

МЕЃУНАРОДЕН ЦЕНТАР ЗА СЛАВЈАНСКА ПРОСВЕТА - СВЕТИ НИКОЛЕ

**«МЕЃУНАРОДЕН ДИЈАЛОГ: ИСТОК - ЗАПАД»**  
(ПСИХОЛОГИЈА И ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ)

**СПИСАНИЕ**  
на научни трудови

**ДВАНАЕСЕТТА МЕЃУНАРОДНА  
НАУЧНА КОНФЕРЕНЦИЈА  
„МЕЃУНАРОДЕН ДИЈАЛОГ: ИСТОК - ЗАПАД“  
МЕЃУНАРОДЕН СЛАВЈАНСКИ УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ  
„ГАВРИЛО РОМАНОВИЧ ДЕРЖАВИН“  
СВЕТИ НИКОЛЕ - БИТОЛА**

*Година VIII*

*Број 3*

*Април 2021*

- СВЕТИ НИКОЛЕ, Р. СЕВЕРНА МАКЕДОНИЈА -  
- 2021 -

**Издавач:** Меѓународен центар за славјанска просвета - Свети Николе

**За издавачот:** м-р Михаела Ѓорчева, директор

**Наслов:** «МЕЃУНАРОДЕН ДИЈАЛОГ: ИСТОК - ЗАПАД» (ПСИХОЛОГИЈА И ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ)

**Организационен одбор:**

Претседател: проф. д-р Јордан Ѓорчев

Заменик претседател: д-р Стромов Владимир Јуревич, Русија

Член: м-р Борче Серафимовски

Член: м-р Милена Спасовска

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**Уредник:** проф. д-р Јордан Ѓорчев

**Компјутерска обработка и дизајн:** Адриано Панајотов, Маја Маријана Панајотова, Благој Митев

**ISSN (принт)** 1857-9299

**ISSN (онлајн)** 1857-9302

**Адреса на комисијата:** ул. Маршал Тито 77, Свети Николе, Р. Северна Македонија

**Контакт телефон:** +389 (0)32 440 330

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**Печати:** Книжарница и печатница „Славјански“, Свети Николе

**Тираж:** 100

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**ИСТОК - ЗАПАД**  
ПСИХОЛОГИЈА И ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ

**Assist. prof. Ana Chuchkova, PhD**  
ISU "G. R. Derzhavin" Sveti Nikole - Bitola  
Republic of North Macedonia

**Ivancho S. Gorjanin, psychologist**  
Yamamori Ryu Shihan at the Center for Mental Hygiene and Origin Arts  
Republic of North Macedonia

## **PSYCHOLOGY IN THE JAPANESE ORIGIN COMBAT SKILLS AND ARTS AND THEIR APPLICATION WITHIN THERAPEUTIC PURPOSES**

**ABSTRACT:** An increasing number of empirical data over the last decades have shown that the practices of unity in mind and body, which originate from Eastern traditions and meditations, can cause much desired and positive changes in psychological features, mental, but also in somatic physiological functions.

As noted by prof. Yasuo Yuasa is that the Eastern theory of mind-body not only is considering body and mind as one, but also is expressed by the need for integration and unity, ie the synergy of mind-body through physical and mental practices.

In Japan, such a mind-body unity is traditionally referred to as "Shin-Shin Ikiniyo (body and mind as one)".

The origin of mindfulness (active consciousness) occurs in the early stages of Buddhism, and today it behaves and reacts through the active attention of the current consciousness in a completely non-judgmental way.

The idea of mindfulness (active consciousness) has proven to be effective in elucidating the psychological, physiological and neurocognitive correlations of mind-body, ie to contemplative practices in scientific and clinical contexts. Interventions based on full-mindedness (active awareness) have been applied to a variety of clinical and educational settings. For example, the John Kabat-Zin Awareness-Based Stress Reduction Program (MBSR) has been shown to reduce psychological symptoms in patients with chronic pain.

**KEYWORDS:** Bushido, psychology, mental health, awareness, control, emotions, self-confidence, focus, children, development

The Cognitive Therapy Awareness Program (MBCT) has been able to prevent relapse of depression through applications containing full-mindedness (active awareness).

The .b (point-bi) program is a full-fledged (active awareness) program developed for school children that has been shown to be effective in improving psychological health outcomes such as reducing stress and anxiety and leading to increased psychological well-being.

Despite the vast amount of evidence and research conducted in Japan above all, there is relatively little empirical data on changes caused in the practice of psychological status or the somatic, physiological states of practitioners in the traditional approach of the body-mind model.

The same applies to practices with a thought, ie artistic spectrum. However, in the research of prof. The mia included practitioners of the original Japanese Budo practice, whose internship period is from 3 months to 34 years, and found that the practitioners

reported greater metacognition, subjective well-being, lower levels of depression as well as much lesser adverse effects and adverse effects on social functioning. environment, all this is secondary to non-practitioners.

In addition, it has been found that over a longer period of time with a larger amount of daily practice the skill is significantly associated with the emphasis on higher attention (consciousness) and mental state, ie psychological health.

On another occasion, the Miyata and Sasaki team studied participants in the Park-Sasaki method of speed reading, a Japanese-based meditation technique for developing effective reading strategies, and found that the trainees showed not only higher reading speed, but also greater vigilance as well as a superior, more stable psychological state than untrained participants.

The original martial arts and arts in Japan refer to various physical and mental practices that have been developed based on ancient and historical primarily martial techniques. Today, the original martial arts and arts are considered not only as sports or just combat methods, but also as activities in constant search of a pragmatic understanding of the embodiment of unity, mind-body and mental health as a whole.

These characteristics of martial arts are thought to be related to the nature of Zen Buddhism, such as fullness (active consciousness or metacognition) where the term "Ken-Zen Ichinyo (unity of Zen and Sword)" is clearly indicated.

Such original terms obviously represent the Japanese forms of consciousness, represented in the original martial arts, and can potentially be very well understood, accepted and practically implemented in the modern scientific framework of psychology.

Most of the empirical studies conducted so far promise a solid contribution to the scientific literature and subsequently lead to an integrated understanding of the Eastern traditional theory of mind-body with modern, more contemporary spirituality, following the pattern of development in Western countries.

For example, karate (empty hand / mind path) is the original form of a martial arts set originating in Okinawa, Japan. The original karate does not only involve physical manipulation of the body to more effectively defeat the opponent with the bare hands, but also devotes maximum time to cultivating consciousness, breath control, breathing and bodily unity. Based on these experiences from history, it seems reasonable to assume that the original martial arts and arts have very similar correlations with active consciousness in the context of psychological studies.

Compared to non-practitioners, martial arts practitioners based on the self-report model gave answers in research and they were calculated with significantly higher scores for awareness as well as subjective well-being, and gave much lower results on questions about the occurrence of depression and the like. conditions ..

Among practitioners of the original martial arts and arts, for the period of training / practice and compared to the ranks of their expertise (ranking by Dan / Q degrees), as well as the frequency of daily practice were significantly important to be correlated with higher parameters of vigilance. and more positive psychological health outcomes. These associations between exercise / expertise in original martial arts and arts and psychological outcomes were generally consistent in controlling demographic variables, while a higher frequency of daily practice, but not in a significantly longer period of practice, predicted lower depression. These data are completely consistent with the hypotheses and support the idea that continuous practice, as well as the degree of expertise are associated with a higher disposition of vigilance and the desired psychological status in the population of practitioners of the original martial arts and arts.

It has been proven that the original martial arts emphasize not only the importance of consciousness, but also the locus of control. Exactly such characteristics fit with the basic components of metacognition.

In the East, systematic martial arts date back to about 3,000 years ago. The first written evidence is found in the territory of present-day Sri Lanka and is gradually spreading to the northwest to China, India and Korea (Korkoron and Farakas, 1983).

Teachers of martial arts and practices, along with their metaphysical teachings, passed them on from generation to generation. These practices are what Western psychology calls "power within oneself" in each individual.

East Indian philosophies and some religions introduced this concept to the "school of thought" (Japanese: ryuha) in China (Ouj, 1981) where it is known as the Qi concept, and later entering Japan (around the 7th century) it was acquired by recognizable name Ki (Seitz, 1990).

In the West, on the other hand, martial arts such as karate, kung fu, ju-jitsu, aikido, tae-kwon-do and judo have always been considered the skills of throwing, kicking and hitting, and unfortunately are often associated with with injury, murder, anger and agony, and reluctantly pointing to those who study them "(Schaller, 1979; cited by Weiser, Kutz and Kutz, 1995). Given that popular culture focuses only on the physical side of these skills such as: breaking bricks, hard objects or bones, all under the guise of mass entertainment, the above fact comes as no surprise. However, for her true and dedicated practitioners, martial arts offer and give much more than just that distorted picture. Well-known practitioner and actor Bruce Lee (1997) successfully distilled these skills into three areas - health promotion, thought cultivation, and self-care - while others (e.g. Wong, 1996) expanded them to five stages - self-defense. health and fitness, character training, mind expansion and spiritual development.

With the fact that martial arts promote mental and physical health, they have become the target of attention of Western scientists and only in the last thirty years, hence the same with a scientific declaration, embody a system of high moral values (eg Respect, be faithful and honest, invest in the perfection of character, etc.), through which they bring together excellent physical and mental relaxation, control of mental and bodily processes, as well as to increase self-confidence (Weiser et al., 1995)

Evidence for the effectiveness of combat skills in creating affective, cognitive, and behavioral benefits has emerged from a number of studies. Improvements in self-esteem (Fuller, 1988), positive response to physical challenge (Richard and Reberg, 1986; Trulson, 1986), greater personal autonomy (Dutty, 1978), emotional stability and assertiveness (Konzac and Budro, 1984) and quality reduction of Anxiety and Depression (Kai, 2000) Konzac and Budro (1984) in their research also drew attention to the social benefits of such behavioral changes — particularly the relationship between combat response and aggression.

Autonomous wisdom that envelops the original martial arts and arts is said to make their practice less impulsive and aggressive towards others. The Samurai Code of Ethics contains ethics, deeds, and responsibilities (The Spirit of Bushido. Nitobe) Patience, insight, and composure are appropriately considered to be prerequisites for good practice in the original Japanese martial art, Budo. (Suzuki, 1981). For example, in Shotokan Karate, there is a Dojo Kun (code or set of rules) that is part of the moral values passed down from ancient times and has the role of strengthening the pacifist drive that lies at the heart of the original Japanese martial arts. This reminds students of maintaining the right attitude to things, directing the mind and the virtues to which

they should strive both inside and outside the Dojo, ie the place of practice of the skill. One of the first rules is: 'Respect others' "The practice begins with Rei (ethics of respect) and ends with Rei. (ethics of respect) (The Dojo Kun, Funakoshi Gichin).

There are other studies that suggest the effectiveness of genuine Japanese martial arts in reducing aggression. Zivin and Sor's (2001) experiment consisted of merging 60 high school boys into pairs, all with a problem behavioral profile, into a treatment group and a control group. The treatment group participated in a training related to a school of native Japanese martial arts. School teachers were asked to rate students for impulsivity, rule resistance, self-concept, and inappropriate behavior. After three months of training, the students within the treatment group improved their behavior in class and all exclusions after the start of the study (six in total) occurred in the control group. Teachers rate students' original Japanese martial arts skills as less impulsive and less aggressive towards other colleagues. Other studies (e.g. Nosanchuk, 1981) provide similar evidence that training in Japanese original martial arts significantly reduces aggression. Lakes et al. (2004) argue that these benefits are a consequence of improved self-regulation — historically known in martial arts as the self-control cultivation of will and discipline. Willpower is considered important, not only for enabling the student to continue the hard training, but also for improving the personality and performance, both inside and outside the training arena; The constant training itself, together with an honest attitude towards the moral principles of martial arts, contributes to the strengthening of the will. It is a two-way process between martial arts and the student involved in the process of "investing in the perfection of character" (Rule No. 5 by Dojo Kun, Japan Karate Association, 2009).

Other researchers (Kai, 2000; Weiser, 1995) have explored some of the physical and psychological benefits of martial arts training. Myeong et al. (2002) examined the effects of Ki on heart rate variability in sedentary subjects and Aiki students. They found that Aiki training, in terms of original Japanese martial arts, stimulated and channeled the harmonious flow of internal and external energy through the body - known to Westerners through the art of Aikido - helping to strengthen practitioners' cardiovascular systems as well as their mental health. Research has also used the distinction between so-called "soft" (internal) and "hard" (external) schools. The difference lies in the way the energy (Ki or Qi) spreads throughout the body towards the goal. "Soft" martial arts (eg Aikido) can be expressed in a slow and gentle way, with an inwardly cultivated force that, when properly applied, can be used to repel or divert the energy of an opposing attacker. "Hard" martial arts, when demonstrated, make it possible to see force visibly and can literally hear the vibrations of the air caused by the use of force. Knoblauch (1985) examined these two constructs to see if they had any bearing on the choice of martial arts style. Using Personality Inventory (CPI), he found significant differences between practitioners of 'soft' and 'hard' martial arts styles. Students who practiced exterior style showed a more dominant and competitive personality than those who practiced interior style. However, care must be taken in interpreting these results because of the possible bias of the author himself in recruiting study participants. It is also important to remember that some martial arts (eg Kojo ryu, Koyama ryu and Shotokan karatedo) have their own distinct aspects that are inherently soft and hard.

Despite the positive picture painted by the above review, little research has been conducted on the application of original Japanese martial arts as a psychotherapeutic intervention (Fuller, 1988). The work of Madenlian (1979) is one of the few comparative studies examining the effect of structured martial arts training alongside conventio-

nal psychotherapy (group or family therapies) on pro-social behavior and academic performance. The results favored Aikido over psychotherapy. The principles of aikido (centering, expansion, and mixing) were also applied by Heckler (1984) to restore self-awareness in distressed patients. This line of work puts the original Japanese martial arts in line with traditional somatopsychiatric therapies (Fuller, 1988) such as the Alexander technique (Alexander, 1969), structural integration (Rolf, 1977), bioenergy (Lowen, 1975), and dance therapy (Klein, 1983), consequently all concerned to establish psychological growth in anxious and confused patients through appropriate physical movements.

The basic principle used by these methods is that emotional interpersonal relationships and maladaptation are reflected in bodily sensations and can be corrected through appropriate physical movements.

Although the original Japanese martial arts enable positive psychological changes in their students and produce beneficial psychotherapeutic effects when practiced outside of their original culture (Fuller, 1988), how much of the original teaching is properly understood and interpreted remains an open question.

There are two problems we must face when conducting any research on Eastern martial arts in the Western situation: understanding the arts as Oriental arts and understanding these arts in the Western context. Based on Fuller's (1988) review, Columbus (1991) noted that research into the benefits of martial arts has been conducted using positivist methods of inquiry, which he says are less relevant when it comes to understanding Oriental styles. thinking or acting, and largely influenced by Zen Buddhism and Taoism, and neither is easily understood from a positivist perspective. In agreement with this, both Adler (2003) and Glasford (1987) argue that statistics cannot offer insight into the deep meanings of Oriental teachings and that the truth and value of these systems can only be truly realized through experience.

The approach to life that Eastern practices such as meditation and martial arts (Konzak and Budro, 1984) offer to their followers has proved appealing to many who are dissatisfied with the consumerist and materialistic values prevalent in the West. Especially since the 60s and 70s of the last century there has been a huge growth of these practices. The growing popularity of martial arts seems to indicate that they too have something to offer as a discipline and as a value system. It can be considered on the one hand a product of their attention to affective, cognitive characteristics and behavior (Lakes and Hoyt, 2004), and on the other hand, morality, nonviolence and enlightenment (Becker, 1982).

In short, they offer a way of being, a journey to self-discovery to cultivate our human potential - a means to better connect with ourselves, others and the wider world.

As Lao Tzu noted, "by changing us, we are changing the world" (quoted by Pau, 2008).

"The ultimate goal of karate does not lie in victory or defeat, but in the perfection of the character of its practitioner (karateka)" O-Sensei Gichin Funakoshi, the "father" of shotokan karate.

Today we are witnessing that mental health problems are becoming an increasingly important social issue and subject that entails serious consequences; Consequences ranging from personal anxiety, disability and reduced labor force participation to wider social and economic impact. For example, after the World Health Organization's annual annual cost estimate in the mental health-related segment was estimated at over \$ 2.5 trillion. Given the new situation, it is estimated that these costs are projected to increase by 240% by 2030.

For many different reasons, apart from financial and cultural reasons where there is stigmatization of mental health, costs, but also the low availability of mental health treatment, many people do not turn to and seek help for mental health problems. It is high time and quite natural to consider the application of alternative and complementary therapies in relation to mental health treatment. The practice of Native Martial Arts and the Arts can be an appropriate alternative to this, with the very fact that it possesses unique characteristics, including an emphasis on respect, self-regulation and the promotion of health as a whole. Because of this, the training and practice of the original martial arts and arts can be seen as a serious intervention to improve mental health, based on psychosomatic activities, potentially providing a much cheaper alternative and supplement to psychological therapy.

Through a series of studies, the effectiveness of this approach has already been proven, although it still receives little attention from the global professional community.

## CONCLUSION

Although the original Japanese martial arts, art and philosophy have their roots in existence for centuries, it has been proven that from the Middle Ages onwards they possessed their complete form.

Primarily developed exclusively as a combat system, their influence during its development reached such a culmination that the Warrior Road (the general name of the skills - Bushido, Budo) was copied from the physical conflict on the battlefield in the constant struggle and search for ourselves, while manages to maintain its authenticity without the aid of infusing any theistic aspects or religion.

Fascinating is the fact that this mental pragma existed in times of great conflict, at a time when the value system was at a completely different level, at a time when it was simply very easy to take life and historically even your own voice, in such circumstances this background pragma has managed to emerge as a kind of proto-psychotherapy.

Present today, in a rather non-military / conflictual state of mind, this pragma is gaining its deserved place and attention as a powerful tool for self-improvement, self-help but also a directed healing process in seriously established sciences such as psychology. Precisely because of its completeness and direct approach, it is today a serious subject of study, and its range of actions and processes, psychosomatics, is expanding into psychotherapy. Although still in a small part, research and results are increasing more and more against the passing of time, but also the emergence of completely new conditions of existence and social action.

Unlike in the past, when all these things were under the veil of mysticism and forbidden to the common man, today we live and act in a wonderful moment where we can not only experience and practice them, but with the help of science and technology, positively we implement them in our actions and our personal growth and development. If they are practiced, it is inevitable that today we will be direct witnesses of that synergy between the original martial arts (Budo, Bushido) and psychology, until the implementation of the results through the prism of psychotherapy.

This practice is a non-invasive process. It is a process that works with us either with active, but also with passive consciousness. This synergy is a process that gives wonderful positive results, both on the mental and physical level of action.

By witnessing the practice of Budo skills and art, from first hand as well as practitioners constant upgrading in psychotherapy, we can confidently claim that this is where that complementarity lies, that synergy from which we can all draw exclusively

positive applications and results, whether we are practitioners or teachers, whether we are in a healthy state or sometimes in the role of a client, whether as a preparation for the youngest or a way of life and skills of young people and adults. True, this synergy is inexhaustible and it really works.

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