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Judo as a supportive tool for business and entrepreneurship

Abstract

Sports and business or entrepreneurship have frequently been linked to one other in various ways. The world of sport makes use of general management theories and general business and entrepreneurship knowledge for professionalizing the management of sport. Within this article the other way around is explored. The sport in this article is limited to the sport judo. The objective is to find out in what way judo sport can be helpful in developing business and entrepreneurship. The level of using sport/judo as a metaphor in the literature on business and entrepreneurship can be transcended. A comparative study using a multi-method approach was conducted with two groups. One containing entrepreneurs with a background in elite-level judo (including a world champion, an Olympic medal winner, a European champion and a national champion) and another group of entrepreneurs without any background in judo. It can be concluded that there are opportunities that the (basic) principles of judo could be deployed to inspire and support an entrepreneurial orientation. Judo involves both technical and moral principles. The technical principles of judo, in particular, can be translated to the elements of an entrepreneurial orientation. In addition, the moral principles of judo can assist in focusing attention on (corporate) social responsibility and social entrepreneurship.

Keywords: judo, sports, business, entrepreneurship, sportmetaphore

Introduction

The sports world is becoming more professional and is making increasing use of knowledge from the field of business sciences. This phenomenon is borne out by the emergence of fields of study such as sports entrepreneurship (Ratten, 2010; 2011; Ciletti & Chadwick, 2012) and sports management (Parkhouse & Ulrich, 1979; Zeigler, 1989; Chelladura, 1994; Westerbeek, 2003). This research adopts an inverse approach, and is concerned with what significance (active) sports can have for management/business know-how in general. Sports experiences are most often used as a metaphor (Segane, 2000). Any other influences on business and entrepreneurship know how in general can be seen as a gap in the current (sport)management/business research. This research is limited to the sport of judo, and the objective is to examine what added value of judo practices can be applied to support business, especially entrepreneurship.

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Judo was developed at the end of the nineteenth century in Japan by Jigoro Kano, who brought a new martial art into life with the so-called Kodokan judo (translated as the gentle way or soft way). Kano regarded kuzushi as essential; this means bringing the opponent out of balance with substantial but extremely effective timing. Kuzushi is carried out by a precise placing of one's own body (tsukuri) and a precise kake (throw). When one's kuzushi, tsukuri, and kake are in balance, it is very easy to throw one's opponent (Kano, 1937; 1964). Kano, who studied the way of life behind practising martial arts, wished to bring more ethics into sport. He found winning a contest superficial. According to him it had only limited value if it could not be applied in one's daily life and/or in society as a whole. Therefore, (Kodokan) judo is developed on basis of two basic principles (Kano, 1937; 1964) which are still valid within the sport of judo today (Stevens, 2013).

1. Technical principle: Seiryoku-zen'yo: Maximum efficiency with determined amount of effort.

Kano clarifies this with an example: "Imagine that my opponent has ten units of power and I only have seven. If he pushed me backwards with all his present power, I would lose with my power. At least if I used my power against his power. But I give in to the power and see what happens. By stepping aside, I keep my balance and my seven units of power, whereas he loses his balance by leaning forward." Keeping one's balance and learning to do so play a major role in this. For Kano, the sentence 'Soft can control the hard, weak can control strong. Being soft at the right time is a virtue; being hard at the wrong time is a disaster.' was important and played a great role in the development of the sport of judo (Kano, 1937).

2. Moral principle: Jita kyoei: general prosperity for the whole world.

A person is to reach a higher level by practising judo in this way. The personality and the spiritual and physical balance are to be strengthened, which indicates that life will be lived joyously and meaningfully. It is beneficial for the society if it consists of balanced people. Showing discipline, perseverance, respect, civilization and self-control in all circumstances is practised in judo and can be applied as a daily lifestyle (Kano, 1937).

Due to the fact that several judo instructors established themselves in Europe, inter alia, the rest of the world could also slowly get to know judo and its principles. Judo became more popular and was given a place within physical education (PE) programmes in schools. It was recognized for its educational and pedagogical value (Manolachi et al., 2010; Neofit et al., 2011). With judo it is possible to contact others, to improve resilience, to take the necessary care, and to learn from each other.

Research question

There seems to be a number of possibilities to apply judo to business and entrepreneurship. First, all the existing links between judo and business/entrepreneurship-related aspects will be investigated to provide an overview of this relationship. Second, focus will be placed on the link, on an individual level, between judo on the one hand and business on the other. Due to the fact that judo is an individualistic sport practised by one person against an opponent, the research zooms in on the managers and entrepreneurs as individuals. As far as business is concerned, there is a link to be made with entrepreneurial orientation. An entrepreneurial orientation proves to be an important asset and is an issue in several businesses and educational institutions and programs. Therefore this research investigates whether the sport of judo can be deployed to support business, with specific focus on the entrepreneurial orientation.

Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) was introduced by Miller and Friesen (1982). It is a concept that states that there is an entrepreneurial mindset (Lumpkin & Dess, 2001) or frame of mind (Dess & Lumpkin, 2005) that supports entrepreneurship (Miller & Friesen, 1982; Covin & Slevin, 1988; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; 2001; 2005; Wiklund & Shepherd, 2003). For both an individual and an organisation this means strategy-making processes and styles within an organisation that support entrepreneurial activities (Chaston & Sadler-Smith, 2012). Within the literature on entrepreneurship, an EO correlates positively with a firm level (Covin & Slevin, 1991; Zahra & Covin, 1995; Green, Covin & Slevin, 2008), social capital ((Stam & Elfering, 2008), market orientation (Lee et al., 2000, Cano et al., 2005, Rauch et al., 2009, Hakala, 2011; Boso et al., 2013) and organisational learning (Atuahene-Gima & Ko, 2001).

EO is involved in many aspects of businesses. Miller et al. (1982) describe three basic dimensions of EO: connecting with product-market innovation, daring related to risky organisations, and coming to consensus with actors involved. These three characteristics can be summarised as: innovativeness, risk-taking and proactiveness. Later on there are two dimensions added. The first one of these is autonomic acting. Companies with an entrepreneurial relation tend to act independently (autonomically) with a provident view on the market (Lumpkin, 1996). Autonomy refers to ability and willingness to act independently in the pursuit of opportunities. The other dimension is competitive aggression, which can be identified by one of the basic elements in an entrepreneurial company, namely “beating competitors to the punch” (Miller, 1983). This EO element refers to companies that have the willingness and tendency to challenge their competitors fast and directly in order to gain a better position in the market (Lumpkin, 1996).

Lumpkin and Dess (1996) note that the five dimensions of EO can be very distinctive and different from each other within different contexts in a company. They distinguish between employees/individuals, entrepreneurs/start-ups and top supervisors/management team of established companies in the market.

The central research question is: to what extent can the (basic) principles of judo be deployed to inspire and/or support an entrepreneurial orientation? The existing links between judo and business-related aspects are investigated in the literature review. The empirical part of the research focuses on the question: Which basic principles of judo can be linked to which elements of an entrepreneurial orientation? Furthermore relevant is the question: to what extent can judo deliver added value in supporting an entrepreneurial orientation?

The combination of judo and businesses/entrepreneurship

Based on a literature review we find that judo is used as a metaphor for business in three areas: economics, strategic management, and entrepreneurship.

The first connection of judo to economic/management sciences is seen in the article by Gelman and Salop (1985). The term ‘judo economics’ is introduced and a strategy is described which makes it possible for an organization to take advantage of its competitors. In the judo economics model a challenger (newcomer) must decide how aggressively it wants to be involved in the market penetration. A simple supposition is given as a clarifying example: when a newcomer enters the market, and wants to take it over, an existing company will fight back and most likely win. However, if the newcomer can convince the existing company that it can be valuable for the company, the existing company gives in and facilitates the newcomer’s entry to the market. It is likely that the

newcomer must make a sacrifice to 'warm up' the other company by serving only a small part of the market. This is better for the existing company, as it is better off giving up a part of the market than fighting for the complete market by constantly reducing its prices in order to win in the long run. Nonetheless, the existing company would survive longer reducing prices, due to the fact that it has been active in the market for a longer time and has reserves. The essential idea behind the model is to use the power of the opponent to be able to make use of it oneself. Follow-up research was subsequently conducted to examine what new entrants do in the case of disturbance caused by collusion on the market. The conclusion was that judo economics were not applicable (Sørgard, 1995).

Second, judo is related to strategic management with regard to so-called judo strategy (Maruyama, 1992; Yoffie & Kwak, 1999; 2001). Judo strategy (Yoffie and Kwak, 2001; 2002) offers a way of thinking which is connected to techniques that make it possible to defeat a larger competitor. Maruyama (1992) addressed the method as extremely useful in international business. Elaborating on judo economics, and referring to the original source of inspiration, the sport of judo (Kano, 1937; 1964) offers judo strategy several tools that not only help a business to survive, but also to grow within a market with intensive rivalry. Three aspects of judo are central in this regard: (I) movement, (II) balance, and (III) the leverage principle. It is stated that before an opponent can be beaten, there must be mobility and movement. I: By letting the opponent move you avoid a head-to-head conflict with an opponent with more weight and strength. II: Be flexible and give away when attacked directly by superior force, the opponent is put off balance. III: Subsequently, the opponent can be beaten (thrown) by exploiting leverage, that uses the weight and strength of opponents against them. Similarly, managers can make the best of their starting position by moving, and thus taking the lead. By staying in balance, they can successfully connect with the opponents and thus be able to react to attacks by competitors. By making use of the leverage principle, managers can use the power of their competitors by changing strategic responsibilities. Yoffie and Kwak (2001, p. 21) explicitly state that 'judo strategy is not a surefire recipe for success.' It is exactly like in a judo contest: making the move at the right moment to enable the maximum benefit from the movement. Each company, depending on the sector, will implement mobility, balance, and the leverage principle differently. In a follow-up article, Yoffie and Kwak (2002) suggest techniques to beat a stronger opponent by providing more insight with regard to the stated three central aspects of judo. Among others, the following instructions are given: understanding the opponent, and how to get a hold of him or her; in a situation where an opponent is attacking, do not respond with the same technique; practise safe falling, which does not mean direct loss, etc. The judo strategy consists of different techniques that can be mixed and matched. Later on these principles were also addressed as organizational judo (Richardson, 2005).

Finally, Drucker (1985) makes a link between judo and entrepreneurship. By entrepreneurial judo he refers to formulating strategies which allow the entrepreneur to exploit the competitors' (bad) habits. The principles of judo have been brought to economic life by taking advantage of the competitors' power and weight, and using it for one's own benefit. Entrepreneurial judo is always market-focused and market-driven. The strategy formulation process starts with analyzing the industry with an emphasis on manufacturers and suppliers. Analysis of their habits (especially the bad ones) and policies is followed by an analysis of the market. Here, research is undertaken into where an alternative strategy would work with the least resistance. The strategy also assumes that the leaders continue behaving according to foreseen patterns. Even if they were repeatedly defeated, they would refuse to change. Drucker (1985, p. 208) gives the following

example: ‘Entrepreneurial judo aims first at securing a beachhead, and one which the established leaders either do not defend at all or defends only halfheartedly... Once the beachhead has been secured, that is, once the newcomers have an adequate market and an adequate revenue stream, they then move on to the rest of the beach, and finally to the whole island.’ So entrepreneurial judo requires some degree of genuine innovation. It is not enough for the newcomers simply to do as the established leader at a lower cost or with a better service, the newcomers have to make themselves distinct.

The authors refer to certain restrictions in their publications. For example, the fact that gains for a new entrance in a market are not quantified using judo techniques. Alternative entry or competitor strategies are not taken into account; moreover, the use of a metaphor does, of course, have its restrictions. A metaphor is not the same as evidence. Characteristic of all theories that relate judo to businesses is the fact that the technical principle is dominant. Furthermore, the metaphor emphasises the aspect of organisation. However, judo is a sport for individuals with a direct opponent, in which you are responsible yourself for your own behaviour and actions. This means that the way towards an entrepreneurial orientation can be likened to a kind of wasteland.

Methodology

The literature review on judo relating to businesses and the entrepreneurial orientation is followed by a qualitative comparative case study with an experimental blocking design. In this design, multi-methods (triangulation) are used; these include a document and website analysis, semi-structured interviews, and a survey using the Delphi method.

On basis of the document and website analyses, two groups of research units were studied:

Group X: a group of entrepreneurs in small and/or medium enterprises (SMEs), who also have a background (athlete and/or coach) in elite-level judo (black-belt, practised professional judo at an international level). They include a world champion, an Olympic medal winner, a European champion, and Dutch national champions. The assumption is that this group of five will be able to make a link between judo and entrepreneurship c.q. the EO.

Group Y: another group of five entrepreneurs in SMEs, without any background in judo were found and used as a control-group. The group without judo know-how recognized the sport from television and the internet and knew that the main objective of a judo contest was to beat the opponent by getting the opponent on its back, but had no further knowledge of rules, material, organizations, techniques, tactics, etc.

All the entrepreneurs were ultimately responsible for an SME company. The companies were registered with the Chamber of Commerce, employed three or more people, had existed for longer than three years, and preferably had several locations and an ambition to grow. A semi-structured interview was conducted with all 10 entrepreneurs. The interviews were based on the literature review and were conducted with the help of an interview guide. The five-dimension construction of EO – referring to innovation, risk-taking, proactivity, competitive aggression and autonomy – was used. The dimensions were measured by representative items per dimension named in the interview guide (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Jambulingam et al., 2005; Boso et al., 2013). The interviews were recorded and transcribed, and then axially and selectively coded by two researchers.

Furthermore, Delphi methodology was applied in both groups separately. The Delphi methodology is a method for structuring a group communication process so that

the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). It maps opinions of experts, or stakeholders and attempts to create consensus concerning the direction of the desired solution. This method is known for its anonymity, information-gathering in several rounds and structured feedback processes, and delivers mostly useful information on complex problematic situations where the individual perceptions of stakeholders play an important role (Kieft, 2011). The aim is to find as reliable a way as possible to form a shared opinion within a group of experts. The experts are confronted with each other's knowledge and positions (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963). The goal is to interactively produce a product that consists of the knowledge from the research field instead of knowledge about the field (Delbecq et al., 1975; Hsu, 2007).

In fact, there were two parallel Delphi paths – on the one hand, the five people with expertise and experience in judo and entrepreneurship (group X) and on the other, the other group of people with expertise and experience in entrepreneurship but not in judo (group Y). All the participants were employed in the Netherlands – in different areas. The participants were repeatedly given – in several rounds – the opportunity to articulate their opinion in the form of semi-structured interviews and feedback. The verification of these statements (per person) was collected into a document. Afterwards, all the documents were put together by a group of researchers, thus forming a document with results. It was therefore possible to formulate a synthesis between the opinions of group X and those of group Y. Furthermore, the documentation was shared with the participants, who were asked to comment on it. The researchers knew only the participants who left comments; the sources of supportive information were kept anonymous to others. Synthesis of the document, feedback and supportive information per group was identified for a second time after linking the given feedback back to the individual documents. Based on this, a step-by-step judgement was formulated, bearing in mind that participants were over-optimistic in the short-term and over-pessimistic in the long-term (Kieft, 2011) due to fact that certain points had been clarified and the wide range of possibilities of measured interventions and adjustments. The consensus was often presented in the form of quantitative terms such as 'majority view' or 'above the average'.

The schedule that was followed is set out below.

Individual interviews:	Entrepreneurs with a judo background	Entrepreneurs without a judo background
	Synthesis interviews group X	Synthesis interviews Group Y
Delphi round a:	Synthesis Xa	Synthesis Ya
Delphi round b:	Synthesis Xb	Synthesis Yb

Findings and results

Interviews group X: Entrepreneurs with a judo background

First, before explaining the research, the interviewees unanimously related entrepreneurship to elite sport, especially the drive to win. This was explained in the context of judo in a contest: victory within the given rules is a must. Therefore, competitive aggression scored the maximum amount. The other aspects relating to an entrepreneurial orientation were brought up, although very little. Proactivity was the only aspect that did not get scored in association with judo and entrepreneurship. See Table 1.

The introduced theoretical constructions (entrepreneurial judo, judo economics and judo strategy) were all unknown to the group. However, after they were explained, the group seemed to recognize these constructions in practice. It was pointed out that the technical aspects of judo could be applied to several stakeholders: customers, employees, partners and competitors.

“When a nationwide company landed right next to us, I thought this giant, this ‘heavyweight’ would pulverize our company. However, from judo you know that big judokas are often slower and if you, as a small one, as a ‘lightweight’ adjust your tactics, the chance of your winning becomes suddenly greater. As judoka you learn to go with your own power. You learn that there are different ways to use your strengths against your opponent.”

(Quote of an entrepreneur and elite judo coach)

After the principles of judo were explained, it was the moral principles, in particular, that seemed to receive attention and recognition. Concerning the moral principles, it seemed that judo could basically be summarized on the basis of respecting others and the rules. The pedagogic/educational value of judo was unanimously agreed upon and also linked to the entrepreneurship. The social component of practising/teaching judo was emphasized in this regard, and it was regarded as important in the entrepreneurial context by all the interviewees. Another value of judo, mentioned by every interviewee, regarding the social aspect, was the physical contact with another person and getting into each other’s comfort zones.

Three of the five interviewees referred to the importance of social responsibility. An important aspect of judo and entrepreneurship is taking care of each other. Mutual dependency was mentioned several times by these interviewees. However, two people explicitly stated that they did not value the so-called Eastern philosophy. They felt that judo’s symbolic value (rituals) should not dominate, but should rather serve as part of the social component.

“Of course you want to beat your opponent and in the final minute maybe at all costs. However you also have to respect him/her, by following the rules and tradition of judo, you know there is respect on both sides. At the end you know you need your opponent. Maybe except the important competitive matches you take care, that is normal.”

(Quote of an entrepreneur and Olympic medalist)

In addition, the five items of entrepreneurial orientation were briefly explained, and the participants were asked whether they recognized them. As Table 1 illustrates, after the explanation most of the items were recognized in practice. Competitive aggression and risk-taking scored maximum points (see Table 1).

“Judo is a very risky sport. Each step can be fatal. That is a parallel to entrepreneurship; you can also take a calculated risky step: if you step forward, someone can wipe you out.”

(Quote of an entrepreneur and judo world champion)

Table 1. Number of respondents with a judo background who recognized EO elements in the practice of judo

EO-element:	Entrepreneurs with a judo background Group X	
	Before explanation	After explanation
Autonomy	1/5	4/5
Competitive aggressiveness	5/5	5/5
Innovation	2/5	4/5
Proactiveness	0/5	4/5
Risk-taking	2/5	5/5

After the explanation, the participants were asked to translate the EO items into judo situations and techniques. Concrete judo examples were given in respect of all the EO items. The most frequently given examples (mentioned by more than two people within group X) are presented in Figure 1.

- **Autonomy:** one cannot blame anyone else for one’s own mistakes; one has the opportunity to act freely; the influence of others (besides one’s opponent) is minimal during a match.
- **Competitive aggressiveness:** there is direct physical contact and confrontation, and a drive to win games and matches within the rules.
- **Innovation:** during training one can practice together; new techniques and tactics can be found; one can train by trial and error, with and without others, while moments later the other person can be your opponent in a match.
- **Proactiveness:** passiveness during a match will be punished by judo regulations.
- **Risk-taking:** learning to lose: if one does something wrong, one will suffer the consequences right away. Judo is falling and standing up, literally and metaphorically. Physically, one is situated in somebody else’s comfort zone.

Figure 1. Transfer of entrepreneurial orientation items to judo practice

Interviews group Y: Entrepreneurs without a judo background

Group Y functions as a control group for the entrepreneurs with a judo background, especially in view of the expected passion and involvement in judo in the first group (X). At first, before the research was further explained, the majority of the interviewees linked judo to staying in balance (three out of five) and believed that both judo and entrepreneurship can involve confrontation (two out of five): the weakest are punished (this aspect belongs to risk-taking). One interviewee mentioned competitive aggression and the aspect of being positioned against one another. See Table 2. The other items could not be directly identified in the associations and reactions of the interviewees.

The introduced theoretical constructions (entrepreneurial judo, judo economics and judo strategy) were all unknown to the group, but once the terms had been further explained, several items were recognized in practice. About half the group had some judo experiences at school (in physical education) decades ago. It was said that the technical

aspects of judo were applicable in terms of reacting to the competitor's (opponent's) actions. In general, all the participants were interested in the combination of judo and entrepreneurship. All of them wanted to know more about it, and the researcher therefore explained the principles of judo. When it came to the moral principles, the group believed that (basic) judo could be related to respecting the other party, the rules, the referee, and the context. The educational/pedagogic value of judo was unanimously agreed upon and linked to entrepreneurship. The social aspect was emphasized, and was also regarded by each interviewee as important in relation to entrepreneurship. The link and importance of social responsibility in entrepreneurship was referred to by two out of five interviewees. Moreover, two interviewees admitted that in their business practice the social component was not given priority, due to the fact that the economic/commercial component was regarded as more important.

Furthermore, the participants were asked about recognizing the five elements of entrepreneurial orientation, after each of these elements was briefly explained. As Table 2 shows some aspects were recognized in practice. Risk-taking and innovation, in particular, scored high. Innovation was recognized in the comparison between judo and entrepreneurship as a metaphor. Risk-taking was recognized in the consequences of failed actions: you lose, or you fall (literally/metaphorically). The remaining items scored low and it was difficult to link them to practice.

Table 2. Number of respondents without a judo background who recognized EO elements in the practice of judo

EO-element:	Entrepreneurs without a judo background	
	Before explanation	After explanation
Autonomy	0/5	2/5
Competitive aggressiveness	1/5	3/5
Innovation	0/5	4/5
Proactiveness	1/5	2/5
Risk-taking	2/5	5/5

Delphi rounds group X: Entrepreneurs with a judo background

Table 1 and Figure 1 were used as input in the Delphi methodology. The acceptance of this information was a formality. However the participants continued with social entrepreneurship, which adds value to the development of society. The added value of judo was put forward in relation to dealing with certain developments in the world: respect for differences between people (race, culture, etc.), respect for rules and agreements, and respect for the environment.

“Judo can contribute to entrepreneurship because it is a sport where you strive for an individual victory within decent norms and values, not forgetting for a moment the other one's well-being.”

(Quote of an entrepreneur and judo national champion)

A link was made with the pedagogical values of judo. The entrepreneurs with a judo background placed value on the commercial perspective: money must be made.

However, this was not possible without the socially oriented goals within entrepreneurship. Therefore, people and profit issues were mentioned quite strongly, in contrast to aspects relating to the planet. Sustainability was not explicitly mentioned. However it was stated that when working in and for a society, social responsibility could be accomplished by entrepreneurship. This was concretely interpreted as supporting common goals.

The majority (three out of five) of the participants had an ‘connective approach’. Concrete they mentioned the relationship with a judo voluntary club. Something that is to be accomplished within an European voluntary judo club is evolving and developing the (young) members. Here, reference is being made to the level of formality of mutual contacts and how meaningful those contacts are to both parties. In the case of some entrepreneurs, the relationships between their firm and (judo or sport) clubs have been developing naturally over time. It is striking that the contacts within a judo club structure in general are informal and are formed by using one’s own network. The relationships between entrepreneurs and these judo clubs could be more strongly formed.

The entrepreneurs’ own frame of reference plays a role here, because due to the time spent in clubs, they are still connected to elite sports. They had a certain affinity with judo and were interested in the theoretical information. The research activities confronted the participants with the relationship between judo and entrepreneurship. The passion and involvement of the participants may have led to answers that were socially desirable. Nevertheless, it is certain that relationships will not be established with all the EO items. Up to now judo is hardly linked to social entrepreneurship. This point should be noted, since this relationship was unanimously agreed on and connected with the educational value of judo, and received much attention in the Delphi exercise.

“Co-operation is essential: you need people to be able to practice judo, in business you also need people; otherwise you cannot survive.”

(Quote of an entrepreneur and Judo Olympic champion)

The link between social entrepreneurship and judo was identified especially in the culture and habits of judo: greeting to show respect for the environment and the opponent, but also being concerned about one’s opponent by providing support when the opponent falls, and being willing and able to work (integrate) with handicapped people, or people with special needs, in a group. Judo can be regarded as a practice for how to deal with certain circumstances related to profit (performance), people (taking care, respect for agreements) and respect for the (social) environment.

Delphi rounds group Y: Entrepreneurs without a judo background

In the Delphi round of group Y, Table 2 was discussed and the relationship between judo and entrepreneurship appeared to be inspiring. The participants had never made the connection, but they were triggered by the information and interpretations of others. The participants unanimously came to the conclusion that judo seemed to be an unexpected source of inspiration to change one’s point of view on one’s own and other people’s entrepreneurial activities. Initially, the entrepreneurial orientation was seen as a point of engagement, but the idea was not taken any further. No concrete examples were given, but participants did unanimously express an interest in possible relationships and examples. Examples were not only sought on the technical side, but also in the visible culture of judo

as a sport, for example, respect towards others and pedagogical values. In addition, participants were open to the idea of participating in experiments supervised by judo experts to find and experience these examples. Participants expressed an interest in examples relating to the technical principles of judo (as set out in the theoretical information) as well as examples relating to judo culture – for example, respect towards others, pedagogical values, etc. Therefore, the moral principles of judo also appeared to be interesting to the participants in this group.

Discussion, conclusion, and implication

Despite the fact that this research has its restrictions in terms of reliability and validity, due to the selected number of participants, the Dutch setting and a limited amount of Delphi rounds, several findings have appeared that require further attention in practice and possible follow-up research into the relationship between judo and entrepreneurship. The focus on moral principles and socially responsible entrepreneurship, in particular, is a new and interesting item

It is remarkable that both groups connected the moral principles of judo with (corporate) social responsibility and social entrepreneurship. In particular, respect towards others (opponent, referee/jury) was mentioned. This is also related to the pedagogical value of sport, but the value here is for adults working in business. The entrepreneurs with a professional judo background automatically referred to a close cooperation between their enterprise and voluntary judo clubs. In this situation commercial/economic values and social values appear to go hand in hand. Porter and Kramer (2006; 2011) already stated this combination of values is not as a zero-sum game but in which (corporate) social responsibility can become a source of social progress, as the business applies its considerable resources, expertise and insights to activities that benefit society.

It can be concluded that the basic principles of judo can be applied in supporting entrepreneurial orientation (EO). This includes judo techniques, rules/habits and forms of training. For example, the technical principles in judo can be related to all the elements of EO. To achieve this, however, certain information about judo (rules, habits, and techniques) should be provided.

Entrepreneurs with a background in professional judo associate sport in general with an EO element, namely competitive aggression. For this group, the technical principles of judo achieve a high score for all the various elements of an EO. Although some information needed to be provided to make the relations, the participants were then able to link all the elements of an EO to concrete judo situations and techniques. Entrepreneurs without a judo background only scored the relation between judo and EO high on the EO elements of risk-taking and competitive aggression. They were inspired by the metaphor or tool of judo but could not make the transfer themselves.

Entrepreneurs without a judo background stated that the basic principles of judo could be deployed to support EO. To achieve this, the technical principles of judo are relevant on the one hand – for example, judo techniques and training exercises could be used. On the other hand, the moral principles with the culture of symbols, rituals, and rules within judo relating to respect and mutual independence could be helpful to bring social entrepreneurship and (corporate) social responsibility into practice.

Further research is also needed into the manner in which way the principles of judo can be used to support an entrepreneurial orientation, but also support the combination of commercial and socially responsible entrepreneurship. That is a challenge

to all who want to combine sport and management/entrepreneurship. On the one hand the professionalization of sports and on the other hand to challenge overall business/entrepreneurship with the help of sport.

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