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DOI:

[10.1016/j.ajsep.2023.05.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajsep.2023.05.002)

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Document Version

Version created as part of publication process; publisher's layout; not normally made publicly available

Citation for published version (Harvard):

Ring, C, Whitehead, J, Gurpinar, B & Kavussanu, M 2023, 'Sport values, personal values and antisocial behavior in sport', *Asian Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajsep.2023.05.002>

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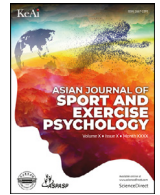
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Sport values, personal values and antisocial behavior in sport

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Behavior
Sport
Unethicality
Values

ABSTRACT

A core aspect of morality concerns behavior towards others. To better understand this issue, we investigated the values-behavior relationship. In a cross-sectional study design, 165 team sport athletes rated the importance of Lee's sport values and Schwartz's basic personal values and reported their frequency of antisocial behavior in sport. With sport values, antisocial behavior was negatively correlated with moral values but positively correlated with status values. With personal values, antisocial behavior was negatively correlated with self-transcendence and conservation values but positively correlated with self-enhancement values. In terms of the relative importance of values, competence and moral were more important than status sport values, whereas self-transcendence and openness to change were more important than conservation and self-enhancement personal values. In terms of the conceptual link across contexts, comparisons of sport and personal values confirmed strong overlap between status and self-enhancement values, competence and openness to change values, and moral and self-transcendence values. In conclusion, antisocial behavior was related to both sport and personal values, and, in line with theory and evidence, the relationship between values and antisocial behavior resembled an *unethicality* profile.

Introduction

The actions of team sport athletes directed towards their opponents and teammates can have consequences for the recipients (e.g., Kavussanu 2019). Accordingly, antisocial behavior in sport (i.e., acts associated with negative consequences) can be viewed as belonging in the moral domain. Our understanding of the psychological factors that thwart or foster antisocial behavior in sport has been improved by research in this topic (for reviews see Kavussanu and Al-Yaaribi 2021, Kavussanu and Stanger 2017). Aside from recent exceptions (e.g., Albouza et al. 2020, Danioni and Barni 2017, Ring et al. 2020), this endeavor has often neglected to evaluate the role of values in athletes' moral behavior. Values are stable beliefs central to the self-concept and concern the desirability of aspirational goals and actions and personal standards (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992). It is well established that values can influence our thoughts and actions in everyday life contexts (e.g., Bardi and Schwartz 2003, Feather 1995, Roccas and Sagiv 2010, Rokeach 1973, Schwartz et al. 2017). Extending this research to the context of sport, we sought to explore the influence of athletes' sport and personal values on the frequency of their antisocial behavior in competitive sport.

Personal values

Rokeach (1973) measured the relative importance of values to people in everyday life and distinguished between values as properties of objects and values as criteria for judging personal conduct. He regarded a value system as the continuum of hierarchical rankings of the importance of values for an individual. Building on this research, Schwartz (1992) examined relationships among the values themselves and demonstrated that values have conflicting or compatible relations with other values. He noted that values are organized in a circumplex structure according to their motivational content: opposing values exert conflicting influences on motivationally-relevant attitudes and behaviors, whereas adjacent values exert compatible influences.

Schwartz (1992) identified ten individual basic personal values organized by two orthogonal bi-polar higher-order dimensions with four poles that operate in an opposing fashion: self-enhancement (power, achievement, hedonism) opposes self-transcendence (universalism, benevolence), while openness to change (stimulation, self-direction) opposes conservation (conformity, tradition, and security). In terms of motivation, Schwartz argued that self-enhancement values motivate people to promote their own interests and success at the ex-

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajsep.2023.05.002>

Received 15 June 2022; Received in revised form 8 May 2023; Accepted 11 May 2023

Available online xxx

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pense of others, self-transcendence values motivate people to empathize with and show concern for others, openness to change values motivate people to approach and explore new and exciting experiences, and conservation values motivate people to maintain and preserve the current state of affairs. In sum, the theory and structure of personal values have been widely used to explain thought and action. Grounded on the Schwartz (1992) theory of personal values and circumplex model, the current study examined the relationship between values and moral behavior in sport.

Values and ethics

Schwartz (1995) noted that most people consider self-transcendence and conservation values to be moral whereas few consider self-enhancement and openness to change values to be moral. In line with these views, research has found that values are differentially associated with antisocial behavior in the form of aggression and violence (e.g., Benish-Weisman 2015, 2019, Seddig and Davidov 2018). A meta-analysis of the associations between personal values and unethical attitudes and actions (collectively termed *unethicality*) established the circumplex structure of the values-ethics relationship (Feldman et al., 2015). In brief, *unethicality* was negatively related to self-transcendence and conservation values but positively related to self-enhancement and openness to change values. Support for this unethicality profile in sport has been confirmed for the relationship between personal values and doping by athletes (Ring et al., 2020).

Sport values

Lee et al. (2000) first constructed the Youth Sport Values Questionnaire (YSVQ) based on the theories of Rokeach (1973) and Schwartz (1992) and the arguments of Braithwaite and Law (1985) to derive salient values directly from the population of interest. Eighteen items were drawn from discussions by young competitors about moral dilemmas in their own sport, and further qualitative studies. Subsequently Lee et al. (2008) constructed the Youth Sport Value Questionnaire-2 (YSVQ-2) to measure three value domains (comprising a number of individual values): moral values (fairness, helpfulness, keeping a contract, obedience, sportspersonship), competence values (achievement, showing skill, self-direction), and status values (winning, superiority, leadership, public image). Competence values were related to both moral and status values whereas moral and status values were unrelated.

The pioneering research by Lee and colleagues (Lee & Cockman, 1995; Lee et al., 2000, 2008) identified a number of relationships between sport values and sport morality. For instance, status values predicted antisocial attitudes, moral values predicted antisocial attitudes and prosocial attitudes, and competence values predicted prosocial attitudes. In replications and extensions of Lee's findings, later research has found that sport values predict antisocial attitudes (e.g., Lucidi et al. 2017, Whitehead and Hatzigeorgiadis 2003), moral disengagement (e.g., Sukys and Jansonienė 2012), aggression (e.g., Albouza et al. 2017), and antisocial behavior (e.g., Stupuris et al. 2013). Taken together these findings establish that sport values are able to predict unethicality in sport.

There is preliminary evidence to suggest that personal values are related to moral behavior in sport (e.g., Albouza et al. 2020, Danioni and Barni 2017, Ring et al. 2020). For instance, Danioni and Barni (2017) reported that self-enhancement and openness to change values were positively correlated with antisocial behavior whereas self-transcendence and conservation values were negatively correlated with antisocial behavior in team sport athletes. It is worth noting that both Lee (e.g., Whitehead 2016, Whitehead et al. 2013) and Schwartz (e.g., Bardi and Schwartz 2013) have speculated on the relationship between sport values and personal values, and they both highlighted considerable theoretical overlap between the two sets of values. Although the findings

reviewed above are compatible with an integrated value structure, research has yet to confirm the degree of overlap between sport and life contexts (cf., Kavussanu and Ring 2021). Building on previous research on values and ethics in sport (for reviews see Spaaia and Schaillee 2019, Whitehead et al. 2013), the current study sought to improve our understanding of the nature of and relations among sport values, personal values, and antisocial behavior in sport.

Current study

Grounded in theory about the structure and function of personal values (Schwartz, 1992), ethics and personal values (Feldman et al., 2015), sport values (Lee & Cockman, 1995; Lee et al., 2000, 2008), and the overlap between personal and sport values (Whitehead et al., 2013), the present study examined the relationships between values and the frequency of antisocial behavior in sport. We had three purposes. Our first study purpose was to examine the relationships between sport values and antisocial behavior in sport. Our second study purpose was to examine the relationships between personal values and antisocial behavior in sport. In relation to our first and second purposes, we expected to see patterns of value-antisocial behavior associations in line with Feldman et al. (2015) unethicality profile, whereby self-enhancement (and status) values would be strongly positively related to antisocial behavior whereas self-transcendence (and moral) values would be strongly negatively related to antisocial behavior. Our third study purpose was to explore the relative importance and overlap of sport and personal values. We expected to see relationships across contexts in line with the theoretical speculations (see Whitehead et al. 2013).

Method

Participants

Participants were 165 (55% males, 45% females) college athletes competing in team sports at a United Kingdom university. The United Kingdom is multi-nation, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural country, with a parliamentary democracy, a tradition of liberalism, and a populace classified as mostly middle class and personally stoical and reserved. The sports included American football (4%), basketball (4%), cricket (4%), football (49%), handball (1%), hockey (11%), lacrosse (1%), netball (14%), rugby (11%), and water polo (1%). On average, participants were aged 19 ($SD = 2$) years and had competed for 10 ($SD = 4$) years. Their highest ever competitive standard in their sport was club (43%), regional (38%), national (14%), and international (5%). Power calculations using GPower 3.1.5 (Faul et al., 2007) software, which accounted for the number of variables included in the separate analyses, indicated that with a sample size of 165, the current study was powered at 0.80 to detect significant ($p < .05$) relationships between values and behavior using Pearson correlation analyses corresponding to a small-to-medium ($r = 0.22$) effect size () and differences among values using repeated measures analyses of variance corresponding to a small ($\eta_p^2 = 0.01$) effect size (Cohen, 1992).

Measures

Sport values

The three sport value domains were measured using a portrait version of the 13-item YSVQ-2 (Lee et al., 2008). The items were phrased in the third person in a portrait format as used by Schwartz et al. (2012) to measure personal values more easily (Roccas et al., 2017). Participants were presented with descriptions of the values of different athletes and told to think about how much they were or were not like them. They were asked to rate descriptions (e.g., competence values = "It is important to them that they improve their performance", moral values = "It is important to them that they try to be fair", status values = "It is important

to them that they win or beat other people”), using a 6-point scale, anchored by 1 (not like me at all) and 6 (very much like me). The YSVQ-2, which comprises items measuring the three (i.e., competence, moral, status) value domains, has demonstrated good reliability and validity (Whitehead et al., 2013).

Personal values

Personal values were measured using the Portrait Values Questionnaire Revised (PVQ-RR; Schwartz et al. 2012). Participants were presented with descriptions of different people and told to think about how much they are or are not like them. They were asked to rate 57 descriptions (e.g., “It is important to them to be very successful”, “It is important to them to be a dependable and trustworthy friend”) using a 6-point scale, anchored by 1 (not like me at all) and 6 (very much like me). The scale comprises items measuring 10 values categories: power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, conformity, tradition, and security. These were combined to create four higher-order dimensions: self-enhancement (power, achievement), openness to change (hedonism, stimulation, self-direction), self-transcendence (universalism, benevolence), and conservation (conformity, tradition, security). These personal value measures have demonstrated good validity and test-retest reliability in previous research (e.g., Schwartz et al. 2012).

Antisocial behavior

Antisocial behavior in sport was measured using the Prosocial and Antisocial Behavior in Sport Scale (PABSS, Kavussanu and Boardley 2009, Kavussanu et al. 2013). The scale comprises two subscales that measure antisocial behavior towards opponents (e.g., *tried to injure an opponent*) and teammates (e.g., *criticized a teammate*). Participants were presented with items describing antisocial behaviors in sport, asked to think about their experience when playing sport in the current season, and were asked to indicate how often they engaged in each behavior. Responses were made on a scale anchored by 1 (*never*) and 5 (*very often*). Past research has established the validity and internal reliability of the scale (e.g., Kavussanu and Boardley 2009, Kavussanu et al. 2013).

Procedure

After approval from the University Ethics Committee at the University of Birmingham (ERN 18-1887), participants were recruited from university sports clubs by a researcher who explained the study to them before or after a training session. They were informed about the study, and told that participation was voluntary, honesty in responses was vital, and data would be confidential. After consenting, they completed the measures described above (c. 10 min) on the spot using an online survey to ensure anonymity. At the time of data collection, participants were approximately four months into their competitive season.

Data analysis

Pearson correlations were used to examine the relations among sport values, personal values, and antisocial behaviors (study purposes 1 and 2). The correlation coefficient, r , was reported as the effect size, with 0.10, 0.30 and 0.50 reflecting small, medium and large associations (Cohen, 1992). Analysis of variance (ANOVA), with either sport value domain (3 levels) or personal value dimension (4 levels) as the within-participant factor, was used to examine differences in the importance of the values (study purpose 3). Partial eta-squared (η_p^2) was reported as the effect size, with 0.02, 0.13, and 0.25 reflecting small, medium, and large effects (Cohen, 1992). We report the multivariate solution to the ANOVAs. Significant effects were followed by post hoc comparisons (t tests). An effect was considered significant when $p < .05$. Data are available from the corresponding author.

Results

Sport values and antisocial behavior

Our first study purpose was to examine the relationship between Lee's sport values and antisocial behavior in sport. Pearson correlations between the YSVQ-2 value domains and the antisocial behavior subscales showed that status values were positively correlated with antisocial behavior, competence values were uncorrelated with antisocial behavior, and moral values were negatively correlated with antisocial behavior (Table 1). It can be seen that the pattern of correlations between sport values and antisocial behavior resembled Feldman et al. (2015) unethicality profile (Fig. 1).

Given the theoretical argument that the relative importance of opposing values is the most influential determinant of action (e.g., Schwartz et al., 2017), we computed the difference in the importance of the moral and status values (i.e., importance of moral values minus importance of status values), and correlated this difference score with the measures of antisocial behavior. These correlations indicated that the difference in conflicting sport values ($M = 1.02$, 95% $CI = 0.85, 1.18$) was negatively correlated with antisocial behavior towards opponents, $r = -0.57$, $p < .001$, and teammates, $r = -0.56$, $p < .001$. It is worth noting that these correlation coefficients were larger than those associated with each individual sport value alone (see Table 1).

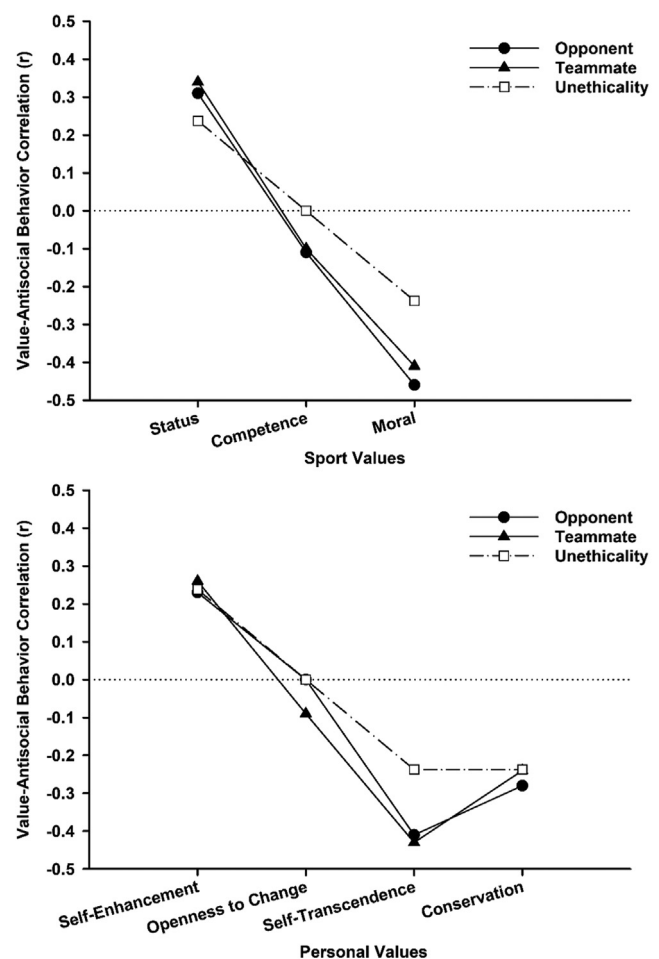


Fig. 1. Pattern of correlations between antisocial behavior and sport values (top) and personal values (bottom). The data depict the relationships for behavior directed towards opponents (filled circles and solid line) and teammates (filled triangles and solid line) as well as for Feldman et al. (2015) theoretical unethicality pattern (open squares and dotted line).

Table 1

Descriptive statistics, coefficient alphas and Pearson correlations between values and antisocial behavior.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	95% <i>CI</i>	α	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Antisocial opponent	2.15	0.73	2.04, 2.67	.86								
2. Antisocial teammate	1.99	0.66	1.88, 2.09	.80	.64***							
3. Status	3.97	0.92	3.83, 4.11	.69	.31**	.34***						
4. Competence	5.09	0.65	4.99, 5.19	.79	−0.11	−0.10	.44***					
5. Moral	4.99	0.70	4.88, 5.09	.82	−0.46***	−0.41***	.15	.65***				
6. Self-Enhancement	3.73	0.65	3.63, 3.83	.73	.23**	.26**	.59***	.29***	.09			
7. Openness to Change	4.67	0.56	4.59, 4.76	.84	.00	−0.09	.24**	.50***	.34***	.42***		
8. Self-Transcendence	4.73	0.55	4.65, 4.82	.85	−0.41***	−0.43***	.04	.48***	.68***	.12	.46***	
9. Conservation	4.14	0.60	4.04, 4.23	.82	−0.28***	−0.24**	.09	.30***	.50***	.18*	.22**	.59***

* Note: $p < 0.05$.** $p < 0.01$.*** $p < 0.001$.

Personal values and antisocial behavior

Our second study purpose was to examine the relationship between Schwartz's personal values and antisocial behavior in sport. Pearson correlations were performed between the PVQ-RR value dimensions and the PABS subscales. These analyses showed that self-enhancement was positively correlated with antisocial behavior whereas self-transcendence and conservation were negatively correlated with antisocial behavior (Table 1). The pattern of correlations between personal values and antisocial behavior resembled Feldman et al. (2015) unethicality profile (Fig. 1).

We correlated difference in the importance of the self-transcendence and self-enhancement values with the measures of antisocial behavior. These correlations indicated that the difference in conflicting personal values ($M = 1.01$, 95% $CI = 0.88, 1.18$) was negatively correlated with antisocial behavior towards opponents, $r = -0.47$, $p < .001$, and teammates, $r = -0.51$, $p < .001$. Notably, these correlation coefficients were larger than those associated with each individual personal value alone (see Table 1).

Sport and personal values

Our third study purpose was to explore the importance of sport and personal values and the overlap between sport and personal values. In terms of the importance of sport values, repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the three YSVQ-2 value domains confirmed differences in their importance, $F(2163) = 144.62$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.64$, whereby competence was the most important value, moral was the middlemost important value, and status was the least important value in sport (Table 1). In terms of the importance of personal values, repeated measures ANOVA on the four PVQ-RR value dimensions confirmed differences in their importance, $F(3162) = 145.23$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.73$, whereby self-transcendence and openness to change were the most important values, conservation was the middlemost important value, and self-enhancement was the least important value (Table 1).

In terms of the putative theoretical overlap between sport values and personal values (see Whitehead et al. 2013), we found high positive correlations between status and self-enhancement values ($r = 0.59$), between competence and openness to change values ($r = 0.50$) values, and between moral and self-transcendence values ($r = 0.68$).

Multiple regression was used to evaluate sport and personal values as independent predictors of antisocial behavior in sport. The first model indicated that the seven values accounted for 37% of the variance in antisocial behavior towards opponents scores, $R^2 = 0.40$, $F(7, 157) = 14.75$, $p < 0.001$. This model revealed that antisocial behavior towards opponents was predicted by moral values, $\beta = -0.47$, $B = -0.49$, 95% $CI = -0.70, -0.28$, $t = 4.68$, $p < 0.001$, status values, $\beta = 0.30$, $B = 0.20$, 95% $CI = 0.10, 0.37$, $t = 3.51$, $p < .002$, and self-transcendence values, $\beta = -0.27$, $B = -0.26$, 95% $CI = -0.52, -0.01$, $t = 2.02$, $p = 0.05$. The second model indicated that the seven values accounted for 35% of

the variance in antisocial behavior towards teammates scores, $R^2 = 0.38$, $F(7, 157) = 13.52$, $p < 0.001$. This model revealed that antisocial behavior towards teammates was predicted by moral values, $\beta = -0.34$, $B = -0.32$, 95% $CI = -0.51, -0.13$, $t = 3.12$, $p < 0.001$, status values, $\beta = 0.28$, $B = 0.20$, 95% $CI = 0.08, 0.32$, $t = 3.19$, $p = 0.002$, and self-transcendence values, $\beta = -0.27$, $B = -0.33$, 95% $CI = -0.57, -0.09$, $t = 2.70$, $p = 0.008$. In sum, antisocial behavior in sport was consistently predicted by two sport values (moral, status) and one personal value (self-transcendence).

Discussion

The present study investigated the relationship between values and moral behavior in sport. We examined the extent to which sport values (Lee et al., 2000, 2008) and personal values (Schwartz, 1992, 2012) were associated with the frequency of antisocial behavior towards opponents and teammates among team sport athletes. We also explored the importance and overlap of sport and personal values (see Whitehead et al. 2013).

Sport values and antisocial behavior

Our first study purpose was to examine the relationship between sport values and antisocial behavior in sport. We found that sport values were consistently related to antisocial behavior towards opponents and teammates: status values and moral values manifested conflicting influences on antisocial behavior. Specifically, status values were associated with increased frequency of antisocial behavior whereas moral values were associated with decreased frequency of antisocial behavior. These relations were broadly the same for antisocial behavior towards opponents and teammates. It is also worth noting that competence values were unrelated to either manifestation of antisocial behavior. Overall, the patterns of correlations (Fig. 1, top) resembled the unethicality pattern (Feldman et al., 2015) for personal values, whereby antisocial behavior was strongly positively related to status values, unrelated to competence values, and strongly negatively related to moral values. In agreement with the theorizing about value conflict (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992), we observed that the relative importance of moral values and status values, which lie on opposite poles of the value circumplex (see Whitehead et al. 2013), was the strongest correlate of antisocial behavior in sport. Other sport research (Whitehead, 2016) has shown that two contrasting profile groups which differed in the relative importance of moral and status values also differed significantly in prosocial and antisocial attitudes and in task and ego orientation.

Our findings confirm that the three sport value domains were consistently related to engagement in antisocial behavior when playing sport. Only one previous study, to our knowledge, has examined the relationships between the YSVQ-2 sport values and antisocial behavior measured using the PABS (Stupuris et al., 2013). In line with our study findings, Stupuris and colleagues found that athletes' moral values were

negatively correlated with antisocial behavior. Moreover, both of these findings are in broad agreement with evidence that moral sport values are negatively correlated with aggression outside sport (Albouza et al., 2017). However, contrary to our study findings, they found that competence values ($M = 3.97$) were negatively correlated with antisocial behavior ($r = -0.14$, $p < 0.01$; $r = -0.19$, $p < 0.01$) and that status values ($M = 2.77$) were uncorrelated with antisocial behavior ($r = -0.08$; $r = 0.10$). Their mean competence value and correlation coefficients were the same as ours whereas their mean status value and correlation coefficients were much lower than ours. Their lower overall status value may help explain why they did not find any evidence for a status-antisocial behavior relationship.

Personal values and antisocial behavior

Our second study purpose was to examine the relationship between personal values and antisocial behavior in sport. With regard to the first dimension of conflicting personal values, we found that self-enhancement values and self-transcendence values manifested conflicting influences on antisocial behavior. Specifically, self-enhancement values were associated with increased frequency of antisocial behavior whereas self-transcendence values were associated with decreased frequency of antisocial behavior. Similarly, with regard to the second dimension of conflicting personal values, openness to change values exerted differing, albeit less extreme, influences on antisocial behavior compared to conservation values. In line with the circumplex structure of values (Schwartz, 1992) and the values-unethicality profile (Feldman et al., 2015), we found that opposite values on the circumplex structure exerted conflicting influences on antisocial behavior, whereas adjacent values exerted more complementary effects. Specifically, antisocial behavior was strongly positively related to self-enhancement values, unrelated to openness to change values, modestly negatively related to conservation values, and strongly negatively related to self-transcendence values. Only one previous study, to our knowledge, has reported on relationships between the personal value dimensions and antisocial behavior measured using the PABS (Danioni & Barni, 2017). Their study and the current study found very similar relationships, in terms of direction and extent, between personal values and antisocial behavior towards opponents and teammates in sport. Finally, in line with the findings of Feldman et al. (2015), the current associations between personal values and antisocial behavior, both toward opponents and teammates, were compatible with their unethicality profile (see Fig. 1).

Since all personal values are desirable (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992) it is often more informative to look at the relative importance of values in order to understand why individuals would choose a particular course of action in any given situation, such as behaving unethically (e.g., hurting or abusing another person), particularly when values are exerting conflicting pressures to behave one way or the other. In line with this reasoning, we found that the difference in the importance of self-transcendence and self-enhancement values was a stronger correlate of antisocial behavior than the same values alone. Moreover, our findings that self-transcendence values were more important than self-enhancement values and that conservation values were more important than openness to change values may help explain why antisocial behavior was relatively infrequent and prosocial behavior was relatively frequent in our athletes (Table 1).

Importance and overlap of sport and personal values

Our third study purpose was to examine the importance and overlap sport values and personal values. Researchers from both sport and non-sport contexts have speculated on the relationships between personal values and sport values (see Whitehead et al. 2013). We provided data that confirm many of their speculations. Specifically, we found strong positive links between moral and self-transcendence values, competence and openness to change values, and status and self-enhancement values.

These findings (see Table 1) provide evidence for the convergent validity the scales used to measure sport values and personal values. This is in accordance with the view of Schwartz and Bardi (2013) who regard sport values as expressions of personal values in the sport domain. It is reasonable to consider moral, competence, and status as core sport values (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003; Danioni et al., 2017; Schwartz et al., 2010) which differ from personal values in their level of abstraction since they are more anchored in a concrete context. They may have a role in influencing the impact of personal values on other variables. For example, Adell et al. (2019) have developed a model in which the four core personal values predicted the three core sport values which, in turn, predicted prosocial and antisocial attitudes (cf. Schwartz et al. 2010). Consistent with the current findings, they found that antisocial attitudes were predicted positively by status values and negatively by moral values.

In terms of the relative importance of values, we confirmed past research on sport values showing that competence and moral values were more important to athletes than status values (for review see Whitehead et al. 2013), as well as research on personal values showing that self-transcendence and openness to change values were more important to athletes than conservation and self-enhancement values (see Ring et al. 2020). Taken together these findings on the relative importance of values provide an explanation for the relatively infrequent antisocial behavior reported by our participants. This is because thought and action are determined by the relative importance of competing values (e.g., Schwartz 1992) and team sport athletes in the current study considered values with a moral dimension (Schwartz, 1995) to be most important to their self-concept as athletes. This held for both sport values, where moral values were more important than status values, and personal values, where self-transcendence values were more important than self-enhancement values (see Table 1). A similar observation was made by Lambert (2013), who showed the *Football 4 Peace* intervention, that selectively promotes values (i.e., equality, neutrality, respect, responsibility, trust) which embody moral and self-transcendence values, successfully reduces unethical behavior in young Arab and Jewish footballers in Israel. It remains to be seen whether value-based interventions can discourage other forms of unethical behavior in sport, such as cheating, doping, and match fixing.

It is noteworthy that antisocial behaviour had higher correlations with differences between sport values than with differences between personal values, and that it was predicted by two sport values but only one basic value. This suggests a higher ecological validity in sport for sport values than personal values. Lee's original values were derived from competitors' discussions of moral dilemmas in sport, and the three higher order values were selected with reference to both the Schwartz circumplex model and the intrinsic nature of sport. Sport is an achievement situation, hence the status (winning) and competence (personal best) values present comparative and self-referenced dimensions of achievement, and the addition of moral (fairplay) values presents the perennial sport conflict: whether or not to cheat to win. Together these values also reflect the earliest sport value scale (Webb, 1969) which measured the importance of winning, playing well, and playing fairly. Hence they have good utility in a sport context and can be measured more parsimoniously than personal values.

Study limitations and future directions

The current findings provide novel insights into the nature of values in sport and their relationships with unethical behavior. Nonetheless, they should be interpreted in light of potential study limitations. First, we only measured self-reported frequency of antisocial behavior. Although reported and observed behaviors are positively related (e.g., Kavussanu et al. 2006), researchers could adopt a field study design to examine the relationship between values and observed behavior during a competition (e.g., Lucidi et al. 2017). Second, the current sample comprised UK college athletes and therefore the generalizability of the

findings to a more diverse body of athletes, in terms of age, experience, competitive level, culture and country, is worthy of investigation. It is worth noting that we used the YSVQ-2, a scale that was originally developed to assess values in adolescent athletes. However, this instrument was based on Schwartz's (1992) value theory and has been used successfully to assess sport values in young adult athletes (e.g., Albouza et al., 2017; MacLean and Hamm, 2008; Stupuris et al., 2013; Sukys and Jansonienė, 2012). Third, the influence of social desirability could be considered in future studies (e.g., Danioni and Barni 2021). Finally, the cross-sectional nature of the design prevents any conclusions about the direction of causality. Evidence that values directly influence behavior can be obtained from future studies with multiple data collection points across a season and experimental manipulations of values (e.g., Bardi and Goodwin 2011).

Practical applications

Values act as guiding principles in an athlete's life, are key components of the spirit of sport, and are central to many sport organizations. Accordingly, moral values could be included in campaigns designed to reduce antisocial behavior and promote fair play in sport. Moreover, governing bodies and sport organizations wishing to reduce or prevent the incidence of antisocial behavior among athletes could develop interventions and campaigns to promote moral sport values and basic transcendence values. Finally, coaches and athlete support personnel could be trained to help promote ethical values among their athletes and entourage.

Conclusions

The current study sought to explore the influence of sport and personal values on the likelihood of engaging in various forms of antisocial behavior in sport. We found evidence that sport values are compatible with personal values in line with theoretical speculations (Whitehead et al., 2013). Both sport values (status, moral) and personal values (self-enhancement, self-transcendence, conservation) consistently predicted antisocial behavior directed towards both opponents and teammates in sport. It is worth noting that higher frequency of antisocial behavior by athletes was predicted by lower moral sport values, higher status sport values, and lower self-transcendence personal values. Finally, the relationships between values and antisocial behavior in sport (Fig. 1) corresponded closely to the *unethicality* profile, in support of theory and evidence (Feldman et al., 2015; Schwartz, 1992).

Declaration of Competing Interest

We have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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