

ABSTRACT OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

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Title of the thesis: THE PERSONALITY PROFILE OF PERFORMANCE ATHLETES IN KARATE DO AND RELATION WITH THE TACTICAL PREPARATION

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Motivations related to the preference for this topic are based on a sports carrier of almost 20 years, materialized by gaining the titles of World and European Champion in this discipline. On our way towards reaching these performances, we have encountered multiple situations in which famous athletes lost important fights in major competitions because of some factors keeping to their psychic preparation. World, European or national Champions of recent years have argued this aspect, demonstrating that without a solid specialization on certain techniques, without knowing the personality of each one and without a good tactics in approaching each fight and each opponent, success cannot be reached in karate.

The scientific approach we want to undergo is oriented towards the achievement of a research that highlights the way in which the athlete's personality is reflected in the tactical approach of the fight.

INTRODUCTION

We can state that, for many people, sport represents an enjoyment to live, as they can express their desire for freedom, achieve by themselves the comparison with other persons and create new relations with the world and the society. Thus, sport represents one of the moral and social factors that facilitate the creation of human relationships and contribute to a better social life.

Karate do contributes permanently to the individual's development, being a door opened towards limits that are to be exceeded, and the fullness of this art resides in the **spirit-psychic-body** communion, a principle known under the name of "jita kyoei" - everything is a unit. This principle can be felt after long years of persevering work, after a life of assiduous and serious practice.

Karate do is a martial art whose final goal is represented by the work for improving the individual's character, personality through the accumulation of experience, through a specific training. The karate do training is extremely complex, due to the unpredictable situations related to the direct contact with the opponent, an aspect that require the athletes to be inventive.

In consensus with the above discussed, we consider the following quotation as a motto of our research thesis: *"The maximization of performance*

cannot be achieved without the maximization of athlete's personality" (Epuran, 1990).

Starting our commentary from the assertion according to which the maximization of performance cannot be achieved without the maximization of athlete's personality, we can say that the performance behaviour will include the athlete's capacity of expression, desire for self-assertion, effort and commitment, as well as the requirements and pressure of the social environment.

Aptitudes are extremely important for a karate athlete, having in view that they practice a heuristic sport, with unpredictable and opposing adversaries, with actions that are carried out at maximal intensity and under the time pressure specific to each competitive fighting (the last 30 seconds of the combat).

In karate do, we encounter the attitude tendency towards the opponents, through the desire for dominating in competition, the aggression during fighting, the attempt to win supremacy over the others, as well as an attitude tendency towards self, through the spirit of combat and sacrifice, the permanent desire for self-improvement, etc.

Attitudes have an important role in the fighter's personality structure, determining the development and valorisation of personal capacities.

Ambience, implicitly the sports environment in karate do, influences the status-related psycho-sociological behaviours, the preferential, organizational and cultural relationships. The karate do practice in an organized setting provides the athlete with the sense of belonging, communication, socialization, self-esteem and respect from others.

As to the training, this is the most complex structure, which includes all components of the performance capacity and where all aspects that will lead to making efficient the competitive results can be emphasized.

RESEARCH SUBJECTS

The research subjects are top performance athletes at the Sports Club "Rapid" of Bucharest, seniors, five boys and four girls, components of the national karate do team - WKC (World Karate Confluence), practitioners of the Goju-Ryu style, from the karate do branch, for more than 10 years.

PRESENTATION OF TESTS

The tests used in our research are part of the CAS⁺⁺ computerized platform of psychological assessment, designed by Cognitrom. The tests used by us in the research are:

- FFPI personality questionnaire;
- ZKPQ personality questionnaire;
- analytical reasoning;
- Endler multidimensional scales for the assessment of anxiety as a trait, a perception and a state.

They were applied on 20 February 2013, in the preparatory period, and on 16 October 2013, in the precompetitive period, within the UNEFS Psycho-Pedagogy Lab, under the careful monitoring of Assistant Lecturer PhD Radu Predoiu, psychologist.

PART I: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

It treats about the theoretical aspects related to karate do, the sports performance factors in karate do, the champion model in karate do, as well as the theoretical aspects regarding tactical preparation, psychological preparation and personality in the performance sports activity.

The main **theoretical conclusions** of our research are:

- Specialty literature on the domain of combat disciplines underlines the importance and the specific involvement of the psychic in optimizing the fighters' preparation. It is emphasized the fact that the karate athlete who is better prepared psychically will be superior in the fight even on a preparation which is sometimes poorer, from the physical point of view. In sense, we consider that the motto of our research has been confirmed.
- Theoretical delimitation referring to the concepts of "performance" and "personality", related to those of "tactical preparation" and "karate do", are fundamental factors in understanding the theoretical approaches of the thesis.
- Structuring a profile of the effort in karate do offers a theoretical background on which the practical-methodical approaches can be then substantiated. We find out the effort in karate do, goju ryu, is specific, dynamic, acyclic, discontinuous, with repetitions, with variable intensities, is neuromuscular and energetic, anaerobic alactacid, lactacid and sometimes mixed, very stressful due to the time pressure and the speed at which the fighting actions are carried out, heuristic, etc.
- As to the psychic activity in karate do, from the theoretical analysis, we consider that it is about an intelligent-motor type, comprising all three sides of the psychic preparation, namely the intellectual, volitional and affective ones.
- Studying the specialty literature, we consider that the performance athlete sums up, in his/her personality structure, traits like ambition, psychic resistance, self-confidence, organization, perseverance, motivation, combativeness, self-control, introversion and extraversion, emotional intelligence, empathy, etc.

PART II: RESEARCH ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF TACTICAL PREPARATION IN KARATE DO

Research on the characteristics of tactical preparation in karate do aims to perform a pertinent analysis of the tactical model used in major competitions by the top performance athletes and to see to what extent it can orient the tactical preparation.

It approaches aspects such as the specific traits of tactical preparation in karate do, reaction time in karate do, tactical profile of the karate fighter and relationship between tactical profile and reaction time.

The research consisted of:

- Achieving a tactical investigation, by using the video materials to emphasize the athletes' aptitudes;
- Achieving the individual tactical profile of the karate do athletes, as well as their general tactical profile;
- Achieving the relationship between reaction time (a psychomotor component essential to a successful tactics) and tactical efficiency; the hypothesis from which we have started this research is the following:

The reaction time values may represent an influencing factor in the manifestation of tactical efficiency during competition.

- Drawing up the conclusions.

As to the preliminary research, the **conclusions** are the following:

- Tactics in karate do supposes the existence of practical and prompt solutions, which aim at the best success possible of the global activity.
- Karate fighter is a complex athlete, who uses both the offensive and defensive fighting styles, depending on the opponent, managing to exhibit his/her entire technical-tactical arsenal in order to win the victory.
- Knowing the individual tactical profile of the karate do athlete provides relevant data for the specific preparation in view of improving the competitive results.
- It has been found, following the interpretation of the results achieved in the reaction time test, that the athletes with results in the performance category no. 5 (a superior category) are the elite athletes from our research, with the best results in competitions. Thus, we can state that there is a strong correlation between tactical efficiency and reaction time, the rho value being of 70%. We consider that our hypothesis has been confirmed.

PART III: EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH ON THE PERSONALITY PROFILE OF PERFORMANCE ATHLETES IN KARATE DO AND RELATION WITH THE TACTICAL PREPARATION

The experimental research includes personal contributions to elaborating the personality profile of the karate do athletes, the manifestation of anxiety in relation to different preparation periods, the personality profile of karate do athletes and its relation with the tactical preparation, and the tactical preparation programme afferent to the tactical and personality profiles.

The **research premises** are the following:

- This study aims to monitor the competitive activity of the subjects, components of the national karate team, as well as some psychological

parameters deemed by us to be important in achieving sports performance at the level of the current age and preparation stage.

- We start from the premise that, at the top performance level, the psychic preparation and the personality manifestation are factors that make the difference in achieving sports performances.

The research consisted of:

- Applying the personality tests, which highlighted the athletes' aptitudes, and elaborating the individual profile of the karate do athletes' personality, as well as the general profile of their personality;
- Elaborating an afferent preparation programme related to the tactical and personality profiles. This was carried out in the precompetitive period, within an accommodation microcycle, where the training lessons were modelled according to the competition characteristics.
- Analysis of the relation between the personality profile and the tactical profile through the items "emotional stability" and "tactical efficiency", and the anxiety manifestation in different preparation periods - preparatory period and precompetitive period - through the item "state anxiety", the statistical calculation using Spearman's rho correlation coefficient and a non-parametric test, Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test.

Hypotheses of the research:

1. The anxiety state of the karate do athletes can be modified during preparation by applying some programmes designed according to the tactical profile of each athlete's personality.
2. The level of emotional stability, as a personality trait, may influence the utilisation of tactical knowledge in competitions.
3. The personality profile of the karate do athletes may represent a landmark for directing the tactical preparation and optimizing sports performances.

After the experimental research, the following **conclusions** have been drawn:

- Knowing the factors that influence the athlete's personality is necessary for establishing a relation with the tactical preparation, in order to construct the tactics that will lead to winning the victory.
- A karate athlete thinks positively, is optimistic, has confidence in his/her inner forces and has the capacity to judge things and to act independently, not being influenced by others, aspects very important to the particularities of sports combat in karate do.
- The manifestation of anxiety in athletes, in different preparation periods, has proved the decrease of its level as the major competition was approaching, they showing self-control, confidence in their own forces, desire to be the best, etc. We consider that the hypothesis no. 1 of the research has been confirmed.
- Knowing the tactical profile is essential in the technical-tactical preparation, because it takes a crucial position for the top performance athletes

and aims at deepening the specialized preparation on a certain technique, as well as at approaching each fight and each opponent according to a suitable tactics.

- It has been found that emotional stability and tactical efficiency act in the same sense, between these two elements existing a small to medium effect, with a positive value of 27.9%. Thus, we state that the hypothesis no. 2 of the research has been confirmed.
- It has been found that the use of a tactical preparation model related to the tactical and personality profiles of each athlete leads to the improvement of competitive results. In this sense, we consider that the hypothesis no. 3 of the research has been confirmed.

PERSONAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND PRACTICAL VALORISATION OF THE RESEARCH

PERSONAL CONTRIBUTIONS:

- We consider that approaching this speciality topic represents a pioneering work in elaborating the personality profile and the tactical profile in karate do, goju ryu;
- We monitored the anxiety evolution, in different preparation periods, within two testing stages used in the preparatory period and the precompetitive period, aiming to highlight the positive influence of the original programme designed by us for the tactical preparation specific to each individual;
- Achieving the individual and general profiles of the karate do athlete is an element of originality in our research;
- Elaborating the criteria for the tactical analysis of fights and achieving the individual and general tactical profiles of the karate fighter also represents our contributions to this study, which are original and belong to us;
- We tried to present the tendencies towards the improvement of the coefficients characteristic to the events or the progress to performance categories, following the application of the preparation programme proposed by us.

PARTICIPATION IN CONGRESSES:

1. “Considérations théoriques sur le style Goju-Ryu en karaté do”. Authors: Lambu Elena-Andreea & Lambu Ioana-Sorina, “International Congress of Physical Education, Sports and Kinetotherapy”, 2nd edition, UNEFS, June 2012, Bucharest, ISBN 978-606-8234-47-6;
2. “Study about the reaction time relation to sports performance in karate do”. Authors: Macovei Sabina, Lambu Elena-Andreea & Lambu Ioana-Sorina, “13th International Scientific Conference - Perspectives in Physical Education and Sport”, May 2013, Constanta;
3. “Profile of some psychomotor capacities in top performance karate do athletes”. Authors: Macovei Sabina, Lambu Elena-Andreea & Lambu Ioana-Sorina, “International Congress of Physical Education, Sport and

Kinetherapy”, 3rd edition, UNEFS, June 2013, Bucharest, ISBN 978-606-8294-61-20;

4. “Manifestation of some personality traits in karate do”. Authors: Macovei Sabina, Lambu Elena-Andreea, Lambu Ioana-Sorina & Predoiu Radu, “International Congress of Physical Education, Sport and Kinetherapy”, 3rd edition”, UNEFS, June 2013, Bucharest, ISBN 978-606-8294-61-2;

5. “The personality profile of top performance athletes in karate do”. Authors: Lambu Ioana-Sorina, “14th International Scientific Conference - Perspectives in Physical Education and Sport”, May 2014, Constanta;

6. “Anxiety manifestations in relation to the preparation periods in karate do”. Authors: Lambu Ioana-Sorina, “International Congress of Physical Education, Sport and Kinetherapy”, 3rd edition, UNEFS, June 2014, Bucharest.

PUBLICATIONS:

1. “Study about the reaction time relation to sports performance in karate do”. Authors: Macovei Sabina, Lambu Elena-Andreea & Lambu Ioana-Sorina, May 2013, Constanta. Ovidius University Annals, Series Physical Education and Sport/Science, Movement and Health, Vol. XIII, pp. 228-233, Issue 2, Supplement, 2013, Romania;

2. “Profile of some psychomotor capacities in top performance karate do athletes”. Authors: Macovei Sabina, Lambu Elena-Andreea & Lambu Ioana-Sorina, UNEFS, June 2013, Bucharest, ISBN 978-606-8294-61-2, Elsevier Procedia - Social and Behavioural Sciences, Volume 117, 19 March 2014, pp. 262-268;

3. “Manifestation of some personality traits in karate do”. Authors: Macovei Sabina, Lambu Elena-Andreea, Lambu Ioana-Sorina & Predoiu Radu, UNEFS, June 2013, Bucharest, ISBN 978-606-8294-61-2, Elsevier Procedia - Social and Behavioural Sciences, Volume 117, 19 March 2014, pp. 269-274;

4. “The personality profile of top performance athletes in karate do”. Authors: Lambu Ioana-Sorina, May 2014, Constanta, Ovidius University Annals, Series Physical Education and Sport/Science, Movement and Health, Vol. XIV, pp. 447-454, Issue 2, Supplement, 2014, Romania;

5. “Anxiety manifestations in relation to the preparation periods in karate do”. Authors: Lambu Ioana-Sorina, UNEFS, June 2014, Bucharest (to be published soon);

6. “Tactical preparation in karate do”. Authors: Lambu Ioana-Sorina (to be published in Discobolul, Physical Education, Sport and Kinetherapy Journal).

CONCLUSIONS

1. Karate do sports discipline engages plenary the athletes’ personality, requiring ambition, psychic resistance, self-confidence, perseverance and self-control, combativeness, emotional intelligence, empathy.

2. Karate fighter is a complex athlete, with a psychic activity of the intelligent-motor type, expressed in competitions by the applied tactics. From this point of view, in the training practice, especially at the top performance level, it is necessary to elaborate some individual tactical profiles that take into consideration the personality particularities. Relying on them, one can individualize and model the overall preparation.
3. Karate do needs athletes with very good reaction times, an aspect which influences the capitalization of tactical preparation in competitions.
4. Through a tactical preparation that takes into account the athlete's psychic particularities, one can influence the anxiety state in order to increase self-control. From this perspective and having in view the results of our research, we consider that the hypothesis no. 1 has been confirmed.
5. Emotional stability is a landmark for the personality profile, which can influence the application of tactical knowledge during competitions. In this sense, we consider that the hypothesis no. 2 of the research been confirmed.
6. Knowing the personality profiles of the karate athletes and their relation to elements of the tactical profile are essential factors in directing the preparation, which lead to increasing self-control, emotional stability, confidence in their inner forces, in parallel with the achievement of tactical efficiency. In this sense, we consider that the hypothesis no. 3 of the research has been confirmed.