

Attitudes of training youths towards karate on the example of the polish national team in the youth category

Actitudes de la formación de jóvenes hacia el kárate en el ejemplo de la selección polaca en la categoría juvenil

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Resumen

El objetivo de la investigación es estudiar las actitudes hacia el Karate correlacionadas con el mundo de valores de los aprendices. Una encuesta de diagnóstico es el método principal del estudio: un cuestionario extendido directo de Cynarski (2006), como cuestionario auxiliar A y un cuestionario de encuesta "Percepción de las artes marciales por parte de los jóvenes practicantes. Motivos y efectos del entrenamiento, valores de las artes marciales frente a otros valores "con la escala de valores de Rokeach (Rokeach, 1973). El material de investigación se basa en declaraciones de los encuestados obtenidas del equipo nacional de la Asociación Polaca de Karate Tradicional. N = 16 (de 18 a 20 años). Los encuestados asocian la práctica de karate y la observación del espíritu de las artes marciales con su propia filosofía de vida. También ven el impacto positivo y multifacético del karate en su personalidad. En la escala de valores instrumentales, el "perdón" es valorado más alto por aquellos que no reconocen el hábito de la búsqueda continua de la meta como el valor más importante en sus vidas. A su vez, la "seguridad familiar" es calificada más alta. El espíritu de la superación personal continua es internalizado por los aprendices que transfieren los valores y principios de las artes marciales a sus vidas. En el caso de los concursantes de karate estudiados, se encontró que el impacto de las reglas de la sala de entrenamiento en su axiología y cosmovisión estaba de acuerdo con la jerarquía de valores declarada.

Palabras clave: pedagogía, artes marciales, kárate, actitudes, valores.

Abstract

The objective of the research is to study the attitudes towards Karate correlated with the world of values of the apprentices. A diagnostic survey is the main method of the study: a direct extended questionnaire from Cynarski (2006), as an auxiliary questionnaire A and a survey questionnaire "Perception of martial arts by young practitioners. Motives and effects of training, values of martial arts versus other values" with Rokeach's scale of values (Rokeach, 1973). The research material is based on statements of respondents obtained from the national team of the Polish Traditional Karate Association. N = 16 (18 to 20 years old). Respondents associate karate practice and observing the spirit of martial arts with their own philosophy of life. They also see the positive and multifaceted impact of karate on his personality. On the instrumental value scale, "forgiveness" is rated higher by those who do not recognize the habit of continuous goal pursuit as the most important value in their lives. In turn, "family security" is rated higher. The spirit of continuous self-improvement is internalized by trainees who transfer the values and principles of martial arts into their lives. In the case of the karate contestants studied, the impact of the training room rules on their axiology and worldview was found to be in accordance with the stated hierarchy of values.

Keywords: pedagogy, martial arts, karate, attitudes, values.

Introduction

Martial arts occupy an important place in the physical culture of students. When *karate* reached Japan (from Okinawa to the main Japanese islands), it was developed there mainly in academic sports clubs. Similarly later, on the international scale, graduates of Japanese universities taught *karate* in various countries responding to the interest especially among students. To this day, it has its important place in physical education and academic sport. In Poland, likewise *judo*, it is being developed, to a large extent, in the students environment (Jones, Jones, 1982; Cynarski, 2000a, 2000b; Litwiniuk, Huk-Wieliczuk, Cynarski, 2004; Obodyński, Cynarski, 2005; Cynarski, Obodyński, Barabasz, Zadarko, 2014).

In the perspective of sport pedagogy, it was decided to address the problem of attitude towards *karate* among the national squad of the Polish Traditional Karate Association. It also concerns their reception of *karate*, the place of *karate* in the hierarchy of values and social context. It is mainly the reception of the values in the area of physical culture, and especially the physical culture of youth and students. We already know that practicing *karate* improves motor and cognitive development, adaptive capacity and subjective self-assessment of health ([Alesi, Bianco, Padulo, Vella, Petrucci et al., 2014](#); Chang, Yeh, Pai, Huang, 2018; Kokun, Korobeynikov, Mytskan, Cynarski, Korobeinikova, 2019). In turn, the state of knowledge affects attitudes (Cynarski, 2006; Cynarski, Kuśnierz, Witkowski, 2012; Arziutov, Iermakov, Bartik, Nosko, Cynarski, 2016; Kuśnierz, Cynarski, Görner, 2017).

The concept of 'attitude' has been adopted in its classical sense with such components as knowledge, emotions and behaviors (Cohen, 1964). All subjects practice sports *karate* (ITKF version - International Traditional Karate Federation), so they confirm their attitude in practice. The rest of the components will be analyzed. By the way, this is also a general tendency that today's youth practicing *karate* want to compete in sports competitions (Jakhel, Pieter, 2013). However, in some varieties *karate* is still cultivated for other purposes (Burrow, 2014; Cynarski, 2014; Cynarski, Sieber, 2016). Does sport competition exclude treating *karate* as a practical philosophy of life (Wróblewski, 2013; Cynarski, 2014; Lloyd, 2014)? Does sports *karate* have the value of effective self-defense (Burrow, 2014; Cynarski, Sieber, 2016)? Hypothesis: *Karate* is treated partially as martial art and *budo* discipline (martial way), partially as modern sport. Purpose: What is *karate* for the best fighters from Poland in the studied age group?

Sample and methodology

A diagnostic survey is the main method of the study. The instruments are: a direct extended questionnaire by Cynarski (2006, pp. 370-396), auxiliary questionnaire A, and survey questionnaire "Perception of martial arts by the practicing youth. Motives and effects of training, values of martial arts against other values", with the Rokeach scale of values 9 (Rokeach, 1973).

The research material is based on the declarations of the respondents obtained from the national squad of the Polish Traditional Karate Association. N=16 (target sample, full) of the questionnaires were collected during the grouping of the national squad.

The subjects are people aged 18-20, mostly young men (68.8%). The subjects are masters of 1 dan (75%) or 2 dan (25%). They all practice the *Shotokan karate*, called traditional in ITKF and, in addition, Brazilian *jiu-jitsu*. All the *karateka* were born and live in Poland, most often in large cities or in villages (43.8% each). In their majority (68.8%) they currently have a secondary, incomplete secondary or elementary education (31.2%). They are pupils or students. Most of them declare the Catholic denomination (56.3%). They are unmarried, with no criminal record. They have practiced *karate* for over 5 years. 75% of the respondents indicated that they had previously practiced a different sport. Most often it was recreational swimming or basketball (12.5% each). Only in one case it was a competitive training. The respondents described the economic situation of their family as 'very good' or 'good' (43.8% of responses each; only 12.4% responded with 'average'). The mother's education was usually higher (56.3%) or secondary (31.3%), father's - secondary (56.3%) or higher (37.5%).

The study used statistical coefficients, non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test, the mean, median, standard deviation, chi-square test and the Fisher's exact test.

Results

Each of the respondents (100%) declares that they currently have a martial arts teacher. However, attitudes towards *karate-do* as a spiritual path of improvement are different. 43.8% of respondents use meditation or similar exercises; only 18.8% declared experiencing special spiritual experiences. Everyone, however, confirmed that practicing Far East fights changed something in their lives. 68.8%, that is the vast majority, attach importance to martial arts principles and their philosophy.

How do the subjects rate their knowledge of *karate* / martial arts philosophy? For 50% of the respondents it is very good or good; for 31.2% - satisfactory, for 18.8% - rather weak. They provided literature or the Internet (43.8%), trainer and training (43.8%) as the sources of knowledge. Others did not answer. The control question was to describe the most important principles and values, as discussed below. The general knowledge was checked by the task: "Please name 5 most outstanding representatives of martial arts". The respondents provided the names: Gichin Funakoshi (precursor of the Shotokan style, author of the idea of *karate-do*), Hidetaka Nishiyama (ITKF founder and chief), as well as the coaches and titled competitors of their organization. Only Bruce Lee (master of *Jeet Kune Do kung-fu* and star of *kung-fu*), Paweł Nastula (excellent Polish judoka) and Yip Man (master of *Ving Tsun kung-fu* style) were mentioned here from beyond *karate*.

For 86.7% of the respondents, the reason for undertaking the training was the desire to learn martial arts and self-defense. Others indicated, as a reason, a lot of their own sports activity since childhood. To question A11 "Why did you choose this kind of art / sport?" - two answers dominated: "interest" (43.8%) and "there was such a karate club in the hometown" (37.5%). Other answers are "accident" (12.5%) and "self-defense skills" (the rest). In 6.3% of cases, the respondent's mother was opposed to their martial arts training. *Karate* fighters themselves apparently consider *karate* something valuable and attractive, because in 68.8% of cases they made attempts to involve other people in training. Most often they were friends (50%) or family (18.8%).

"What role did the teacher(s) play in your training / life?" Here the majority (83.3%) answered: "educational and motivational". Others pointed to the "transfer of knowledge". When asked about the path to the championship, the answers were quite laconic (Table 1).

Tab. 1. Question A7. Frequencies

A7. The process of getting degrees and qualifications?	Answers		Percent of observation
	N	percent	
training, competition, hard work, training seminars	2	11,8%	12,5%
moderately, smoothly	15	88,2%	93,8%
Total	17	100,0%	106,3%

Seven people who are already trying to teach *karate*, when asked about the motives to become a trainer answered: "for development, passion, willingness to conduct martial arts training" (100% response and observation).

To the question: "How did you perceive Far Eastern martial arts in the days when you started to practice them?", the most common answers were: "interesting physical activity" (40%), "fashion" (20%) and "competition who will be stronger"(20%). All responders confirm that their reception has changed over time. To the question: "What significance do Far Eastern martial arts have for you now?" the answer was: "significant, *karate* is a development of the spirit" (81.8%) or "professional sport, work, passion" (18.2% of responses). In the opinion of the vast majority of the respondents (88.9%), this change resulted in the maturation and development of those who practice.

To the question "Is the aspect of art or sport more important to you?" dominated the martial arts aspect - 64.7%, and 84.6% of observations in multiple choice (25.3% and 46.2% chose "sport" respectively). Let's remember that the respondents were the participants of the World and European Championships (47.1%) and the Karate World Cup (5.9%), i.e. the sports upper crust. "Has practicing Far East fights, contact with these arts / sports changed anything in your life? (What?) "- the answers were: "shaped my character"(62.5%), "awareness of life" (18.8%) and "greater physical fitness"(18.8%). Why? - "traditional *karate* developed me emotionally and spiritually" (53.3%) or that it is a martial art and it is about "self-improvement". All respondents (100%) assessed these changes positively. "Please, tell me more about the significance of Far Eastern martial arts in your life today?" -those who answered the question indicated that "it gives me income and / or peace; opportunity to grow". To the next question: "Is this just a way to improve physical fitness or is it something else? If so, what? "answers were given: "way of life" (42.9%), "gives enormous power" and "achieving internal balance" (23.8% each), "self-defense skills" (9.5%).

How much are the respondents familiar with the philosophy of martial arts? They identify it as "striving for perfection through *karate*" (83.3%) or "dojo oath" (16.7%).

"What are the most important principles of Far Eastern martial arts?" For 58.3% of the surveyed they are: "stable emotions, hard work, striving for perfection, confidence, humility", for others - *dojo kun*, or "dojo oath". "Do you attach importance to the philosophy and principles of Far Eastern martial arts?" - "I try to follow these rules in training, as well as in everyday life" (up to 87.5% of responses) or the statement that "there is no *karate* without rules" (12.5%). Which of these principles do respondents consider the most important? For 54.5% they are "hard work, humility, stable emotions", but 36.4% believe that "all are equally important", and 9.1% - "self-confidence". Majority (83.3%), assess the importance of these principles in their lives as fundamental. For 63.6% they provide "peace and fulfilling their dreams", while according to 36.4% of the declarations - "certainty in action".

Do these *karate* rules only apply to training and competitions, or always and everywhere in life? 92.3% of the respondents opted for 'always'. However, in the next question 14.3% answered that these rules only apply to *karate* practice. Others use them "everywhere". Unacceptable in martial arts were: "exaltation" and "politics" (18.2% each), "limiting yourself to martial arts only" and practicing meditation (9.1% each). In the case of "politics", we do not know whether it is about mixing *karate* with the politics of political parties, ideology, or the policy of a given sports organization. 45.5% of respondents do not see anything unacceptable.

What values dominate among the tested *karate* fighters? "What would you consider the most important value in your life?" Most indications (29.4% each) were given to "family / friends" and "habit of constant pursuit of the goal". The most important values "direction in life" (60%), provide support (33.3%) or development opportunity (7.7%). Among other significant values, most of the indications (40%) were "practicing attention concentration and training", but also "family" (20%), "friendship" and "trust" (10% each). Statistical analysis in this group showed one statistically significant difference which indicates that "forgiveness" (Christian and prosocial value) on the scale of instrumental values is rated higher by those who do not recognize the habit of continuous pursuit of the goal as the most important value in their lives. For other variables, no statistically significant differentiation was found. In turn, family safety on the scale of terminal values is rated higher by those who consider family and friends to be the most important value in their lives. In the case of other variables, no statistically significant differentiation was found (Table 3-4).

The instructors, who already have their pupils in *karate*, were asked about the importance of martial arts in the life of their pupils (based on observations and conversations with them). In this case, most answers were indications of "way of life" (46.7%) and "sport" (26.7%). 66.7% of *karate* people notice changes in *karate* over the years, and 33.3% identify them with an understanding of ethical and psychological values (self-improvement). Generally, according to the majority (77.8%) these are positive changes. The factors of change are perceived in the external context ("change of the times", "surrounding people"), the effects of their own work, and the impact of fame.

For the majority (66.7%), "the path of martial arts" is a "life's passion". Everyone practices the *karate* called traditional. They generally declare a positive attitude to the philosophy of traditional martial arts (87.5%), although this philosophy is indifferent to 12.5%. Among such components of "*karate* paths" as "training, technique, fight, philosophy of life", as many as 55% of the votes were given to the training process. Among the many motives for practicing *karate*, the most frequently declared were: "improving fitness", "training self-discipline and willpower" (5.7% each), "self-defense skills" and "philosophy, self-improvement" (5.3% each), "desire to relieve stress, relax", "acquiring perseverance and systematicity" and "good physical training" (4.8% each).

What are the three most important features of the ideal martial arts trainer, according to the respondents? First of all, be a good person, "also a model outside the training room" (16.7%). In addition, of course: "competent in terms of skills and knowledge" and having "the ability to motivate to work" (14.6% each). And also "demanding of the students and themselves" (12.5%).

What interested you in martial arts and caused the desire to take up the training? In the case of 28.6%, those were the patterns from the mass culture - cinema, film, television. For 23.8% - friends' stories. Sometimes also a favorite hero or computer games (9.5% each). Only 4.8% of respondents declared "watched tournament, show". The father had the most significant impact on training (33.3% of responses). In turn, training, according to all the respondents, had a very positive impact on their personality. This applies to the volitional sphere and discipline, controlling emotions, the intellectual sphere (knowledge of Far Eastern culture), in the physical and moral-social areas. Have you managed to achieve sports success? All respondents answered in the affirmative, indicating nationwide (65%) and regional (35%) rankings.

If we appreciate something, we usually encourage the people we care about. What are the most important arguments used by the subjects when encouraging others to train? First of all: "self-defense skills" (26.1%) and "gaining good overall condition and improving physical fitness" (23.9%). "What does your club do to promote martial arts or martial sports?" Most often the answers are: "ads on posters" (15.8%), "shows, camps, groupings" (14.9%), organization of the tournament (13.9%). "What do you think is the most attractive in martial arts?" The most common answers were: "road to perfection, pursuit of mastery" (14.6%), "detachment from everyday problems" (11%), "gaining boldness and confidence" and that "there is always something to be learned" (9.8% each). "What do you dislike about martial arts?" - 52% pointed to "acting, flashiness", 16% (each) to "forms of violence, aggressive behavior" and "possibility to use fighting techniques for evil purposes", and 8% to "monotonous, tedious training methods".

"What would you currently like to achieve in martial arts / sports?" - 32.6% declare: "improve a specific fitness skill or technique", 21.7% - "win in prestigious competitions", 15.2% - "get a higher degree" and "become an instructor". Meanwhile, the surveyed *karate* students train regularly, even every day (Table 2).

Tab. 2. Karate in the youth category. Statistics^a

	Z		Mean	Median	Standard deviation	Minimal	Maximal Valid
	Valid	No data					
A4 How long have you been dealing with these martial arts?	15	1	11,07	11,00	2,492	8	15
A8. How long have you been a trainer? (years)	6	10	1,83	1,50	,983	1	3
A12. How many times a week do you train?	16	0	4,56	4,00	1,504	3	7
B6a. How much art is in what you do and how much sport? art%	13	3	50,77	50,00	11,875	20	70
B6b. sport %	13	3	49,23	50,00	11,875	30	80
M2. Age	16	0	18,50	18,00	1,211	17	20
M4. Time of practicing martial arts / sports (total)	16	0	11,06	10,50	2,489	8	15
M5. Time of training / practicing different methods-varieties (years)	16	0	10,69	10,50	3,177	3	15

a. Group = M

Tab. 3. Karate fighters - the choice of social values. Statistics^a

Z1. Scale of terminal values -	Z		Mean	Median	Standard deviation	Minimal	Maximal
	Valid	No data					
Family security	13	3	3,31	2,00	2,658	1	9
Happiness	13	3	5,92	6,00	3,252	1	12
Mature love	12	4	6,58	4,50	4,602	1	14
Inner harmony	12	4	6,58	5,50	3,502	2	14
Wisdom	13	3	6,69	6,00	4,151	2	14
Self accomplishment	13	3	6,77	6,00	4,126	1	15
Freedom	13	3	7,31	8,00	4,697	1	14
Self respect	13	3	7,69	6,00	4,626	2	17
True friendship	13	3	8,31	9,00	3,750	1	13
Equality	13	3	8,54	7,00	4,196	3	18
National security	13	3	9,23	9,00	5,747	1	18
Pleasure	12	4	11,75	13,00	4,434	4	17
Wealthy life	13	3	11,85	13,00	4,616	2	18
World at peace	13	3	12,69	15,00	5,170	1	18
Salvation	13	3	13,08	15,00	6,171	1	18
Exciting life	13	3	13,31	13,00	2,463	10	18
World of beauty	13	3	13,62	15,00	3,990	6	18
Social recognition	13	3	13,85	15,00	2,641	9	17

a. Group = M

Tab. 4. Karate fighters - the choice of individual values. Statistics^a

Z2. Scale of instrumental values -	Z		Mean	Median	Standard deviation	Minimal	Maximal Valid
	Valid	No data					
Ambition	13	3	4,15	3,00	3,288	1	11
Love	13	3	5,77	5,00	3,700	1	11
Intellect	13	3	6,54	6,00	3,099	2	11
Responsibility	13	3	7,00	6,00	5,000	1	15
Honesty	13	3	7,46	7,00	4,841	1	16
Helpfulness	13	3	8,69	9,00	5,138	3	16
Courage	13	3	8,85	8,00	4,616	1	16
Logic	12	4	8,92	8,50	4,542	2	17
Cleanliness	13	3	8,92	10,00	4,734	2	17
Independence	13	3	9,00	9,00	6,964	1	18
Self-control	13	3	9,38	10,00	4,629	1	17
Broad-mindedness	13	3	10,85	11,00	4,705	4	17
Politeness	13	3	11,46	12,00	4,576	3	18
Placidity	13	3	11,77	14,00	5,449	1	18
Imagination	13	3	12,08	12,00	4,271	6	18
Obedience	13	3	12,62	14,00	4,874	5	18
Forgiveness	13	3	12,85	13,00	4,394	4	18
Talent	13	3	13,46	14,00	3,479	7	18

a. Group = M

Interestingly, among the surveyed athletes, the following values on the Rokeach scale were rarely chosen: faith, health, contact with people and freedom. To the question: "What would you consider the most important value in your life?" - The "habit of continuous pursuit of a goal" was indicated by more men than women (36.4% and 20%, respectively), which gives a weak correlation by the gender variables ($p = 0.48$). Strong dependence was in choosing family and friends - 80% of women, with 9.1% of men (at $p = 0.01$, Table 5).

Tab. 5. "Family/friends" value * M3. Gender Cross-table

What do you consider the most important value in your life?			M3. Gender		Total
			female	male	
family/friends	Yes	N	4	1	5
		%	80,0%	9,1%	31,3%
	No	N	1	10	11
		%	20,0%	90,9%	68,8%
Total		N	5	11	16
		%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
Fisher test p=0,01					

"Faith" was indicated as the highest value by .0% women and 9.1% men, which gives a weak correlation by sex ($p = 0.69$). In the case of 'health', it was 20% women and .0% men (similarly, $p = 0.31$). In the case of "respect" - 40% of women, 9.1% of men, i.e. the relationship is slightly stronger ($p = 0.21$). Elsewhere, no significant gender correlations were found.

In general, the hypothesis that *karate* is treated partially as martial art and *budo* discipline (martial way), and partially as modern sport, was confirmed.

Discussion

For the vast majority of respondents, *karate* is perceived as more martial art than martial sport. The principles and values presented here are generally respected. Self-defense and acquisition of real combat skills are mentioned as the encouragement. However, in sports *karate*, little self-defense is practiced, or it appears in a rather conventional version (Cynarski, 2014). Training in sports *karate* (despite the name "traditional") is focused on the results in sports competitions.

A survey of ITKF *karate* elite athletes allowed to obtain the declarations of traditional *karate* people, who are also athletes at the level of the master class in sports. These statements are a novelty in the research. Sports performance requires self-concentration and this individuality is reinforced by the idea of self-realization and self-improvement. Self-improvement wins here with the values of Christianity (faith, forgiveness) and the

pro-social ones. Only 'family' and its security are slightly more often chosen, but by women. In general, the fighters' indications are quite typical of the sport when it comes to motives and goals. Knowledge about martial arts is quite scarce here, and knowledge of the philosophy of these traditional martial arts is limited to a few slogans, but it is backed by a good level of *karate* practice.

Faith is still alive in the Polish society - the Roman Catholic faith dominates. In the population research, 'family' is the dominant value, while other Christian values are also emphasized. In Cynarski's studies (2006, pp. 319-320), which were carried out in the Podkarpacie region (this is a region with a large majority of supporters of traditional values and conservative party voters), young people practicing martial arts were even more connected with Christian values than the control group. Only the declarations of *judo* fighters (and in its competitive version it is more martial sport than martial art) were closer to the individualistic, consumerist and hedonistic orientation. Do martial sports deriving from martial arts change the pro-social attitude to the individualistic one?

There is a similar study, but it concerns the national representation of juniors in ITKF *karate* (age 16-17). << Women more often than men pointed to the "habit of continuous pursuit of the goal" as the most important value in their lives, while men more often pointed to "family and friends". "Family safety" is better appreciated by those who consider the constant habit of pursuing a goal to be the most important value in their lives. Also, these subjects assess "responsibility" higher. The respondents who did not recognize "the habit of continuous pursuit of the goal" as the most important value in life evaluate "logic" more highly on the scale of instrumental values. >> (Cynarski, Niewczas, 2017a). So, a slightly different distribution of accents turned out in the hierarchy of values.

In the case of seniors (21+), a study was published using a different method - interview, with a qualitative analysis of the statements of the *karateka* respondents, mainly experienced instructors (Cynarski, Niewczas, 2017b, p. 136). In both cases there is no religious indoctrination for Buddhism - "75% declared a Christian or Roman Catholic denomination. The rest did not declare anything. So there are no declared Buddhists or followers of other religions. However, the level of internalization of the values associated with practicing *karate* varies" (Cynarski, Niewczas, 2017b). Only the influence of the ethos of self-improvement through self-discipline and practice of *karate* is well-pronounced.

And what do young people who do not practice *karate* think about *karate* and martial arts? Studies from the areas of Opole, Rzeszów and Wrocław and the surrounding areas show that: "1) the assessment of the impact of martial arts practice is independent of the gender of the respondents, 2) the assessment of the impact of martial arts practice is independent of the age of the respondents, 3) attitudes towards martial arts depend (directly proportionally) on the knowledge of the respondents, 4) the assessment of martial arts value depends on the level of knowledge of the respondents about martial arts. In addition, insufficient knowledge of martial arts as a field of physical culture (movement, sport) was noted in the surveyed high school students" (Cynarski et al., 2012). Little knowledge causes fears of martial arts brutality [24].

Other studies in the martial arts and combat sports environment performed with the same tool found: << 1. The same motivations and aspirations occur in judokas - men and women. 2. A high correlation of aspiration hierarchy (motive choices) occurred in the following groups: *aikido* – non-contact *karate*. 3. The biggest differences in the hierarchy of the aspiration importance occur between women's *judo* and *aikido* and *judo* (women and men) groups and non-contact *karate*. 4. Big differences in the hierarchy of aspirations (motives) occur between judokas and other martial arts. This is due to the different goals of training in martial sports and arts. >> (Obodyński, Cynarski, Witkowski, 2007; Rogowska, Kuśnierz, 2013; Witkowski, Cynarski, Błażejowski, 2013).

We also know that "*karate* children show better speed times, explosive legs strength and coordination skills. They scored better on working memory, visual selective attention and executive functions" (Obodyński, Cynarski, Witkowski, 2008; Piepiora, Witkowski, Piepiora, 2018; Widyastuti, Dimyati, 2019). Also, *karate* training gives global benefits resulting in physiological and psychological gains in children. This is similar for adult *karate* practitioners that practice it for "physiological benefits" (Chang et al., 2018). However, for young people an important driving force of the interest towards *karate* is sports competition. *Karate* contains a great potential of universal values. It is treated as a martial art, *budo* and combat sport at the same time.

Sometimes it can also be a show. Martial arts discipline the mind by disciplining the body. *Budo* is based on the philosophy of warrior's life and is closely related to the spiritual dimension of practice. Combat sport aims to endlessly improve the results. "*Karate* has many advantages not only at the individual level, where it develops self-esteem, a sense of security, emotional self-control, confidence, perseverance, integrity

and will, but also at the social level, where it improves teamwork, interpersonal skills, communication and social interaction. In addition, it teaches the respect for others as well as for tradition and authority. This applies to all people, regardless of their age or social status" (Ben Messaoud, 2016; Piepiora, Szmajke, Migasiewicz, Witkowski, 2016; Witkowski, Piepiora, Leśnik, Migasiewicz, 2017).

In the research of the hierarchy of values vs. self-esteem of persons practising martial arts and those not practicing, women were found to demonstrate higher statistically significant level of values on the aesthetic ($p = 0.02$) and truth ($p = 0.048$) subscales. Non-practicing peers demonstrated higher statistically significant level of hedonistic values ($p = 0.01$), whereas the practising respondents showed 'fitness and physical strength' ($p = 0.008$), moral values ($p = 0.002$), sacred ($p = 0.02$), 'religious sanctities' ($p = 0.002$) and self-esteem ($p = 0.01$). It was observed that men who trained martial arts were characterized by a higher level of self-esteem ($p = 0.03$) and attributed bigger importance to 'fitness and physical strength' ($p = 0.01$), moral values ($p = 0.02$) and religious sanctities ($p = 0.003$). It was found that women from the training group were characterized by a higher level of self-esteem ($p = 0.04$) than female respondents in the control group. The results showed that the most explanatory model of the variables is 'fitness and physical strength', moral values and religious sanctities, as well as self-esteem at a significantly moderate statistical level" (Kostorz, Gniezinska, Nawrocka, 2017). For people practicing it *karate* can be sometimes a form of connectedness to nature (Piepiora, Witkowski, Migasiewicz, 2017; Lipowski, Krokosz, Lada, Slizik, Pasek, 2019; Piepiora, Petecka, 2020; Piepiora, Witkowski, 2020), too.

Karate aims at the spiritual and physical development and improvement of a human being through intense psychophysical experiences experienced during sports combat or self-defense training. The philosophy and the original spirit of karate-do come from several sources: Zen Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, as well as samurai-chivalry traditions. Constant active karate practice with the consistent implementation of ambitious goals and constant adherence to the moral attitude will always lead to success. By perceiving traditional values and internalizing the principles indicated, the way of karate becomes a style and a way of life (Piepiora, Piepiora, 2016). Therefore, the pro-health values of karate come to the fore, understood in such a way as to develop and improve your life through training. Physical activity, mental training, rational nutrition and avoidance of stimulants are important here. A special feature of karate is its philosophical emphasis on the principle of non-violence. Whenever possible, the

adept should avoid physical confrontation. This shows that pro-health karate attitudes are important for the whole of society.

The philosophy of living in harmony with Tao and nature represents the Taoist trend, where we also find the idea of self-improvement (Baka, 2008). Here, however, the issues of energy circulation in the body and health, balancing and harmonizing opposing energies, and caring for ecology are more often emphasized. Fashion for such an issue causes the necessary virtue to be lost in parallel. *The Book of the Way and the Virtues* is, after all, the main text left to us by master Lao Tzu (2001). In the concept of *karate-do*, the element “do” (Chinese “Dao”) comes from Taoism. Philosophical Taoism has a significant impact on the spiritual dimension of karate (Cynarski, 2018).

Spiritual dimensions of martial arts are sometimes taken into account by researchers, as in M. Maliszewski's field studies (Maliszewski, 1996). He described numerous varieties of martial arts as meditation systems. In fact, some karate schools recommend meditation exercises.

Conclusions

1. The personality-forming function of *karate*, as one of the paths in martial arts, applies to various cultural circles. The ethos of continuous self-improvement is internalized by the trainees who transfer the values and principles of martial arts to their lives. Persistent training improves the body and shapes the character.
2. In the case of the *karate* fighters studied here (age 18-20), the impact of the training room rules on their axiology and worldview was found to be in accordance with the previously declared hierarchy of values. Based on the obtained results, it can be hypothesized that, in this case too, the sports effort causes an increase in individualistic attitudes. However, the proof of this assumption requires further research.

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