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RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE AND COMPETITIVE LEVEL IN JUDO

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INTRODUCTION

Numerous researchers and professionals have been interested in the role of psychological resilience in competitive sports and its relationship with sports performance. In this sense, various studies confirm a positive relationship between high levels of resilience and optimal sports performance. Could resilience be a psychological quality among athletes who reach a high competitive level? The purpose of this study was to assess the possible association between the competitive level in Judo and psychological resilience, both in men and women.

METHODS

The sample consisted of 703 Judo practitioners. Men ($n = 469$, 66.7%) and women ($n = 234$, 33.3%) were 40.32 ± 14.09 and 31.42 ± 10.97 years old, respectively. We assessed psychological resilience with the 10-item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (10-item CD-RISC; Campbell-Sills & Stein, 2007), with a score range from 0 to 40. Higher scores indicate greater resilience levels. The judokas were classified into two groups based on their competitive level: TOP level [when all or some of the following inclusion criteria were met: (i) form or have formed part of the national junior or senior Judo team; (ii) be or have been recognized as a High Level Athlete (HLA) and/or High Performance Athlete (HPA) by the competent official bodies; (iii) occupy or have occupied the top 70 positions in the world junior or senior Judo ranking in their corresponding weight category] and non-TOP level (none of the three criteria were met).

RESULTS

TOP level judokas ($n = 194$, 27.6%) reported significantly higher levels of resilience than non-TOP level judokas (34.25 ± 4.13 vs. 32.58 ± 5.08 , respectively, $p < .001$). Since both groups were significantly different in other variables under study (gender, age, age of initiation in the practice of Judo, years practicing Judo, weekly hours of practice and years competing), an ANCOVA was carried out for men and another for women, introducing these variables as covariates. Both in men [$F(1,469) = 5.04$; $p = .025$; eta squared = .011], as in women [$F(1,234) = 12.45$; $p = .001$; eta squared = .052], the differences in resilience scores between TOP and non-TOP level judokas were confirmed.

DISCUSSION

The results shows that being or having been a judoka at a highly competitive level (TOP level judoka) is related to higher levels of resilience in men and women. Although the effect size is small in both cases, it seems that this relationship is more robust in the case of women. From a practical point of view, these results seem to indicate that specific work on resilient qualities could contribute to reaching a highly competitive level in Judo, especially in women.

REFERENCES

Campbell Sills, L., & Stein, M. B. (2007). Psychometric analysis and refinement of the Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale (CD RISC): Validation of a 10 item measure of resilience. *J Trauma Stress*, 20(6), 1019-1028.

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