

# RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT IN

# JUDO

# AND LOWER LEVELS OF HOMICIDE

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## BACKGROUND

This study was prompted by recent alarming media reports suggesting that Knife crime and homicide in the UK is a growing problem. Prompting debate in the country as to the best ways to tackle the problem which is perceived to be focused on the young. Many in Government are searching for ways to measure the rate of crime and ways to combat the described trend. Could the answer be a greater delivery of Judo to British Schools?

In July 2008, former Deputy Commissioner for Scotland Yard Sir Paul Stephenson suggested that knife crime had overtaken terrorism as the top priority for London Police (1). The media, while performing a vital function in reporting the news tend to add to the alarm felt by the population when reporting spurious findings or edited selections from Government statistics. Ian Johnston, president of the Police Superintendents' Association, said 'Knife crime is a major challenge for the police service.' In order to address this challenge we need to have credible and meaningful statistics relating to the number of offences where a knife has been used (2). Changing government criteria for collating crime statistics raises the concern that many figures are recorded inconsistently, nationally and internationally leading to a position where researchers will find it difficult to monitor knife crime trends.

Nevertheless an attempt to provide clarity had been provided by [www.UNdata.org](http://www.UNdata.org). Even they place a significant caveat to their statistics suggesting that the data ought to be used cautiously. These statistics were reported by Simon Rogers during October 2009, via [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk) (3). Mr. Rogers suggests that murder rates must affect our perception of society, shaping our view of the other countries and of ourselves. Clearly murder rates in any one country may be attributable to a multitude of sources, care must therefore be taken when attempting to make cross cultural comparisons with nationally sourced data but intuitively many feel knife crime particularly in the younger population may be due to a general disengagement with Society leading to reduced emotional development which may lead young adults to show less emotional stability and less self control potentially leading to increased knife crime.

## JUDO & INCIDENCE OF HOMICIDE

We reviewed the data provided by UNdata.org (5) and referenced by the Guardian Online Newspaper (3) for a period between 2007 and 2009.

For the 15 top ranked Judo nations taken from the most recent World Championships hosted by Tokyo, Japan.

The average rate of homicide is noted as 9.75/100,000 population. Data for the top 15 ranked nations indicated that 13 of the 15 Nations have a homicide rate below this average. The average for the strongest world Judo nations is 6.48; this indicates a strong correlation between high levels of Judo success and low levels of knife crime/homicide. The exception or anomalies to this apparent relationship are Russia and Brazil which in general have high levels of crime and homicide.

The initial conclusion is that Judo and knife crime/homicide may be inversely proportional. That is the more active a Country becomes in Judo there may be a link to lower knife crime/homicide in that Country.

Judo Rank	Country/Area	Homicides per 100,000 population	Period
1	Japan	0.5	2005
2	France	1.6	2004
3	Uzbekistan	3.5	2004
4	Greece	1	2004
5	Korea	2.2	2004
6	USA	5.9	Average 2003 - 2005
7	Brazil	30.8	Average 2003 - 2005
8	Peoples Republic of China	2.2	2004
9	Netherlands	1.4	2004
10	Germany	1	2004
11	Hungary	2.1	2004
12	Portugal	1.4	2004
13	Ukraine	8	2004
14	Russia	29.7	2004
15	Cuba	6	Average 2004 - 2006

## JUDO & SOCIETY

Much is discussed about the shaping of our Society & many suggest that sport in general may positively affect the balance of Society. An interesting study from Tel Aviv University (4) set out to determine whether sports training would have a positive impact on children by lowering aggression. Keren Shahar, a Ph.D. student at Tel Aviv University, suggests using sports to control aggression, is more effective than verbal therapy, because while verbal therapy encourages children to control their behaviour, research indicates that it does not reduce negative emotions. The introduction of sport, however, can reduce aggressive behaviour by quelling negative emotions. These results demonstrated an improvement in traits relating to participants' self-control, such as self observation, problem solving skills, and delayed gratification, which ultimately led to a decrease in the incidence of aggression. Only those children who exhibited higher levels of self-control also demonstrated the decline in aggression. Shabar concluded; a strong connection with any activity gives children a sense of purpose and decreases the likelihood that they will "act out" their behavioural problems. Interestingly Judo was one of a battery of sports used by this research.

Judo is a form of physical education which has been devised from its first principles with a defined purpose. Judo should be studied not only as a method of self-defence but also as a way of training the body and cultivating the mind (6). In perfect isolation an individual can strive for personal fulfilment using the principle of Seiryoku Zenyo but in group's only one member need to decent to cause conflict. If everyone in the group or Society can be guided to act considerately then conflict can be avoided and harmony will be the result. Conflict is to mutual detriment as harmony is to mutual gain. This principle, Jita Kyoei; mutual prosperity through mutual assistance is the second fundamental principle of Judo.

This would imply that Judo is ideally structured to assist with the development and education of the next generation, potentially leading to a reduction in anti-social behaviour in Society.

Mature coach education in Judo playing Nations, will naturally develop physique and technique but must also place to the fore front in the development of the Judoka the moral code of Judo. Judo must perpetuate the spirit of the martial arts of the past; courage, sincerity, politeness, honour, modesty, respect, self control and friendship. Clearly the code of conduct implicit in the development of all fully developed Judoka in a schools environment can encourage the containment and eradication of bullying and other anti social behaviours possibly leading to a greater proportion of the youth engaged in Judo and therefore developing a benefit for Society.

## CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The initial conclusion is that Judo and knife crime/homicide may be inversely proportional.

That is, the more active a Country becomes in Judo there may be a link to lower knife crime/homicide in that Country. Clearly the limited nature of this study cannot establish any causal link or indeed any firm conclusion with respect to the correlation between Judo participation and knife crime. However the indications presented by these findings are sufficient to recommend further comprehensive research. Areas for analysis could include the correlation between levels of participation and anti-social behaviour and potentially where levels of Judo participation have changed over time which then correlates to a decrease in knife related crime, this may lead researchers to a causal link between Judo participation and a reduction in anti-social behaviour in the young.

## REFERENCES

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- 3 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2009/oct/13/homicide-rates-country-murder-data>
- 4 <http://psychcentral.com/news/2011/07/07/sports-can-help-kids-defuse-anger/27534.html>
- 5 <http://data.un.org/>
- 6 Jigoro Kano, Mind over Muscle writings from the founder of Judo, ISBN 978-4-7700-315-3