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Fun forms of martial arts in diagnosing and reducing aggressiveness – mental effects of a one-day course for Polish animators of sport

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Abstract

Background and Study Aim. During a fight, various aspects of human nature become apparent – anxiety, aggression, pride, vanity, skills, physical dispositions, knowledge and interdependence between these characteristics [1]. Only in few countries martial arts are part of universal education: in Japan school youth practice *judo*, *kendo* and *sumo* as part of the *budo* module [2]; in South Korea *taekwondo* [3]. In Poland these are covered only as original curricula, for example. *hapkido* [4] or as *fun forms of martial arts* [5,6].

The purpose of the research is the knowledge of mental effects (associated with the perception of the phenomena of violence and aggression and a possibility to diagnose and modify human violent behaviours) for sport animators participating in one-day specialist courses.

- Detailed research questions:
- does training change the perception of the phenomena of “aggression”, “aggressiveness” and “violence” (courses I and II)?
- is aggressiveness desirable in sport (course II)?
- is a one-day course enough to convince the most creative participants to take effort to specialize in diagnosing and therapy of aggressiveness based on cognitive-behavioural methods, including *fun forms of martial arts* (courses I and II)?

Materials and Methods. Total 1,076 and 618 sports animators, recruited mainly from among Physical Education teachers and sport coaches, participated in two one-day courses (in 2014 and 2015, respectively), 237 of them (38%) also participated in course I. Women accounted for (23% and 13%), men (77% and 87%). Persons with work experience of over 10 years dominated (67% and 70%).

Results and Discussion. Prior to training (course I) it was obvious only for 50% of the teachers that the notions of “aggression”, “aggressiveness”, “violence” mean various phenomena related to each other in substance, but for almost half (48%) these terms were synonyms of the same phenomenon (Figure 1), which is a clear lack of understanding of the essence. After the training these proportions already diversified: 56% and 37%, respectively. However, this seemingly positive trend was a result of three-fold increase (from 2% to 6%) in the declaration of those who believed that these concepts were unrelated, which is another proof of the lack of understanding of the essence of the differences, but also of the substantive ties between the phenomena thus named. This is an indirect evidence that the issue of aggression (with which the key concepts of “aggressiveness” and “violence” are related and are often distorted in the media) is not easy. Hence a valid directive for future trainings – to pay more attention to the semantic aspect of the taught content.

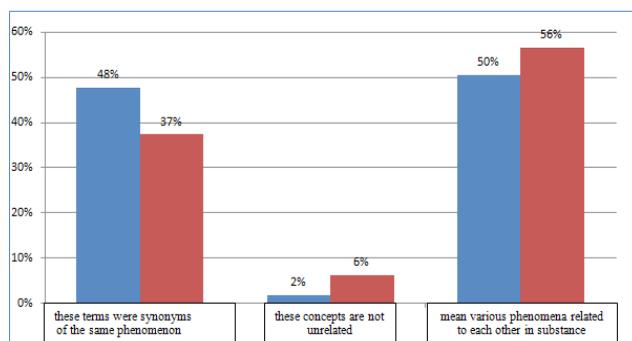


Figure 1. Changes in teachers' perception of the relationship between the concepts of “aggression”, “aggressiveness”, and “violence” (course I) before the training, blue colour (n = 1046) and after the training, maroon colour (n = 842).

The result of course II shows a positive, long-lasting educational effect. From among persons who participated in the course for the second time, 62% declared that the concepts of “aggression”, “aggressiveness”, “violence” mean various phenomena related to each other in substance, but 34% still thought that they were synonyms of the same phenomenon. This significant positive effect can be hypothetically connected with studying the coursebook [7], which each participant received. Similar declarations, however, were made by those participating in the course for the first time (60% and 37%, respectively). The conclusive result whether aggressiveness in sport is desired is an argument reinforcing the authenticity of this hypothesis: 47% of newcomers believed “yes” and 7% said “strongly yes”, while those attending for the second time 37% and 5%, respectively ($p < 0.01$). Only 29% of newcomers said “never”, but 46% of those participating for the second time in the course ($p < 0.01$) (Figure 2).

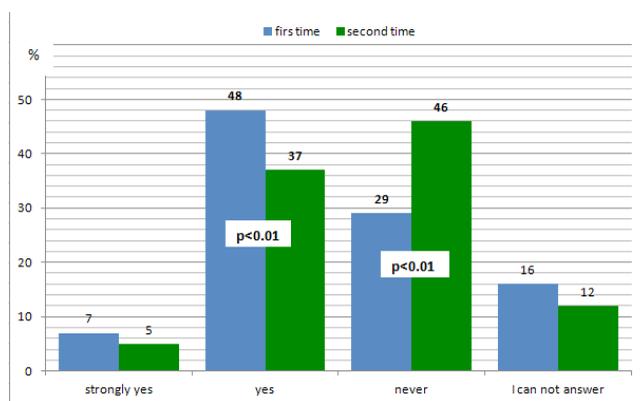


Figure 2. The structure of answers of 618 participants of course II to the question: “Is aggressiveness in sport desirable?”

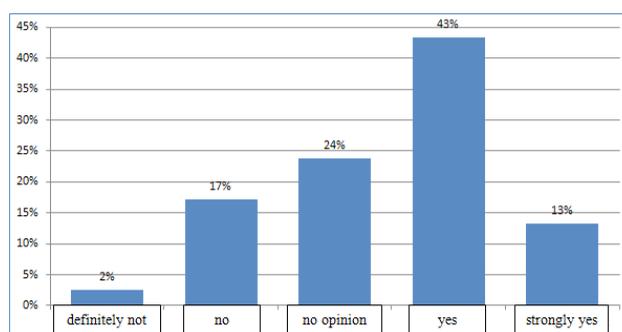


Figure 3. The structure of answers of 846 sport animators after course I when asked about taking the trouble to specialize in the diagnosis and therapy of aggressiveness based on cognitive behavioural methods.

Clearly the most positive training effect shows in the structure of answers to the question about taking the trouble in the future to specialize in the treatment of aggressiveness based on cognitive behavioural methods. The majority (56%) want to gain such qualifications (Figure 3). The result after the second course is similar.

Conclusion. Aggression and violence in school [8] and in the area of sport activity [9] are growing phenomena on a global scale. A large percentage of sports animators working with Polish youth who are determined to take the trouble to specialize in the treatment of aggressiveness based on cognitive behavioural methods gives optimistic educational prospects and expected social effects. The result of the study also indicates a possibility of a successful promotion of widely understood *martial arts* in the prevention and therapy of aggressiveness, positive education and health promotion defying the expansion of neo-gladiatorship.

Keywords: cognitive behavioural methods • physical education teachers • social effects • specific courses

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