

# The Youth Olympic Games as an arena for Olympic education: An evaluation of the school program, “Dream Day”

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## ABSTRACT

The promotion of Olympic education through Olympic events has received increased attention among researchers. The aim of this paper is to evaluate the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) as an arena for Olympic education based on the perceptions of the pupils participating in the school programme “Dream Day” during the YOG 2016 in Lillehammer, a former Olympic city in Norway. Didactical principles for Olympic education (Naul, 2008) are adopted as an analytical framework. This is a qualitative case study using interviews, observations and personal essays of participating pupils as the main sources. Based on the findings in this paper, we argue that the YOG have significant potential as an arena for Olympic education. However, this potential is not yet utilized, and the following implications for future practices are presented. First, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) needs to put more effort into the implementation of Olympic education programmes. Second, the implementation of Olympic education programmes should be a collaboration between different groups and disciplines, including youth representatives. Third, corroborating Naul's (2008), the pupils' socio-cultural backgrounds have to be taken into account in order to meet the needs of the participating youth. Finally, the Olympic education programme should have a long-term perspective where the Games are used to increase the educational effect.

## KEYWORDS

Olympic education; sports participation; intervention programme; local youth; demonstration effect; festival effect

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## INTRODUCTION

The Youth Olympic Games (YOG) are a recent creation in the history of the Olympic Movement. The YOG was established in 2007 as an international elite multi-sport event for young athletes aged between 15 and 18 years. However, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) wants the YOG to be more than just a sporting event and has an ambition of reaching beyond the participating athletes. The YOG was promoted as a strategy to improve health, increase sports participation and re-establish interest in Olympic sports among the world's youth (IOC, 2007). The vision is to “inspire young people around the world to participate in sport and adopt and live by the Olympic values” (IOC, 2015a, p. 13). A central strategy to realise the ambitious goals of the YOG involves a variety of cultural and educational programmes. This paper evaluates the YOG as an arena for Olympic education based on the experiences of the pupils' participating in the largest school programme at the second Winter YOG 2016 in Lillehammer, Dream Day.

According to Chatziefstathiou & Henry (2008), during the 2000s, education and youth were placed higher on the Olympic agenda, and Olympic education gained a renewed interest. Olympic education can be understood as using the Olympic ideals to develop and reinforce positive values and actions among young people in sports as well as in everyday life (Binder, 2012). The Olympic values were also re-defined, and excellence, friendship and respect were highlighted as the three core values (Maass, 2007). Among several new initiatives and programmes targeting youth, the establishment of the YOG was defined as the IOC's main strategy for promoting Olympic education among youth (IOC, 2007; Naul, 2008).

The promotion of Olympic education through Olympic events has received increased attention among researchers. Studies have evaluated the Olympic education programmes prepared for the Olympic Games (OG) (Makris & Georgiadis, 2017; Kohe & Chatziefstathiou, 2017) and the YOG (Parry, 2012; Binder, Aplin, & Miang, 2017; Schnitzer, Walde, Scheiber, Nagiller, & Tappeiner, 2018). In their study on the OG in London 2012, Kohe & Chatziefstathiou (2017) criticised the past practices of Olympic education related to the OG and called for a reconceptualization and reshaping of the educational programmes. Based on the experiences from the 2010 YOG, Parry (2012) described the YOG as a promising development of Olympic education and wrote that “it seems that the YOG are bringing new ideas and setting new standards for the OG” (p. 96). However, critics have argued that the YOG primarily are an event for the participating athletes and youth already involved in sport (Krieger, 2012; Pound, 2008).

Two empirical studies, which focus on local youth's perception of the YOG and their programmes in retrospect, reveal that the general effect on local youth has been rather limited (Leng, Kuo, Baysa-Pee, & Tay, 2012; Schnitzer et al., 2018). According to Schnitzer et al. (2018), the established youth intervention programmes through the first Winter YOG in 2012 had limited influence on the pupils' perception of the Olympic values. Furthermore, they encourage future organisers to find “alternative, probably more innovative ways of engaging schools, pupils and their teachers on occasion of major sports events” (Schnitzer et al., 2018, p. 8). They also request future empirical studies on local youth as the target group.

At the 2016 YOG, Dream Day turned out to be the most comprehensive youth intervention programme and involved 20,000 youth in all the secondary and high schools in the two host counties (Oppland and Hedmark). Dream Day was a school programme initiated by the Lillehammer Youth Olympic Games Committee (LYO-GOC) and a new addition to the YOG concept. The idea was to give the pupils an experience they could literally dream about, and the aim was to inspire them to practice sport and introduce them to the Olympic values (Oppland County Governor [OCG], 2013). The new and integrated Dream Day concept can be considered an example of the innovative concept that Schnitzer et al. (2018) advocated in their paper.

The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the implementation of Olympic education through Dream Day and how it was perceived by participating high schools pupils (16–19 years). The research question is: How can the 2016 YOG be understood as an arena for Olympic education based on the perception of pupils participating in Dream Day? Didactical principles for Olympic education are used to evaluate the programme (Naul, 2008), which, together with previous research, form the basis of a more general discussion of the YOG as an arena for Olympic education. The paper is a qualitative case study using interviews with and the observations and personal essays of 43 high school pupils participating in Dream Day as the main sources.

### **Olympic education and Olympic events**

The idea of educating youth through sport is as old as the Olympic Movement itself. The founder of the Olympic Movement, Pierre de Coubertin, developed the philosophy of Olympism in the late nineteenth century. Olympism is not only a philosophy for sports or life, it is also an educational philosophy (Binder, 2012; Chatziefstathiou, 2013; Naul, 2008). Olympism can be loosely defined as a philosophy for life that blends sport, culture and education and emphasises the balanced development of body, will and mind (IOC, 2015b).

Coubertin's goal was that the OG would serve as a means or framework for promoting Olympic ideals and their educational possibilities around the world (Wassong, 2006). However, scholars have identified an increased gap between the ideals of Olympism and the reality in the Olympic Movement (David, 2004; Segrave, 2000) and argue that there have been major failures in the Olympic Movement's quest to promote the Olympic values (Müller, 2004; Wassong, 2006). According to Naul (2008), the circumstances in the Olympic Movement, such as commercialisation, doping and corruption, have led to negative associations with the OG among parents, teachers and a large segment of the population. Consequently, scholars have suggested disconnecting the ideals of Olympism from the OG and the Olympic Movement (Culpan & McBain, 2012; Wamsley, 2004).

The literature on Olympic education can be divided between a fundamental critique of the concept of Olympic education (Lenskyj, 2008, 2012; Wamsey, 2004) and a more constructive, yet critical, evaluation of the implementation of Olympic education (i.e. Binder, 2012; Chatziefstathiou, 2013; Naul, 2008; Naul, Binder, & Rychtecký, 2017). The main purpose of this paper is not to address the fundamental discussion of the relevance of Olympic education, but to examine the YOG as an arena for Olympic education. Olympic education has traditionally been promoted by the IOC through the International Olympic Academy (IOA), National Olympic Academies (NOA) and

Olympic Youth Camps with programmes mainly being implemented in schools and sports clubs. During the last three decades, new strategies have been developed to use the OG and, more recently, the YOG as arenas to promote Olympic education among youth (Naul, 2008).

Regarding the OG, the IOC has expected the local organisers to implement Olympic education programmes targeting school pupils in the host region ever since the Winter Games in Calgary in 1988 (Naul et al., 2017). However, these programmes were mainly theoretical until the 2012 Summer Games when Olympic education programmes became more practical (Kohe & Chatziefsthathiou, 2017). Kohe & Chatziefsthathiou (2017) advocate for education based on a clear understanding of young people's localised lives and experiences and argue that "a relevant values-based framework that more appropriately resonates with the real experiences of young people's lives and concerns" (p. 70) will have the potential to facilitate development and change.

At the first ever YOG in Singapore in 2010, the Olympic Education programme (OEP) involved all pupils between seven and nineteen years (Binder et al., 2017). These authors showed how the historical relationship between physical education and sports training in schools prepared the ground for Olympic education through the 2010 YOG. While no studies have examined the educational effect of the OEP in Singapore, Leng et al. (2012) found that the 2010 YOG had a positive effect on the national pride of the local youth. Regarding the 2012 YOG, Schnitzer et al. (2018) found that intervention programmes had a positive influence on local youth's interest in the Olympic Movement. However, in order to influence their perception of the Olympic values, the programmes should not be mandatory, single, isolated activities. A main finding was that their perceptions of the Olympic values largely depends on their socio-demographic backgrounds, such as their prior interest in sports events, social capital and the extent to which they follow the event in the media.

### **The 2016 YOG**

The IOC expects the LYOGOC to implement the Competition programme and the Learn and Share programme (an educational programme) targeting the athletes and the following four mainly programmes targeting the local youth: Try the Sport, Hello World, Torch Tour and the Culture programme. The aim of Try the Sport was to promote Olympic sports, and Hello World was intended to create cultural exchanges between school classes, while Torch Tour aimed to promote the YOG before the event (IOC, 2015a). Additionally, the LYOGOCs was encouraged to "develop strong relations with the school system" in order to develop and implement educational programmes targeting pupils in the region (IOC, 2015a, p. 63).

Regarding the 2016 YOG, several programmes initiated by local actors involved secondary school pupils, such as the Active Mind and Active Body, the School Olympic and the School Prize. Dream Day involved all high school pupils in the two host counties and was the only programme that can be characterised as an Olympic education programme. Dream Day aimed to inspire the participating pupils to practice sport and introduce them to the Olympic values (OCG, 2013) through three parts: 1) watching sports competitions, 2) trying Olympic sports and 3) attending a cultural program (a concert).

In order to begin understanding the high school pupils' experiences from Dream Day, their socio-cultural environment is briefly described. Nearly all Norwegian youth enter high school education, and the graduation rate is 75% (Statistics Norway, 2018). Sports is the most popular leisure activity among high school youth (40% are sports club members) (NOVA, 2016). While the dropouts rates in organised sport among high school youth are relatively high, unorganised physical activities have become increasingly popular.

When linking Olympic education programmes to the YOG, the participants are receiving a direct exposure to an Olympic event, which release the potential for a demonstration effect (Weed et al., 2012) and a festival effect (Chalip, 2006; Smith & Fox, 2007).

### **Didactical approaches to Olympic education**

In this study, four didactic approaches to Olympic education are used as an analytical framework to evaluate the implementation of Olympic education through Dream Day: 1) knowledge-oriented, 2) experience-oriented, 3) physical achievement-oriented and 4) lifeworld-orientated (Naul, 2008). Related to the experience-oriented approach, festival effect (Chalip, 2006; Smith & Fox, 2007) and demonstration effect (Weed et al., 2012) are adopted.

The knowledge-oriented approach is a traditional learning approach where knowledge is transferred to the young people in the form of teaching and the use of different learning materials. The experience-oriented approach is learning by doing both inside and outside the school where children and young people can try out activities such as sports, music and other art forms at festivals and other events. The physical achievement-oriented approach is related to personal efforts to strive for one's best performance in sports and other activities while practising fair play and respecting one's opponent (Gessmann, 2004; Naul, 2008). According to Naul (2008), these three didactic approaches can lead to Olympic Education. However, a lifeworld-orientation is essential because the other three didactic approaches alone will have limited scope. In the lifeworld-oriented approach, the Olympic values are associated with the young people's own everyday experiences inside and outside the sports arena. The lifeworld approach can supplement, expand and integrate the other three approaches; however, it also needs a thematic and contextual supplementation.

The festival effect (Chalip, 2006; Smith & Fox, 2007) involves creating a festival that is bigger and goes beyond the sports competitions that are rooted in the lives of the participants. The key to involving the host population is to de-emphasise the sports element and instead to focus on promoting physical activity and the festival element (Weed et al., 2012). The demonstration effect is described as the process through which people are inspired to practise sports through watching elite sports, athletes and sporting events (Weed, 2010). No research confirms that the demonstration effect can inspire sports participation among those who are not or have never practised sport (Weed et al., 2012), and exposure to elite sport competitions can even push this group even more away from sports activities (Weed et al., 2009). However, Weed et al. (2009) have suggested that the OG, supported by leveraging strategies and investment, has the potential to inspire those who have played before to 1) play a little more, 2) play again or 3) perform "activity switching," wherein people give up one sport to

try another. According to Coalter (2007), the less “normal” the elite athletes appear, the less potential exists to inspire “normal” people.

## **METHODS**

A qualitative case study approach has been selected as the method. Case studies are useful for studies that try to answer how and why something happens, and their ability to incorporate a variety of different data sources leads to a more balanced picture (Yin, 2014). The sources for this study are documents (archival material and personal essays), interviews, observations and surveys.

### **Data collection and participants**

The data collection consisted of two main steps. First, archival materials (planning documents and reports) were collected, and interviews with representatives from the organisations involved in the implementation of Dream Day were conducted. Representatives from the LYOGOC (Representative 1: CEO, 11.06.2016 and Representative 2: manager of Dream Day, 29.08.2016), the OCG (17.11.2015), the Oppland County Council ([OCC], 25.02.2015 and 29.03.2017) and the Oppland District Sport Association ([DSA], 04.12.2015) were interviewed in order to gain knowledge of the planning and implementation of Dream Day. The second step was to recruit pupils participating in Dream Day in order to capture their perceptions of the programme. After gaining the initial approval of the headmasters at three different high schools, the contact with teachers of three first year high school classes at the Education Programme for General Studies were established. After the research project had been presented to the three classes, 43 pupils (18 boys and 25 girls) agreed to participate in the study. The sources used to collect the data from the pupils were surveys, observations and personal essays. Before the 2016 YOG, the informants answered an online questionnaire (Questback) in order to establish their background regarding participation in sports and physical activity, their interest in the OG and other sporting events and their expectations for Dream Day. Observations were made of an “Olympic Day” at one of the schools before the Games and of the pupils taking part in the Dream Day programme during the Games. The observations included informal conversations with the participating youth and their teachers, testing some of the activities and writing field notes afterwards. The personal essays written by the informants were the most important source of data in this study. The task given to the pupils was to reflect on their participation in Dream Day specifically and on the 2016 YOG in general. The writing of a personal essay was chosen because it was considered to be a suitable method for pupils of this age (16 years) to express their experiences and perceptions.

### **Ethical statements**

Ethical considerations have been made, and the study has been approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) with the reference number 46094 on 21 December 2015. The study was presented to all informants, who all gave free and informed consent. In order to keep the pupils anonymous in the paper, they have been given fictive personal names as well as fictive school names (Midtbygda, Vestbygda, and Nordbygda). Thus, the possibility of identifying any of the informants should be very limited.

### **Data analysis**

The content of the essays was coded and developed into four categories: 1) watching the competitions, 2) trying the sports, 3) attending the concert, 4) taking part in informal activities and 5) learning outcomes. Categories 1, 2 and 3 provide an insight into the pupils' perceptions of the main components of the Dream Day programme, while category 4 was created when the data showed that the informal activities were an integral part of the pupils' experiences. In order to capture an understanding of the pupils' general perceptions, positive and negative statements from the essays were summarised, and each essay was classified as either positive, negative or neutral. When the positive and negative statements in a given essay were equal in number, the essay was classified as neutral. This classification was compared to 1) membership of the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports [NIF], 2) physical activity level and 3) interest in major sporting events. The results were then discussed in relation to Naul's (2008) four didactical principles in order to evaluate Dream Day as an Olympic education programme.

## **RESULTS**

### **The implementation of Dream Day**

According to LYOGOC representative 1, the main rationale for the Dream Day initiative was to implement the IOC's vision for the YOG and to "let the local youth take part in the Games." The data presented here will provide some answers to how the objectives of Dream Day were implemented.

The LYOGOC developed the concept for Dream Day together with the OCC and the OCG (school authorities). After taking the initiative to create Dream Day, the LYOGOC withdrew from the implementation process until six months before the Games, leaving the main responsibility with the OCC, the OCG and the DSA. The Dream Day concept consisted of two supporting programmes, the School Tour and the Sporty Norwegian programme, which were developed in order to prepare pupils for Dream Day. The School Tour involved school visits by the organisers to promote and spread information about Dream Day and the 2016 YOG. The Sporty Norwegian programme was aimed at teaching the high school pupils about the Olympic values through classroom discussions led by the authors based on a book they had read in advance (and included about 1500 pupils). Additionally, several schools made their own initiatives to prepare the pupils for Dream Day.

During the 2016 YOG, five consecutive editions of the programme were staged (Monday through Friday) with approximately 4000 pupils attending each day. The teachers, Dream Day hosts and sports instructors had a very important role in delivering the programme through direct contact with the participating pupils. The teachers followed their class before, during and after Dream Day. Two hundred and fifty Dream Day hosts were recruited from regional high schools and trained to guide the pupils through the day. The sports instructors were young athletes recruited from high schools and local sports clubs who provided an introduction to the various sports.

The participating pupils were invited to try an adapted version of three or more of the following sports at the sports arenas during the competitions: cross-country skiing, Nordic combined, ski jumping, biathlon, speed skating, ice hockey, alpine skiing,

snowboarding, bobsleigh and curling. The Try the Sports programme became integrated into Dream Day as the provider of the sports activities. The concert included the Norwegian artists Ravi, Samsaya and the chamber orchestra Allegria.

### **The perception of the participating pupils**

The evaluation of Dream Day is mainly based on the perception of the participating pupils. In this chapter, the pupils' written perceptions of Dream Day and the 2016 YOG are presented in five parts: 1) watching sports, 2) trying sports, 3) attending the concert and 4) enjoying informal activities and 5) learning outcomes. Finally, the pupils' general perceptions are compared with their backgrounds.

#### ***Watching sports competitions***

The pupils in this study were exposed to competitions in the following sports: skeleton, slalom, giant slalom, snowboard slopestyle with mixed teams, curling, and ice hockey. The findings show that snowboarding and ice hockey were the most popular competitions to watch, while the skeleton and alpine skiing were the least popular.

A majority of the pupils were inspired by the atmosphere at the ice hockey arena: "The hockey game was absolutely amazing! There was a great atmosphere in the hall, lots of people, lots of goals and high athletic performances" (Kjell, Vestbygda). Some pupils found inspiration in the skills, efforts and dedication of the competing athletes:

What inspired me most of all was the attitude of the athletes. Many of them seemed very professional, and it was obvious that they enjoyed doing what they were doing. I hope I'll find something that I'm burning so hard to do one day (Britt, Vestbygda).

According to the data, no previously inactive pupils were inspired to start practising sports; however, there were some indications that some of the pupils already practising sports were inspired by activity switching (Weed et al., 2009). Other sports competitions were less popular to watch. The skeleton competitions only gave the pupils the chance to see a glimpse of the racers as they passed, and the slalom competition was affected by a long wait.

#### ***Trying sports***

The pupils participating in this study were given the opportunity to try curling, ice hockey, downhill skiing, snowboarding, sledging and a real full-size bobsleigh down a short track. The sporting activities were received very differently, and many pupils did not take part in any of the activities. Many pupils were positive about the ice hockey and the curling activities, while the alpine skiing and snowboarding activities were described as less exciting.

The ice hockey competitions seemed to inspire some pupils to try the sport themselves: "After watching the hockey game, I had to try it whilst I had the opportunity" (Petter, Vestbygda). Curling was perceived as interesting because it was a new activity to many of the pupils: "I and some other friends queued up to try out curling, and it was an exciting and new experience" (Sahid, Vestbygda). Others were rather negative about the sporting activities and argued that there were too few activities at the arena to engage them. One pupil wrote that "after trying the activities, we just waited for



the competitions. There should be more activities, and they should have been more exciting" (Rakel, Midtbygda). Another pupil wrote that "Dream Day mainly consisted of waiting, freezing and not knowing where to go or what to do" (Sigrid, Vestbygda). Some of the activities were not well adapted to the high school age group and were described as "childish."

### ***Attending the concert***

The majority of the pupils did not attend the concert, which was rather negatively received by the pupils who did attend. Several pupils noted that the artists were somewhat outdated and not well adapted to their age group: "I don't really know if it was because of the music or the audience, but anyway, the music did not fit with the youth group" (Marius, Vestbygda). The pupils' awareness of the contemporary and well-known artists performing in the official culture programme (Sjoggfest) influenced some of the pupils' perceptions of the Dream Day concert.

### ***Taking part in informal activities***

Informal activities that were not part of the official Dream Day programme, such as socialising with classmates, cultural exchange and their own organised physical activities, were an integral part of the Dream Day experience for many of the pupils. An example of the relevance of the informal activities is expressed by Therese from Nordbygda, who wrote, "I would like to say that my perception of Dream Day was generally positive, except the mandatory part." Several pupils valued the possibility of socialising with their classmates and meeting youth from different nationalities: "No matter where we turned our heads, we could see youth from other countries, which was exciting. It is good to see that sports can bring people together" (Merete, Nordbygda). In addition to (or instead of) taking part in the Try the Sports activities, some of the pupils created their own physical activities.

### ***Learning outcomes***

Several pupils said that the educational outcome was limited, and some pupils missed more learning opportunities before and during Dream Day. Emil from Midtbygda writes, "I didn't feel that I learned much about what the Olympic values are nor their relation to the event we took part in." The most critical voice questioned the whole Dream Day concept was, interestingly enough, from a pupil who enjoys physical education:

If this really is the way that the County Council is going to try to make young people more interested in sport and culture, they should reconsider. [...] I would much rather have had the math lesson and the physical education lesson that we usually have on Fridays (Heidi, Nordbygda).

Even though the formal learning outcome was limited, the data indicate that the pupils' experiences can be linked to the three Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect. Sigurd from Midtbygda wrote that "we got to see and feel the atmosphere in and around an Olympic event, which was amazing." Regarding excellence, some pupils perceived the athletes as role models and inspirations to achieve high goals

in their own life. Respect for the rules can be related to watching what appeared to be fair competitions (for example no positive doping tests), and respect for different cultures can be related to the experiences from the cultural exchange. The value of friendship was experienced when the pupils used Dream Day to cultivate friendships with classmates.

### **General perception compared with background**

Previous research of Schnitzer et al. (2018) found that participation and interest in sports influence the youth's perception of such an intervention programme. The survey examined whether membership in organised sport, level of physical activity and interest in the OG and other major sport events influenced the pupils' general perceptions of Dream Day.

**Table 1** The pupils' membership in organised sport (NIF), physical activity level and interest in the OG combined with their perceptions of Dream Day (absolute numbers)

School	Member NIF		Physical activity level*			Follows OG and major sporting events			Pupils' general perception of Dream Day		
	Yes	No	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Midtbygda (15)	8	7	4/15	6/15	5/15	10/15	4/15	1/15	10/15	4/15	1/15
Vestbygda (16)	11	5	3/16	7/16	6/16	11/16	2/16	3/16	8/16	5/16	3/16
Nordbygda (12)	2	10	7/12	4/12	1/12	5/12	4/12	3/12	4/12	1/12	7/12
Tot. (43)	21	22	14	17	12	26	10	7	22	10	11

\* **Measures** for physical activity are based on questions about how many sessions of physical activity (that makes them sweat) they participate in each week. Two sessions or fewer is regarded as low activity (physical education at school is considered one session), 3–4 sessions is average activity and 5 sessions or more is regarded as high activity.

Nordbygda had the pupils with the fewest NIF members and the lowest interest in major sporting events, but they did have a relatively high physical activity level. Midtbygda and Vestbygda had significantly more pupils who were NIF members and who had an interest in major sporting events, but their general physical activity level was comparatively more moderate. As Midtbygda and Vestbygda had the pupils with the most positive experiences of Dream Day, these findings indicate that previous participation in organised sport and interest in major sporting events had a positive influence on the general perception of Dream Day. The analysis of the personal essays also apparently confirms the same connection. The findings also indicate that a high physical activity level alone did not lead to a more positive perception of Dream Day. To summarise, the results in this study confirm the findings of Schnitzer et al. (2018) and reveal that participation in organised sport and interest in major sporting events had a positive influence on the pupils' perceptions of Dream Day, while participation in unorganised physical activity did not influence their perceptions.

## DISCUSSION

### **Olympic education through Dream Day**

The framework for the following discussion is the four didactic principles for Olympic education (Naul, 2008).

#### ***The knowledge-oriented approach***

The supporting programmes, the School Tour and the Sporty Norwegian, were designed to raise the pupils' awareness of the Olympic values. Although the Sporty Norwegian programme was well received by the pupils who participated in it and to some extent raised their awareness of the Olympic values, the data indicate that the pupils did not comprehend their connection to Dream Day or the 2016 YOG. Except for these two programmes, the preparations for Dream Day was largely dependent on the initiatives at the various school and the individual teachers. Several schools had their own initiatives, such as Nordbygda, which staged an Olympic day with lectures on Olympic topics and training sessions. However, the teachers did not receive any educational material from the organisers (only a pamphlet containing mainly practical information). Thus, the transfer of knowledge through the Dream Day programme was rather limited.

#### ***The experience-oriented approach***

The integrated Dream Day concept was characterised by a strong experience-oriented approach. There were indications of a festival effect, a demonstration effect and an increased interest in Olympic sports among pupils already involved in sports. Thus, Dream Day maintained the practical approach that Kohe & Chatziefstathiou (2017) advocated in their paper. Additionally, the findings have already revealed examples of how the pupils' experiences can be related to the Olympic values, such as excellence, friendship and respect.

The combination of the experiences of being exposed to sports competitions and medal ceremonies, trying sports, participating in cultural elements and informal activities and the atmosphere at an Olympic event contributed to the 2016 YOG being perceived as something more than a mere sporting competitions for many of the pupils. The adapted versions of the sports activities de-emphasised the competition element in order to make them more available to the participants (Weed et al., 2012). Despite the fact that most of the athletes were living an elite-sport life, their similarity in age seems to have contributed to the athletes being perceived by the pupils as more "normal" and easier to identify with (Coalter, 2007). According to Hilde from Midtbygda "it was very exciting that the athletes were our age, we could more easily relate to them." However, many of the pupils who were previously not active in sports did not participate, and some of the pupils already active in the sport did not find the activities exciting enough. While the sports instructors took an active role in presenting the sports, the rather passive role of many of the Dream Day hosts resulted in many pupils missing out on practical information during Dream Day. The data revealed indications of a demonstration effect when some of the pupils already practising sport were inspired to activity switching (Weed et al., 2009) and to an increased sports participation. However, there were no indications that previously

inactive pupils were inspired to start practising sport through Dream Day as this group were less interested in watching the competitions and had low participation in the sports activities.

The experiences of watching the sports competitions and the atmosphere at the sports arenas made the strongest impression on the majority of the participating pupils. Thus, the main effect of Dream Day on the participating pupils seemed to be an increased interest in Olympic events, which is defined as a main goal for the YOG (IOC, 2007). Although increased interest in Olympic events have the potential to create a demonstration effect, some scholars find Olympic education's becoming a promotion of Olympic events and the Olympic Movement instead of a promotion of the Olympic values problematic (Culpan & McBain, 2012).

### ***The physical achievement-oriented approach***

The physical achievement-oriented approach was only fulfilled to a limited degree through Dream Day. The sports activities only challenged the pupils' physical abilities to a lesser extent as they mainly provided introductions to the different sports. This approach implies a long-term effort to improve performance in sports, while Dream Day had a limited lifespan.

### ***The lifeworld-oriented approach***

This section discusses how the Olympic values were linked to the lives of the participating pupils through the three previous approaches: knowledge-oriented, experience-oriented and physical achievement-oriented.

In order to make the Olympic values and the experiences from Dream Day relevant to the participating pupils, the socio-cultural background is essential for the organisers to consider in order to meet their needs. When implementing a programme targeting 20,000 secondary and high school pupils, the differences in age and interests becomes evident. As the OCC representative points out, "it is almost impossible to create a programme that is adapted to the age group between 12 and 19 years (2017)." The findings confirm that the programme only to a lesser extent met the different needs of the high school age group, especially the pupils who were not already involved or interested in organised sports. When making Dream Day mandatory for all pupils in the region, more efforts could be made by the organisers in order to satisfy this group of pupils. While the pupils already involved in sport were significantly more satisfied with the Dream Day programme, many did not find the sports activities exciting enough. An explanation for this may be that this group of pupils had already been exposed to the real format of the same sports in schools and/or in organised sport.

Dream Day was mainly characterised by an experience-oriented approach as the knowledge-oriented approach and physical achievement-oriented approaches were underdeveloped. The various experiences of watching sports competitions and trying sports in a festival atmosphere contribute to Dream Day being perceived mainly positive by the majority of the participating pupils. However, their limited awareness of the Olympic values made them less able to make these experiences relevant to their own lives. While the experience-oriented approach can lead to Olympic education alone, the scope will be limited without a lifeworld-orientation (Naul, 2008).

The implementation of Dream Day was constrained by high ambitions, scarce resources, late involvement by the LYOGOC and limited experience with Olympic education among the organisers. Several organisations with competence in Olympic education, such as the IOC, the NIF, the Norwegian NOA and the Norway Olympic Museum (NOM), could have been more involved in the implementation of the programme. Elements from the educational materials prepared for the local schools for the 1994 OG in Lillehammer or the more modernised "Teaching values: An Olympic education toolkit" (Binder, 2007) could have been prepared for the teachers.

### **The YOG as an arena for Olympic education**

The main focus of this paper is the relevance of the YOG as an arena for Olympic education. The following sections present some advantages and challenges, which form the basis for suggestions for future practices.

#### ***Advantages and challenges***

Two main advantages of linking an Olympic education programme to the YOG are suggested. First, this study confirms the potential for a demonstration effect and a festival effect when giving the participants direct exposures to the competitions, ceremonies and cultural exchanges at the YOG. Second, considering the similar aims of using sports as a means to develop positive values among youth, there is a great potential in linking Olympic education to physical education in the schools. Using Norwegian schools as an example, the goals in the curriculum for physical education have similarities to those of Olympic education, considering the similar emphasis on creating a joy of sport as well as using sport and physical activity to develop social behaviour and moral values (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015). Thus, the teachers can use the experiences from watching competitions to inspire sports participation and raise awareness of the Olympic values in physical education classes.

However, several potential challenges may arise in the implementation process. First, the main focus for the IOC, the YOG organising committees (YOGOC) and the National Olympic Committees (NOC) is the athletes and the majority of the resources are reserved for the Competition programme and the Learn and Share. Second, the findings in this study supports Pound's (2008) predictions and findings in previous studies (Weed et al., 2012; Schnitzer et al., 2018) that intervention programmes have limited influence on participants who were not already involved in organised sports. The third challenge is creating a legacy or a long-term effect of the Olympic education programmes. The nature of an Olympic event is that the lifespan is very short as the IOC moves on to next event and the organising committee dissolves. Regarding the host population, the period of intense enthusiasm for a major event is short-lived (Ritchie, 2000).

#### ***Implications***

Based on the findings of this study and previous research on Olympic education some implications are given here in order to improve future practices. First, the IOC needs to put more effort into the implementation of Olympic education through the YOG. The IOC is in a position to put pressure on the YOGOC, the NOC and the NOA in order to release more resources and competence into the implementation of Olympic

education. In order to ensure the quality of the programme, sufficient human and financial resources must be allocated. In particular, the role of the teachers, hosts and instructors in direct contact with the participants must be supported. Second, the planning and implementation of Olympic education should be a collaboration between different groups, and disciplines, such as the IOC, the NOC, the NOA, the school authorities, scholars, teachers and youth representatives. Youth representatives are especially important in order to understand the socio-cultural environment of the participants. The IOC, the NOC and the NOA should provide competence on Olympic education, while the local organisations are integral in the practical implementation of the programmes. Third, Naul's (2008) four didactic principles for Olympic education should be considered in the implementation of the programmes. Importantly, the pupils' socio-cultural background should be understood and taken into account in order to meet the needs of the participating youth. The organisers should put extra effort into making the programme relevant to youth not already involved in sport. We support Schnitzer et al. (2018) in the argument that youth intervention programmes should preferably be voluntary and combined with other related activities. Finally, as Parry (2012) points out, the education of a child or a youth takes place over a long period of time and the "YOG should be seen not as an end, but as a means – as a motivating event, that needs to be followed up at home in various ways in order to be effective" (p. 95). Thus, the Olympic education programme should start before the Games and be followed up afterwards in schools in order to create a long-term educational effect. Because of their shared aims, the Olympic educational programmes should be linked to physical education in schools.

## CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this paper is to evaluate the YOG as an arena for Olympic education through the Dream Day programme at the 2016 YOG. As an analytical framework, Naul's (2008) four principles for Olympic education are adopted.

The Dream Day programme, which consisted of watching sports competitions, trying sports and attending a cultural event in a festival atmosphere, was a new concept in the YOG context and meet the criteria of an Olympic education programme. The findings in this paper show that the outcome of the programme did not fulfil all the expectations for a "Dream Day" from either the participating pupils or the organisers. However, the evaluation of the Dream Day programme forms the basis for a more general discussion of the advantages and challenges of linking an Olympic education programme to the YOG.

Based on the findings in this paper, we argue that the YOG has significant potential as an arena for Olympic education. However, this potential is not yet utilized, and the following implications for future practices are presented. First, the IOC needs to put more effort into the implementation of Olympic education programmes. Second, the implementation of Olympic education programmes should be a collaboration among different groups and disciplines, including youth representatives. Third, the pupils' socio-cultural background must be considered in order to identify the needs of the youth target groups. Finally, the Olympic education programme must include a long-term perspective in order to increase the educational effect.

This study signifies our best attempt to present and discuss the participating pupils' perception of Dream Day. However, we are aware of the limitations. First, our sample does not represent all participants, and it would be interesting to include the perceptions of secondary school pupils as well as the outcomes of the other youth intervention programmes at the 2016 YOG. Second, with the written essays as the main source, the writing skills of the pupils did potentially affect their ability to express themselves. Third, the data is based on the pupils' perception shortly after the 2016 YOG and does not reflect the long-term effects of Dream Day.

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