



## THE EXAMINATION OF ATTITUDES TOWARD JUDO IN GREEK ATHLETES

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The aim of the present study was to evaluate opinions about judo athletes' personality. For this purpose forty-eight (48) judo athletes, 12 women and 36 men,  $30 \pm 9.1$  years old (mean  $\pm$  SD), with none to five dan, participated in the research. All the subjects answered to a 35-item questionnaire describing the image they have towards those people who are doing judo, in regard to five factors such as social nature, volition nature, active nature, physical nature and emotional nature. For the statistical analysis the statistic packet SPSS/PC version 12.0 for windows was used. Men's and women's rating about judo athletes' image was almost the same on all items ranging from the average, to somewhat strong and, also, to strong. However, there was a definitely significant difference in the comparison of the two groups, among men and women, with men rating significantly higher in the item of "being cautious" of active nature ( $t=3.518$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), in the item of "not being unfair in things" of emotional nature ( $t=2.533$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and in the item of "being mild" of emotional nature, too ( $t=2.718$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). However, women were rating significantly higher in the item of "having an independent nature" of volition nature ( $t=-2.350$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Age didn't correlate with any item. Moreover, chi square test showed that dan number affects the item of "having leadership" of social nature ( $\chi^2=31.335$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). The results lead to the conclusions that the high rating in the image of all thirty-five items, of all the five senses, social nature, volition nature, active nature, physical nature and emotional nature in both men and women regarding judo is high and is thought to be an expression of attitudes provided in judo lessons and matches, as well as during judo practice time.

**Key-Words:** opinions, judo athletes, personality, image, dan.

### Introduction

Judo, this "Martial Art", is characterized by a great amount of techniques, and highly valuable philosophical basis that helps in an individual's formation (Gleser, & Lison, 1986). Judo is a dynamic and complex sport, in which many variables such as technical, as well as tactical, physiological, and psychological, determine the final result (Frachini et al., 2005). Judo training sessions are normally two hours in duration and consist of judo specific skills and drills and randori (fighting practice) (Degoutte et al., 2003).

Judo practice, from his origin, is supposed to train an individual to obtain self-discipline, restraint, coordination, mutual benefit, and companionship. Practicing judo, therefore, supposedly contributes not only to physical development but also to psychological maturity. Because of its philosophy, judo should be particularly effective to help individuals redirect aggression or frustration and become more socially adaptive. Thus, judo practice contributes in physical and psychological development with a number of beneficial effects. Today judo is an international Olympic sport (Gleser, & Lison, 1986). It is a sport characterized by short duration, high intensity and intermittent exercise that lasts in total 7.18 minutes per match (Degoutte et al., 2003).

Judo has inherited a spirit of vitality and energy, and a spirit of mutual appreciation for other people. From the other side, since judo has spread more and more since World War II and is still continuing to spread all over the world as an international sport (Matsumoto et al., 1984), all the people have an image about judo athletes' personality. More specifically this image may play a role in participating in judo practice or may be a motive for beginning judo. Thus, the purpose of the present study was to evaluate the opinions about judo athletes' personality or else to evaluate the image toward judo athletes.

### Content and Methods

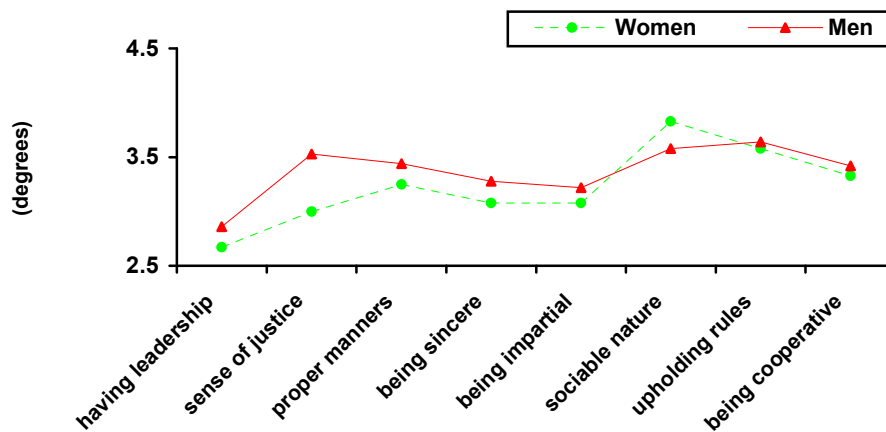
**Sample:** Forty-eight (48) judo athletes, twelve (12) women and thirty-six (36) men,  $30 \pm 9.1$  years old (mean  $\pm$  SD), with none to five dan, participated in the research. The sample was divided into 2 groups, men vs. women.

**Questionnaire.** All the subjects answered to a 35-item questionnaire describing the image they have towards those people who are doing judo. Regarding the examination of the opinions about judo athletes' personality (image toward people already doing judo), the used questionnaire was compiled by Matsumoto et al. (1984), having as a reference Ogata's and Soeda's (1979) research. The 35 items of the questionnaire were divided into 5 categories: 1) active nature (7 items), 2) physical nature (7 items), 3) emotional nature (6 items), 4) social nature (8 items) and 5) volition nature (7 items). The 35 items concerning the factors of each nature were evaluated on a 5-level scale. These values were then converted and an average scale made. The differences area by area in evaluation of the survey areas was investigated.

**Statistical Analysis.** The statistic packet SPSS/PC Version 12.0 for windows was used. The *non-parametric test Kolmogorov-Smirnov* was used to evaluate samples' normal distribution. To evaluate significant differences between men and women *student t-test* was used. Moreover, descriptive analysis, correlations, crosstabulations, as well as  $\chi^2$  tests were used. The level of significance was set to  $p < 0.05$ .

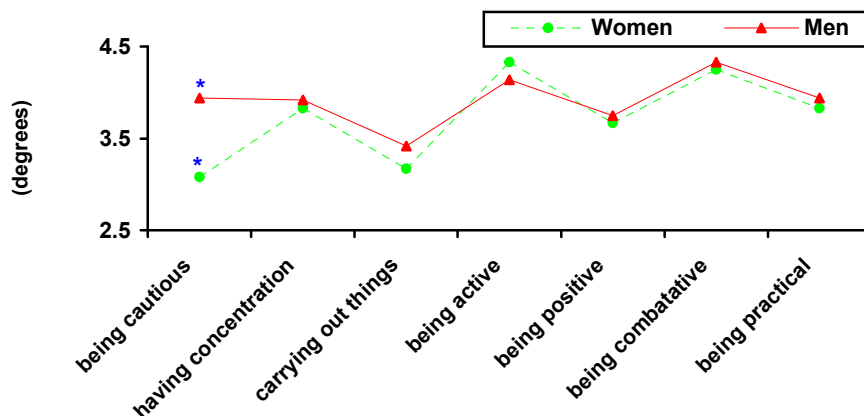
**Results**

In Figure 1, men and women rating to the 8 items regarding the social nature are presented. The items of "having a sociable nature" and "upholding rules" had a high value in each group. The rating tendencies are similar, while there were observed no significant difference between men and women.



**Figure 1.** Men and Women rating to the items of Social Nature

In Figure 2, men and women rating to the 7 items regarding the active nature are presented. The items of "being active" and "being combative" had a high value in each group. The rating tendencies are similar for both groups. However, men rated significantly higher in "being cautious" ( $t=3.518, p < 0.01$ ).



**Figure 2.** Men and Women rating to the items of Active Nature

In Figure 3, men and women rating to the 7 items regarding the volition nature are presented. Women rated higher in the most items and significantly higher in “having an independent nature” ( $t=-2.350, p<0.05$ ).

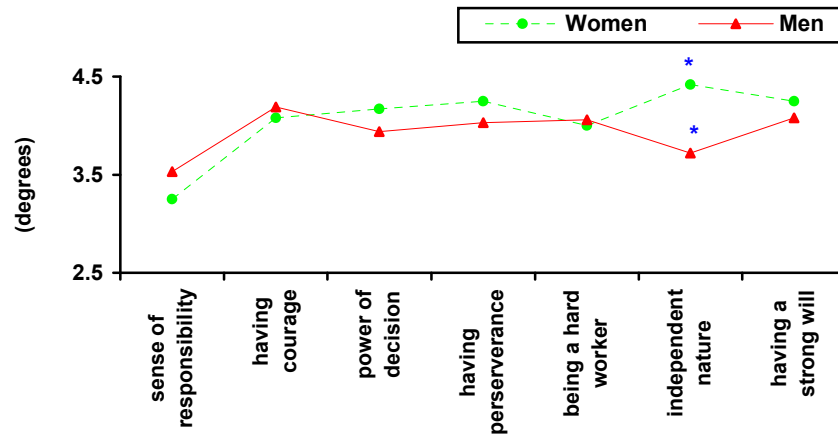


Figure 3. Men and Women rating to the items of Volition Nature

In Figure 4, men and women rating to the 7 items regarding the physical nature are presented. The items of “being positive” and “having a physical endurance” had a high value in each group. Moreover, men rated higher than women in the most items.

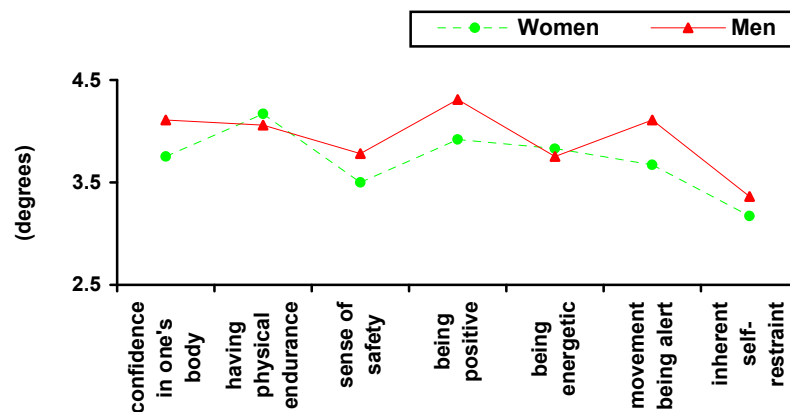


Figure 4. Men and Women rating to the items of Physical Nature

In Figure 5, men and women rating to the 6 items regarding the emotional nature are presented. Men rated higher in the most items and significantly higher in “not being unfair to things” ( $t=2.533, p<0.05$ ) and in “being mild” ( $t=2.718, p<0.01$ ).

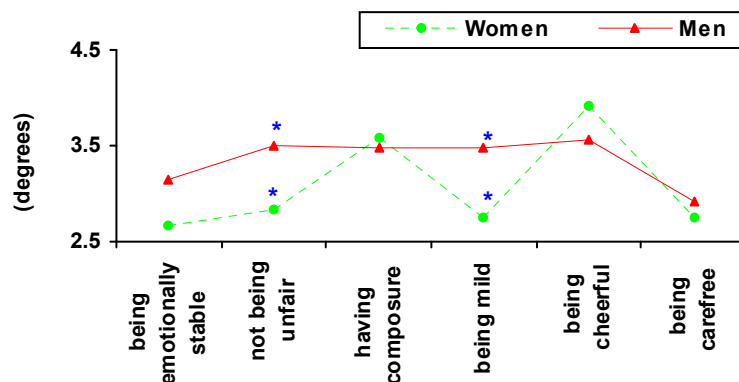


Figure 5. Men and Women rating to the items of Emotional Nature

In addition, age didn't correlate with any item. However, chi square test showed that dan number affects the item of “having leadership” of social nature ( $\chi^2=31.335, p<0.05$ ).

## **Discussion**

The purpose of the present study was to evaluate the opinions about judo athletes' personality or else to evaluate the image toward judo athletes. Personality has been defined as "the dynamic organization of the individual's psychophysical systems that determine unique adjustments to his environment" (Cox, 1994; pp. 21). Moreover, Hernández-Ardieta et al., (2002; pp. 106), defined personality as the "organization more or less stable and lasting of the character, mood, intelligence and physical composition of an individual who determines his particular way to adjust himself to environment and to interact with it". It is important to note the presence not only of psychological characteristics related to personality, but also the presence of physical aspects. In agreement, in the present study a high rating on the physical characteristics for both men and women was observed.

In the present study the image is defined as "a physical experience born out of the memory elements accumulated by past kinetic experience of all five senses, and such physical movement provides a continuity through a fixed time" (Tsuruhara et al., 1981). So, in examining men vs. women the difference of the image held regarding judo athletes was investigated. The results of the present study overall indicated that men's and women's rating about judo athletes' image was almost the same on all items ranging from the average, to somewhat strong and, also, to strong. Moreover, the rating tendencies were similar for both groups in all the five senses.

Regarding the personality characteristics, Butt (1987), Cox (1994) and Saint-Phard et al., (1999), reported that the competitive athlete presents some psychological characteristics that distinguish him from other populations. More specifically, athletes present higher emotional stability, extroversion, self-confidence and higher mental resistance if compared with non-athletes. Dobosz and Beaty (1999) indicated that athletes presented higher leadership ability than non-athletes. They, also, found that runners presented lower stress, depression and anger levels. Comparing the athlete with non-athlete woman, Weinberg and Gould (1995) and Hernández-Ardieta et al., (2002), demonstrated that the athletes are more aggressive, independent, emotionally more stable and more concentrated in work than non-athletes. In addition, Morgan and Costill (1996) concluded that athletes presented more positive characteristics than non-athletes.

Moreover, stable personality traits are related to transitory mood states. The transactional model for investigating mood changes over time suggests that stable personality traits (extraversion, neuroticism, self-esteem, coping disposition) predispose certain transient moods and performance-related cognitions (performance goals, self-efficacy of goal attainment, and intended effort), which combine to influence the appraisal of person-environment interactions (Stevens et al., 2006).

All the aforementioned athletes' personality characteristics are associated with competitive success. Therefore, Matsumoto et al. (1997; 2000) have shown that competitive success is associated with more self-confidence, anger-hostility, subjective control over outcomes, conscientiousness, internal locus of control, social support, and optimism, and with less anxiety, neuroticism, confrontational styles of coping and escape/avoidance coping. Studies on the psychological and physical aspects of judo players are especially important because mind, technique and body are traditionally considered the essential components of competitive abilities in judo, as well as to the development of moral character and personality (Matsumoto et al., 2001).

While in competition, strengths in one or two of these components can compensate for weaknesses in another, the most successful judo competitors have excellent technique, physical shape and conditioning, and mental fitness and outlook in relation to training and competition. Outside the competition arena, proper development in each of these areas is seen as a necessary condition to the development of the whole person through judo practice (Matsumoto et al., 2001). Judo instructors must pay attention in maintaining character along with maintain physical condition (Matsumoto et al., 1984).

Nowadays, opinions concerning judo are separated into those that characterize judo as a spiritual training and a human development, and those that characterize judo as a competition training, with the former being the more overwhelming. Moreover, the essence of judo from the point of win/loss is also revealed. It is well understood that the hope of every judo athlete is to obtain a championship title or/and win in the Olympics. However, the concepts of the founding of judo as an approved teaching model that it would also contribute to human development exist always in the hearts of judo followers (Matsumoto et al., 1984).

The results lead to the conclusions that the rating in the image of all thirty-five items, of all the five senses, social nature, volition nature, active nature, physical nature and emotional nature in both men and women regarding judo is high and is thought to be an expression of attitudes provided in judo lessons and matches, as well as during judo practice time.

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