

Dialogue of an expert with artificial intelligence about the ethical problems of competition in sports and martial arts

Authors' Contribution:

- ✍ A Study Design
- 📁 B Data Collection
- 📊 C Statistical Analysis
- 📄 D Manuscript Preparation
- 📁 E Funds Collection

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Received: 02 December 2022; **Accepted:** 18 January 2022; **Published online:** 14 February 2023

AoBID: 15931

Abstract

In this dialogue, an expert of a martial arts sub-discipline discusses with artificial intelligence (AI, ChatGPT 4) about the ethics of competition in martial arts and sports. The starting point for the considerations is the analysis of five key recommendations for teaching self-defense, which were formulated by the expert on the basis of a previous dialogue with AI. The dialogue addressed issues such as the role of sports competition, the importance of the philosophy of Olympism, the ethics of fair play and the challenges related to brutal forms of competition related to gladiatorial games. Participants in the dialogue emphasized the need to comply with the principles set out in the Code of Ethics of the International Olympic Committee, including respect for the dignity and good – physical, mental and social – of a human being.

Key words: Code of Ethics of the International Olympic Committee • fair play • self-defense • sports competitions

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Conflict of interest: Author has declared that no competing interest exists

Ethical approval: Not required

Provenance & peer review: Not commissioned; externally peer reviewed

Source of support: Departmental sources

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JH (Jan Harasymowicz): I want to talk to you about the ethical problems of competition in martial arts and sports. I have already completed a dialogue with ChatGPT 3 on the importance and basics of teaching self-defence [1]. This dialogue led to the formulation of some important general observations and recommendations regarding the teaching of self-defence. I recall them in a synthetic way, because they are the starting point for our dialogue.

1. Teaching self-defence – justified from the point of view of biological, social and psychological human needs – should be implemented in a responsible manner, taking into account both practical, legal and ethical aspects;
2. Self-defence skills cannot be used for aggressive purposes;
3. Knowledge and skills related to self-defence should be transferred in the context of protection of health, life and own good, and in the spirit of respecting the rights and dignity of other people;
4. The teaching of self-defence skills should be included in the education process, but this teaching should be carried out by responsible and competent trainers. These trainers should teach self-defence techniques in conjunction with learning ethical and legal approaches to conflict (teach fair self-defence);
5. The above comments/recommendations also apply to martial arts and sports training, which should be considered as different forms and methods of teaching and improving self-defence skills.

Do you accept such comments/recommendations for self-defence training and martial arts and sports?

AI (artificial intelligence): Yes, I agree with the comments and recommendations given. They seem to be well thought out and aimed at promoting responsibility, safety and ethics in teaching self-defence, sports and martial arts. These points emphasize the importance of teaching self-defence correctly and responsibly, with particular emphasis on protecting health, life and respecting the rights of others.

I also support the idea that these skills should not be used for aggressive purposes, but rather as a means to protect yourself and others, always respecting the rights of others.

Similarly, I agree that trainers should be responsible and competent in teaching not only the physical aspects of self-defence, but also the legal and ethical aspects of conflict. In this way, students can better understand how to use self-defence skills ethically and appropriately.

The last point, concerning sports and martial arts as various forms and methods of teaching and improving self-defence skills, also seems to be important. Sports and martial arts can be useful not only for physical development, but also for shaping character, teaching discipline and respect for others.

Therefore, I agree with the comments and recommendations made.

JH: In sports and some martial arts there are various forms of sports competition (regulatory competitions). It is argued – as in all Olympic sports – that sports competition is essential because it forces you to make maximum effort and allows you to reveal the weaknesses of your own preparation: physical, technical, tactical and mental.

What is your opinion on such an argument?

AI: Sports competition, including regulation competitions in martial arts and sports, can indeed have many benefits that are consistent with the arguments you present.

1. **Maximum Effort**: Competition often forces athletes to reach their full potential and give their best. This not only helps you achieve your best, but also develops endurance, determination and the ability to cope with difficulties.
2. **Detecting Weaknesses**: Competition can reveal areas that need improvement. Without competition, some weaknesses might go unnoticed. By highlighting these areas, competition helps athletes identify where they can improve their skills and preparation.
3. **Skill development**: Competitive sports can accelerate the development of technical, tactical and mental skills. Confrontation with

other rivals can force athletes to constantly improve their skills to meet the challenges.

4. Mental empowerment: Competitive sports can also help athletes develop mentally, for example by helping them cope with pressure, stress and failure, which can be helpful not only in the field of sports but also in other aspects of life.

However, it is worth noting that the competition should be conducted in a healthy and responsible way, in accordance with the principles of sports ethics. It should promote fair play, respect for opponents and fairness. Athletes should also remember that a person's worth is not determined only by their athletic performance.

JH: If the use of various forms of sports competition in teaching and improving self-defense skills is justified, the question arises whether during this competition – both during training and public sports competitions – the above-mentioned recommendations regarding self-defense training should also be followed.

What do you think?

AI: Definitely yes. The principles and recommendations for self-defense training that you formulated earlier should be applied both in training and in public sports competitions. What is important during self-defense training – responsibility, respect for the rights and dignity of others, health, safety and ethics – is just as important, if not more so, during sports competitions.

During sports competitions, these rules and recommendations may even become more important. Public sports competitions are often followed by large numbers of people, including younger spectators, who may be influenced by the attitudes and behaviors of the athletes they watch. Athletes who adhere to the rules of ethics and fair play can influence these people in a positive way.

In addition, competition rules should be designed to promote these principles and recommendations. For example, rules may include rules against excessive use of force, encouraging respect for the opponent, and so on.

In conclusion, the rules and recommendations for self-defense training should be followed both

during training and during public sports competitions. In this way, we can maintain the educational value of sports and martial arts, promote responsibility, respect and safety, and ensure that these disciplines serve their purposes in a positive way.

JH: Does following the recommendations formulated at the beginning of our conversation mean to you that all forms of sports competition should be carried out in accordance with the regulations obliging to respect the ethical principles of Olympic sport, sport that is implemented within the humanistic perspective of integral human education, the philosophy of Olympism and the principle of fairness? play?

AI: Yes, definitely yes. The principles of sports ethics, including the principles of ethics of Olympic sport, the philosophy of Olympism and the principle of fair play, should be the basis for all forms of sports competition, both in sports and martial arts.

Compliance with these rules is essential to maintaining the integrity of the sport, promoting healthy competition and creating a safe environment for all participants. In this way, sport can truly serve its educational and developmental purposes, as well as promote values such as respect, responsibility and fairness.

Additionally, applying these principles within the humanistic perspective of integral human education emphasizes that sport is not only about physical development and winning, but also about developing the whole person, including their ability to empathize, cooperate, cope with difficulties, and so on.

That is why it is so important that all forms of sports competition, both during training and during public competitions, are conducted in accordance with the principles of sports ethics, the philosophy of Olympism and the principles of fair play.

JH: How do you understand the philosophy of Olympism and the principle of fair play ethics?

AI: The philosophy of Olympism and the principle of fair play are fundamental elements of the ethics of sport.

1. The philosophy of Olympism: It assumes that sport is more than just a competition; is a way for harmonious human development, combining body, mind and spirit. Olympism emphasizes the educational value of good example and promotes respect for universal fundamental ethical principles. The philosophy of Olympism puts first not victory, but participation, as well as the principles of fair play and respect for others. It is an ideology that promotes peace, friendship and mutual understanding between nations through sport.
2. The principle of fair play: This ethical principle relates to honesty, respect and good sportsmanship. Fair play means abiding by the rules, respecting opponents and referees, accepting referee decisions, accepting defeats with dignity, and avoiding actions that could cause unnecessary risk or harm to other participants. In the context of sport, fair play is not only playing by the rules, but also behavior that upholds the spirit of true sporting competition.

These two elements, the philosophy of Olympism and the principle of fair play, are crucial to maintaining sport as a positive and constructive field of human activity that promotes mutual respect, self-development and a spirit of cooperation.

JH: Shouldn't the promotion of such brutal forms of competition as: vale tudo, cage fights, mixed martial arts competitions, or cage fights for children be critically assessed against the background of the philosophy of Olympism? Aren't these modern forms of gladiatorism (also known as neo-gladiatorism) that can be considered dehumanizing sports trends?

AI: Criticism of brutal forms of sports competition, such as cage fights, mixed martial arts (MMA) competitions or cage fights for children, is understandable, especially in the context of the Olympic philosophy, which emphasizes harmonious human development, respect and fair play.

Such forms of competition can indeed seem counter to the spirit of Olympism, especially if they become more focused on violence and spectacle than on skill, sporting values and respect for opponents. In some cases, such as cage fighting, there is also a serious threat to the safety and well-being of the young participants.

On the other hand, it is worth noting that not all forms of MMA or cage fighting are the same, and some organizations place a strong emphasis on fighter safety, respect and professionalism. Many of these sports also have deep roots in traditional martial arts that emphasize respect, discipline, and self-control.

Nevertheless, I agree that it is important to critically evaluate these forms of competition and pay attention to whether they are consistent with the values that sport promotes, such as respect, fair play and integral human development. We should always strive to ensure that sport is safe, respects the dignity of all participants and promotes positive values.

JH: The authors of the Code of Ethics of the International Olympic Committee issued in 2023 [2] remind that the Olympic sport respects international conventions for the protection of human rights, that during sports competition the following should be ensured in particular: respect for human dignity; rejection of any kind of discrimination based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status; rejection of all forms of harassment and abuse, be it physical, professional or sexual; rejection of any physical or psychological trauma; provide participants with conditions of safety, well-being and medical care conducive to their physical and mental balance.

Should these rules be ensured during various forms of training and competition in martial arts and sports? Is it possible to follow these rules in brutal forms of competition?

AI: Definitely yes, all forms of training and competition in martial arts and sports should follow these principles. These principles, as you mentioned, include respect for human dignity, rejection of all forms of discrimination, abuse and injury, as well as ensuring safety, well-being and adequate medical care.

This is very important because sports and martial arts have a huge impact on the health and well-being of participants, both physically and mentally. Therefore, it is important that these practices are conducted in a responsible and ethical manner, respecting the rights and dignity of each participant.

As for violent forms of competition, there can be challenges in adhering to these rules. The risk of injury, both physical and psychological, can be much higher in these forms of competition. However, this does not mean that these rules cannot or should not be followed.

For example, organizations may implement additional safety measures to reduce the risk of injury as well as provide psychological support to participants. In addition, all participants should be fully aware of the risks involved in participating in these forms of competition and should have the right to withdraw at any time.

Nevertheless, in some cases, such as cage fighting, there may be serious questions as to whether these forms of competition can be conducted under these rules. These questions require serious debate and critical analysis.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the conversation with the latest version of AI (ChatGPT 4) on the ethical problems of competition in martial arts and sports allows us to formulate the following conclusions:

1. AI fully accepts the expert's 5 general recommendations for teaching self-defense and martial arts and sports. It believes that these recommendations underline the importance of responsible teaching of self-defense, protection of health, life and respect for the rights of others.
2. AI accepts the opinion that participation in safe sports competition has many advantages, that competition reveals the weaknesses of one's own preparation, allows us to test our skills under pressure, forces us to make maximum effort, develop skills and can strengthen us mentally. At the same time, AI emphasizes that competition must not harm the health or safety of participants, that it should be conducted in a healthy and responsible manner, in accordance with the principles of sports ethics and fair play. It rightly reminds us that the value of a person is not determined only by his sports performance.
3. AI strongly believes that the general recommendations for teaching self-defence should be applied both during training and during public sports competitions. It emphasizes the importance of responsibility, respect for the dignity and rights of others, the importance of health, safety and ethics during sports competitions.
4. AI strongly states that all forms of sports competition, during trainings and competitions, should be carried out in accordance with the ethics of Olympic sport, the philosophy of Olympism and the principles of fair play. AI reminds that compliance with these principles is crucial for the promotion of humanistic values, integral education and full human development.
5. AI correctly „understands“ the philosophy of Olympism („understands“ here only means that AI can generate meaningful, verbal answers to asked questions, based on information and algorithms contained in the data on which it was trained). It knows that this philosophy encourages the harmonious development of human personality, that it promotes the idea of peaceful competition, friendship, solidarity and cooperation. It also knows that the philosophy of Olympism puts first not victory, but participation in fair, regulated competition and respect for the health and dignity of other people. AI states that the philosophy of Olympism and the principle of fair play are the pillars of valuable sport – sport understood as a positive and creative field of human activity.
6. AI admits that in the context of the philosophy of Olympism, brutal forms of sports competition should be critically assessed, which are a spectacle of violence, pose a serious threat to the health of participants and are contrary to the spirit of Olympism. However, the AI is not entirely consistent and tries to temper its own critical assessment of such dehumanizing forms of competition. It notes that not all violent forms of competition are the same, that some organizations emphasize player safety, respect and professionalism. It reminds that some of these forms have roots in traditional martial arts, where respect, discipline and self-control were emphasized. You can see here the AI's overly diplomatic attitude, which results in the lack of full consistency of formulated

opinions. Ethically assessing various forms of sports competition, one should not justify its brutal forms by pointing out, for example, that the techniques allowed in them come from traditional martial arts. Rather, it should be remembered that the development of socially acceptable sports and martial arts – such as judo and other budo arts – was associated with the elimination of techniques dangerous to health and demeaning behavior from the regulations of competitions. Consent to the use of destructive techniques was limited only to self-defence situations acceptable by law.

7. AI fully endorses the Code of Ethics of the International Olympic Committee of 2023 [2], which obliges to respect international conventions for the protection of human rights in Olympic sport and lists a number of criteria for ethically acceptable sports competition. AI clearly states that the principles listed in this Code should be observed in all forms of training and competition in sports and martial arts. AI knows that in violent forms of competition, where there is a high risk to the physical and mental health of the players, it is difficult to follow all the rules of Olympic sport. Particular ethical doubts – according to AI – may arise from such forms of competition as children's fights in cages. AI states that such forms of competition require serious debate and critical scrutiny.

Summing up the dialogue carried out with CzatGPT 4, it should be admitted that this form of AI has extensive knowledge about the philosophical and ethical foundations and characteristics of Olympic sport, about competition in the spirit of fair play. This knowledge can be used for educational purposes to promote sport and the values of Olympism. AI's knowledge resources are sufficient for a critical, though not yet consistent, ethical analysis and evaluation of brutal forms of competition referring to gladiatorism. Such forms of competition cannot be accepted in the light of the philosophy of sport and the values of Olympism [3, 4, 2]. You also cannot justify – as AI tries to do – by looking for their lineage in traditional martial arts. The analysis of the works of the most outstanding creators of the Far Eastern budo martial arts shows that they created systems of physical, mental and moral education.

These Systems are based on the original, inspiring philosophy of man, which emphasizes the need for inner transformation, constant mental discipline and effort in the development of self-control, on the universal values of chivalric ethics and on the attitude of respect for all life adopted from Buddhism [5-8]. Judo founder Prof. Jigoro Kano emphasized that self-defence training and regulated, safe training fights are only means to awaken and develop the intelligence of acting in accordance with the universal laws of nature [9]. Kano wanted – as Jazarin passionately wrote about it – that judo should be a school of life [10]. He believed that such a school required full psychophysical involvement of students, which is forced by martial arts training requiring constant cooperation, friendship, effort, self-discipline and mutual concessions. Everything for the common good and development [11, 10]. The educational advantages of judo were appreciated by the highest authorities of Japan. Judo has been recognized as a modern, comprehensive and effective system of physical and moral education that should be used in schools [6]. Therefore, martial arts should not be reduced to learning different movement techniques and different forms of competition. In traditional martial arts, budo is about disciplining and taming the chaotic nature of man, awakening his dormant intelligence and fighting his own weaknesses [5, 12]. There is no place in them for the cult of strength, aggression and spectacles of violence, where even the health and lives of children are put at risk for commerce and profit.

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Cite this article as: Harasymowicz J. Dialogue of an expert with artificial intelligence about the ethical problems of competition in sports and martial arts. *Arch Budo Sci Martial Art Extreme Sport* 2023; 19: 11-17