

Dagmara Budnik-Przybylska

Changing in motivation for practising karate as individuals gain experience through training

The ultimate objective of karate is neither victory nor defeat but rather the cultivation of the character of those who practise karate

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Słowa kluczowe: sztuki walki, motywacja wewnętrzna, motywacja zewnętrzna, rozwój osobisty

Introduction

Karate has always been and will doubtless remain a discipline which draws a great number of young people.

Fechner nad Ruciński¹ claim that karate is also an art – the so-called Samurai path of harmony between fitness and wisdom; it is a sport – a kind of rivalry, fight, defeat and victory; most of all, though, it is a means to conquer one's own tiredness, pain or dejection, a means to conquer oneself.

The attractiveness of karate is based on physical as well as mental presumptions. Miłkowski claims that:

- karate is a type of physical activity open to all age groups – from childhood until late old age;
- it shapes the entire body in a harmonious and symmetrical manner;
- it stresses overall development, fitness, especially elasticity, motor coordination, dynamics and precision².

¹ P. Fechner, M. Ruciński, *Karate – Do. Pokonać samego siebie*, Warszawa 1985, p. 2.

² J. Miłkowski, *Sztuki i sporty walki Dalekiego Wschodu*, Warszawa 1987, p. 152.

There is a lot of studies that concern motivation in sport³. But only few regard participant motivation in martial arts. In research of Stefanek⁴ it occurs that motives for participation in 250 male and female collegiate Taekwondo participants of varying belt ranks were found to be similar to those motives found in traditional sport such as fun, physical exercises, friendship, and skill development. But also there were specific motives for the top Taekwondo participants which integrated improving both mental and physical health, increase perseverance and reduce stress- philosophy of martial arts suggesting that mind- body – spirit is important to participants⁵.

In Breese's investigation⁶ of 72 Taekwon-Do participants in New Zealand, motivation for participation was different dependent upon overall time involved in the martial art with those involved for greater than 4 years identifying personal power and control as their primary motivation whilst those involved for less than 2 years identified fitness as their main motivation.

In Zaggelidis's⁷ study using a modified 28-item PMQ in judo and karate practitioners in the sample of 113 mixed ability males and females it revealed no significant differences between the two sports and genders as regards to the main motives encountered for entering the sports. The three most highly ranked motives identified were interest in the sport, health benefits and character cultivation.

Research using 28-item adapted version of the Participation Motivation Questionnaire with additional demographic questions in a group of 75 practitioners Tai Chi, Karate, Kung fu, Aikido, Jeet Kune Do, British Free Fighting, Taekwon-Do and Jujitsu revealed that the rank order in terms of participation motives was: 1-Affiliation; 2-Friendship; 3-Fitness; 4-Reward/status; 5-Competition; 6-Situational and

³ C.S. Dweck, *Motivational processes affecting learning*, „American Psychologist” 1986; 41, p. 1040–1048; J.L. Duda, *Motivation in sport settings: A goal perspective approach*, [in:] *Motivation in sport and exercise* G.C. Roberts, Champaign, IL, 1992, p. 57–92; J.L.Duda, *Maximizing motivation in sport and physical education among children and adolescents: The case for greater task involvement*, „Quest” 1996; 48, p. 290–302; C.S. Dweck, *Self-theories and goals: Their role in motivation, personality, and development*, Philadelphia, PA 1999; R.S Weinberg, D. Gould, *Foundations of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, Champaign, United States 2007, p. 125–156; R X Cox, *Sport Psychology. Concept and Applications*, New York 2007, p. 103–142; E.L. Deci, R.M. Ryan, *Facilitating optimal motivation and psychological well-being across life's domains*, „Canadian Psychology” 2008, 49, p.14–23.

⁴ K.A. Stefanek, *An exploration of participation motives among collegiate taekwondo participants*, Oregon 2004.

⁵ C. Iedwab, R. Standefer, *Martial Arts: mind and body*, Champaign Ill 2000; C. Lu, *An understanding of body-mind relation based on eastern movement disciplines and its implication in physical education*, Avante 2003; 9, p. 66–73.

⁶ H.P. Breese, *Participation motivation in ITF/NZ Taekwon-Do: A study of the central districts region*, Wellington NZ 1998.

⁷ G. Zaggelidis, K. Martinidis, S. Zaggelidis, *Comparative study of factors – motives in beginning practicing judo and karate*, „Physical Training: Fitness for Combatives” 2004; May, p. 1–8.

7-Skill development. Participants who trained for more than 4 hours per week placed greater importance on the underpinning philosophy of the martial art⁸.

An individual undergoes a change while practising karate. Do the motives change accordingly as a person acquires experience in training?

Material and Methods

The current article presents analyses of the relationships between the motivation of the participants in the study, connected with the choice of training, and the psychodemographic profile traits of individuals who practise karate.

The study group of karatekas consisted of 167 people between the ages of 15 and 52, with the average age of 25 (106 men and 61 women). The individuals displayed various levels of proficiency. The group referred to as beginners (64 people) were karatekas with lower student ranks: 9th-4th kyu as well as people with no rank. The advanced group (100 people) were those with higher student ranks (3rd-1st kyu) and master ranks (dan).

A diagnostic survey with the application of the author's own questionnaire was the basic study tool. The questionnaire was anonymous and consisted of so called certificate and open questions related to the factors behind their choice of karate, and a motivation analysis related to the willingness to continue with the training, as well as an analysis of the influence of psychodemographic profile traits on the shape of the perceived change in behaviour as a result of karate.

The following research problem was formulated: The analysis of training motivation as perceived by karatekas.

Additionally, the following research questions were posed:

- What were the motives driving karatekas at the start of their training?
- In what way do karatekas substantiate their willingness to continue training?
- What changes in their own behaviour do karatekas perceive in connection with karate?

The analyses and comparisons were conducted with the help of the one-factor repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) with precise post-hoc comparisons using Tukey's HSD (Honestly Significant Difference) method.

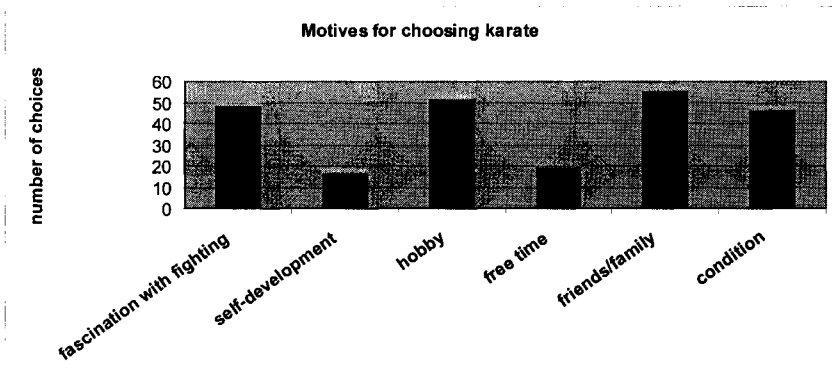
Results In order to analyse the motivation of criterion group participants in the study to undertake karate, an open question was posed: *What prompted you to practise karate?* The participants were asked to provide a brief description of their motives. To conduct a detailed qualitative analysis of the motivation, the answers were divided

⁸ G.W. Jones, K.S. Mackay, D.M. Peters, *Participation motivation in martial artists in the West Midlands region of England*, „Journal of Sports Science and Medicine” 2006; CSSI, p. 28–34.

into the following categories:

- **Fascination with fighting** – with stress on learning self-defence, films with Bruce Lee and other actors falling within this category. Sample answers included: *I have been interested in martial arts since I was a child, Bruce Lee was my kindergarten hero, I have wanted to learn how to cope if I was ever attacked in the street etc.;*
- **Personal development**, with the issues of confidence and personal development presented in this category, such as *reining in one's character, willingness to control the mind and the body;*
- **Hobby** – with stress on the wish to get to know karate and martial arts, and a fascination with the culture of the East;
- **Free time**, where sample answers included: *a way to spend free time, occupying free time after work;*
- **Friends/family** – with such answers as: *my dad, who does karate, persuaded me, I was encouraged by a friend;*
- **Condition** – *thanks to the training I will be fitter and physically stronger, a wish to improve one's body shape and condition;*

Picture 1.
Motives for choosing karate



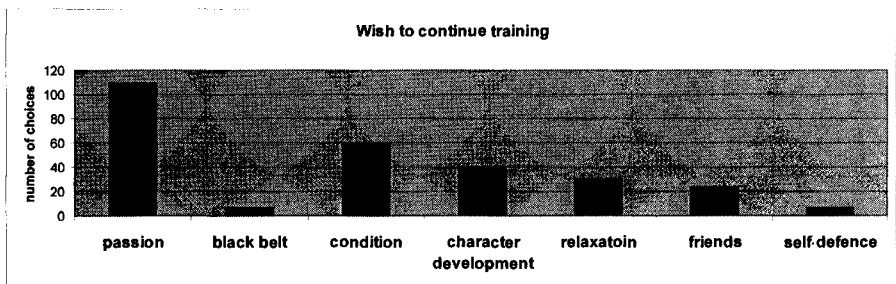
On the basis of the data presented in the graph above, it may be concluded that the respondents were most often persuaded to start training by family or friends, with such factors as a hobby, a wish to get to know karate or martial arts, a fascination with the culture of the East mentioned in succession. A further motive was a fascination with fighting or learning the art of self-defence, or films with Bruce Lee or other actors. A fourth motive in the sequence was condition i.e the wish to stay fit. The fewest answers were connected with the way of spending free time and self-development.

The subsequent part contained an analysis of the reasons for which the respondents continued with their karate training. To establish this, the following question was posed: *Why do you continue to practise karate?* The manner in which the answers were given was analogous to the previous (open) question, with the answers categorised as follows:

- **Passion** – *addiction, interested in it, a way of life, gives me pleasure;*
- **Result goal** – *I want to get a black belt, take part in competitions, competition achievements;*
- **Self-defence** – *I want to be able to defend myself in the street, cope in dangerous situations;*
- **Developing character** – *I feel more self-confident, conquering weaknesses, self-discipline, persistence in achieving goals, self-development, mental balance;*
- **Condition** – *I train to improve my condition;*
- **Way of relaxing** – *it allows me to forget everyday worries, escape from studying, a way of relaxing after work;*
- **Friends** – *I've met many new friends.*

Picture 2.

Motivation connected with the wish to continue training – frequency of choice



The results presented in the above graph indicate that the most frequent answers were connected with passion i.e. what makes life meaningful, followed by motives related to keeping in shape and character development. The least frequent choices concerned the result goal i.e. the wish to obtain a black belt or factors connected with self-defence. It would seem that this result may be interpreted as a qualitative change in motivation to practise karate vs. the motivation to start training. While the motives behind practising karate were external – mostly friends – the motivation to continue training seems to be of a more internal nature.

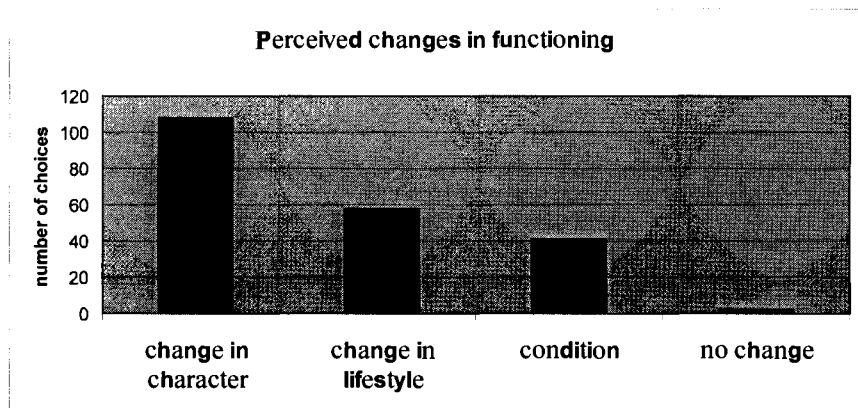
The next element to undergo analysis was the perceived change in the karatekas themselves as a result of karate. As previously, the respondents answered another open question: *Do you think that the training has changed you in any way?* The answers were classified according to the following categories:

- Change in character, where sample answers included: acquiring a degree of self-confidence, regularity, development of character, heightening of inner powers, self-discipline and self-development, concentration;
- Change in lifestyle – distance towards various everyday matters, the training sessions „*have shaped me*”, new friendships, a way of spending free time;
- Condition;
- No change observed – no change in self-image perceived.

By analysing the data presented in the graph above, one may notice that the majority of answers concerned a change in character, for example: „it gave me self-confidence”, „it taught me to be methodical, self-disciplined and concentrated”. Next in the sequence was a change in lifestyle, with the respondents stating that karate allowed them, for example, to distance themselves from various everyday matters. The individuals who started at a young age and still continue gave such answers as „karate has shaped me”. Next came answers relating to karate’s influence on the improvement in the respondents’ condition. The fewest choices concerned the statement that karate had had no influence in any way – this answer was given by those who have been training for the shortest period of time.

Picture 3.

Perceived changes in functioning as a result of training – frequency of choice



The conclusion which may be drawn from the above analyses is that motivation has been undergoing change at various stages of training, so for this reason an over-

view of motives from the temporal perspective has been provided below. The analyses include a valuation of the motive of the opinion of one's friends, attaching importance to self-development, self-defence, self-appreciation/self-confidence as well as condition.

Role of personal relationships at various stages of training

Table 1.

Role of personal relationships at various stages of training

Friends	N=146				
	M	SD	t	df	p
Start	0.38	0.49			
Continuation	0.16	0.37	4.47	145	0.000
Start	0.38	0.49			
Change	0.03	0.16	8.57	145	0.000
Continuation	0.16	0.37			
Change	0.03	0.16	4.18	145	0.000

Through analysis of the data included in the graph and table above it can be seen that family and friends had the greatest influence on respondents at the start of their training. Most frequently it was family and friends who encouraged the respondents to start, with their role diminishing as training progressed. During analysis of the subjective change observed in the functioning of karatekas as a result of training the family and friends motive appeared sporadically.

Role of self-development at various stages of training

Table 2.

Role of self-development at various stages of training

Self-development N=146	M	SD	t	df	p
start	0.04	0.20			
continuation	0.27	0.45	-6.39	145	0.000
start	0.04	0.20			
change	0.49	0.50	-10.65	145	0.000
continuation	0.27	0.45			
change	0.49	0.50	-4.56	145	0.00

On the basis of the above table and graph it could be concluded that the wish to develop oneself constituted the least frequently selected motive in taking up karate. Its value, however, grew as training progressed. This motive was more often given as a reason to continue training rather than as a motive to start. The participants declared that their character had developed and for that reason they wished to continue, additionally claiming that karate had changed them in that respect.

Role of the self-defence motive at various stages of training

Table 3.

Role of the self-defence motive at various stages of training

Self-defence N=146	M	SD	t	df	p
start	0.24	0.43			
continuation	0.05	0.21	5.04	145	0.000
start	0.24	0.43			
change	0.00	0.00	6.76	145	0.000
continuation	0.05	0.21			
change	0.00	0.00	2.70	145	0.008

During the analysis of the self-defence motive, it became evident that it was the most frequently mentioned motive encouraging respondents to take up karate. However, when asked about the reasons for the continuation of training, respondents mentioned the self-defence factor much more infrequently. The self-defence motive did not feature in the declarations of the perceived change in one's personality.

Role of the self-appreciation/self-confidence motive at various stages of training

A detailed overview of the significance of the self-appreciation/self-confidence motive was conducted along the same guidelines as the previous analyses.

Table 4.

Role of the self-appreciation/self-confidence motive at various stages of training

Self-appreciation/self-confidence N=146					
	M	SD	t	df	p
start	0.068	0.25			
change	0.370	0.48	-7.23	145	0.000

The graph and table above lead to the conclusion that a statistically significant change occurred between the assessment of the wish to attain greater self-appreciation/self-confidence at the start of training and during the perceived change as a result

of karate. The self-confidence motive is more often declared in the area of change as opposed to the area of motivation to take up training.

Role of condition-related motive at various stages of training

The role of the condition-related motive in particular areas of motivation for individuals practising karate was analysed in a manner similar to that employed in previous analyses.

Table 5.

Role of the condition-related motive at various stages of training

condition N=146	M	SD	t	df	p
start	0.32	0.47			
continuation	0.40	0.49	-1.73	145	0.090
start	0.32	0.47			
change	0.28	0.45	0.66	145	n.i.
continuation	0.40	0.49			
change	0.28	0.45	2.54	145	0.010

On the basis of the data contained in the graph and table above, statistically significant changes in the condition motive emerged between the start of training and its progress as well as between the perceived change in functioning and the continuation of training. The wish to improve one's condition was of less significance at the beginning of the training than during it. Less importance was attached to condition in the sense of what had changed in the respondents' behaviour than to condition understood as a wish to continue training. No statistically significant change in the condition factor between the perceived change as a result of training and the start of training was observed. Therefore, persons continuing with karate do so, among other things, to improve their fitness although, at the same time and to a lesser degree, they do not claim that their physical condition has improved as a result.

Discussion of results

The analysis of the motives connected with taking up karate revealed a predominance of external motives. The respondents were most often persuaded to start by friends. The 'hobby' motive i.e. the wish to become acquainted with karate or martial arts, or an interest in the culture of the East were indicated as next in the sequence, followed by a fascination with fighting i.e. mastering the art of self-defence or films with Bruce Lee or other actors. The fourth motive in the hierarchy of importance concerned the improvement of one's condition i.e. the wish to remain fit. The fewest answers concerned karate as a way to spend free time and develop oneself.

As regards the question relating to the motives connected to the decision to continue training, the motives provided point to the dominance of extrinsic motivation. Karatekas continue their training because they associate this martial art with a passion or something which gives meaning to their lives. Next in the sequence were the wish to keep fit and character development. The least popular choices related to the result goal, so, for example, the wish to obtain a black belt, or factors connected with self-defence.

Extrinsic motivation seems to be dominant also with the analysis of perceived change in one's own behaviour as a result of karate. The respondents' most frequent answers concerned a change in character as in, for instance: „it gave me self-confidence” or „it taught me to be methodical, self-disciplined and concentrated”. A change in lifestyle was next in the hierarchy of importance, with respondents stating, for example, that karate gave them the chance to distance themselves from everyday matters. Those who started at a young age claimed that *karate had shaped them*. Next, the karatekas pointed to the motive of improving one's condition. The minority of answers related to the statement that karate had not changed a particular individual – this answer was given by those with the least training.

The issue of the respondents' perceived change in the importance of particular motives at various stages of training was next to be tackled.

The following motives were included in further analyses: the role of personal relationships at various stages of training, self-development, self-defence, self-appreciation/self-confidence as well as condition.

According to respondents' perception, the role of friends and family seemed to diminish with time. It was most often family or friends who had encouraged them to take up training, with respondents training less for their friends' sake and seldom mentioning the fact that they had made new friends when it came to the perceived change in behaviour as a result of karate.

As regards the analysis of the self-development motive, the fewest individuals mentioned it as dominant when signing up for karate, with the significance of the motive rising as training progressed. The people concerned stressed the development of character as the main argument for the continuation of training and for the perceived change in behaviour as a result of karate.

When it came to the analysis of the self-defence motive, it became clear that it was one of the major motives at the start of training in encouraging the respondents to take up karate. However, when asked to provide reasons for continuing instruction in this field, the respondents placed the self-defence factor in a much lower position. When it came to a perceived change as a result of karate, though, the skill of self-defence was not mentioned at all.

An analysis of the self-confidence motive was also performed, the importance of which was stressed more frequently during the perceived change as a result of training than at the start of training.

A wish to improve one's condition was of a less importance at the start of training than during it. Less importance was attached to condition when it came to the change in one's behaviour, as opposed to condition as a motive connected with the wish to carry on with the training.

Conclusions

With reference to the results relating to the dominant motives at various stages of training, it appears that the changes in the significance of the motivation testify to the acquisition of a greater degree of inner-direction, greater intrinsic motivation or training for oneself or one's own development. Research by D.R. Bógdał and J. R. Stryjska⁹, who analysed the motivation of karatekas practising karate kyukushinkai, confirms the fact that the majority of karatekas with more than 10 years' experience perceive their training as a way of life and lifestyle. What seems interesting is the fact that less importance is attached to the self-defence factor during training. It is likely that with time karate begins to constitute a value in itself. Another possible explanation may be study participants' conviction that the skill of self-defence has been mastered and it is the awareness of this fact which may account for its omission at subsequent stages of training.

What also deserves attention is the participants' perceived heightening of self-confidence as a result of training. Research by Bógdał and Stryjska¹⁰ also seems to confirm this fact – 72% of respondents out of the 300 karatekas participating in the study categorically stated that karate had led to greater self-confidence. One may at this point be tempted to refer to Bandura's concept of self-efficacy¹¹, according to which the achieving of goals in a given sports discipline results in confidence and efficacy in one's actions.

There is a score of publications¹² pointing to the fact that motion affects human psyche through, among others, the so-called perceptive path which proceeds as follows: motor activity is connected to the improvement in physical build and the height-

⁹ D.R. Bógdał, J.R. Stryjska, *Wiek, wykształcenie i staż treningowy jako czynniki różnicujące główne motywy uprawiania karate*, „Wychowanie Fizyczne i Sport” 2002, vol. 46, p. 387–395.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ A. Bandura, *Self – Efficacy mechanism in physiological activation and Health promoting behavior*, [in:] *Neurobiology of learning, emotion and affect*, ed. J. Madden, New York 1991, p. 229–270.

¹² K. Garstka, *Wpływ uprawiania gimnastyki rekreacyjnej przez kobiety w średnim wieku na percepcję obrazu własnego ciała*, „Wychowanie Fizyczne i Sport” 2000; 4, p. 55–62

ening of fitness, while awareness of these factors increases life optimism. Not just the activity itself but its biological results have certain mental consequences. Additionally, there exists a correlation between one's physical condition and mental functioning relating to cognitive ability, mood or self-esteem¹³.

Many studies concern educational and therapeutic aspects connected with karate and other martial arts participation. Very often martial arts are used in order to diminish aggression level and to increase self-esteem level in group of people endangered social exclusion, juvenile delinquents and those with behavioral problems¹⁴. Mastering abilities in martial arts from the youngest years is the chance for harmonious, biological, mental, moral and social development of individual¹⁵.

Moreover, Miłkowski¹⁶ has mentioned the fact that training begins with learning to trust one's own body and its capabilities, from getting to like it, adjusting it to the constraints of one's willpower, through acquiring respect for oneself, to attaining a harmony of movement and, consequently, composure in the psyche. The aspect of being part of a group and peer acceptance can also have an influence over the development of a feeling of self-confidence.

Karate can be practised by everyone. As the analyses above may indicate, alongside mastering the techniques of the discipline itself, individuals seem to gain much more self-confidence and self-development, for example, which very often exerts an influence on their lives beyond the sports hall.

¹³ W. Boskin, G. Graaf, V. Kreisworth, *Health dynamics: Attitudes and behaviors*, St Paul, MN 1990.

¹⁴ M.E. Trulson, *Martial arts training: a novel „cure” for juvenile delinquency*, „Human Relations” 1986, 39, p. 27–35; J. Supiński, *Agresja w sporcie – jej determinanty i następstwa społeczno-wychowawcze*, „Rozprawy Naukowe”, Wrocław 1987, p. 147–194; T. A. Nosanchuk, M.L.C. NacNeil, *Examination of the Effects of Traditional and Modern Martial Arts Training on Aggressiveness*, „Aggressive Behavior” 1989; 15, p. 153–159; R. M. Kalina, W. Jagiełło, *Zabawowe formy walki w wychowaniu fizycznym i treningu sportowym*, Warszawa 2000; S. Sterkowicz, *Utylitarne i wychowawcze aspekty sztuki walki hapkido*, [in:] *Wychowawcze i utylitarne aspekty sportów walki*, eds. R.M. Kalina, W. Jagiełło, Warszawa 2000, p. 25–32; D. Budnik, *Karate tradycyjne i sportowe a poziom agresywności adeptów*, „Studia i Monografie Akademii wychowania fizycznego we Wrocławiu” nb 79, Wrocław 2005, p. 123–129; D. Budnik, *Personality profile, stress coping styles and self-image of karate competitors with different attitudes towards meditation*, „Journal of Combat Sports and Martial Arts” 2009; vol 1, 1 (2), p. 15–20; W. Jagiełło, M. Dornowski, *Martial arts in the opinions of students at the Faculty of Physical Education*, „Archives of Budo” 2011, vol. 7, iss. 2, p. 55–59.

¹⁵ E. Jaskólski, J. Dziąsło, *Rozwój osobowości i dyspozycyjności ciała w procesie pedagogicznego wykorzystania zasad budo*, [in:] *Wychowawcze i utylitarne aspekty sportów walki*, eds. R.M. Kalina, W. Jagiełło, Warszawa 1997, p. 9–13.

¹⁶ J. Miłkowski, *Sztuki i sporty walki Dalekiego Wschodu*, Warszawa 1987, p. 154–163.

Summary

Changing in motivation for practising karate as individuals gain experience through training

Background and Study Aim: Karate as a martial art invariably remains the object of attention for numerous individuals, young and old, who wish to explore its secrets. What is the motivation of those who select this martial art? Is it possible that with training, certain factors become weaker in importance while others become more weighty?

This article presents analyses of correlations of motivation in individuals practising karate at various levels of skill.

Material and Methods: The study group of karatekas consisted of 167 people between the ages of 15 and 52, with the average age of 25 (106 men and 61 women). The individuals displayed various levels of proficiency. The group referred to as beginners (64 people) were karatekas with lower student ranks: 9th-4th kyu as well as people with no rank. The advanced group (100 people) were those with higher student ranks (3rd-1st kyu) and master ranks (dan).

The participants in the study answered open questions relating to the factors which had helped them select a particular karate course. Moreover, they conducted a motivation analysis concerning their willingness to continue with karate, as well as an analysis of the perception of their behavioural change as influenced by the practice of karate.

Results: A change in motivation at particular levels of training was observed. As perceived by the participants, the role of acquaintances and relatives diminishes with time. As training progresses, a rise is discernible in the importance of that motive which stresses personal development. The motivational factor connected to self-defence loses its importance.

Conclusions: In the course of time, the importance of intrinsic motivation increases, while the importance of motives relating to external factors declines.

Keywords: martial arts, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, self-development