

PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS KARATE AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE POLISH JUNIOR REPRESENTATION SQUAD: DIAGNOSTIC SURVEY

PERCEPCIÓN Y ACTITUD HACIA EL KARATE DE LOS MIEMBROS DE LA ESCUADRA JUVENIL POLACA: EXAMEN DE DIAGNÓSTICO

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ABSTRACT

Attitudes and motivations of people practicing *Karate* are studied by a relatively small group of researchers. Such surveys have not yet been conducted among the national *Karate* squad of the Polish Traditional *Karate* Association for this age group. The anthropology of martial arts provides a scientific framework for this study. The scientific problem was formulated as the following questions: What is the perception of *karate* and attitude toward *karate* in the Polish junior squad in relation to their values? What are the preferences of the surveyed in terms of value hierarchy? Does gender variable differentiate the selection of the most important values? The main method of empirical research here is a diagnostic survey. The tools are: a direct extended questionnaire by Cynarski, auxiliary questionnaire A, survey questionnaire "Perception of martial arts by the practicing youth. Motives and effects of training, values of martial arts against other values", and the Rokeach scale. The research material is based on the responses made by the members of national squad of the Polish Traditional *Karate* Association 2016, junior category (16-17), N = 25. The study used statistical coefficients, non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test, the mean (\bar{X}), median (M_e), standard deviation (S), chi-square test (X^2) and the Fisher's exact test. Results: in general, the very fact of cultivating *Karate* is highly valued. The gender variable differentiates the choice of the most important values - women more often point to "family and friends", as well as "respect". For most of the subjects, the *Karate* philosophy is important, but this does not imply internalisation of the imperative of "continuous pursuit of the goal." *Novum* in this study is the inclusion of the level of advancement, gender variable and the correlation of choices through answers to specific questions. Conclusions: the respondents most frequently pointed to "family security", "happiness" and "wisdom" on the scale of terminal values, "ambition" and "responsibility" on the scale of instrumental values.

KEYWORDS: traditional *Karate*, motivation, perception, values

RESUMEN

Las actitudes y motivaciones de los practicantes de *Karate* son estudiadas por un grupo relativamente pequeño de investigadores. Tales estudios todavía no han sido realizados entre la escuadra nacional de la Asociación Tradicional Polaca de *Karate* para esta categoría de edad. La antropología de las artes marciales proporciona un marco científico para este estudio. El problema científico fue formulado con las preguntas siguientes: ¿Cuál es la percepción y actitud hacia el *Karate* en la escuadra juvenil polaca en lo referente a sus valores? ¿Cuáles son las preferencias de los examinados en término de la jerarquía del valor? ¿Hace la variable género distinguir la selección de los valores más importantes? El método principal de esta investigación empírica es el examen diagnóstico. Las herramientas son: el extenso cuestionario directo de Cynarski, el cuestionario auxiliar A, cuestionario del examen " Percepción de las artes marciales por la juventud practicante. Motivos y efectos del entrenamiento, valores de las artes marciales contra otros valores " y la escala *Rokeach*.

El material de la investigación se basa en las respuestas ofrecidas por los miembros de la escuadra nacional de la Asociación Polaca de *Karate* Tradicional-2016, categoría juvenil (16-17 años), número de muestra (N) = 25. En este estudio se empleó el coeficiente estadístico, prueba no-paramétrica de *U Mann-Whitney*, la media aritmética (\bar{X}), la mediana (M_e), la desviación *standard* (*S*), la prueba chi-cuadrado (X^2) y la prueba exacta de Fisher. Resultados: en general, el mismo hecho de cultivar el *Karate* fue muy valorado. La variable género distingue la opción de los valores más importantes -las mujeres con mayor frecuencia señalaron a la "familia y amigos" y el "respeto". Para la mayoría de los sujetos, la filosofía *Karate* es importante, pero esto no implica la internalización del imperativo de "búsqueda continua de la meta". Lo nuevo de este estudio está en la inclusión del nivel de progreso, la variable género y la correlación de opciones con respuestas a las preguntas específicas. Conclusiones: Los encuestados con mucha frecuencia optaron por la "seguridad de la familia", la "felicidad" y la "sabiduría" en la escala de valores terminales, así como la "ambición" y la "responsabilidad" en la escala de valores instrumentales.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Karate* tradicional, motivación, percepción, valores

INTRODUCTION

Jakhel and Pieter (2013), provided a very interesting picture of changes prevailing among people studying *karate*, as well as dominant motives of this practice. This is the result of 30 years of observations of the community, however, focusing on the organization of sport *karate*. They write that young people want to participate in the sport *Karate* rivalry.

Attitudes and motivations of people practicing *karate* are studied by a relatively small group of researchers. Such surveys have not yet been conducted among the national *Karate* squad of the Polish Traditional *Karate* Association for this age group. The anthropology of martial arts. Bolelli (2008) and Cynarski (2012), provides a scientific framework for this study.

We focus here on the Shotokan *karate* school and organization, created by GM Hidetaka Nishiyama (1928-2008). It is cultivated by ITKF (International Traditional *Karate-Do* Federation), and by the Polish Traditional *Karate* Association.

Studies on the training / education process in various *Karate* varieties and the perception of *Karate* by the trainees have been conducted by various research teams (cf. Olivares, Enrique, Cespedes, 2015; Georgios, 2016; Gonzales, Clavelo, Martinez, F.E. and Martinez, R., 2016; Cynarski and, Niewczas, 2017). However, the national *Karate* representation in the ITKF variety and the junior age group have not been studied so far.

SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY

The scientific problem was formulated as the following questions: What is the perception of *Karate* and attitude toward *Karate* in the Polish junior squad in relation to their values? What are the preferences of the surveyed in terms of value hierarchy? Does the gender variable differentiate the choice of the most important values?

The main method of empirical research here is a diagnostic survey. The tools are: the Cynarski [2006] direct extended questionnaire, auxiliary questionnaire A, questionnaire of the survey "Perception of martial arts by young people practicing them. Motives and effects of training and the values of martial arts compared to other values", and the Milton Rokeach scale (Rokeach 1973; Cynarski, 2006). The research material is based on the responses made by the members of the national squad of the Polish Traditional *Karate* Association 2016. 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.

All the juniors participating in the traditional *Karate* (ITKF variety) seminar were tested, which is a so-called full test. This is N=25, including 32% of women, 68% of men. The junior category includes competitors aged 16-17 (mean age 16.24). They were born in 2000 (60%) and 1999. Because of their age, they are pupils and students, people of free status (92%); no criminal record (96%). In 80% of cases, their family status (economic situation) is very good or good. In most cases their parents have higher education - 68% of mothers

and 60% of fathers. They come mainly from small and large cities (64%). They have practiced traditional karate (Shotokan style, ITKF) for over 5 years. 92% of the respondents reached the level of 1 dan. All respondents are both born and living in Poland. Most of them have primary education (76%) and secondary (20%), religion -Roman Catholic (76%). Only 12% of the respondents had experienced another sport discipline.

RESULTS

Values in the Milton Rokeach's scale were mostly negative (Table 1). Mann Whitney's U test in the junior group did not show statistically significant differences in the terminal and instrumental scale due to the choice of the habit of continuing goal pursuit (the most important value in life).

Tab. 1. Goal pursuit and M.Rokeach's values-report-juniors karate ITKF

D1. What would you consider to be the most important value in your life?	Habit of continuing goal pursuit												p U Mann Whitney's
	Yes				No				Total				
	\bar{X}	M _e	N	S	\bar{X}	M _e	N	S	\bar{X}	M _e	N	S	
Z1. Scale of terminal values													
National security	7,40	7,00	5	3,050	6,94	7,00	16	4,389	7,05	7,00	21	4,043	,706
Family security	2,25	1,00	4	2,500	4,88	2,00	16	5,239	4,35	2,00	20	4,880	,233
Mature love	6,80	3,00	5	6,648	8,00	7,00	16	5,633	7,71	6,00	21	5,737	,430
Wealthy life	10,20	8,00	5	4,494	10,31	9,50	16	5,237	10,29	9,00	21	4,961	,901
Wisdom	6,00	6,00	5	1,871	7,19	5,00	16	4,651	6,90	5,00	21	4,146	,967
Self accomplishment	9,00	8,00	5	5,385	11,50	13,00	16	5,680	10,90	10,00	21	5,585	,454
Self respect	8,80	7,00	5	5,675	8,31	7,00	16	4,527	8,43	7,00	21	4,675	,901
World at peace	9,80	9,00	5	4,324	9,87	9,00	15	4,340	9,85	9,00	20	4,221	,861
True friendship	10,40	12,00	5	6,107	7,88	8,50	16	4,603	8,48	9,00	21	4,956	,384
Pleasure	8,60	8,00	5	3,050	10,38	12,00	16	4,500	9,95	10,00	21	4,201	,361
Inner harmony	7,80	8,00	5	3,033	9,93	10,00	15	3,195	9,40	9,50	20	3,218	,220
Equality	10,00	11,00	5	3,317	9,00	10,00	16	5,177	9,24	11,00	21	4,742	,868
Happiness	4,00	3,00	5	3,391	5,87	4,00	15	4,642	5,40	3,00	20	4,358	,627
World of beauty	15,00	17,00	5	3,742	13,13	14,00	16	4,349	13,57	14,00	21	4,202	,428
Social recognition	12,60	13,00	5	1,817	12,80	14,00	15	3,052	12,75	13,00	20	2,751	,757
Freedom	8,60	11,00	5	4,827	8,44	8,50	16	4,953	8,48	9,00	21	4,802	1,000
Salvation	14,75	14,50	4	1,708	13,81	14,50	16	3,885	14,00	14,50	20	3,539	,810
Exciting life	12,40	15,00	5	6,427	11,69	11,00	16	5,630	11,86	14,00	21	5,668	,900
Z2. Scale of instrumental values													
Ambition	3,20	2,00	5	3,834	5,13	5,00	15	4,658	4,65	2,50	20	4,452	,349
Cleanliness	8,80	10,00	5	5,357	8,00	7,00	15	5,732	8,20	7,50	20	5,512	,725
Intellect	6,75	6,50	4	3,202	7,20	5,00	15	4,799	7,11	5,00	19	4,433	,920
Love	5,60	2,00	5	7,232	6,79	5,50	14	5,409	6,47	4,00	19	5,748	,425
Logic	9,00	8,00	5	5,874	8,60	9,00	15	4,453	8,70	8,50	20	4,680	,965
Independence	8,60	8,00	5	2,074	8,40	8,00	15	3,225	8,45	8,00	20	2,929	,691
Imagination	10,40	8,00	5	4,506	11,60	12,00	15	4,205	11,30	12,00	20	4,194	,661
Responsibility	4,20	2,00	5	4,382	5,29	5,50	14	3,688	5,00	3,00	19	3,786	,777
Courage	5,60	4,00	5	5,030	7,87	8,00	15	4,533	7,30	7,00	20	4,635	,293
Self-Control	6,60	5,00	5	2,702	8,80	9,00	15	4,395	8,25	9,00	20	4,089	,426
Broad-Mindedness	9,40	8,00	5	4,037	10,87	10,00	15	4,138	10,50	10,00	20	4,059	,380
Placidity	6,25	5,50	4	3,403	8,27	10,00	15	3,882	7,84	8,00	19	3,790	,268
Hepfulness	11,00	12,00	4	2,708	8,64	9,00	14	4,634	9,17	11,50	18	4,328	,484
Obedience	15,75	16,50	4	2,872	12,36	14,00	14	4,601	13,11	14,50	18	4,444	,149
Honesty	12,50	14,00	4	4,435	11,29	14,00	14	5,225	11,56	14,00	18	4,961	,788
Politeness	13,25	15,00	4	5,679	11,93	15,00	14	5,609	12,22	15,00	18	5,483	,872
Talent	15,75	16,00	4	1,258	13,36	14,50	14	4,700	13,89	15,50	18	4,269	,520
Forgiveness	13,50	13,00	4	2,517	11,43	12,00	14	5,774	11,89	13,00	18	5,234	,669

Legend: \bar{X} -Media arithmetic media, S-Standar Desviation, M_e - Mediana, N-Number of samples

Statistical analysis in the junior group showed one statistically significant difference, which indicates that "freedom" in the scale of terminal values is assessed higher by those who mark family and friends as the most important values in their lives. There were no statistically significant differences for other variables.

Karate trainees have practiced karate on average for 9 years with a frequency of 2 to 7 times a week. The vast majority (80%) see in this practice more martial arts (on average 58.5%) than sport. The respondents most often pointed to "family security", "happiness" and "wisdom" in the scale of terminal values (Table 2), and "ambition" and "responsibility" in the instrumental value scale (Table 3).

Tab. 2. Statistics for junior *karate*: terminal values (by importance of hierarchy)

Z1. Scale of terminal values	Z		Mean	Median	Standard deviation	Minimal	Maximal
	Valid	No data					
Family security	20	5	4,35	2,00	4,880	1	18
Happiness	20	5	5,40	3,00	4,358	1	13
Wisdom	21	4	6,90	5,00	4,146	2	18
National security	21	4	7,05	7,00	4,043	1	18
Mature love	21	4	7,71	6,00	5,737	1	18
Self respect	21	4	8,43	7,00	4,675	2	17
True friendship	21	4	8,48	9,00	4,956	1	18
Freedom	21	4	8,48	9,00	4,802	2	16
Equality	21	4	9,24	11,00	4,742	2	17
Inner harmony	20	5	9,40	9,50	3,218	4	16
World at peace	20	5	9,85	9,00	4,221	4	17
Pleasure	21	4	9,95	10,00	4,201	3	16
Wealthy life	21	4	10,29	9,00	4,961	4	18
Self accomplishment	21	4	10,90	10,00	5,585	2	18
Exciting life	21	4	11,86	14,00	5,668	1	18
Social recognition	20	5	12,75	13,00	2,751	8	17
World of beauty	21	4	13,57	14,00	4,202	4	18
Salvation	20	5	14,00	14,50	3,539	5	18

Legend: \bar{X} -Media arithmetic media, S-Standar Desviation, M_e - Mediana N-Number of samples

Tab. 3. Statistics for junior *karate*: instrumental values (by importance of hierarchy)

Z2. Scale of instrumental values	Z		\bar{X}	M_e	S	Minimal	Maximal
	Valid	No data					
Ambition	20	5	4,65	2,50	4,452	1	18
Responsibility	19	6	5,00	3,00	3,786	1	12
Love	19	6	6,47	4,00	5,748	1	18
Intellect	19	6	7,11	5,00	4,433	1	16
Courage	20	5	7,30	7,00	4,635	1	18
Placidity	19	6	7,84	8,00	3,790	1	13
Cleanliness	20	5	8,20	7,50	5,512	2	18
Self-Control	20	5	8,25	9,00	4,089	2	17
Independence	20	5	8,45	8,00	2,929	4	13
Logic	20	5	8,70	8,50	4,680	1	18

Helpfulness	18	7	9,17	11,50	4,328	2	15
Broad-Mindedness	20	5	10,50	10,00	4,059	3	18
Imagination	20	5	11,30	12,00	4,194	4	17
Honesty	18	7	11,56	14,00	4,961	3	17
Forgiveness	18	7	11,89	13,00	5,234	1	18
Politeness	18	7	12,22	15,00	5,483	3	18
Obedience	18	7	13,11	14,50	4,444	4	18
Talent	18	7	13,89	15,50	4,269	2	18

Legend: \bar{X} -Media arithmetic media, S-Standar Desviation, M_e - Mediana

88% of the respondents declare that they still have a martial arts teacher (karate). 84% state that karate has changed something in their lives. 64% of the respondents attach importance to the philosophy and principles of Oriental martial arts. 48% assess their knowledge of martial arts as good or very good, 20% as sufficient, and 16% are not interested in this philosophy. The most common source of knowledge about this philosophy is the trainer (40%) or sensei (16%). Only 28% use meditation exercises or the like. 20% of juniors gave an affirmative answer to the question, "Have you experienced some special spiritual, mystical, etc. experiences?"

The analysis of the group comparison gave the following results. For the vast majority of respondents (76%) the most important value in life is not the "habit of continuous goal pursuit" and "sincerity". In both cases there was no statistically significant gender difference.

For 52% of respondents this value is family or friends. Only for 4% -faith/religion, likewise "health" (tab 4) and "respect" (also for 4%). None of the surveyed women indicated "faith" and "health". On the other hand, women were more likely to point to "family and friends" ($p=0.21$) and "respect" ($p=0.32$).

Tab. 4 Junior karate study. Question: What do you consider to be the most important value in your life?

Health		M2. Wiek	M4. Time of practicing martial arts/sports (total)	M5. Time of training/practicing different styles (years)
Yes	\bar{X}	16,00	5,00	5,00
	M_e	16,00	5,00	5,00
	N	1	1	1
	S	-	-	-
No	\bar{X}	16,25	9,14	9,24
	M_e	16,00	9,00	9,00
	N	24	22	21
	S	,676	2,054	2,047
Total	\bar{X}	16,24	8,96	9,05
	M_e	16,00	9,00	9,00
	N	25	23	22
	S	,663	2,184	2,193

Legend: \bar{X} -Media arithmetic media, S-Standar Desviation, M_e - Median, N-Number of sample

56% of the respondents tried to involve other people to the training. This means that they highly value karate.

How about the knowledge of the surveyed concerning the most outstanding karate masters? Among the five most prominent representatives of martial arts, the respondents mentioned historical figures (Gichin Funakoshi), celebrities from the mass culture such as Bruce Lee and the ITKF people. This is knowledge confined to the important figures within their own organization and the icons of mass culture, which, in the case of juniors, is rather understandable.

DISCUSSION

The practice of karate is well suited to the process of socialization (Jones A. and Jones R., 1982). This is due to the existence of a specific karate culture as a component of Budo culture [cf. Cihounkova, Reguli, 2016; Georgios, 2016; Lin, 2016; Piepiora et al., 2016] exposing the tradition, normative ethics and the authority of sensei -tutor- teacher. The karate culture enriches the culture of sport and is a means of improving the emotional self-control of those who practice it (Cynarski and Obodynski, 2004, Kusnierz, Cynarski and Litwiniuk, 2014; and Piepiora et al. 2016).

Capulis, Dombrovskis and Guseva (2014), pointed to positive changes in the emotional stability of 14-15 year old boys, so slightly younger. All juniors presented in the research results above have this period already behind. Their stay in *karate* indirectly confirms this stability.

Application of *Karate* in physical education went beyond Okinawan schools and Japanese universities long time ago (cf. Georgios, 2016). However, combining education and physical culture with sporting rivalry has long been a source of controversy among educators. Martial arts practitioners often practice for non-sporting purposes (Choi, 1994; Sieber, 2011; Zeng, Xie, Cynarski, 2013; Cynarski, 2014; Zeng and Cynarski, 2016).

Cynarski's research (2006), conducted in the south-eastern region of Poland showed that for young people practicing Asian martial arts religion and faith in God are among the most important values in life, apart from the family. The studies outlined above were dominated by indications of national security and family, as well as individual ambitions. The difference, in particular, is due to the fact that this time the masters of sport, who are pursuing their sports careers, have been examined. In addition, these are nationwide results, however, from one organization. In general, the perception of karate or other martial arts and martial sports is influenced by environmental and cultural factors (cf. Ben, 2015; Gonzales et al., 2016 and Cynarski, Gorner, 2017).

Similar results, on top of those described in this study, were found in judo research (Cynarski, 2006), and in Czech *Karate* studies (sport *Karate* and Shotokan style (Cihounkova and Reguli, 2016). The self-improvement values prevailed here. Apparently the athlete's performance concentrates mainly on themselves and their careers.

Another research observed that men who trained martial arts were characterized by a higher level of self-esteem and attributed bigger value to the importance of fitness and physical strength, moral values, and religious sanctities. It was found that women from the training group were characterized by a higher level of self-esteem than respondents in the control group. The results showed that the most explanatory model variables are 'fitness and physical strength', moral values and religious sanctities, and self-esteem showing a significantly moderate statistical level (Kostorz, Gniezinska and Nawrocka, 2017).

Novum of this study is in the fact that such a research has not been done so far for the National ITKF *Karate* representation and for the junior age group. We include here the level of advancement, the gender variable and the correlation of choices - answers to specific questions. There are new aspects important for the description of the phenomenon of *Karate* as a martial art and a martial sport, as declared choices of values. Contrary to the results of the senior members of the Polish Traditional *Karate* Association, who in their hierarchy of values rank highly the family and ethics of martial arts (Cynarski and Niewczas, 2017), juniors only in 52% pointed to family and friends.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The gender variable differentiates the choice of the most important values -women more often pointed to "family and friends" and "respect". In general, the very fact of cultivating *Karate* is highly valued. It can be presumed that juniors are still at a stage preceding in-depth reflection on the axiology and sense of their own way of life.

2. Respondents most often pointed to "family security", "happiness" and "wisdom" on the scale of terminal values, as well as "ambition" and "responsibility" on the scale of instrumental values. For most of the subjects, *Karate* philosophy is important, but this does not imply the internalisation of the imperative of "continuous goal pursuit."

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