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Mission and assignments of the University Centre for Combat Sports and Martial Arts (UCCSMA)

Authors' contributions:

A Study design
B Data collection
C Statistical analysis
D Data interpretation
E Literature search
F Manuscript preparation
G Funds collection

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Summary

The mission of the University Centre for Combat Sports and Martial Arts, which is a didactic and research unit, should focus on: 1. Identifying, in an interdisciplinary way, the most essential phenomena of the theory and practice of combat sports and martial arts; 2. Monitoring research results, methodological solutions worth disseminating, screening pathology in view of achieving better results in training; 3. Systemic and permanent training of physical education teachers, coaches and instructors interested in developing their didactic and scientific competences, using a holistic approach to combat sports and martial arts.

Key words:

Combat sports • Martial arts • Research and didactic centre

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INTRODUCTION

There are at least three circumstances indicating the necessity of establishing an institution in Poland, which could competently appraise issues of the theory and practice of combat sports and martial arts, and conduct research and educational activities in collaboration with outstanding lecturers, scientists and university centres all over the world.

Firstly, not only young people but also adults of various ages and in many countries are interested in Eastern combat sports and martial arts. Seventy-seven percent of Poles practising combat sports and 75% of those not training agree with the opinion that everybody may engage in training combat sports or martial arts irrespectively of age and skills. Combat sports and martial arts influence mental and physical development, and that view is shared by 68% of training, and by 59% non-training people. The non-training ones cannot practice either because of a difficult access to facilities (33%) or of financial problems (26%). Only 17% of respondents said they were not interested in that kind of activity. It is worth emphasising that 70% of trainees with higher education are convinced that combat sports and martial arts should be included, though with some limitation, into school curricula of physical education (PE), and 20% of them are absolutely sure of it. Similar opinion (58 and 28%, respectively) is expressed by people with higher education but not training combat sports or martial arts [10]. Unfortunately, combat sports, or martial arts are not included in school curricula either in Poland or in many countries in the world.

Secondly, pathology of violence and aggression dangerously increase and penetrate into schools and other areas of life. It also concerns teachers and pupils practising combat sports and martial arts. In spite of the documented scientific evidence on a possibility of reducing aggression and, simultaneously, increasing gallantry by applying selected techniques of combat sports and martial arts (cf. [5,15,17]), that knowledge is not widespread and not much has been done to implement these issues in the education of physical education teachers.

That topic was implemented at the Faculty of Physical Education, Paweł Włodkowic University College, Płock, Poland, as a subject “Theory and Practice of Combat Sports”¹. A similar programme used to be realised at the Academy of Physical Education

in Warsaw in 2001 – 2005 (lectures on “Theory of Combat Sports and Workshops on Propaedeutics of Combat Sports”).

Thirdly, the abovementioned two groups of circumstances imply an urgent necessity of training physical education teachers, coaches and instructors in combat sports and martial arts, with a view on physical and moral education. Legal regulations concerning education of coaches and instructors are, in general, observed by Polish Sport Associations, particularly the Olympic ones: Judo and WTF Taekwondo, but in martial arts coach’s licenses are not, in principle, issued.

Shortcomings in coaches’ education² are caused by insufficient number of physical education faculties specialising in these sports (regulations concerning sport specialisations are under way). Instructor’s degrees are mostly issued at courses (not at universities), promoting predominantly practical skills, the knowledge demanded for teacher’s education being of secondary importance to pedagogy, psychology, voice training, information technology, training methodology, physiology, biomechanics, etc. Great differentiation of styles and modifications even within the same combat sport or martial art creates intricate situation for teaching staff. It often happens that instructors teaching young people have only got certificates issued by a foreign centre or even a private person without having their competences authorised in Poland.

Mission of the Centre

The mission of the University Centre for Combat Sports and Martial Arts, being a didactic-research unit, should focus on:

- Identifying, in an interdisciplinary way, the most essential phenomena of the theory and practice of combat sports and martial arts;
- Monitoring research results, methodological solutions worth disseminating, screening pathology in view of achieving better results in training;
- Systemic and continuous training of physical education teachers, coaches and instructors interested in developing their didactic and scientific competences using a holistic approach to combat sports and martial arts.

¹ Basic textbooks for this topic are lectures and exercises: Kalina, Theory of Combat Sports [6]; Kalina, Jagiełło Playful Forms of Combat Sports in Physical Education and Sport Training [7]; Kalina, *et al.*, Propaedeutics of Combat Sports – Basic of Judo [8].

² There are 268 coaches and instructors in 12 styles of karate, only one Ist degree coach, and three IInd degree coaches. There are 4 instructors in Kendo and 19 in kick-boxing; further 134 instructors, one Ist degree and one IInd degree coach in ju-jitsu (data of the National Sports Centre of 21st March, 2001).



Although a permanent training of teachers is the most important part of the Centre's mission, placing this issue as the third in turn is just and reasonable. An effective system of coaches' education must be a result of actual and scientifically tested knowledge confirmed by practice. This knowledge should be screened and subject to evaluation.

Objectives of the Centre

The main teaching objectives of the Centre are:

- To enable experienced and graduated coaches and instructors of combat sports and martial arts receiving the PE teacher's degree to be allowed to teach propaedeutics of combat sports and run own PE classes based on technical elements of combat sports and self-defence (it does not mean that they would be fully competent PE teachers);
- To enable PE teachers gaining competences of a coach or instructor of given combat sport or martial art to teach propaedeutics of combat sports and martial arts and own PE classes based on technical elements of these sports and self-defence in various types of schools. They would also be authorised to run selected combat sport or self-defence training at schools, at schoolchildren clubs and as extracurricular activities;
- To enable PE teachers gaining technical and methodological competence in:
 1. Safe falling down and avoiding collision as a prevention of bodily injuries;
 2. Aggression assessment in pupils by taking advantage of playful forms of combat;
 3. Reduction of pupils' aggression by including some elements of combat sports in PE classes;
 4. Developing gallantry and bravery;
 5. Preventing pathology and violence by teaching self-defence;
 6. Showing respect for own and others corporality;
- To enable persons having defined didactic qualifications joining forces, e.g. army, police, prison guards, etc., and achieving special competences as instructors in given combat sport or martial art;
- To enable experienced athletes with an excellent technique receiving instructor's degree in their respective sports;

- To enable persons with foreign degree or certificate (not authorised to teach in Poland), or coaches and instructors staying out of practice for 5 years or more, participating in special qualification courses.

Main scientific objectives of the Centre

- Evaluation of the effects of interdisciplinary educational activity (one of the main tasks of the Centre);
- Verification of methods used in selection for training combat sports on a professional level;
- Verification of the efficacy of training methods in various combat sports and martial arts;
- Designing best methods of selecting the most talented competitors and providing appropriate control (operational and long-term) of the training process and sport contests;
- Designing appropriate methods of selecting candidates for various forces, with respect to predispositions for effective interventions in close contact with an opponent or a group of opponents, and of an operational and long-term control of results of a permanent training.

Main objectives in monitoring research results and methodological issues of combat sports and martial arts

- Dissemination of results and opinions of experts on the main issues of the Centre, i.e. teaching and scientific investigations;
- Preparation, for parliamentary committees, governmental agencies, universities and Polish sports associations, opinions, expert assessments and information which could be of great importance for legal initiatives, educational solutions, investments, etc.

The ways to execute the mission and assignments of the Centre

The following issues are vital for the execution of the didactic assignments of the Centre:

1. Postgraduate study (at least three terms, 350 h; this remains flexible and subject to modifications) running various courses:
 - a. Pedagogy of combat sports (for coaches of combat sports with university education to achieve

- teaching competence in propaedeutics to given combat sport);
- b. Pedagogy of martial arts (for instructors and coaches of martial arts with university education to achieve teaching competence in propaedeutics to given combat art);
 - c. Pedagogy of self-defence (for physical education teachers to achieve competence in propaedeutics to combat sports and competence of a recreation instructor specialising in self-defence);
 - d. Pedagogy of combat sports and martial arts for security personnel assigned to teaching activities in the army and related formations);
 - e. Pedagogy of combat sports for security personnel assigned to teaching activities in the police, frontier guards, prison guards, etc.).
 - a. Pedagogy of combat sports (for coaches of combat sports with university education to achieve teaching competence in “Propaedeutics of combat sports” and given combat sports);
 - b. Pedagogy of martial arts (for instructors and coaches of martial arts with university education to achieve teaching competence in “Propaedeutics of combat sports” and given martial arts);
 - c. Pedagogy of self-defence (for physical education teachers to achieve competence in “Propaedeutics of combat sports” and competence of a recreation instructor specialising in self-defence);
2. Courses for coaches and instructors:
- a. In specific combat sports;
 - b. In specific martial arts.
3. Training courses for physical education teachers in:
- a. Safe falling down and avoiding collisions for prevention of bodily injuries;
 - b. Detection and reduction of aggression in youths and adults by applying selected technical elements of combat sports;
 - c. Methods of developing bravery and gallantry of youths and adults with application of some technical elements of combat sports and self-defence.

4. Training courses aimed at receiving or extending coaching or instructing licences in given combat sports or martial arts.

The research activity of the Centre would include individual projects, those requested by the Ministry of Sport and sport federations, and those resulting from international collaboration.

Monitoring research results and methodological solutions in combat sports and martial arts may be performed by scientific journals, edited by the scholars and teachers of combat sports, who inspired the establishment of the Centre and promised to contribute to it. Among them are: *Acta Asiatica Varsoviensia* (S. Tokarski, member of the Editorial board), *Archives of Budo* (R.M. Kalina, Editor-in-chief), *IDO Movement for Culture* (W. Cynarski, Editor-in-chief), *Scientific Review of Physical Culture of University of Rzeszów, Poland* (K. Obodyński, Editor-in-chief). The scientific and didactic achievements of the Centre shall be published in scientific journals, presented at congresses, conferences, etc.

Location of the Centre and its international character

The establishment of the Centre at the Physical Education Faculty of Rzeszow University has many advantages. The Department of Combat Sports and Extreme Sport was established at the Faculty of Physical Education, University of Rzeszów, the only one in Poland, as of this academic year. The department is run by 3 professors (Wojciech Cynarski, Roman M. Kalina, Kazimierz Obodyński) of great scientific and didactic achievements in combat sports, martial arts, extreme sports and similar activities. They have been collaborating for years with other eminent Polish specialists, e.g. (names in alphabetical order): Zbigniew Czajkowski (Academy of Physical Education, Katowice), Władysław Jagiełło (Academy of Physical Education and Sports, Gdańsk), Ewaryst Jaskólski (Academy of Physical Education, Wrocław), Stanisław Sterkowicz (Academy of Physical Education, Kraków), Stanisław Tokarski (Polish Academy of Sciences).

The co-operation with outstanding specialists and institutions dealing with combat sports and martial arts all over the world emphasises the international character of the Centre. This co-operation between Polish professors, coaches and sport managers with their foreign partners has been going on for many years and will be intensified in the field of permanent education. Experts from other countries shall be invited as visiting professors to postgraduate



studies or courses upon the wish of a relevant Polish Association. Education will be very flexible.

Summary

The University Centre for Combat Sports and Martial Arts may initiate new approaches to decisions of individuals, families, schoolmates and PE students, and regional, national or international sport communities. The aim is to facilitate choosing an attractive "sport of life". Every combat sport or martial art is also an art of self-defence (having support in the team of competent specialists) and a field for interpersonal and intercultural dialogues that can be widened and continued up to an old age [2,3,4,13], as such motor activities increase the feeling of safety.

The expected positive effects of didactic and research activities of the Centre may have impact on many areas of human activity. For example, athletes have

to develop self-control of aggression [9,11,12] and the same applies to soldiers, policemen and everybody involved in defence activities [1,5,14,16]. The core of combat sports is a direct struggle with one another, therefore they are the best "laboratory" for investigation of all the aspect of human aggression. Besides, they are the best field for studying and developing valiancy, without which a success in sport is impossible. Thus, the results of investigations on aggression and valiancy in combat sports, may be useful in other sports and out of it.

Last but not least, the educational mission of the Centre is in agreement with the Declaration of Bologne which treats the permanent education as one of the most important goals. It recommends that the participation in courses should be credited in ECTS points. Therefore, education at the Centre will be as attractive as university education, because ECTS credit points are internationally acknowledged.

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