

## Judo as a tool to reinforce value-based education in the South African Primary Schools physical education and school sport programmes

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### Abstract:

**Background:** Modern lives are characterized by technological comforts, safety concerns and complicated lifestyles, which all conspire to limit children's movement activities and that resulted in the waning of values in most societies. Physical Education and schools sport (PESS) programmes should have an integrated approach towards the holistic development (cognitive; psychomotor; physical; social; affective domains) of all children to instill qualities and values. **Aim:** The aim was to determine if judo is an appropriate educational tool in a South African schooling context to promote the values inherent in the curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) Curriculum. **Setting:** Due to the Covid-19 epidemic lockdown, all interviews were conducted online, with participants and the researcher participating from their home settings. **Methods:** With this descriptive design and qualitative approach, a purposive sample of South African primary schools that incorporate judo as an extramural activity were identified and invited. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with sport administrators ( $n=6$ ), school judo coaches ( $n=7$ ), and a focus group discussion was conducted with professional school judo coaches ( $n=4$ ). Narrative data obtained were analysed through line-to-line, axial and cross-thematic comparative coding. **Results:** Themes, guided by the conceptual framework of social justice, were triangulated and categorised. These themes include community, responsibility, inclusion and equality, physical development, leadership, cognitive development, enhanced participation, active, healthy lifestyle choices, and fairness. **Conclusion:** Coaches and school sport administrators, recognize the potential and actual contributions of judo at various levels, including the development of moral values, physical attributes, cognitive and psychomotor skills, and a philosophy of teamwork and togetherness.

**Key Words:** *Martial Arts, learning, development, pedagogy, children*

### Introduction

Globally, recognition exists for the economic, health, social, cultural, educational and political benefits of participation in physical activity and sport from grassroots to elite level (Grix & Carmichael 2012; Sport England n.d.; COB 2005; Slováková, Bendíková, Rozim & Daubnerová 2022). As part of the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity, a framework of policy actions developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) that seeks to encourage and promote physical activity at all levels (WHO 2018) is provided. The objective to create active people for a healthier world include action plans that can provide activity programmes across multiple settings and the enhancement of physical education and school-based programmes (WHO, 2018). Whilst schools sport forms an integral part of an athlete's development pathway to elite level (Gulbin, Weissensteiner, Oldenzel & Gagne 2013), an integrated approach to the holistic development (cognitive; psychomotor; physical; social; affective domains) (Gallahue & Donnelley 2003) of all individuals is necessary to develop overall educational goals by instilling qualities and values such as citizenship, sportsmanship, fair play, teamwork, respect, and health and welfare (Bulatova, Krol, Ermolova & Radchenko 2019; Shields & Gilbert n.d.).

Physical education and school sport in South Africa are key government priorities, and the government is seeking to deliver on envisaged educational and sport-focused outcomes (SRSA 2012, 2013a & b). There emerge numerous and well-documented wellness benefits associated with the holistic development of learners (Rusănescu, Sora & Stoicescu 2018). The recognition of these benefits is evident in the current policy governing school curricula in South Africa, the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) Grades R-12 (Department of Basic Education 2011; Stroebel, Hay & Bloemhoff 2016; SAG 2020a). The National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document specifically emphasizes the use of sport and physical education in a school context to promote nation-building and shape social bonds by reinforcing values such as social cohesion, social justice, equity, equality, tolerance, social justice, respect, and reconciliation (SAG 2020b).

Modern lives are characterized by technological comforts, safety concerns and complicated lifestyles, which all conspire to limit children's movement activities (Balkó, Balkó, Valter & Jelinek 2017). As a result, organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization with significant global footprints have adopted Values Education through Sport (VETS) programmes that reinforce value-based

education principles, whilst recognizing cross-curricular potential (UNESCO 2019). The values that are developed through VETS programmes provide a promising link (UNESCO 2019) with subjects such as physical education, civic and moral education, nutrition, biology and arts. The VETS programmes focus on promoting a universal framework of values. These values are embodied by fairness, respect, equality and inclusion, that translate into mutual understanding, integrity, responsibility, honesty, friendship, tolerance, teamwork and community (UNESCO 2016).

With active participation in school sports programmes, learners could meaningfully engage with their peers and educators in the educational programmes that could contribute to improved academic performance (Cadoret, Bigras, Duval, Lemay, Tremblay & Lemire 2018), provide life skills education, and establish strong networks between athletic directors, organisations and professional athletes. Learning contexts should therefore be characterized by practices that lead to learners' holistic development (Andrieieva, Galan, Hakman & Holovach 2017). Such learning is not only physically centered. It is also socially centered, involving interpersonal relationships and co-participation among learners. Some learners can possess natural abilities or prior movement experiences that they learn outside schools through informal education experiences (Eshach 2007). Bailey, Cope and Parnell (2015) confirm these findings, indicating that there are significant benefits associated with deliberately and appropriately addressing the social, psychomotor, physical, affective, and cognitive developmental needs during well-structured programmes on fundamental physical and movement skills and physical. Positive social skills, behaviours and attitudes are also to be developed through such active participation in well-structured PE and school sport programmes. The appropriate development of the teacher-learner relationship can benefit the development of self-esteem, cognitive functioning, psychosocial development, school engagement and educational attainment (Bailey 2016).

These relationships are particularly relevant at societal level with political, social, cultural and technological changes resulting in a deviation from traditional human values (Anil 2014). As a result, a scenario unfolds where parents are increasingly preoccupied with their careers, and instilling values in children is largely left to day care centers (Roux 2020). The potential negative effects of lifestyle changes are compounded by increased exposure to social ills that include drugs, alcohol and gambling through television broadcasting and social media houses from a young age, leading to a breakdown in value acquisition and potentially contributing to resulting juvenile delinquency (Aneja 2014; Haljasorg & Lilleoja 2016). Although nations have their own informal and formal learning practices in place that contribute to acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes, regular physical activity and sport participation could contribute to a nation's wellbeing by improving physical health, mental health and quality of life (Gosselin, Boccanfuso & Laberge 2020; Roux, Burnett & Hollander 2008). South Africa is a country that recognizes the potential benefits of school sport programmes. Therefore, the South African Government states in the White Paper of Sport and Recreation (SRSA) (2013) that the potential benefits include developing life skills, improving education, encouraging life-long participation in sport, serving as a hub for the identification and development of talented athletes, and making a valuable contribution to the development and transformation of sport. Schools sport programmes, supported by physical education programmes, should contribute to the holistic development of all learners involved (Gallahue & Donnelly 2007). The International Olympic Committee (IOC) (2019) emphasizes that holistic development through a blend of sport and education reaffirm the values of Olympism, emphasizing the development of body, will and mind intertwined with a cultural and educational perspective.

Value-based education is a political act supported by governments, educationists and policy makers as one of the fastest growing educational approaches in the world that seeks to transform societal norms and values (Pitsoe & Mahlangu 2014). The goals of value-based education are to adequately prepare individuals for active citizenship with the necessary conceptual tools to contribute constructively towards building a democratic society (Solomons & Fataar 2011). Values are judgments that are based on the understanding of what constitutes good and bad and contribute to leading and living a just life (Veugelers 2000). The South African education system has also increasingly transformed to embrace value-based education and the African principle of Ubuntu. Ubuntu is an African concept of personhood that emphasizes depending on others to be whom they are, and to form part of society (Ogude 2019). From an educational perspective, the philosophy of Ubuntu embraces values of humanness such as caring, sympathy, empathy and forgiveness, whilst embracing a culture of justice and mutual caring (Lefa 2015).

Gulbin, Weissensteiner, Oldenzel and Gagné's (2013) propose a triad of athlete development that incorporates an organized program of school sport. This program is necessary to produce elite athletes as part of a Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model (Canadian Sports Institute 2014). This study's orientation leans towards recognizing the agency and role that judokas (judo players) and judo programmes have in influencing school learning environments. Judo is a global sport that forms part of the Olympic movement (Ohlenkamp 2006) and is practiced widely in South Africa and school and club level. Judo also meets the essential function of physical education by giving communities healthy individuals that are harmoniously developed both mentally and spiritually (Bogdan 2014). The moral code of judo includes courtesy, courage, friendship, honesty, honour, modesty, respect and self-control (Roden 2018), and highlights inherent values in the practice of the sport. The moral code is guided by two main philosophical principles that combine moral and physical education, *jita kyoei* (mutual prosperity) and *seiryoku zenyo* (maximum use of one's energy) (Kano 2005).

## **Material & methods**

### *Conceptual framework*

Schools provide the context for developing active and responsible citizens in a community (Talbot 2001). Within this context social justice education can be taught through the educational structure and the classroom (Human Rights Careers, n.d.). Physical education provides an appropriate platform for educators to teach a broad range of issues related to social justice (Walton-Fisette, Sutherland & Hill 2019). Whilst schools have traditionally employed an instructionist model of educational practice that is teacher-focused and non-interactive, the social acquisition of tacit skills and tacit knowledge is generated by interactive and shared experiences within given socio-cultural contexts (Johnson 2005; Roux 2020). Therefore, this paper positions and discusses judo within the conceptual framework of social justice by means of physical education in the school context in South Africa.

### *Aim and research question*

This paper aims to answer the following research question: Is judo an appropriate educational tool in a South African schooling context to promote the values inherent in the CAPS Curriculum? The methodology is described accordingly, followed by the results, and finally by a conclusion and recommendations.

### *Research Design and sampling*

This paper reports on a section of a broader national study on a contextual schools judo programme in South Africa. The study adopted a descriptive design with a qualitative approach. A purposive sample of primary schools in South Africa were selected that incorporate judo as an extramural activity, serving the purpose of representing a cross-section that specifically represented the population under study (Lavrakas, 2008). Only participants who signed consent forms participated in the study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with South African primary school sport administrators (n=6) from government and private schools, professional school judo coaches (n=7), and an additional focus group discussion was also conducted with professional school judo coaches (n=4). All but one of the judo coaches had a black belt, the other having a blue belt. Further characteristics are provided in the results section.

### *Setting*

All interviews and the focus group were conducted online, with participants and the researcher participating from their home settings. This was due to the lockdown situation imposed by the State President of South Africa in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### *Data collection (tool)*

For this study semi-structured interviews and a focus group discussion were employed to collect qualitative information from the participants.

### *Validity and Reliability*

With these interviews and discussions, trustworthiness was ascertained through the following criteria:

1. Credibility; the keeping of notes on research decisions made by coding the data and the use of member checking to verify the findings.
2. Conformability and dependability; keeping records of the research path throughout the study from the development to the reporting of the findings. Raw data were transcribed verbatim for verification.

### *Ethical considerations*

Access to conduct this research was obtained from Judo South Africa. Ethical conduct was implemented according to the processes and procedures approved by the Higher Degrees and Ethics Committees of a Higher Education Institution in the Gauteng Province of South Africa, with clearance number REC-462-2020. Information letters and informed consent forms to participate in the research, and to be audio-recorded during the interviews, were distributed via email to the respondents prior to their participation. Once returned, the data collection commenced. Trustworthiness of interviews and focus groups were ensured through applying modalities of authenticity, member checking and rigor during the research process.

### *Data analysis*

Narrative data obtained from interviews and focus groups were analysed through line-to-line, axial and cross-thematic comparative coding. Through this process of inductive analysis, themes were conceptualised by identifying repeating responses as well as instances of metaphors and analogies. The themes were informed by an priori approach (using prior theoretical understanding of the phenomenon under study) (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

## **Results**

Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in order to gather information on the perspective of professionals regarding the school's judo programme in South Africa. Respondents were also requested to make recommendations to possibly enhance the programme. Results were triangulated and categorised in themes guided by the conceptual framework of social justice. The themes include community, responsibility, inclusion and equality, physical development, leadership, cognitive development, enhanced participation, active, healthy lifestyle choices, and fairness.

### *Community*

A number of judo coaches and administrators agreed that judo contributes to values related to a sense of

community. One coach felt that “Judo can increase the moral fiber of society in South Africa” because judokas have a “sense of Ubuntu”. The same coach further explained that:

The whole principle of what Kano (referring to Jigoro Kano, the founder of judo) promulgates as mutually beneficial to society as a whole, and the benefit lies in decent, well educated, well mannered proper young children that can make a difference to society.

(Coach 1: Male; 51 years old; Approximately 28 years of experience)

The coach went on to explain that some schools recognize the value of judo’s contributing to the community, claiming that: They (the schools) do understand that in making space for us, we contribute to their well-being and to the enhancement of the healthy state of affairs and healthy state of thinking of their students.

Another coach reflected on the contribution that judo makes to a collective understanding of the value-system within communities and a sense of belonging, describing that:

A lot of people send their child to judo for the discipline. The way we teach judo at schools is more relaxed, and it becomes much more strict at club level...but I personally think the children learn very quickly where the boundaries are in judo. At some households the boundaries are less clear, and in that sense, they feel safe at the judo, and they feel safe with the coach.

(Coach 2: Male; 59 years old; 28 years of experience)

Reflecting on the benefits of judo in a troubled neighborhood and community, administrator 1 (Male; approximately 20 years of experience) emphasized that ‘The other value is it keeps the children off the streets’, providing further insight that judo could make significant contributions to the behaviour of students, as well as the safety of the community through empowerment. The following narrative supports these thoughts:

I personally introduced the judo, together with the coach, because I know of the disciplinary aspect of it...martial arts and judo has a tremendous culture of discipline, and obviously the self-defense factor as well.

(Administrator 1: Male; approximately 20 years of experience)

Coach 1 also reflected on the fact that the innate nature and philosophy of judo contributed to a better understanding of the functioning of society as a whole, indicated by the following response:

Kids have an understanding of the moral code, hierarchy, and of discipline, where they need to have respect for teachers and friends alike. You find that those guys in general have a much better understanding of how things are put together.

(Coach 1: Male; 51 years old; Approximately 28 years of experience)

It is evident from the responses that there is recognition amongst many of the respondents that judo promotes a strong sense of community values, teamwork and introduces a value-system based on which a community can function as a whole.

#### *Responsibility*

Various responses reflected on the development of qualities that contribute to a recognition of responsibility, both at individual level, and as an individual within a community. Administrator 1 indicated that:

It is the self-defense factor, it is the ‘Okay do your homework this afternoon’, ‘Okay do your push-ups’, ‘Okay learn to play the piano’, learn not to beat up on your wife, and many other aspects of it. So, it’s core, its (judo) not just a sport...

(Administrator 1: Male; approximately 20 years of experience)

One narrative by Coach 3 (Female; 56 years old; approximately 27 years of experience) also reflected on the sense of responsibility that a judo coach has towards the community, indicating that: ‘At one of my less wealthy private schools...it is about empowering the kids, teaching them self-defense, giving them something to do at school’.

Responses imply that there is a realization of the responsibility that judo coaches have to contribute meaningfully to the development of school communities. That contribution translates into students that can impact positively on their larger communities.

#### *Inclusion and equality*

Coaches agreed that judo embraces an inclusive environment that does not discriminate against judokas that are different. One narrative by Coach 1 provides insight into the greeting procedure: ‘...when they come into the dojo...its enforced that we have recognize each other’, whilst Coach 4 (Female; 36 years of age; approximately 2 years of experience) responded that: ‘Judo doesn’t discriminate – a short person can do judo, a tall person can do judo, a chubby person can do judo, a skinny person – it doesn’t limit you.’

Another factor that contributes to the feelings of inclusiveness relates to friendship. Coach 4 indicated that establishing friendships is an essential aspect of the judo programme:

At school level what we are currently busy with in our lesson plans is that judo is not just fighting, it is about working on the whole you as a person. We work on courtesy, courage, and we are busy with friendship this week.

(Coach 4: Female; 36 years of age; approximately 2 years of experience)

Another narrative from Coach 4 emphasized the fact that judo provides fertile grounds and

opportunities for developing friendships by saying that:

We teach you how to be...a respectful person. It builds your character as a person, it teaches you discipline...and one thing that stands out for me is when we used to travel to different provinces, you actually made lifelong friends.

(Coach 4: Female; 36 years of age; approximately 2 years of experience)

Besides the atmosphere of inclusivity and culture of equality mentioned above, judo also provides an opportunity for participants to achieve equal status. A narrative from Coach 1 reaffirms this, indicating that '...its empowering (to do judo)...girls that can stand up for themselves and be accountable'.

Clearly, establishing friendships and creating equal and inclusive opportunities for participation is a priority when participating in judo in a school's programme.

#### *Physical development*

It is evident from the responses that judo at schools' level also contributes to the development of physical qualities. One coach provided in-depth insight, stating that:

In judo you have to take grip, hold and use your hands. Children don't use their hands anymore they use their thumbs on their cell phones and computers. Now they are losing their hand strength and coordination. On the judo mat, the first thing you teach them is to take hold, but when you get home and pull on your sisters dress you get told off. When a problem comes and you have to defend yourself, you can't because you've been taught not to take hold with your hands. This is a major problem, and I see it more and more on the judo mat, children don't know how to hold on.

(Coach 5: Male; 74 years old; approximately 55 years of experience)

Coach 6 (Male; 65 years old; approximately 40 years of experience) responded that '...they just see that the children's motor skills and concentration develop and a further narrative from Coach 7 (Male; 22 years old; approximately 2 years of experience) indicates that judo incorporates physical training as well, indicating that: 'You teach students basic motor development as well'.

#### *Leadership*

Coach 3 indicated that the feedback from schools was positive in regard to the development of leadership qualities of students that practiced judo with the following narrative:

They've (the school sports administrators) said that they found that the kids doing judo are better disciplined, and are actually more of an asset to the school. They are disciplined, they are better behaved, and they are also the ones that end up being leaders in the schools.

(Female; 56 years old; approximately 27 years of experience)

Another interesting insight into the acceptance of leadership figures that are ingrained in the sport with the following response by Coach 5:

Because judo is a contact sport, we hug and we are in each other's personal space...to make a child feel safe with the educator and the sports instructor...replaces the father figure. The value is tremendous.

(Male; 74 years old; approximately 55 years of experience)

The responses illustrate judo's value in establishing role acceptance and developing qualities in a group as well as at individual level that could contribute to a functioning community and society.

#### *Cognitive development*

Widespread recognition existed amongst the respondents for the contribution that judo makes to the development of cognitive skills. One of these skills was concentration, with Coach 6 indicating that 'Some of the teachers indicated that the concentration skills of the children improved'. School sports administrators agreed, with Administrator 2 (Female; Approximately 14 years of experience) indicating that '...there have been conversations on things like the concentration, whilst Administrator 1's narrative provided further insight into the benefits that judo could have for school students with challenges such as Attention Deficit Disorder: 'I think in the cases of children who are bordering on ADD, and that sort of challenge, I think they would also be able to profit from it'.

Speaking from personal experience in the sport, the following narrative from Coach 8 (Male; 55 years old; Approximately 30 years of experience) provides insight into the development of cognitive traits such as self-confidence through judo: 'The confidence judo gave them was immense, and I realized that we could change people's lives through judo'.

A schools sport administrator supported this perception, indicating that:

(Judo) is of great benefit to teachers...especially when we talk about values, discipline...self-esteem, and self-confidence. We get to do with so many children that have no self-confidence, and these are typical sports (judo) that I think could help in developing self-confidence and self-esteem.

(Administrator 3: Male; Approximately 10 years of experience)

Another narrative from a schools sport administrator reflects on the development of cognitive control

through judo that also contributes to the development of a just and functioning community:

Sports codes like judo are beneficial to our school...where children have disciplinary challenges these are the sport codes wherein such children excel and we can see the benefits in a classroom setting as well, because they develop self-discipline...

(Administrator 4: Male; Approximately 8 years of experience)

The notion of cognitive control is supported by the following narrative of Coach 5 that: 'The other thing is a guy that loses his temper quickly – if he loses his temper on a judo mat, he loses his focus, makes mistakes, and he will lose'. According to Coach 5, the nature of judo as an individual sport also develops perseverance with the coach stating that 'Children that cry often, or are a bit softer in nature, could also benefit from learning to get up and give something back (after being thrown)'.

A further narrative indicated that:

One of the pillars of the CURRO model is positive discipline that obviously infiltrates into every aspect of the school. So a learner who's learning to do katas (judo forms) and whatever it is in terms of the judo, they're learning that discipline, they're learning the discipline of self-defense, and not just an aggressive approach so they can control their own bodies.

(Administrator 1: Male; Approximately 20 years of experience)

This response indicates that there is recognition for the development of emotional control through different forms of judo training.

#### *Enhanced participation*

Coach 8 indicated that the skills and values learned through judo could contribute to a more successful competition career with the following narrative:

Judo taught me about myself and my limits, what you're able to do and what you're not able to do, and eventually if you do judo long enough you can start fighting judo without concern about the outcome of the contest. I feel that was the big turning point (for my competition career).

(Coach 8: Male; 55 years of age; Approximately 30 years of experience)

Participating in judo at school level affords judokas the opportunity to continue with their careers to club level and beyond.

#### *Active, healthy lifestyle choices*

Participating in judo is not limited to only competing in a sport, as confirmed by Coach 7 who indicated that: 'There's a saying that judo isn't a sport, judo is a lifestyle as well. You get a moral code as well.' Coach 5 reflected on the changes of lifestyle in South Africa and what role judo could play, indicating that:

When television was introduced in South Africa it had a negative effect on participation rates in judo, because children would rather watch television than exercise. Now people are more aware of the fact that children have to exercise, so they are bringing children after hours, after schools' sports, back to judo.

(Coach 5: Male; 74 years old; approximately 55 years of experience)

Another narrative from Administrator 3 reflects on the positive effects on emotions that students could benefit from when choosing to be active in a sport like judo, or similar: 'We have behavior problems in classes that I think with a bit of contact through judo or wrestling, could be addressed as they get rid of some frustration'. Judo offers opportunities for participation in a structured environment that offers recreational opportunities to improve fitness, develop and establish values, and participate in a competitive sport career.

#### *Fairness*

Regarding offering fair opportunities for participation, Coach 5 felt that judo contributes to stopping children from being bullied. The following narrative provides an explanation:

If you have a bully in school, then he comes to judo. That bully will compete against other guys in class that are better and stronger than him, and he will learn not to be a bully quite quickly. (Coach 5: Male; 74 years old; approximately 55 years of experience)

Administrator 5 also reflected on the fairness created by judo grading examinations, as all judokas received recognition for the progress they made: We saw how judo positively influenced many of our students, and how the children grade (for new belts). In terms of an overall impression of judo in schools, one schools sport administrator indicated that the contributions of judo could be even more significant:

If parents have that kind of information that indicates what the benefits are of judo for their children, it will definitely be to the benefit of everyone.

(Administrator 6: Male; Approximately 10 years of experience).

#### **Dicussion**

The results of this study indicated that both coaches and school sport administrators recognize the potential and actual contributions of judo at various levels including the development of moral values, physical attributes, cognitive and psychomotor skills, and a philosophy of teamwork and togetherness at community level.

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 This approach to the holistic development not only the individual, but enhancing social interaction and cohesiveness, and reinforcing community values through appropriate physical education and school sport programmes. This also directly corresponds with the goals of the South African school curriculum for physical education (CAPS curriculum) (SAG, 2020b). In a South African context, the qualities recognized by these primary school judo coaches and administrators also promote the African principle of Ubuntu that forms an essential part of the educational principles in the country (Lefa 2015; Ogude 2019). Although there are often misconceptions about contact sports with a Martial Arts background, these results clearly indicate that judo is not perceived to be violent in nature. In contrast, both, coaches and administrators recognize links between the educational contributions of judo to improved schoolwork, whether it be directly linked to the grades and positions of leadership of students, or a positive reinforcement of behaviour that has resulted in students adjusting to school communities more successfully (Cadoret et al. 2018).

A relevant aspect of judo that became apparent in the results of this study is that judo was formed through a unique blend of educational principles and sport-related qualities (Kano 2005; Ohlenkamp 2006). Due to its Olympic status, the 'educational sport' character of judo also affords talented athletes the opportunity to follow a sport career through judo. Learning contexts should offer opportunities for holistic development (Andrieieva et al. 2017), a principle that is in line with the World Health Organisation's (2018) objectives for school-based programmes.

### Conclusions

It is evident from the results of this study that the contribution of judo is recognised both within the educational and sporting domains. The historic development of judo as educational activity and the philosophical qualities and approach of community building, together with its Olympic status, positions the sport firmly and appropriately within the educational context in South Africa. The South African government's attempts to transform society through physical activity and sport for a variety of reasons ranging from health to socio-economic struggles such as poverty and violence, further strengthens the potential contributions that judo could make to society as a whole. Due to the willingness expressed by these primary school sports administrators to incorporate judo to a greater extent in the school curriculum, it is the author's recommendation that judo could be adopted as one of the core programmes in physical education as part of the school curriculum, and that more extensive opportunities should be offered for talented athletes through a school sport programme that incorporates judo as a school sport in South Africa.

**Conflicts of interest** - Nothing to declare.

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