marx argued that all forms of alienation ultimately stemmed from the individual's estrangement from themselves (Jarvie ,1994).

The capitalist society is characterized by a state of alienation for workers, as their involvement in production is solely for the purpose of survival rather than self-expression or creativity. On the other hand, most capitalists are also alienated from their essence since they do not engage their creative powers. In this way, both the working class and capitalist class experience a form of alienation in capitalist society, albeit for different reasons (Comor,2010)

According to Marxist sociologists of sport such as Bero Rigauer and Jean-Marie Brohm, a form of alienation arises in sport as a field of cultural production. Rigauer argues that the athlete is alienated when their sporting performance is turned into a commodity and reduced to work, taking on the same relations as the workplace, and dehumanizing the sportsperson in the production process. Brohm believes that the production relations of the capitalist mode of production were infused into sport, with bodily oppression and inhumanity being a form of alienation. Beamish further argues that despite the availability of large salaries for many professional athletes, they remain precariously placed in their relationships with sports promoters and clubs, who maintain control over their contracts, working conditions, competition seasons, and training schedules. In some team sports, players may even be loaned to other teams for indefinite periods of time against their will (Hughson ,2005). This can be seen as a form of exploitation, where athletes are used as a means to generate profits for the owners, rather than as individuals with their own interests and agency. Additionally, the structure of sports leagues and competitions can be set up in a way that benefits the owners and organizers, rather than the athletes. For example, leagues may be structured to prioritize revenue generation over fair competition or athlete well-being, leading



to practices such as scheduling games with insufficient rest time for players or prioritizing lucrative markets over competitive balance. In this way, athletes may be complicit in their own alienation, contributing to a system that ultimately works against their own interests (Jarvie ,1994).

6. The globalization and the Olympic movement (IOC)

the Olympic Games provide an example for analyzing the relationship between globalization and sport; The Games attract millions of viewers from around the world, making them a prime platform for international sport and cultural exchange. The media coverage of the Games has grown exponentially over the years, and today the Olympics are one of the most widely broadcasted sporting events, reaching billions of viewers worldwide. The globalization of the Olympics has also led to an increase in corporate sponsorship and commercialization. The Games have become a lucrative business opportunity for companies seeking to reach a global audience. This has led to criticisms of the commercialization of the Games and concerns about their impact on host countries and their populations. In addition to commercialization, the globalization of the Olympics has also had an impact on the athletes who participate. The Games provide a platform for athletes to showcase their skills on a global stage, but the pressure to perform and win can be intense. The cost of training and competing at the highest level can also be prohibitive for many athletes, especially those from developing countries. Overall, the Olympic Games provide an interesting case study for examining the relationship between globalization and sport. The Games have become a global symbol of sport and cultural exchange, but they also raise important questions about commercialization, athlete exploitation, and the role of sport in society (Majid & Banafa ,2012).

7. Examples of Olympic education Programmes around the World

- ALGERIA : Historically, the project of the establishment of the NOA of Algeria was borne from the will of the NOC to create an institution, which would be capable of taking charge of the Olympic Education programmes in Algeria. There was a need for carrying the ideals and values of Olympism beyond a domain which had always been dedicated to sports practice. Established on the 25th February 2002 the NOA of Algeria is constituted by a Director, a Coordinator a “Pedagogy and Planning” Department, and an “Organization and Communication” Department. The programmes that are described below have similar intentions. Activity under the title "Olympic Races" Target Group: Pupils of the 5th and 6th grade of primary schools. Concept and implementation of 2000



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participation cards Distribution of the participation cards to the schools
Distribution of T-shirts, hats and balloons to the participating pupils and schools

- Activity “Sport and Fair Play” Target group: Students of high schools and colleges Action’s objective: To raise public awareness through games and questions Concept and implementation of a leaflet in 5000 copies.

- Activity “Sports and ill children”: Target group: Children and teenagers who are hospital patients Action’s objective: To raise awareness and comfort through sport Distribution of leaflets “Games and Questions” on the occasion of the Olympic Games.

- GUATEMALA:

- Olympic festival: During three days, the Guatemalan Olympic Academy and the Guatemala Olympic Committee organize an annual Olympic festival including different activities: sponsor’s show, sport exhibitions, conferences and workshops on topics related to Olympics ,as well as a painting and drawing contest entitled “Draw your sport and name it” aimed at all age groups. The activity, held annually, aims to disseminate Olympic principles and promote all sports, relating them to art and culture.

- Cine Forum: The Olympic Academy of Guatemala holds, periodically, a series of Cine Forum in different educational institutions throughout the country, in order to make Olympic Philosophy known through an interactive educational program. Approximately 150 students aged between 12 and 18 are divided into several groups to watch a movie related to Olympism and discuss the values or anti-values identified in the movie.

- ALBANIA:

Olympic week: in schools educational programmers organized by the National Olympic Committee and Academy of Albania in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the Regional Directorate of Education, and the University of Sport, are aimed to increase familiarization with the Olympic ideals and sport for a better life. The initiative involves the organization of an Olympic Week every two years in each school of Albania, from elementary to gymnasium (high level). For one week, various activities are organized by the schools including class activities in all curriculum subjects, art contests, a sporting contest during the last day of the week and an Olympic quiz.

-NEW ZEALAND:

New Zealand’s active National Olympic Academy works closely with the country’s Ministry of Education. Learning outcomes related to the values of



Olympism appear throughout the New Zealand Health and Physical Education Curriculum (Deanna,2007, pp 17-18).

8.Consequences of globalisation in the Olympic context

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is an example of a non-governmental international body that influences and affects the making and changing of sport around the world. This can have an enormous impact on globalization in sport .An example of possible consequences of globalization in the Olympic context is illustrated in the following table (Chatziefstathiou , 2005 , pp62-63).

Table 1. Consequences of globalization in the Olympic context adapted by Robertson

Binary oppositions of globalization		Interpretations in the context of Olympism
Universalization	vs	Olympic value of universalism and internationalism vs. rise of nationalism in sport competitions (boycotts, national anthem, national flags).
particularization		
Homogenization	vs.	Ideology of Olympism vs. different interpretations of values in different societies (different value systems, e.g. the practice of Islam is quite different in different.
differentiation		
Integration	vs.	The International Olympic Committee, the International Olympic Academy vs. fragmented societies with no access to the sessions of the IOA or any Olympic Education related programmes.
fragmentation		
Centralization	vs.	Powerful International Olympic Committee, the International Olympic Academy as a central educational tool of the IOC vs. local educational initiatives, municipal educational programmes, school programmes, sport clubs’ seminars, and other individual educational initiatives (e.g. establishment of the Foundation of Olympic and Sport Education- FOSE- in Greece).
decentralization		
Juxtaposition	vs.	The event of the Olympic Games, the international sessions for young participants of the IOA, Olympic Forums and Congresses vs. westernization, ‘hybridization’ of cultures and values, mix of traditional with ‘modern values’.
syncretization		

Source : (Chatziefstathiou,2005,p64)

9.Glocalization against the globalization in modern sport

The idea of pure homogenization in globalization doesn't consider the influence of local culture on consumer preferences. Therefore, it's challenging to



believe that consumers would have the same tastes worldwide given the cultural differences across the globe. As an alternative, Harvey et al.'s model of global sport that combines both local and global elements is more accurate. Andrews and Ritzer have suggested that glocalization, a combination of globalization and localization, is a more feasible alternative to the idea of pure globalization. Consumers may prefer their local values, attitudes, or lifestyles to more cosmopolitan or global ones. However, the impact of globalization on sports is evident, particularly in professional sports, which are embracing the business practices of American sports leagues. This movement has influenced sports around the world, from Australian cricket to Chinese basketball. Major sporting good manufacturers have a global presence, but they select sponsorships and endorsements that match the needs of consumers in regional markets. Nike, for instance, uses glocalized advertising campaigns that feature a global brand with localized imagery, themes, and athletes. Therefore, while consumers may enjoy globalized sports or brands in international markets, they still prefer to follow their local athletes or teams, suggesting that glocalization plays a role in sports (Menefee,2009)

10. CONCLUSION

Based on the previous discussion, it becomes evident that globalization in its various dimensions has impacted sports, in addition to being used as a weapon in the hands of its theorists and promoters, whether through sports as an activity or global sports organizations, or through sports events. Many researchers have pointed this out. On the other hand, some have attempted to use modern sports to protect their people from the various effects of globalization. However, these attempts remain modest due to the strength of globalization in media, economy, politics, and most dangerously, in socio-cultural aspects. We have also witnessed how globalization works to eliminate the national and cultural identities of peoples and increase their alienation. Therefore, it is incumbent upon workers and researchers in the field of sports or other fields to develop clear strategies to resist this phenomenon through prevention programs or community awareness.

4. CONCLUSION

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