

# HUMANISTIC APPROACH IN THE ORGANIZATION OF SPORTS LESSONS: KARATE AS MEANS OF SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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## **Abstract**

*A great opportunity of humanistic approach implementation is found in spiritual and physical education of students during the lessons of martial arts. Three main constituents are necessary to acquire the mastery level in martial arts: [1] moral qualities, mental power and willpower; [2] physical condition, strength and endurance; [3] technical mastery. It is assumed, that karate takes an important place in the system of spiritual and physical education of a personality, ensuring not only versatile physical but also moral education. Thus, the priority is given to the spiritual aspect of karate, but the fighting technique is of a minor importance. In Latvia, not so many methods of karate teaching have been developed, which are based on didactic sport teaching principles worked out according to humanistic approach.*

*That is why the aim of this research is investigation of humanistic approach implementation at the lessons of karate with adolescents according to specially developed teaching methods.*

*Eighty 14-15-year-old students, who were divided into experimental and control groups, participated in the research. The following methods have been used: a test "Achievement motivation and Fear of failures", a test "Feelings – Activity – Mood"; to define the development level of physical qualities control tests of sport standards of Ministry for Education of the Latvian Republic have been carried out. The results have been subjected to mathematical processing applying analysis of variation and Tukey HSD test.*

*The results of the research have confirmed, that humanistic approach implementation at the lessons of karate promotes positive dynamics of students' achievements motivation, improvement of mood and feelings. All the results have been analyzed and interpreted.*

**Key words:** *educational of adolescents, humanistic approach, karate classes.*

## **Introduction**

We know that humanism is a system of views, where love, truth, mutual respect and belief in the progress of a person are implemented (Маслоу, 2003). Humanistic approach is directed rather to great potential of person's nature than to forced formation of a personality. Humanistic approach confirms value of a person independently of their social position and status (Столяров, 1995).

In its turn, the problem of humanistic value of sport and creation of personality – oriented approaches to physical education of children and adolescents, discussion of their place in modern culture are still a subject of discussions among philosophers, sociologists, culture

specialists, pedagogues, psychologists, etc.

In the focus of these discussions there is a question, whether we managed to achieve practical realization of humanistic ideals and values in the process of physical education.

During a long period of time an opinion prevailed among scientists and teachers of sport that pedagogical efforts are necessary only to include children into regular active sports classes, which seem allow to solve many social – pedagogical tasks; they assist to maintain health and promote harmonious development and formation of physical and spiritual culture, etc. That is why the main efforts are directed to inclusion of as many children as possible into regular sports classes (Матвеев, 1999).

Development of sport and influence of active sports exercises on health, personality features and interrelations of people showed, however, that humanistic potential of sport is not realized automatically. Moreover, sports classes can lead to the range of negative phenomena, that contradict the main ideals and values of humanistic - oriented system of education: children's stress, aggravation of state of health, development of selfishness, envy, aggressiveness, etc. (Bailey, 1978).

The defined peculiarities confirm, that when we use sport in educational purposes to join participants to spiritual – moral, aesthetic and other humanistic values, rather significant difficulties arise. That is why many specialists, being oriented to the principles of humanistic education, suggest refusing usage of sport in educational work with children and adolescents in general (Arnold, 1978; Arnold, 1989).

Humanistic approach of sport and physical education, including children and youth education, is considered as theory, the subject of which is conformity to natural laws of influence of sport on personality, ways, means and methods that provide optimal positive effect of such influence (Столяров, 1997). The basis of the given theory is the concept of such an optimal model of physical education, which provides formation and development of active, creative, versatile, harmonious personality and humanistic human relations.

As it is known, the most important principles of humanistic approach are as follows:

- Strengthening of attention to personality of every person as to the highest social value; transformation of a pupil from an object of social – pedagogical influence of a pedagogue into a subject of active creative activity on the basis of the development of inner motives for self-perfection and self-definition, ability to act intellectually and critically, that is directed to deep realization of role and meaning of their activity;
- Formation of person's motivation to develop into harmonious personality;
- Democratization in relations of a teacher and pupils;
- Individualization in education work on the basis of acquirement and registration of information on state of their health, level of physical preparedness, individual psychological peculiarities of pupils;
- Partnership in pupils' choice of form of classes, their intensity, etc.

Being guided by these principles a range of scientists developed specific programmes and technologies of practical realization of these principles in the process of physical education and organization of physical exercise classes for children and youth (Бальсевич, 1996; Бальсевич и др, 1997; Лях, Мейксон & Кофман, 1996).

Modern sport makes a significant contribution to formation and development of creative abilities of young and adult athletes; according to this contribution their heuristic value is defined. There is no need to look for grounds to prove heuristic – creative character of athletes' decisions, made in complicated competitive situations. Improvisation accuracy, instantaneous guess of the only correct decision, when conscious choice of options is just impossible, draws together peculiarities of vision, thinking, motive reactions of athletes with analogous mental processes and physical actions in artistic creative work (Столяров & Самусенкова, 1996).

Humanistic paradigm makes grounds heuristic value of sports competitions. Competi-

tion can reveal and reveals new talents and it often promotes the development of different abilities, talents and skills unexpectedly and in various forms. Besides, it encourages new undertakings and arouses aspiration to acquirement of new knowledge and deeper self-expression (Pruvulovich, 1982).

That is why a central problem of non-classical theory of children and youth sports education as well as sport in general is search and scientific grounds of such teaching models and organization of sports competitions, which possess a higher, if to compare with a traditional model, humanistic cultural potential, create optimal conditions for formation and development of a free, active, creative and harmonious personality, humane human relations and allow to solve effectively different tasks of formation of such relations and personality development (Столяров, 1997).

We suppose that conscious purposeful activity of a teacher plays particularly important role in realization of humanistic potential of physical education. A teacher is responsible not only for physical preparation, but also for general education of children. A teacher has to have a clear enough idea of the main problems of biological, mental and social development of children and has to be able to use this knowledge in practice.

According to the essence of the profession teachers take part in the process of socialization of children. They are able to transmit the patterns of behaviour and values to their pupils. That is why a teacher is also responsible for social integration of children, teaching skills of cooperation (Jansone & Krauksts, 2005; Kuznecova, 2003; Имеш, 1982).

An ideal of harmonious combination of spiritual power and physical perfection is an ideal, which assumes, that intellectual values are in harmony with moral values, but aesthetic values are in harmony with corporal values.

Giving concrete expression to the situation considering physical education, the main idea is to fill sport itself with these ideals, which in this case would not need their declaration, as they would make up the essence of sport (Lipiec, 1994).

Being based on the analysis of modern views about humanistic education, in the given research we have been guided by consideration, that versatile and harmonious development of a personality includes the following correlated components:

- Constant orientation of a personality to self-perfection, self-overcoming and self-development;
- Unity of physical, mental and spiritual, harmonious development of corporal constituent, mental abilities and moral features of a person;
- Overcoming of partiality, one-sided view and narrow specialization in development of a personality.

A great possibility in implementation of humanistic approach can be found in spiritual and physical education of students during the classes of martial arts (Obodynski & Cynarski, 2004). Karate plays an important role in the system of spiritual and physical education of a personality, providing not only versatile physical, but also moral education (Nakayama, 1983; Микрюков, 2003). In karate priority is given to spiritual aspect, and fighting technique is of minor importance. To acquire every level of karate mastery three constituents are necessary: (1) moral features, mental power and willpower; (2) physical condition, strength and endurance; (3) technical mastery (Каштанов, 2006; Микрюков, 2003).

That is why the aim of the given research is investigation of humanistic approach implementation in the karate classes with the adolescents, who do karate according to the specially developed methods.

The structure of karate teaching process has been developed on the basis of sport education principles. Therefore, karate teaching process can be divided into several stages:

1. Introduction to the techniques.
2. Detailed learning of the techniques:

- learning of the techniques on the whole,
  - learning of the techniques in parts.
3. Improvement and fastening of skills.

The following humanistic approaches (Kopotov, 1994) and didactic principles of study process (Liepiņa, 1993) have been worked out in teaching methods developed by us:

- principle of consciousness,
- principle of activity,
- principle of regularity,
- principle of approachability and stability,
- principle of favourable conditions formation for creative potential,
- principle of harmonious development of mutual relations.

The main aim of the research is to denote usage opportunities of humanistic approach in the process of karate classes of 14-15-year-old adolescents.

## Methodology of Research

### *Participants*

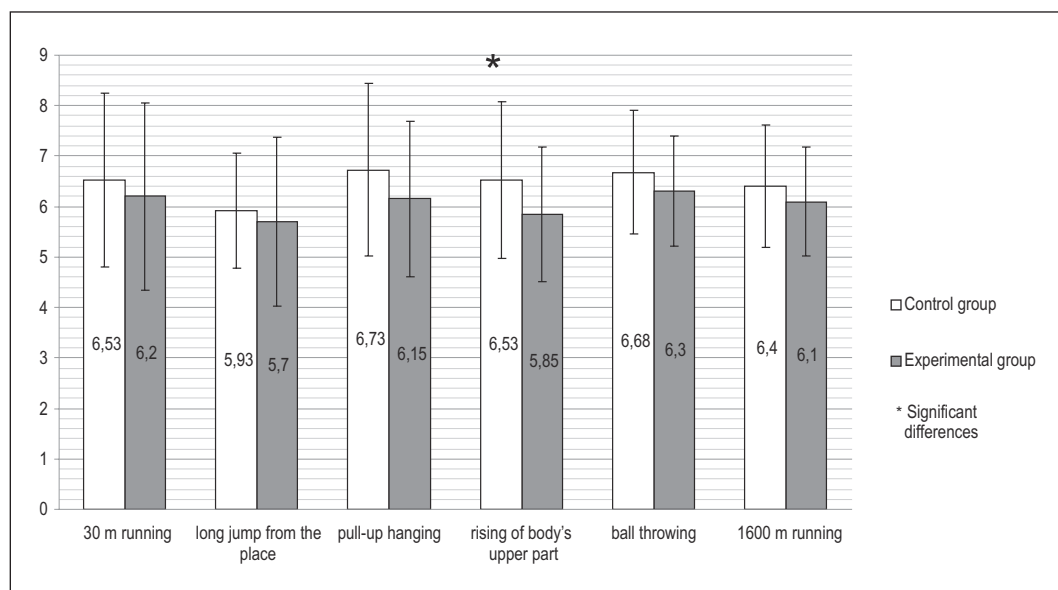
Students of the Latvian Funakoshi Shotokan karate Academy have taken part in the research. The students entered the academy due to advertisements in mass media. Eighty 14-15-year-old boys have been selected from 107 people who applied and who did not have any experience in karate classes.

### *Procedure and Instruments*

Selection of participants has been carried out according to the results of physical tests, confirmed by Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia (Valsts Izglītības un saturs centrs, 2009). This tests have been used as a sport test of basic school graduates.

The following tests have been included: 30 m running, long jump from the place, pull-up hanging, rising of body's upper part, ball throwing and 1600 m running. Evaluation happened according to the results shown by 10-point scale. On the basis of the acquired results 80 adolescents have been chosen with approximately similar physical development and they have been divided into experimental and control groups, having 40 people in each of them. It is obvious, that sport test results of experimental and control groups at the beginning of the research statistically do not differ, except an exercise of rising of body's upper part, where the figures of a control group were much higher than the figures of an experimental group.

The acquired data have been reflected in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Physical preparedness figures comparison of experimental and control groups at the beginning of experiment.**

The experimental group has been divided into two subgroups, each having 20 students. A teacher of the same qualification and work experience has worked in each group.

Then motivation features of adolescents and their emotional state have been studied at the confirming stage.

Two diagnostic procedures have been carried both in CG and EG: questionnaires according to „Feeling, Activity, Mood (FAM)” (Доскин, Лаврентьева, Мирошников & Шарай, 1973) and „Achievements motivation and fear of failures” (Реан, 2004; Акимова, 2005).

To make out changes dynamics of feelings, activity and mood of respondents the questionnaire according to FAM method has been organized before and after the classes. It was important to clarify how feelings, activity and mood change, considering concrete karate class.

To test according to „Achievements motivation and fear of failures” method we did not need to do the questionnaire before and after the classes, that is why the questionnaire has been carried out during one of the classes.

At the second transforming stage karate studies according to different programmes have been carried out in the groups.

The classes were carried out three times a week, 60 minutes each, during one school-year. The training process in the control group was designed according to the common plan emphasizing the sports constituent of karate. In this case karate is generally considered only as a kind of sport and it includes competitive – applied character.

The direction of the given classes is development of physical qualities, acquirement of motive skills, training of elements of karate technique and participation in the competitions.

The classes in the experimental group have been carried out according to a specially developed program considering correlation of physical development and spiritual – moral growth of a personality. It means that the ground of the classes was a system of karate as one of the kinds of martial arts and lifestyle. Sport is considered here as one of the constituents of the given art. During the classes in the experimental group some developing events have been conducted, that promote both development of physical features and self-perfection of adolescents. One of the main aspects of conduction of classes is a worked out conversation that fosters not only training of exercises technique but also development of understanding of the essence of

karate as sense-forming constituent of lifestyle.

At the final stage of the research statistical reliability of changes of motivation features, emotional-functional state.

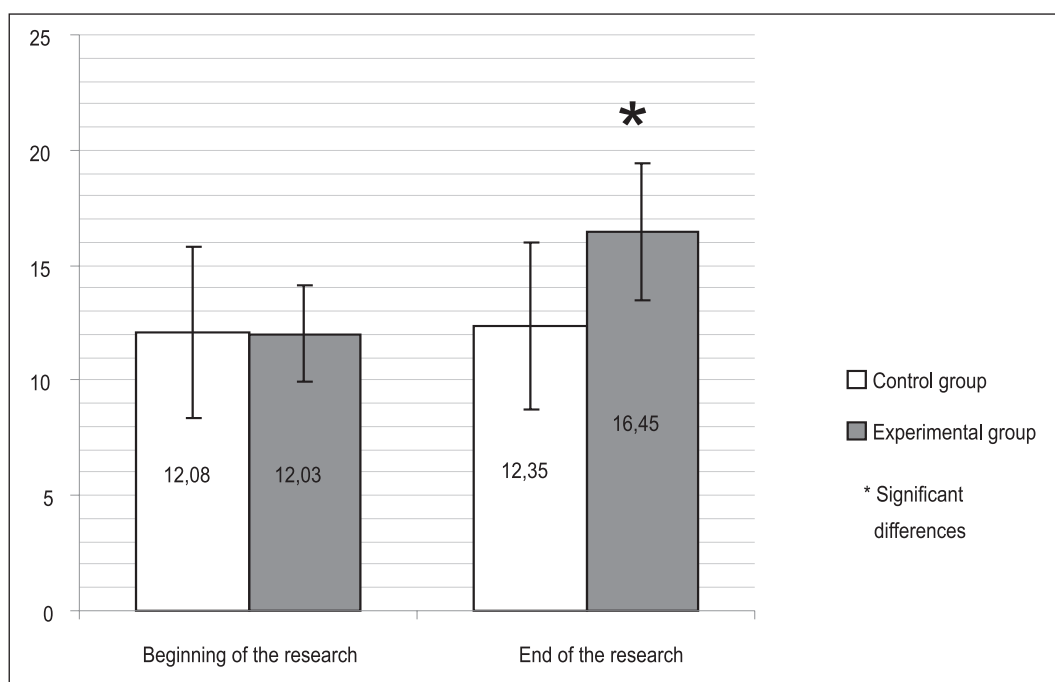
At this stage students of the control group and experimental group repeated questionnaire according to „Achievements motivation and fear of failures” method have been organized in order to compare the acquired results at the given stage with the results acquired at the beginning of the research, as well as the students have been questioned according to FAM method.

### Data Analysis

The results have been subjected to mathematical processing applying analysis of variation and Tukey HSD test. Tukey HSD test has been applied to denote significantly different figures of emotional-functional states in experimental group.

### Results of Research

The figures of the students in the control group and experimental group in the test “Achievements motivation and fear of failures” at the beginning and at the end of the research and their significant differences have been reflected in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: Comparison of figures of motivation level in the experimental and control groups at the beginning and at the end of the experiment.**

As we can see in Figure 2 figures of the control and experimental groups in the tests „Achievements motivation and fear of failures” do not have significant differences at the beginning of the research. Motivation pole is not expressed significantly, but there is a slight trend to achieve success. At the end of the research having carried out classes according to a specially developed programme in the experimental group and according to a common plan in the control

group considerable variations have been fixed considering the level of motivation. The analysis of variation is shown in Table 1. One-way ANOVA clearly demonstrated no difference between control and experimental groups in the beginning of the research, while the results of one-way ANOVA showed a significant heterogeneity between the groups in the end of the research.

**Table 1. The statistically significant differences between of motivation level of the students in the experimental and control groups at the beginning and at the end of the experiment**

	Group	Mean ± SD	One-way ANOVA		
			df	F	p
Beginning of the research	Control group	12.08 ± 3.71	1	0.004	0.95
	Experimental group	12.03 ± 2.13			
End of the research	Control group	12.35 ± 3.64	1	31.48	0.0001*
	Experimental group	16.45 ± 2.93			

It is obvious, that figures of the students of the control and experimental groups in the test „Achievements motivation and fear of failures” at the end of the research (One-way ANOVA: Df = 1, F = 31.48, p = 0.0001\*).

The results showed that due to karate classes, motivation of success could be observed to a great extent in the experimental group.

Studying feeling, activity and mood of the students in the experimental and control groups it has been stated, that estimation of emotional state of the students testifies about favourable state of the students in both groups.

Let us have a look at each group separately. The results of the control group acquired in the course of the experiment according to FAM method are represented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Dynamics of figures of feeling, activity and mood of students in the control group before and after classes**

Parameters	Beginning of the research (Mean ± SD)		End of the research (Mean ± SD)		One-way ANOVA		
	Before classes	After classes	Before classes	After classes	df	F	p
Feeling	5.15 ± 0.76	5.17 ± 0.78	4.98 ± 0.98	4.82 ± 0.94	3	1.02	0.41
Activity	5.31 ± 0.71	5.01 ± 0.64	4.97 ± 0.85	4.79 ± 0.86	3	1.99	0.08
Mood	5.46 ± 0.76	5.19 ± 0.73	5.09 ± 1.00	4.91 ± 1.02	3	1.99	0.082

Carrying out the analysis of feeling, activity and mood of the students in the control group in the course of the research and including variations analysis it has been stated that model groups of feeling, activity and mood of the students in the control group are homogenous.

The results of the experimental group according to FAM method acquired in the course of the experiment are represented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Dynamics of figures of feeling, activity and mood of students in the experimental group before and after classes**

Parameters	Beginning of the research (Mean ± SD)		End of the research (Mean ± SD)		One-way ANOVA		
	Before classes	After classes	Before classes	After classes	df	F	p
Feeling	5.15 ± 0.78	5.49 ± 0.64	5.07 ± 0.75	5.55 ± 0.62	3	4.17	0.001*
Activity	5.31 ± 0.84	5.6 ± 0.58	5.19 ± 0.66	5.49 ± 0.62	3	2.21	0.054
Mood	5.59 ± 0.72	5.88 ± 0.53	5.23 ± 0.70	5.99 ± 0.59	3	8.18	0.001*

Investigating feeling analysis of the students of the experimental group in the course of the whole research it has been stated that feeling model group of the participants of the experimental group is not homogenous – figures differ a lot (one-way ANOVA: Df = 3, F=4.17, p=0.001\*). Carrying out variation analysis we have stated inhomogeneity of the group (the group consists of sub-groups that belong to different general groups). To state which groups differ Tukey HSD test has been carried out which showed that feeling figures of the students in the experimental group at the beginning of the research after classes (5.49 ± 0.64 points (Mean ± SD)) was much lower than feeling figures stated after classes at the end of the research (5.55 ± 0.62 (Mean ± SD)) (Tukey HSD test, p=0,013\*). It means that feeling figures of the students in the experimental group had significant differences only comparing the results acquired after classes.

In spite of this result feeling absolute values of the students in the experimental group present evidence about feeling improvement comparing these parameters before and after the classes.

Carrying out analysis of activity figures of the students in the experimental group in the course of the whole research, including variation analysis, it has been stated that activity model group of the participants of the experimental group is homogenous (one-way ANOVA: df = 3, F=2.21, p=0.054).

Comparing the acquired mood figures it has been stated that mood model group of the students of the experimental group is heterogeneous – figures differ a lot (one-way ANOVA: df = 3, F=8.18, p=0.001\*).

In the result of the classes mood of the students in the experimental group improved significantly.

This trend is confirmed by the compared results before and after the classes at the end of the research (Tukey HSD test, p=0.0001\*).

## Discussion

It is known, that humanistic potential in sport is not realized in arbitrary way (Столяров, 1997). Full and efficient realization of this potential demands conscious, purposeful and motivated actions of both a pedagogue and a student.

True spirit of karate includes magnanimity and patience of all the classes, in the process of which upbringing of a personality is happening. A person, who is devoted to studies of karate, has to control the behaviour and emotions all the time, to accumulate physical and spiritual powers constantly in order to achieve the main aim – self-perfection. Aspiration to self-perfection of adolescents is the reason to do sport (Ильин, 2002).



That is why karate is one of those kinds of sport that are favourable for application of humanistic approach. Karate is organic complex of psycho-physical training of consciousness and spirit of a person, where all parts of the body are used in the most rational way.

The results of the research confirm an important role of humanistic approach in conduction of karate classes with 14-15-year-old adolescents. As well as not only aims and tasks, denoted by a teacher in sports education, are important. It is also essential, which values and norms of behaviour are encouraged in the course of classes (Jansone, Krauksts, 2005).

Motivation has direct influence on efficiency of activity, especially in sport. At the initial stages of karate studies students' motives are not conscious enough, and such forms as emotional inclinations or aspirations and wishes prevail. In order to form stable motivation basis it is necessary to explain social functions of karate and to develop interest to educational process (Каштанов, 2006; Маряшин, 2002).

That is why not strictly fixed humanistically-oriented conversation, applied in the course of the experiment, has given some sense to actions students, in other words, they have understood why they do karate. Thus philosophic basis of karate and expansion of knowledge about Oriental culture have become central and system-forming motivation factor for students.

Motives of success achievement and failure avoidance are the main indicator in the development of a personality of beginner athletes (Duda, 1993, Nicholls, 1984). Orienting students to task fulfillment, comparison of their own results, not with the results of other peers in a group, is emphasized. The problem of result achievement has not been paramount.

In the course of studies orientation of students to result can promote fall of perception of learning material, appearance of excessive situation anxiousness and as a result motive of failure avoidance is developing. In its turn, realization of principle of orientation to task fulfillment promotes the development of self-confidence and self-control in complicated situations and forms adaptive features of a personality (Duda, 1993, Roberts, 1993)

To sum up, it is necessary to note, that the results of the experiment have shown tendency of manifestation of adolescents' inner need to self-perfection and self-overcoming, as well as manifestation of positive emotional states connected with achievements.

## Conclusions

The given research has shown opportunities of realization of humanistic approach in the process of karate classes of adolescents.

The present research has confirmed efficiency of a specially developed program of karate for 14-15-year-old adolescents directed to the development of skills of spiritual and physical development of personality.

The main method of realization of the humanistic approach is conduction of subject conversations during the classes, which promotes development of students' understanding of sense and essence of karate as means of self-perfection.

It is statistically proved that changes happened in motivation sphere and emotional – functional state of adolescents. We can observe considerable increase of motivation of success and state of mood indicates stabilization of favourable attitude to the classes.

Being based on the acquired results we can confirm that purposeful activity of a teacher is of major importance in realization of humanistic potential of physical education.

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