

QUALITATIVE AND PHILOSOPHICAL ENQUIRY OF AIKIDO PARTICIPANTS FROM
DIFFERENT LEVELS, CONCEPTUALIZATION OF AIKIDO AS DIFFERENT FROM
OTHER SPORTS: MIND AND BODY PERSPECTIVES

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

BARIŞ ŞENTUNA

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS

FEBRUARY 2010

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ABSTRACT

QUALITATIVE AND PHILOSOPHICAL ENQUIRY OF AIKIDO PARTICIPANTS FROM DIFFERENT LEVELS, CONCEPTUALIZATION OF AIKIDO AS DIFFERENT FROM OTHER SPORTS: MIND AND BODY PERSPECTIVES

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February 2010, 142 pages

This thesis is made of two main parts. First main part of the thesis is based on the qualitative enquiry of twenty-three Aikido participants from different levels - beginner, intermediate, advanced- from three different dojos. Open ended questions regarding the difference of Aikido from other sports is asked to the participants. Their written responses were coded using qualitative methods. Based on coding of documents: labels, categories and themes have been generated. Second main part of this thesis is based on the discussion of those findings. The discussion between different levels, the comparison with other findings in Aikido Literature was done. Lastly and largely the position of findings and possible arguments it can generate in the Philosophy of Sports Literature are discussed.

Keywords: Aikido, Philosophy of Sports, Qualitative Study, Martial Arts

ÖZ

FARKLI SEVİYELERDEN AİKİDO KATILIMCILARININ, AİKİDOYU DİĞER SPORLARDAN FARKLI OLARAK KAVRAMSALLAŞTIRMASI ÜZERİNE NİTEL VE FELSEFİ BİR ARAŞTIRMA: AKIL VE BEDEN BAKIŞ AÇILARINDAN

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Şubat 2010, 142 sayfa

Bu çalışma iki ana bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci ana bölümde üç ayrı dojo'dan, farklı seviyelerden –başlangıç, orta-seviye, ileri seviye- yirmiüç Aikido katılımcısı üzerinde nitel bir araştırma yürütülmüştür. Katılımcılara Aikido'yu diğer sporlardan ayıran yönler, açık uçlu sorular şeklinde sorulmuştur. Katılımcıların yazılı cevapları nitel araştırma yöntemleri kullanılarak kodlanmıştır. Kodlamalara dayanarak: etiketleme, kategorileme ve temalaştırma yapılmıştır. Bu tezin ikinci bölümü bu bulguların üzerinde tartışmayı içermektedir. Farklı seviye Aikido katılımcıları arasındaki farklılıklar, diğer Aikido literatüründeki bulgular ile karşılaştırma yapılmıştır. En son ve en geniş olarak, bulguların Spor Felsefesi literatüründe ortaya çıkarabileceği durumlar ve argümanlar tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Aikido, Spor Felsefesi, Nitel Çalışma, Savaş Sanatları.

-To warriors I know-

- *My father I have lost -and whose loss is still a loss- to cancer showed me the way to be a warrior without having the education of it. His glorious humour with his cancer. Even the day before he passed away his honour and saying “go away, I am fine” to me and Hüseyin.*

- *To heroes; mil. captain Sinan Erođlu and mil. captain Hasan Hatil from Special Forces whom had passed to easy side –we have lost-. To their families and children, to their names never be forgotten, and whose legends will remain always unwritten. But must be remembered.*

- *Lastly to whom I call Sensei.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I first of all would like to thank to my main advisor Prof. Dr. Feza Korkusuz. For his wide open generosity and directing such an interdisciplinary thesis. For his support all the time wanting the impossible from me as, it can be done when I realize. His being a Sen (to live) Sei (to show) to me.

Secondly I would like to thank to my co-advisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ercan Kiraz who had taught me qualitative study in his style and forced me to such a thesis. I also would like to thank to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Settar Koçak whom I have taken most of my Ph.D. classes and learned great deal on sports and his support was all the time intensive.

Thirdly I would like to thank to Mike Sensei. Prof. Dr. Mike McNamee, who was in the jury from Wales, but also acted as an advisor to my thesis as well. His friendship, help, support is very important to me, in this area of philosophy of sports, he is the one.

Fourthly I would like to thank to Stephen Sensei. Prof. Dr. Stephen Voss from Bogazici University, whom I have known since 1996 and helped me in all my hard times, taught me great deal of philosophy and I am still learning from him.

I also would like to thank Assist. Prof. Dr. Saadettin Kirazcı, Prof. Dr. Nevin Ergan from Hacettepe Sociology Department for her positive attitude and to Assist. Prof. Dr. Murat G. Kırdar –aikido student- who helped me on the revision of English.

My great thanks goes to my Aikido students from all levels, especially children of age 7-14. The enthusiasm in their eyes, their egoless self, their energy, kept me going on.

One must also thank to all girlfriends of three have been changed through writing this thesis. Not mentioning their names but I would like to tell my apologies and disturbance that can be caused in the writing of this thesis.

I also would like to thank to my friends, where the concept friend is much more like a family. To Capt. Hüseyin Özdemir and Ali Öztürk, Çakıl Güç, Orhan Curaoğlu –still writing Ph.D. thesis-, Assist. Prof. Dr. Ünal Karlı –finished before us-, Ersin Doğan and Sibel Doğan, UBG and Arda Arpacı for their support all the time.

And to all members of my family each one who have supported me in all of this hard process. Lastly to my dear mother –when we lost our father while writing the thesis to cancer- for her support, wisdom, meals, patience and so on and on...

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Aikido was born in Japan between 1920 and 1925, grew in the years of 1931 and 1940 and legally recognized by the government in 1941. After 1956, it was spread to all over the world. (Ueno, 1995)

Unlike Western languages, literally Aikido is made up of 3 words: Ai – Ki and Do. The etymology of the words are, “Ai” meaning (愛) harmonious love, “Ki” meaning energy (気) which is also synonymous with the Chinese “Chi” and “Do”(道) meaning way or path. From this perspective Aikido literally means the “*harmonious energy path*”.

Aikido may be seen as the modern interpretation of Bu-do (Bu means war or warrior and Do is path or way). Bu-do is used for martial arts in Japanese and means the “*way to war or the way of the warrior*”. Since Bu-do is seen as the way of the warriors, the names of most martial arts that originated in Japan and spread all throughout the world include the “-do” suffix.

The founder of Aikido is Morihei Ueshiba (1883-1969). Ueshiba is also referred by Aikido practitioners as the “*O’Sensei*” meaning the “*Great Teacher*”. Ueshiba worked on different Japanese and Samurai arts including Daito Ryu, Aiki-Bujitsu and Jujitsu which like Aikido turned into Judo by Professor Kano. Morihei Ueshiba combined all these arts with the philosophy of Shinto and

integrated the love and not harming principles into Aikido. Today Aikido, unlike other traditional Japanese Martial Arts, is practiced similarly all over the world.

Bu-do is based on the skills and techniques that were used by the Samurai and other Japanese warriors. Aikido has techniques in which a sword “*bokken*”, a wooden stave “*jo*” or a wooden knife “*tanto*” is used. Techniques that do not use these weapons however exist and these are more frequently thought than those that use the weapons.



Figure 1. Weapons used in Aikido Training

In Aikido, the “*ate*” (the friendly attacker) (it is commonly used as uke in the literature as in Judo but the real word is rather ate “meaning friend”) and the “*nage*” (the defender) are not supposed to engage in a war of brute force. They also do not need to test the strength of each other with needless force. On the contrary, as the name of Aikido suggests, nage is supposed to harmonize with ate’s move; receive ate’s energy and redirect this energy back to him/her using body motions without a direct offense. The critical feature in Aikido is to control the balance of the attacker. The way to achieve this is to destabilize the ate’s center of balance (*hara*). This can only be achieved by constant motions and not by a static body.

While practicing Aikido, ate and nage share equal importance. In order to progress in Bu-do, both ate and nage must be able to perform the techniques precisely.

The first lesson in Aikido begins by teaching how to react and how to fall down on the mat in a safe and secure way. However, it is not expected that a beginner can be an appropriate *ate* to an advanced *nage*. Therefore, during practice, the techniques must be carried out at the level of the *ate* and this, in turn, depends on the ability of the *nage* to carry out the technique at this level. The *nage* has to maintain his/her speed and power at a level that the *ate* can handle. It is in fact not very accurate to perceive Aikido as an only defensive martial art. When a *nage* performs the techniques at its real pace, serious injuries or even death may occur. Yet, Aikido is also based on a philosophy that aims not to injure the attacker. It is this philosophy, willing and choosing not to hurt even when you can hurt, that makes Aikido the way of love as well.

O'Sensei opposed organizing tournaments among students in practices because some of the techniques were quite dangerous and he thought that the contests in these tournaments could be detrimental to the philosophy of Aikido. Aikido is different than other Bu-do martial arts as competitions do not exist. After learning the fundamental movements of Aikido, a student tries to smoothen these techniques by constant observation and practice. Aside of the technical rules, there are a set of rules, named as "*ethic*" that all Bu-do martial arts need to follow. The way of the warrior is set according to these rules. These may essentially be grouped under the heading of discipline. The survival of a group depends on these rules. It is this requirement that brings ethic and discipline into Bu-do. Ethic and discipline guarantee the continuation of the rules. Ethic controls our identity as "I" and assures that it behaves according to moral norms rather than instincts. The way we leave our shoes after we take them off outside the

Dojo could be an example to these rules. Our aesthetic conscience tells us that once we take off our shoes, they must be properly left in the right place. This can be observed outside the doors of many Aikido dojos.

The goal of Aikido is to teach harmony, love and peace. Aikido expresses the way the universe works using the human body. Once harmony with the movement of the universe is applied on the body in the right way, the body rejuvenates itself in form and health. This rejuvenation would reflect itself in daily life in one's education, work, and personality. As a result, harmony with the universe would bring universal peace.

Advices on Aikido training from the founder of Aikido Morihei Ueshiba are:

1. Aikido can determine life or death with a single blow; therefore, when training, observe the directions of the instructor and do not engage in contests of strength.
2. Aikido is a way that makes one person the equivalent of thousands; therefore, when training, always be mindful not only of the space in front of you, but also what is happening in all directions.
3. Training should always be an enjoyable experience.
4. An instructor can only impart a portion of the teachings. To be able to use a technique, you must learn it through diligent and ceaseless training. Only then will you begin to recognize your body. It is pointless to desire to learn many techniques. To master a technique, you must make it your own.
5. Daily training begins with Tai no Henko. Gradually increase the intensity of your training. Make sure not to overexert your body. Even older persons should not injure themselves. Continue to train enjoyably and strive to realize the purpose of training.
6. Aikido is training of the mind and body. Its purpose is to raise respectful people. Since all techniques are entirely secret, you should not reveal them indiscriminately to the public. The improper use of any technique by ill-

mannered persons is to be avoided. (Ueshiba Morihei, Budo Renshu, 1933 [a manual on Aikido training])

1.1-Rationale

Qualitative research in the English literature focused on advanced practitioners of Aikido and there were limited studies conducted on beginners and intermediate practitioners. Epstein (1985), Faggianelli (1995), Mclean (1989), Newton (1996), Heery (2003), Rush (1999) Ingalls (2002), Ritscher (2006), (Donohue 1987) Dykhuizen (2000) and Rothman's (2007) studies focused on advanced practitioners and researched the therapeutical, educational, sociological aspect of Aikido. As advanced practitioners of Aikido were training for long years, findings revealed that the concepts of Aikido such as mind and body harmony, peace and physical activeness were already inherited by them. Until now only one study Scott (1988) focused on intermediate Aikido practitioners.

The mind and body aspect in sports has been assessed previously by Rothman (2000), Abramson (2003), Balon (2006), Goodwin et.al. (2004), Honda and Goodwin (2004), Nicolosi et al. (2004) Dickens et.al. (2004), Bar et al. (2004), Gehi et al. (2005), Meissiner, (2006), Moodley et al. (2008), Yablo (2005) Richert and Harris (2008), and Reynolds, (1986) McNamee (2009) but not in Aikido. It has been discussed as a part of dissertations or in articles published by Hannon (Faggianelli (1995), Goyeche (1982), Rothman (2007), Newton (1996) Durkheim (1962), Rush (1999).

Previous studies did not connect the qualitative research findings and philosophy of Aikido until now. Nearly all of the previous studies repeat the same pattern on philosophy of Aikido except for Becker (1980) who questioned different martial arts, Wertz (1977) questioned Zen and Yoga for Western Athletes and Young (2009) went into the historical roots of martial arts. Studies mentioned above in advanced Aikido participants remained

descriptive and the philosophy of Aikido was not discussed. A systematically philosophical discussion of previous studies is missing. Philosophical arguments are carried out by Hadot and Krishnamurti. Philosophical framework of Aikido in combining the findings of qualitative research is made in this study.

1.2-Research Questions

The main research question of this study is: *How do practitioners conceive Aikido by means of mind and body aspects?*

The sub-questions include:

1- *What is the substance of the documents gathered from the Aikido practitioners from the aspects of Mind and Body? How frequently do they refer to these substances?*

2- *What is the perspective of practitioners into the philosophy of Aikido?*

3- *How do practitioners conceptualize properties of Aikido?*

4- *Do practitioners approach Aikido as a sport or art?*

5- *How do practitioners perceive advantages, disadvantages and risks of Aikido?*

1.3-Aims of Study

The aims of this study were: (a) to explore the conceptualization of mind and body aspects of beginner, intermediate and advanced Aikido practitioners and (b) to interpret the qualitative research findings with the philosophy of Aikido.

1.4-Limitations

- Although the open-ended qualitative research question included the words “comparison to other sports”, the main aim was to compare the mind and body aspects of different ranking Aikido practitioners.
- The discussion section of this study is limited with the English written previous documents and studies written in other languages were not approached.
- This study was limited to 3 Aikido Dojo’s (out of 10 Dojo’s in Ankara, Turkey) and 21 practitioners (5 advanced, 10 intermediate and 6 beginners).
- Age and sex differences were not assessed.
- A cross-sectional study was carried out.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature on Aikido was accessed at Middle East Technical University library. Peer-reviewed journals, published theses and dissertations on Aikido were used. According to Fuller (1991), the misleading public image of the martial arts masks a rich though esoteric psychological legacy containing informative parallels for contemporary psychotherapeutic concepts and practices. More importantly, Fuller indicates the lack of quality in these studies, According to Fuller, empirical research on martial arts has lacked sophistication in the questions it has posed and in the methodology adopted to answer them. (Fuller, 1991)

This review of literature covers only qualitative and sociological-philosophical studies written on the subject of Aikido. Studies on Aikido started in the 80's; the first dissertation was by Epstein (1985) on therapists who are Aikido practitioners followed by Donohue (1987) on sociology. Most of the dissertations are on transpersonal psychology. In the late 90's, dissertations on Aikido started to move to the field of philosophy. Research on education also started to enquire Aikido and its benefits on adolescents. Ingalls (2002), Ritchall (2006).

This literature is divided into three main parts parallel to Research Questions and Aims of the study.

1- Qualitative Research on Aikido.

2 – The Mind and Body Aspects of Aikido Practitioners and in general .

3- Philosophy of Aikido.

2.1. QUALITATIVE STUDIES

2.1.1. Where it all started “Psychotherapy” – Epistein (1985)

The first dissertation that is conducted by using qualitative methods may draw the attraction of all psychiatry area was started by Epistein Robert, and “A phenomenological study of the therapists being centred in therapy based on understanding of centring in Aikido” [Ph.D. dissertation] .United States -- California: California School of Professional Psychology Berkeley/Alameda; 1985. This phenomenological study investigated the Therapist’s experience of being centred in therapy. Eight psychotherapists, who were advanced practitioners of Aikido were asked to describe in open-ended interviews that followed a phenomenological approach, their experience of being centred and the way in which they become centred, based on their understanding of centring in aikido (Epistein 1985).

According to Epistein, the dualistic nature of ego, consciousness which divides awareness into such categories as body-mind, self other, subjective-objective, intellect-emotion. (Epistein 1985 p. 25)

Epistein’s study is mostly rooted from Durkheim regarding the relationship between mind and body in centeredness. In this centeredness unity of mind and body becomes together in the notion of Aikido for Epistein. The main research question in

interview was the research question was uniformly presented as follows: “Please describe in as much detail as possible your experience of being centred in therapy, and the way you go about becoming centred, based on your understanding of aikido.” (Epistein 1985 p. 59)

The results are although from our point of view a little unorganized, in terms of qualitative study are worth considering. Centring: sensory awareness is the first theme. Attention was another theme. Empty Mind is another theme. There are many other themes which is not our concern here.

2.1.2 -Faggianelli (1995) Second study on Therapists who are Aikido practitioners

A second much more systemized and described and professionally written study after Epistein’s study was written by Faggianelli, Patrick Victor. “Aikido and psychotherapy: A study of psychotherapists who are Aikido practitioners” as a [Ph.D. dissertation].United States - California: Saybrook Graduate School and Research Center.

Faggianelli worked with eight psychotherapists and were advanced practitioners of aikido were asked the question; “In your experience does the practice of Aikido inform or affect your practice of psychotherapy? If so, how and in what ways?”

One of the main underlying ideas why psychotherapists deal with Aikido is explained in that way; there is a very close parallel between how an aikidoist deals with an attack and the most effective methods of utilizing resistance in trance production and in psychotherapy (Faggianelli 1995 p.68) Aikido could be a resolution for Faggianelli. Faggianelli participants practiced Aikido with a minimum of seven years experience. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather accounts focused upon how aikido practice affects psychotherapy practice, and the findings were given based on themes.

An important theme in Fagienelli's study for us is: Theme # 1: The practice of aikido results in a mind-body unification which is physically and psychologically healing. (Faggianelli p. 98-99)

2.1.3- Transpersonal Psychology

Transpersonal psychology can be defined as a school of psychology that studies the transpersonal, self-transcendent or spiritual aspects of the human experience. (Lajoie and Shapiro, 1992:91).which have risen in the 1980's and 1990's. There have been 4 Ph.D. dissertations submitted to Institute of Transpersonal psychology.

ITP (Institute of transpersonal Psychology) has a Ph.D. program

2.1.3.1. Scott (1988)

The first thesis we will take a look is by Jeffrey Scott (1988) named Sensory/motor education and transpersonal psychology: Applications of The Feldenkrais Method, Aikido and Nero linguistic programming with St. Joseph's University basketball team. The researcher Scott Jeffrey consulted a basketball team during the pre period of time. Researcher acted and give classes of The Feldenkrais Method, the martial art of Aikido and Nero linguistic Programming. Scott defines his methodology was observational. Based on observations, recorded all of the interactions and interventions with the team, kept a history of the season, interviewed coaches and players, noted patterns of behaviour within the team, prognosticated possible outcomes of some interactions on several occasions, kept results. The result related with Aikido is the use of Aikido practices was well suited to basketball players because of the arts direct applicability to movement. (Scott 241-250)

2.1.3.2- Mclean (1989)

Second dissertation on Aikido from ITP is by McLean, Mary named love has no enemy: Aikido as a system for training the sacred warrior as a [Ph.D. dissertation]. 1989. McLean's dissertation is somehow a path to sacred therapist For our main theme of Mind and Body, she gets into the unity of mind and body where it reveals not only the union of mind and body, but also the union of the mind and body with the universe, itself (McLean, p47). But here she does not explain the process as it is mostly the case.

Mc Lean concludes her study first summarizing what she has done and than concluding: As a result of this personal enquiry study, as an Aikido teacher McLean states, her study indicates that the art of Aikido is one of available and effective means of personal transformation in the realm of sacred warrior ship, and that as such, it may also serve as a means of societal transformation through individual means.(McLean p.275)

2.1.3.3- Newton (1996)

The third thesis we will analyze from Institute of Transpersonal Psychology is by Susan J. Newton (1996). Exploring The interstices: the space between in the body /mind disciplines of Aikido and Fencing. In Newton's study only senior practitioners in the body/mind disciplines of Aikido and fencing participated. Five women from Aikido, third to fifth degree black belt, and five women from fencing, nationally classified A or B, where Newton defines them as co-researchers, considered as experts in their fields. (Newton 1996) Newton defines her research combined aspects of heuristic, phenomenological and feminist research practice, with a transpersonal perspective. (Newton 1996 p.4)

At first, Newton states the link between experience and life as “the translation of experience from practice path context to one’s life” (p.5) and further she states that “the flow or peak experiences may be considered forms of experience in this realm, perhaps on the way to transcendence, transformation of ego self towards spiritual self.” (p.6)

Newton gets into abstracts of participants as she calls co-researchers. The first abstract is from Shari 3rd degree black belt Aikido practitioner, to Wend who is 4th Dan and practicing Aikido for 24 years, Linda 4th degree black belt in Aikido and teaching for the last 20 years and Sue Ann 5th degree black belt and Pat whose working for 22 year and 5th Dan This study just gives the interviews and leaves everything aside. The link between feminism, heuristic point of view and peak experience and the role of teacher are not synthesized.

2.1.3.4- Heery (2003)

The fourth thesis from transpersonal psychology institute is by Heery, Brian Peter (2003) named “Awakening spirit in the body: A heuristic exploration of peak or mystical experience in the practice of Aikido”. In this dissertation Heuristic study of the deeper layers of meaning associated with peak: or mystical experiences in the practice of Aikido explored in the inner and outer worlds of 3 senior Aikido teachers: Hiroshi Kato (8th degree black belt), Robert Frager (6th degree black belt), and Sue Ann McKean (5th degree black belt) After selection criteria of Sensei and data analysis of heuristic study; Heery first mentions Sue Ann Sensei where she calls Aikido as a medicine to cure oneself. (Heery 2003 p 74)

The practice and awakening of nature told by Kato Sensei is quite remarkable and worth considering. Kato Sensei describes one experience of Aikido sing the whole body

marvellously. For him he can see people more fully when compared to his adolescence. He describes not looking them with eyes but rather looking at them with the whole body.

(Heery 2003 p. 99)

2.1.3.5-Critique of transpersonal Psychology and Aikido Friedman

In a paper written by Friedman (2005) the points that can be problematic to Transpersonal Psychology are discussed and put into question one by one. In a study concerning transpersonal therapy by Harris Friedman (2005) Problems of Romanticism in Transpersonal Psychology: A Case Study of Aikido, Friedman in his article discusses the romanticism in transpersonal psychology over the case of Aikido and states the errors done over Aikido: Location Errors, Authority Errors, ,Time Errors , Ethnicity Errors, Narcissistic Errors ,Transmission Errors. Friedman talks about is like ethnicity errors on the ways of teaching. All of those errors stated by Friedman are pointed out cleverly on warning transpersonal psychologists.

2.1.4.-Zen and Therapy – Rush (1999)

From another point of view there is a dissertation on the point of Zen and therapeutic relationship by Bruce A.Rush (1999) named “Zen and Therapeutic Relationship”. Rush in his huge thesis gets into Zen. For Rush Order of Universe is over unity of mind-body togetherness and the conclusion of it is “ki”. Which is not easy to grasp theoretically and requires years of training in martial arts.

Martial art culture especially Aikido offers both the therapist and also the client is an important healing affective point. For Rush, physical training is the key element of integrating mind and body. Rush in the conclusion part of his thesis talk about teacher.

Therapist, martial arts teacher analogy is a great one for Rush: A Zen master is a teacher. A sensei is a martial arts teacher. A psychotherapist is a teacher. On one level, these teachers perhaps utilize different processes of teaching. But on another level, these teachers share a common process and purpose: the communication of experience for the purposes of instruction and enlightenment. (Rush p. 429)

2.1.5. Ingalls & Ritscher

Both of dissertations on Aikido used the methods of qualitative research are on the education field both by Ingalls and Ritscher.

In a dissertation by Ingalls, Jonathan Earl (2002) “The adolescent experience of Aikido: A phenomenological approach.” Ingalls in his study get into 20 dojos around California and send letter and flyer and made phone calls to sensei. Unfortunately Ingalls was able to reach 4 students of Aikido meeting his requirements. After some time some other participants were added from another dojo and the number of students became 5 males 2 females.

Interviews with these adolescents were few in number (4). In Ingall’s study the results were, on theme Aikido was a helpful tool that they used to become nicer, more loving, peaceful, confident, and disciplined people. (Ingalls 2002 p.64)

Another theme Ingalls points out is Aikido helps students participants reduce symptoms of Psychological Disorders. A participant with OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder) states that: “When I am at Aikido [my OCD] is gone. I don’t even know how it is possible. It’s like my mind goes to a higher place [when I am practicing Aikido]”.(Ingalls 2002 p.68) Another theme was applying the principles of Aikido to

everyday life and another theme was using entering, blending, and resolution within emotional as well as physical relationships. (Ingalls 2002 p.74)

Another thesis was written by Regina L Ritscher (2006) named “Moving thought: children’s expressiveness in action (an inquiry into aikido, science and teaching)” as a [Ed.D. dissertation] to Harvard University. Ritscher starts with his theoretical background his current theoretical understanding of embodied, tacit knowledge. Ritscher starts with his idea on Aikido: This involves “thinking-in-action”, which is often characterized as doing without stopping to think. (Ritscher 2006 p. 20) In Ritscher study considers two girls and two boys, ages 14 and 15, all of whom practice aikido at one dojo. Ritscher defines his work as explorative rather than definitive. Ritscher in follow explains Aikido and science related to it giving different examples. Between November 4, 2004 and February 16, 2005 he taped nine hour-long aikido classes, each attended by one or two of his study participants. He taped each of the four teens in at least three classes Interviews are also made by Ritscher on the four participants. The interview consisted of eleven formal questions 18 three background questions about their aikido study, science they had studied and other activities and interests (physical activities being especially important); four questions asking them to explain aikido and think about the “physics” that makes it work; and four science questions, which began with non-aikido physical activity and became increasingly more abstract. Transcription was done from the audiotapes.

At the conclusion part of his thesis learning science and learning Aikido are analyzed by Ritscher as both are grounded in perceptual and intuitive knowledge, and aided by visualization and images and the experience of actively “doing.” Again, this is not only true of learning science, but is part of the creative process through which new

discoveries are made. Feynman (1985), states that he understands science by creating specific scenarios in his mind and running through them step-by-step. (Ritscher p. 296)

2.1.6. Qualitative Articles on Education

As well as learning and science and adolescents tiding and Aikido principles was also subject of articles. In an article written by Jesse Palmer (2001) the ki Aikido principles are offered for conflict resolution. After defining conflict, Palmer investigates different strategies to solve it.

Palmer gives a way of possible resolution of conflict by the rules or the way of Aikido. In which you use opponent's energy against him. Although in Aikido is not an opponent actually. Conflict resolution is an adopted way of Aikido to different areas. It is also a sociological term used in political contexts as well..

When we return to education, the field where qualitative studies emerge more and also valuable. Here we will give two papers presented in Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association, in the year 2001, both of which are qualitative enquires combining Aikido and Education.

The first paper was presented by Paul Brawdy (2001) Exploring human kindness through the pedagogy of Aikido. In this study a teacher of Aikido and 4 students are interviewed. For Brawdy Aikido propose “a possible model for instruction that focuses on peace”. Brawdy made a phenomenological analysis of Aikido pedagogy.

The other qualitative work done on the same field on the same proceedings is by Jonathan ML. Bending back to move forward: Using reflective practice to develop a high school civic education/Aikido course. In this article Jonathan offers a course to high schools developed by the principles of Aikido named citizenship and world affairs. The

aggression or the attacker's conflict can be resolved by the principle of Aikido and blending. Loyal opposition in that sense when transformed into Aikido must play the role of the attacker in Aikido and make it a real attack.

2.1-7- First roots in sociology – Donohue

In one of the earliest literature was made by Donohue, John Joseph. Named: "The forge of the spirit: Ritual, motion, and meaning in the Japanese martial Tradition" as a [Ph.D. dissertation].United States -- New York: State University of New York at Stony Brook; 1987. This study is parallel to Epstein and therapy works in time consideration. Epstein's work was done on 1985.

Donohue's study was based on observation. He observed the Budo in settings. Donohue (1987) in his obtained by participant observation over an eighteen-month period in four dojos which were concerned with the promulgation of the arts of aikido, judo, and kendo. His result is quite simple; the dojos he observed, serve in modern society, which include the promotion of ethnicity and the creation of social identity in a poly-ethnic, urban environment. (Donohue 1987) Respect is one of the main observations of Donohue. The reason for this kind of respect is dojo has templates the contemporary organization of Budo been decisively shaped by the social of traditional Japan. (Donohue 1987 p 125)

For Donohue; the rationale of aikido is to learn to transcend the fear of aggression, injury and death through the mastery of a self-defence system which enables the individual to defend himself without causing undue harm to the attacker. (Donohue 1987 p.262)

2.1-8-Cross-Cultural - Dykhuizen

Second sociological study was a very good and detailed work conducted by C. Jeffrey Dykhuizen (2000) where in his quantitative and qualitative work used culture as an independent variable. The study investigated whether a relationship existed between instructional style and points of emphasis in the training context of the martial art Aikido and the perceptions which practitioners of aikido generated for aikido-related concepts.

Dykhuizen (2000)

Dykhuizen for this purpose investigated the following research questions:

- (1) How is the instruction and practice of aikido in the United States different than the instruction and practice of aikido in Japan?
- (2) What differences, if any, exist between what aikido means to practitioners in the United States and Japan?
- (3) In what manner are differences in instruction and practice related to differences in the meaning which aikido has to practitioners in different cultures? (Dykhuizen , 2000, p.743)

Dykhuizen's cross cultural study aims at instructional differences and practical differences as stated in his RQ 1, and semantic difference on the meaning of Aikido RQ 2 and lastly the interaction between them the affect of practice on the meaning of Aikido which is a very hard question to answer.

For the quantitative part of this study 120 participants from 10 Japanese dojos and 128 participants from 9 American dojos have been investigated. For the qualitative study, 10 Japanese participants from white belt to 8th degree black belt were interviewed in Japan and in the United States 7 participants were interviewed from white belt to 5th degree black belt. Dykhuizen took field notes on two settings: Japan and America the reminding of Aikido as a martial art was primary to American setting. Although in Japanese setting "ki" and individual instruction was primary, in America setting it was different for Dykhuizen.

On the concept analysis of Ki Dykhuizen extracted three distinct factors for ``ki'' Japanese semantic differential data, while only two factors were extracted from the American data. For Dykhuizen this indicates that Japanese practitioners structured their understanding of ki in a more complex manner than American practitioners.

On the concept of Aikido Dykhuizen mentions a very interesting cause of difference. Dykhuizen summarizes the findings and the difference of Aikido practitioners in two cultures Japanese and American quantitatively very slightly different but on the other hand qualitatively not. Slight aggression in America setting although not observed quantitatively and also silent instruction in Japanese setting changed the meaning of ki and Aikido not from a total point of view but from qualitative slight differences.

2.1.9-The Sociosomatics of Connection - Rothman

Another more recent sociological dissertation study was written by Renee Rothman named Aikido Sensibilities: The Sociosomatics of Connection and its Role in the Constitution of Community at North Bay Aikido in Santa Cruz. California as a [Ph.D. dissertation].United States -- California: University of California, Santa Cruz; 2007.

Rothman's (2007) thesis examines the Sociosomatics of tactility and kinaesthesia through the modern, Japanese martial art, aikido. North Bay Aikido dojo is the site of his research. Where he realizes sense of "community" is deliberately cultivated. (Rothman 2007)

Rothman states that he explored two things through Aikido "Through the practices of aikido I explore two primary phenomena: the sense of touch (which includes kinaesthesia and tactility) and the constitution of community. (Rothman 2007 p.7)

In the field Rothman studies between 1996-1999 in Aikido dojo, videotaped special events as rank tests and even worked in some dojo actions. He also conducted 20 formal interviews for his dissertation and examination. In addition to training in the martial art, he also volunteered time at the dojo.

At North Bay Aikido dojo, the community both begins and ends in the practice of the art itself; that is, aikido training serves to define the community boundaries and is the primary point of reference through which people engage with one another. (Rothman 2007 p.207) In the conclusion part of his dissertation Rothman states that in the new pluralistic culture and society “As the world makes less and less sense, we seek out new metaphors both to explain the chaos and to re-direct our action” For Rothman, Americans are seeking ways to harmonize mind and body for the last 40 years. In that sense they are polarized (p.262).

2.1.10-Conflict Resolution and Levine

Professor Levine is working at the University of Chicago Sociology Department and he is also an Aikido Master. For Levine Yoga and Aikido conceive the bodily harmony promoted by their teachings as a model of mature human functioning and accordingly view social conflict as a by product of inner discord. (Levine, 2007) A good deal of contemporary Budo practice exhibits characteristics: Authoritarianism, Anti-intellectualism, Particularism, Doctrinaire rigidity, Narrowness of focus, Excessive competitiveness.

Levine takes the negative point of view. For Levine these are the points of Budo. For the question in sake here is, could those characteristics go to a liberalizing direction without losing the heart of Budo. Levine believes in so. On authoritarianism Levine gives

his own example and witnessing some Aikido teachers encouraging asking questions both in and outside the dojo. On non verbal learning Levine thinks that one can benefit from it. "It is good for mind and body."

Overcoming mind and body split is the one of the main aims of this course which Levine defines as pervading Western Education. Levine adds conflicts of aggression and body and resolution of them physically to his outcome.

As a concluding remark, Levine joins liberal education with human excellence for him; weakened the traditional case for liberal education, the arts of Budo, taught as they were originally intended - as vehicles for personal growth and spiritual enlightenment - provide a formidable exemplar of education for human excellence at its purest. (Levine 1990 p. 10)

2.2 - Mind and Body Aspects of Aikido Practitioners and Mind and Body in general

2.3- Philosophy of Aikido

These studies will be examined in the discussion and philosophical part of this dissertation namely: Chapter V. The reason for this is the discussion in line with our discussion.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1-Research Question and Sub Questions

The main research question of this study is: *How do practitioners conceive Aikido by means of mind and body aspects?*

The sub-questions include:

- 1- *What is the substance of the documents gathered from the Aikido practitioners from the aspects of Mind and Body? How frequently do they refer to these substances?*
- 2- *What is the perspective of practitioners into the philosophy of Aikido?*
- 3- *How do practitioners conceptualize properties of Aikido?*
- 4- *Do practitioners approach Aikido as a sport or art?*
- 5- *How do practitioners perceive advantages, disadvantages and risks of Aikido?*

3.2. - Population and Settings

Three Aikido Dojo's were selected in Ankara. According to the nature of Aikido minor differences in conceptualization and perception may exist between different Dojo's. Furthermore there is a hierarchical setting in a Dojo and the instructor should decide

participating a study. Due to these reason Dojo's of which the instructor was in close relation (peer or student of the instructor of METU Dojo) with the Middle East Technical University Dojo were invited to participate this study. All the three Dojo's had at least 10 years of Aikido teaching experience. Participants did not indicate their names and the name of their Dojo's on the questionnaire. Evaluation was therefore based only on the level of Aikido training of the practitioner. For that reason the age and the dojo they come from were not asked to the participants. Participants returned the data sheet by the initial they choose.

| DOJOS | AVARAGE PARTICAPANTS | PARTICIPANTS RETURNED THE OPENENDED Q. |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| METU Aikido Dojo Kızılay Aikido Dojo Anıttepe Aikido Dojo | 60 | 23 |

Table 1. Participants and Dojo's

Twenty-three of the 60 Aikido participants returned the open ended questions.

Practitioners were grouped by their ranking as beginner, intermediate and advanced as shown in Table 2.

| KYU | GROUPING | MIN. MONTHS |
|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| 7 th | BEGINNER | 1 Month |
| 6 th | | 3 Months |
| 5 th | INTERMEDIATE | 4 Months |
| 4 th | | 7 Months |
| 3 rd | ADVANCED | 8 Months |
| 2 nd | | 11 Months |
| 1 st | | 12 Months |
| BLACK BELT and ABOVE | | Above |

Table 2. Grouping of the Participants

Practitioners who participated this study were at the Advanced (n=5), Intermediate (n=12) and Beginner (n=6) levels.

3.3- Data Collection and Analysis

Personal documents of Aikido practitioners broadly referred to any first-person narrative that describes an individual's actions, experiences and beliefs (Biklen & Bogdan 2003), were collected and analysed using qualitative research methods.

Both the research design and the questions asked in this study were open-ended. The main research question focused on the nature and process of Aikido with relation to mind and body interactions. The open ended research question asked is, "What are the differentiating point of Aikido from other sports?" Based on your experiences up to now,

what are the points that can make you think that Aikido is different from other sports?

What could be the advantages and disadvantages of Aikido?

The open ended quantitative approach of this study permitted measuring the reactions of a set of Aikido practitioners to a limited set of questions (Patton, 1990

Subjects own frame of reference rather than from a structured one by prearranged questions was preferred in this study. The personal document asked in this study is based on 1 major research question and 5 sub questions derived from that, asked to Aikidoka.

The participants' responses were determined by using analytic codes to characterize the themes and patterns of the participant and conceptualization of Aikido.

| RESEARCH QUESTION | OPEN-ENDED DOCUMENT QUESTIONS |
|---|---|
| <p>How do participants conceive Aikido in comparison to other sports: mind and body aspects?</p> <p>Sub Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the substance of the documents gathered from the aikido participants from the aspects of mind and body? How frequently do they refer to the substances? 2. In what ways the understanding of Aikido participants and their understanding of philosophy of Aikido and philosophy in general present itself from the view point of participant perspectives? 3. In what ways the properties of Aikido, as participants conceptualize it, present itself as a differentiating point of Aikido from others sports? 4. How do participants classify Aikido as regards to arts and sports? 5. In what ways participants reported advantages and disadvantages of Aikido? <p>What kind of risks are reported by Aikido participants?</p> | <p>What are the differentiating point of Aikido from other sports? Based on your experiences up to now, what are the points can make you think that Aikido is different from other sports? What could be the advantages and disadvantages of Aikido training?</p> |

Table 3. Open-Ended Question

3.4- Generating Main Themes

In the data analysis process of this study, the most important part was generating the main themes that enabled the researcher to understand the meaning of words at the gathered data. While selecting the categories according to Gall, Gall & Borg, (2003) there are mainly two ways.

Developing Categories:

1. One approach is to use a list of categories developed by the other researchers.
2. The other approach is to develop your own categories.

The main themes used in this study are as old as history of thought and mankind. It is one of the biggest philosophical problems that have been a question for philosophers. Nearly every philosopher wrote about this specific problem. From Plato to Derrida, this problem has been history of philosophy area's favourite problem. Namely: The Mind and Body Problem.

Mind and Body and Mind & Body together therefore becomes the broadest category of this study.

3.5- Inter Coder Reliability

The documents were read by 3 qualitative research experts and categories and labels have been reported. Although there have been some disagreement on the names of some categories and labels the optimal names were selected for the dissertation. This is also known as reliability in quantitative studies as Coranbach's alpha.

3.6- Categories and Labels

Categories fall under the themes of Mind, Body and Mind & Body. In this preliminary brief explanation and frequencies of the labels reported by participants how they conceptualization Aikido at different training levels will be described.

3.6.1-Philosophy

Review of documents revealed that “philosophy” in its broader sense of the term, was generally mentioned by the participants. Differentiating character from other sports as “philosophy” as a general category, was mentioned by 17 practitioners out of 23.

Philosophy created one of the two highly differentiating characteristics of Aikido.

Since the mentioning of philosophy is very broad in its meaning, in order to figure out which philosophical aspects participants mean, we have coded general philosophy into 4 sub-labels. These labels were:

3.6.1.1- Inner Development

Like many martial arts Aikido also has an aim of inner/personal/spiritual development. This purpose was mentioned as a topic by the participants. 14 out of 23 Aikido practitioners indicate inner development as a difference for Aikido.

3.6.1.2.-Overcoming Ego - Having Philosophy -Applicability to Life.

These three categories were adding facts to inner development. Among 23 practitioners, only an advanced and an intermediate practitioner used these terms without referring to inner development. All other practitioners referred to inner development. Two out of 6 beginner practitioners mentioned inner development. None of the beginner practitioners mentioned “overcoming ego”, “having philosophy” and “applicability to life”.

3.6.2- Properties of Aikido

Properties of Aikido are generally mentioned by participants as differentiating facts from other sports. Participants conceptualized 7 main properties of Aikido. These were; a) Harmony, b) Not using force, c) Love and respect, d) Discipline, e) Defending oneself, f) Physical improvement, and g-) Awareness.

3.6.2.1 – *Harmony*

Harmony is not only a property but also in the etymology of Aikido. As presented previously, “Ai” in “Aikido” means “harmony”. It is not only the harmony of practicing the techniques but also the philosophy of mind & body; that is to be in harmony with the entire universe. In this study, the “harmony” label of Aikido was found to be the most generally mentioned differentiating characteristic of Aikido. Fourteen out of 23 practitioners indicated harmony as a differentiating property of Aikido. The frequency was highest among intermediate participants. Nine out of 12 intermediate practitioners found harmony as a differentiating property of Aikido. Only one advanced student found “harmony” as a differentiating point where as it has to be noted that they have mentioned the other properties when compared to other properties. Two out of 6 new beginners also found harmony principle as a property of Aikido.

3.6.2.2.– *Not Using Force*

Although not using force is a common and attractive property of Aikido, only an advanced and a beginner participant mentioned this property of Aikido.

3.6.3.3 – *Love & Respect*

Love and respect are embodied even in the name of Aikido. The meaning of Ai is both harmony and also “harmonious love” as well. Not hurting the one that attacks you and controlling him is taught to be the highest form of love. In that sense Aikido is based on the art of love and respect in its definition. In its formal definitions and philosophy, love and respect are considered to be fundamentals of Aikido. This property is hard to find in any other sports. Review of the documents revealed that, although Aikido is based on love and respect this property was only mentioned by 3 out of 23 participants.

3.6.3.4 – Discipline

Among 23 participants, 2 out of 5 advanced and 3 out of 6 new beginner practitioners indicated discipline as a differentiating property of Aikido. On the other hand, very interestingly intermediate students did not reveal discipline property of Aikido as a differentiating character.

3.6.3.5.– Defending Oneself

Aikido generally is supposed to be a defensive martial art. It is not based on striking or attacking, but rather on controlling and also defending. Defending oneself, could be a motive for practitioners to start Aikido Using attackers force against him/her is the way of Aikido.

Review of the documents revealed defending property as a differentiating character of Aikido. Among 23 participants, 2 out of 6 beginners find “defending oneself” as a differentiating point. One out of 17 intermediate and no advanced practitioners found “defending oneself” as a differentiating point of Aikido from other sports. It is revealed that, beginners conceptualized defending oneself as a main difference of Aikido. At advanced and intermediate levels defending oneself loses its importance.

3.6.3.6. – Physical Improvement

Review of documents revealed that 6 out of 23 participants indicated physical improvement as a property of Aikido. An intermediate, an advanced and 4 out of 12 participants indicated physical improvement as a differentiating property of Aikido.

3.6.3.7 – Awareness

A beginner, an intermediate and an advanced practitioner recognized awareness as a property of Aikido.

3.6.3- Art / War and Competition

In its formal definition Aikido is defined as a non-competitive martial art. This is a major differentiating fact of Aikido. Competitive-less practice of Aikido is embodied in its philosophy. The only “competition” in Aikido is the competition “within oneself” as presented by the founder Morihei Ueshiba.

Review of the documents revealed that almost all (18 out of 23) participants conceptualized this idea. An advanced, 4 intermediate and 2 beginner practitioners highlighted that there is “no competition” and “no winning or losing” in Aikido.

In its formal definition Aikido is defined as a martial art; an “art of war”. At the same it is the “art of harmony” and the “art of love”. Our results support that art of war is strongly conceptualized by Aikido practitioners.

Five out of 23 participants indicated that Aikido was a war but not sports activity. Only 2 out of 23 participants defined that Aikido is not a sports.

3.6.4-Disadvantages

Review of the documents revealed that disadvantages of practicing Aikido are injury and training as two people. Participants revealed that 15 out of 23 have given a

general idea about disadvantages of practicing Aikido. Ten of those 15 participants agreed on Aikido has no disadvantages.

Five out of 6 beginners indicated possible injuries as a disadvantage of Aikido. Only one intermediate practitioner indicated injury as a disadvantage.

Aikido is classically practiced as pairs. Only one beginner indicated “practicing as at least two people” as a disadvantage.

3.7.-Themes of Mind, Body, Body and Mind

Aikido participants revealed conceptualization of Aikido, either from a mind, body or both mind & body point of views. Out of 18 labels, there have been

| Themes | Labels |
|-------------|--------|
| Mind | 9 |
| Body | 7 |
| Mind & Body | 2 |

Table 4: Discrimination of Labels among Themes

Mind - 9 Labels

Inner development – Having Philosophy – Applicability to Life – Overcoming Ego Not

Having Competition – Not Including Winning and Losing – Is not art of War –

Is not Sports- Love and Respect

Body - 7 Labels

Defending – Not Using Force – Physical Improvement – Injury – No Disadvantage –

Working with two people - Awareness –

Mind & Body – 2 Labels

Harmony — Discipline –

Are presented by Aikido participants. The table 6 shows the themes and labels related with these labels. This distribution shows the Mind dominance of the conceptualization of Aikido . This point and the detailed examination on personal level is given below in Findings Chapter under the examination of each theme.

Philosophical Discussion and Argumentation which itself has its own methodology is used for the discussion of Qualitative Findings as in the form of argumentation.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

4.1. Research Question and Sub-Research Questions

The main research question of this study is: *How do practitioners conceive Aikido by means of mind and body aspects?*

The sub-questions include:

1- *What is the substance of the documents gathered from the Aikido practitioners from the aspects of Mind and Body? How frequently do they refer to these substances?*

2- *What is the perspective of practitioners into the philosophy of Aikido?*

3- *How do practitioners conceptualize properties of Aikido?*

4- *Do practitioners approach Aikido as a sport or art?*

5- *How do practitioners perceive advantages, disadvantages and risks of Aikido?*

The qualitative document analysis done to Aikido students is 23

The general terms and participants revealed are presented below.

- Philosophy
 - Inner Development
 - Overcoming Ego
 - Having Philosophy
 - Applicability to Life
- Properties

- Harmony
- Not Using Force
- Love & respect
- Discipline
- Defending Oneself
- Physical Improvement
- Awareness
- Art/War and Competition
 - Not having Competition
 - Not Including Winning or Losing
 - Not Sports
 - Art of War
- Disadvantages
 - No Disadvantages
 - Working with two people
 - Injury as a disadvantage
 -

4.2. Sub-Question 1

What is the substance of the documents gathered from the Aikido practitioners from the aspects of Mind and Body? How frequently do they refer to these substances?

Participants general terms were analysed, categorized and labelled. Participants declared that they had the Aikido experience to answer the questions.

13 out of 23 participants answered this question creating at least 5 or more categories and labels.

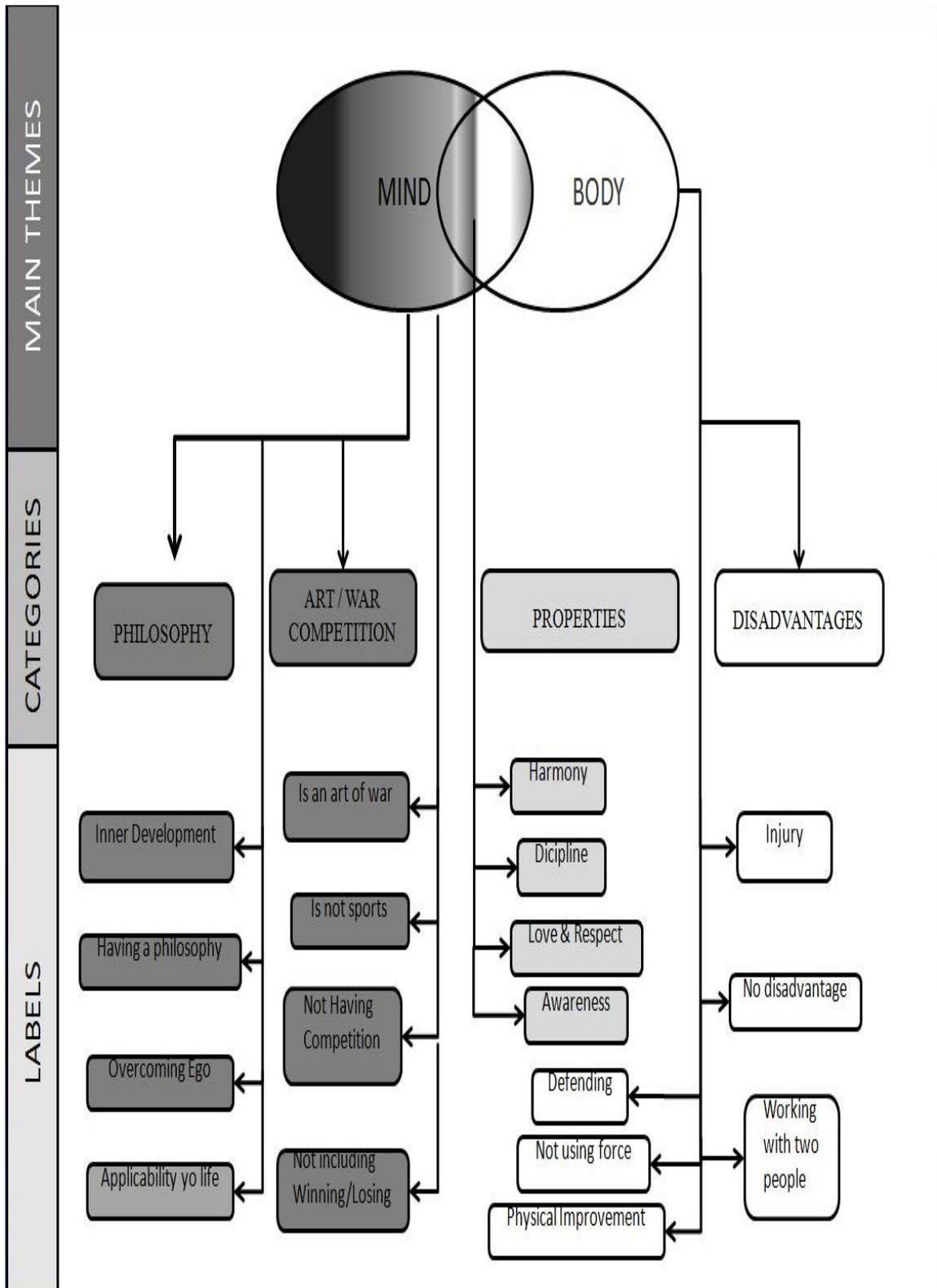


Table 5: Themes, Categories and Labels Table

| | | NR | 2 people disadvant | Injury as Disadvant face | No disadvant | Not having winning | Not Having Competiti | Not Sports | Art of War | Awarenes s | Defending | Physical improven ed | Love & Respect | Not Using Force | Discipline | Harmony | Aplicabilit yte Life | Overcomi ng Ego | Having a philosoph | Inner Developm ent | SUBJ |
|----|-----|----|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------|---------|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------|
| A | BT. | 6 | | | X | X | | | X | | | | | | | X | X | | X | | |
| D | BO. | 5 | | | | | X | | | | | | X | | X | | | | | X | |
| V. | EK. | 5 | | | X | | X | | | X | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| | IG. | 5 | | | | | X | | | | | X | | | X | | | X | | X | |
| | TK. | 2 | | | | | | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 5 | 23 | --- | --- | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | --- | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | |
| I. | BA. | 6 | | | | X | | | | | | X | X | | | X | | | | X | |
| N | BK. | 2 | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| T | EA. | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | | | X | | |
| E | EK. | 4 | | | X | | | | X | | | | | | | X | | | | X | |
| K | EB. | 5 | | | X | | | | | | | | | | | X | | X | | X | |
| M | GB. | 2 | | | | | | | | | | X | | | | X | | | | | |
| M | HM. | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| E | KC. | 2 | | | | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| D | SS. | 7 | | | | | | | X | | | X | | | | X | | | | X | |
| I | UH. | 5 | | | | | | | | | X | X | | | | X | | | | | |
| A | CV. | 4 | | | | | X | | | | | | | | | X | | | | | |
| I | RY. | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | | | X | X | |
| E | 12 | 48 | | | 3 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 7 | |
| E | GA. | 6 | | | X | X | X | | | | X | | | | | | | | | X | |
| W | MA. | 3 | | | | | | | | | X | X | | | | | | | | | |
| | NY. | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | | | | | | |
| | EA. | 7 | | | | | | | | X | | | | | X | | | | | | |
| | GG. | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | | | | | |
| | HA. | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | | | | | |
| 6 | | 4 | | | | 3 | 3 | | | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | | 2 | |
| 25 | | 27 | | | | 12 | 7 | | | | 3 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 12 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 12 | |
| A | | | 1 | 6 | 7 | 12 | | 2 | 4 | | 3 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 12 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 12 | |

Table 6: Coding Table

4.3. Mind & Body Themes

4.3.1 - Mind Theme

Participants revealed that, mind dominated characteristics of Aikido make a difference from other sports. The analysis of Aikido participants conceiving of Aikido revealed the interesting category of Philosophy. Another category is the category of Art/War and Competition.

Philosophy is the differentiation point of Aikido for practitioners. Every sport has its own philosophy however none of the participants in this study mentioned this point. Participants rather think that philosophy is where Aikido differs from other sports.

Detailed analysis of the Mind theme revealed that some participants conceive Aikido through an understanding that mind is dominant to its physical characteristics. Advanced participant T.K. presented the Mind theme as *“In a short time, I understand that Aikido is much more than sports. First of all physical activity is not primary in Aikido.”*

For T.K. the mind aspect of Aikido is preliminary and creates the difference with other sports. T.K. puts forward the aims of Aikido in a definite way such as *“Aikido is certainly an art that helps someone’s overcoming of his own ego that changes the stance of person and that changes the view of someone towards life.”* T.K. enumerates the certain philosophical aspect of Aikido with regards to philosophy and mind. According to T.K., Aikido helps to articulate participants’ view of life; so to speak philosophy of life. For T.K. the mindly aspects of Aikido are the aspects that make it different from other sports. T.K. also puts the other mind dominated category and the label “aikido is art” as presenting *“Aikido is certainly an art”*.

Intermediate student S.S. highlighted the philosophy of Aikido as “...*it is not for beating someone; it is for changing something in us. It may be the philosophy of life.*” The term “*of life*” is a mind dominant term that leads Aikido.

Spirituality is inherited in other eastern originating sports such as karate-do, taekwondo or yoga training. New beginner E.A. states the Mind perspective as

In other sports something's can be won but Aikido does not have an end. It is open-ended and there is always learning. This property of Aikido adds to the improvement of the spiritual characteristics of us. Form this point of view, Aikido is different from other sports.

E.A. suggests an infinite learning and spiritual development in Aikido. This again creates the mind related difference of Aikido. Although the philosophically differentiating characteristic was put forward by E.A., “*spirituality*” is the key term for Aikido as a differentiating character from other sports.

New beginner H.M. stated the term as “*a right way of living*” and wrote about his attending to Aikido as “*I started Aikido with the offer of my friends without knowing what it is, but it teaches me the right way to live.*”

Attending Aikido by an advice is a motive for H.M. that needs further insight but the term the “*right way of living*” is important for understanding the mind theme. The Art/War and Competition label was another total mind category.

“Not having competition”, “not including winning or losing”, “is not sports” and “is an art of war” were the sub-labels of this theme. An intermediate student (B.K.) stated “*There is winning and losing in all other sports. This does not happen in Aikido. I think this is the main point that makes Aikido different than other sports. Everybody wins and loses inside herself/himself*”

Another participant (C.Y.) approaches this issue from a different perspective.

The best point about Aikido is not having competition. There are no concepts like winning and losing (In reality except for death and life as in Budo). I think it rasps the sharp edges of participants like ambition, arrogance, etc. In addition to that, Aikido stays away from dirtiness of modern life.

Budo is the art of war and Aikido is officially accepted as an art of Budo.

4.3.2 - Body Theme

The most common label for the theme of body reported by the participants was injury. Injury is a bodily theme under the category of disadvantages. Injury was mainly reported by beginners. Five out of 6 beginners reported injury as a disadvantage. On the other hand, only one intermediate student and no advanced student reported injury as a disadvantage of Aikido. A beginner (G.A.) reported this point as “*A disadvantage of Aikido is causing physical impact. The injuries that can happen, which are natural, can be harmful for participants.*” Although G.A. sees injury as natural, most of the injuries in Aikido are minor when compared to other martial arts. The concept of injury and risk needs further insight and analysis which will be discussed in the last sub-research question and in the discussion section in detail.

Another bodily related label was training as a pair. One beginner highlighted this label. Aikido cannot be trained alone.

Three participants reported defending oneself as a bodily differentiating characteristic of Aikido. One of these participants who was a beginner (M.A.) stated the advantage of Aikido as “*Aikido is for the body to become more flexible and to defend oneself against sudden attacks.*”

Physical improvement is another bodily related label. Physical improvement is remarked by 6 participants. Nearly all sports contribute to physical improvement.

However, physical improvement is not an important property of Aikido. On the other hand, the review of the documents revealed that Aikido practitioners recognize physical improvement as a differentiating character. The remarking point on physical improvement was that most of the practitioners stated physical improvement together with the mind labels. E.K. stated that *“Aikido is not a field of sports where there is physical improvement. In addition to that, Aikido includes the education of emotions and thoughts as well.”* E.K. added mind characteristics to physical improvement characteristics of Aikido. B.Ö. stated *“I do not know any exercise which at the same time enables getting stronger and also getting more flexible.”* Here B.Ö. stated the details of physical improvement he or she has experienced. After stating these physical characteristics B.Ö. continues as same as E.K. *“More than physical benefits, Aikido leads to inner development and according to me this is the most important point where it differs from all other sports.”* In this statement inner development is combined with physical development. E.A., another intermediate student, also stated that *“Aikido as not solely depending on physical characteristic, shows a difference from a lot of other sports”*

Physical improvement is mostly identified together with inner development. There are two more body related labels of Aikido which are differentiating in reality but not reported by the practitioners. These were “not using force” and “defending oneself”. These are two properties of Aikido that are bodily related and when body and physical characteristics are concerned, these are absolutely differentiating.

Technically unlike any other sports, Aikido can be practiced by everyone regardless of any physical characteristics of strength or force. Defending oneself is also a differentiating characteristic of Aikido. Not using force is presented by 2 participants and defending oneself is presented by 5 participants.

Another body theme of Aikido is awareness. As from the perspective of Aikido teachings, raising awareness is an aim of Aikido which requires years of training. E.K. states awareness as:

A person who trains swimming can walk fast and can have advantages of physical condition. On the other hand a person who trains Aikido, based on my experience, is aware of her/his surrounding and tries to pay attention to her/his surrounding. To realize how far I am to the people in my surroundings or to hear the footsteps of someone coming from my back could be a more detailed example. Sometime while I am walking in the street other people are so close that they may attack me easily. To be aware of someone coming from my back is a direct result of being aware of the surrounding.

4.3.3 – Mind & Body Theme

We have figured out that both the body and the mind were themes in Aikido. The interaction between mind and body was the core point of this study. For the sake of arguments and as we construct an analogy, we could say that, if we call the mind black, and the body white, the mind and body theme is the gray zone.

A label for this category was not specified. Harmony and discipline to some extent may fall under this category.

Aikido in its meaning and in its discourse is an art of harmony. The Japanese word “Ai” means harmony. Harmony is mentioned by 14 out of 27 participants as a differentiating character of Aikido. Intermediate participants raised the concept of “*doing Aikido better*”. Though, there is the need to accept the philosophy of Aikido and apply it to daily life as much as possible. “*If a person cannot experience harmony in his life, this will reveal itself in Aikido.*”

At first glance E.A. seems to be writing on a mind theme. Further in his/her statement, E.A. thinks that the lack of harmony may affect Aikido. E.A. continues as

“Aikido physically and spiritually affects oneself.” For E.A. the harmony property of Aikido affects the physical and the spiritual life of the practitioner.

Another practitioner (E.B.) associates harmony with health and happiness. E.B. states that *“...all the things related with Aikido result in to be in harmony; in your personal life, social life and in a broader perspective Aikido teaches to be in harmony with the universe. If harmony exists in your life you are happy and healthy.”* For E.B., harmony results with happiness and health. A mind and a physical outcome is stated as a result of harmony.

This mind and body theme is stated by G.B. together as *“Maybe it is not in my experience to say that but, Aikido is not like any other sports that mostly demand on physical characteristics. If there is the harmony and unity of both mind and body, Aikido can be understood more clearly.”* For G.B., the unity and harmony of body and mind is not only a crucial and core fact of Aikido, but also is necessary for its understanding.

The harmony principle in that sense is somehow different from other leading properties that unite the mind and body.

In addition to harmony, discipline also revealed itself as a label under the body and mind category. Aikido is an art of discipline in its literature. The term martial art is also referred as discipline arts. Discipline has been mentioned by participants as a label by 7 participants. As I.G. states, *“Aikido puts the person’s whole body and spirit into discipline.”* Here Aikido is referred to put the body and spirit (mind) into discipline.

4.4. Sub-Question 2

What is the perspective of practitioners into the philosophy of Aikido?

The analysis of the documents revealed philosophy as a category and these sub-topics as labels.

- Inner development
- Having a philosophy
- Overcoming ego
- Applicability to life

The second sub-question looks a different way to Aikido practitioners understanding of philosophy and the philosophy of Aikido.

Philosophy of Aikido has been the subject to many books, novels and even to films in today's popular culture. Whether this philosophy is a systematically and/or rooted philosophy is open to discussion.

The aim of this part of the study is to present Aikido practitioners perspectives into its philosophy.

When we take a look inside the conceptualization of philosophy, 23 practitioners out of 24 stated the labels of inner development, having philosophy, overcoming ego or applicability to life. The frequency distribution of these labels is given in Table 7.

| | SUBJ | Inner Development | Having a philosophy | Overcoming Ego | Aplicability to Life |
|---------------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| ADVANCED | B.T. | | X | | X |
| | B.O. | X | | | |
| | E.K. | X | | | X |
| | I.G. | X | | X | |
| | T.K. | | | | |
| total | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| INTERMEDIATE | B.A. | X | | | X |
| | B.K. | X | | | |
| | E.A. | X | X | | X |
| | E.K. | | | | |
| | E.B. | X | | X | |
| | G.B. | | | | |
| | H.M. | X | | | X |
| | K.C. | | | | |
| | S.S. | X | X | | |
| | U.H. | | X | | |
| | C.Y. | | | | |
| | R.Y. | X | X | X | |
| total | 12 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| NEW BEGINNER | G.A. | X | | | |
| | M.A. | | | | |
| | N.Y. | | | | |
| | E.A. | X | | | |
| | G.G. | | | | |
| H.A. | | | | | |
| total | 6 | 2 | -- | -- | -- |
| total | 23 | 12 | 5 | 3 | 5 |

Table 7: Philosophy Category Table

Analysis of the document revealed that the highest frequency among the philosophy category was inner development.

4.4.1. Inner Development

Aikido practitioners indicate that the difference of Aikido was its “personal/inner/spiritual development” when compared to other sports. 12 out of 23 practitioners indicate inner development as a conceptualization of Aikido. We have merged inner development together with spiritual and personal developments to analyse the data.

Aikido is a physical activity on one side. However, many practitioners indicated inner development as an important property of Aikido. E.A. states “Aikido affects the practitioner not only physically but also spiritually and encourages her/him to question and enquire himself” In addition to physical improvement, spiritual enquiry is also mentioned by E.A. This can be taken as the general idea underlying of the philosophy of Aikido.

Practitioners SS and BK put these labels in a slightly different way. *“I practice Aikido not to beat someone but to win my ego. I want to change something in myself. It is winning a war in myself.”* B.K. states *“Everyone wins in herself/himself.”* This also highlights the point that Aikido is about *“-self”*. This self-oriented aspect of philosophy could be the stem of inner development aspect of Aikido. This aspect is defined by R.Y as

According to me the point that makes a difference of Aikido from other sports is that it has a philosophy. The only person in Aikido you can oppose is yourself. One can get away from the things that can disturb her/his attention and establishes an inner look to herself/himself. Actually saying to have an inner look is not enough. It is rather to have a real look into herself/himself! This is the appropriate way of expression

R.Y in the above quoted paragraph gives a quite detailed explanation of inner development. He/She not only makes a difference between sports that have philosophy and Aikido but also deepens and stresses the introspective look that Aikido offers. *“It is rather to have a real look into herself/himself!!”* is a key term R.Y. uses.

Two out of 6 beginners mentioned Aikido’s inner/spiritual development. A statement by beginner G.A. was *“Aikido not only offers physical education but also spiritual development.”* As another beginner E.A. states, *“..Aikido contributes to the spiritual development of the practitioner and in that sense it is different from other sports.”*

4.4.2. “Overcoming ego”, “Having a philosophy” “Applicability to life”

These three labels nearly make most of the frequency of inner development. These labels can be taken as labels that strengthen the inner/personal/spiritual development. Among 23 practitioners, only one advanced and one intermediate practitioner have used these labels without inner/personal/spiritual development. All other practitioners used these labels. Although 2 out of 6 beginners have mentioned these labels inner/personal/spiritual

development was not used by the other practitioners. This can be interpreted as when students and participants tried to explain inner and personal development they have used those labels. When more advanced practitioners are considered, the explanation of inner development also include “overcoming ego” “applicability to life” and “having philosophy”.

An intermediate participant (E.B.) explains the way Aikido proposes the way to overcome ego in the following way:

. . . with the help of all of those, you let a superego that is much more defined into your life, both in your life in dojo and outside dojo, and if necessary by realizing, you can stop your ego and moreover you can cultivate your ego. All of those things can make you be in harmony with all of your social life, intimate life and all of the universe.

In the conceptualization of Aikido for E.B., inner development, harmony, and controlling ego act together. H.M., an intermediate student, states that “*Aikido teaches me to live truly*” H.M. does not explain the meaning of “truly”. Another student, E.K., defines “applicability to life” as the first aspect of Aikido that comes to mind in the following way:

. . . The first property that comes to mind when I think of the difference between other sports and Aikido is the applicability of Aikido to all life. I think that a person who has practiced Aikido for some time continues to practice and continues to see the advantages of it even when he/she is walking on the street.

B.T., an advanced practitioner, labels “applicability to life” and “having a philosophy” together. “*The way you are on the mat is complementary with the way you are in life; in anytime in anywhere in your life the techniques and philosophy of Aikido are with you*”. On the other hand, an intermediate participant (U.H.) draws attention to the

philosophy of Aikido without mentioning its applicability to life “*Aikido inside consists of a philosophy that comes from history*”

4.5. Sub – Question 3

How do practitioners conceptualize the properties of Aikido?

Although there can be many properties of Aikido, those presented here are the ones from the viewpoint of our participants. According to the participants’ responses to the open-ended question, we categorized the properties of Aikido as follows.

- Harmony
- Discipline
- Love & Respect
- Awareness
- Defending
- Not Using Force
- Physical Improvement

Certain properties of Aikido have been mentioned by many books and articles. We have seen those properties from the view point of Mind & Body themes previously. In this analysis we realized that Properties of Aikido is the place where all Mind, Body and Mind & Body themes come together.

In this part we will take a particular sub-research question. The aim of this part is to present participant perspectives of Aikido and the way they report the properties of it. When we take a look inside philosophy, 42 different labels have been mentioned by 23 subjects. The frequency distribution of these labels is given at the below table.

| | SUBJ | Harmony | Discipline | Not Using Force | Love & Respect | Physical Improvement | Defending | Awareness |
|---------------------|--------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------------|--------------|-----------|
| ADVANCED | B.T. | X | | | | | | |
| | B.O. | | X | X | X | | | |
| | E.K. | | | | | | | X |
| | I.G. | | X | | | X | | |
| | T.K. | | | | | | | |
| total | 5 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - - - | 1 |
| INTERMEDIATE | B.A. | X | | | X | X | | |
| | B.K. | | | | | | | |
| | E.A. | X | | | | | | |
| | E.K. | X | | | | | | |
| | E.B. | X | | | | | | |
| | G.B. | X | | | | X | | |
| | H.M. | | | | | | | |
| | K.Ç. | | | | | | | X |
| | S.S. | X | | | | X | | |
| | U.H. | X | | | | X | X | |
| | C.Y. | X | | | | | | |
| | R.Y. | X | | | | | | |
| | total | 12 | 9 | --- | --- | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| NEW BEGINNER | G.A. | | | | | | X | |
| | M.A. | | | | | X | X | |
| | N.Y. | | X | | | | | |
| | E.A. | | X | | | | | X |
| | G.G. | X | X | | | | | |
| | H.A. | X | | X | X | | | |
| total | 6 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| total | 23 | 12 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 3 |

Table 8: Properties Category Table

4.5.1. Harmony

Harmony is not only a property of Aikido but it is also in the etymology of Aikido. As we have presented earlier, “Ai” in “Aikido” means “harmony”. It is not only the harmony of practicing, as it can be observed in the techniques, but also it is “to be in harmony with the entire universe” according to the philosophical definition of Aikido. In our study, the “harmony” label of Aikido is found to be the most frequent conceptualization characteristic of Aikido in accordance with its etymological meaning. Out of the 23 people in the study, 12 mentioned the “harmony” property of Aikido as a

differentiating character. The probability was the highest among intermediate subjects: 9 out of the 12 intermediate practitioners declared harmony as a differentiating point of Aikido. Only one of the five advanced students indicated “harmony” as a differentiating point.

B.T., an advanced practitioner, defines harmony in its widest sense of the word: “I think that the most important advantage of Aikido training is that Aikido teaches human-beings to live in harmony with the other human-beings and also with the universe.”

Among the new beginners, two of them indicated harmony as a conceptualizing character. For instance, G.G., a new beginner participant, states that “...*concentration, discipline, and harmony with the surroundings is very important in Aikido.*”. An intermediate participant, E.A., gets to the harmony principles in a more detailed way. “*If the person cannot experience harmony in his own life, this will reveal itself while practicing Aikido. ‘Not being in harmony’ not only affects physically but also psychologically and pushes the person to examine himself*” In this sense, E.A. establishes a connection between life and harmony.

Compared to the beginner and intermediate level participants, B.T.—an advanced participant—sees harmony from a wider philosophical and life perspective setting.

4.5.2.Discipline

The discipline property of Aikido is found to be another important conceptualization element. Five of the 23 participants mentioned the discipline label of Aikido. This is no surprise as Aikido is a martial art and martial arts are discipline arts. Like every “do” Aikido is also based on discipline.

Two of the five advanced, and three of the six new beginner students called discipline as a differentiating character. However, perhaps surprisingly, none of the intermediate students included discipline as a differentiating property.

A new beginner student, N.Y., explains the discipline character of Aikido in a very brief way. *“Aikido is beneficial to participants in the way that it develops discipline”*. On the other hand, B.Ö.—an advanced practitioner—compares the discipline character of Aikido with the other Do disciplines and argues *“Like the other Do disciplines, it has a sense to discipline the practitioner, but unlike other do disciplines, it is far from glamour and being gentle is what comes first.”* B.Ö states that the discipline property of Aikido is moderate when compared to other Do martial arts.

Another new beginner, N.Y., states *“..there is a benefit of it which raises the discipline in participants”*. N.Y.. like most of the new beginners, do not get into details of this discipline. For another new beginner, G.A., the discipline property of Aikido is to continue practicing Aikido. *“According to me Aikido is different from other sports from the point of physical development and the discipline required to continue.”*

G.G., another new beginner, provides another interpretation of the discipline property of Aikido. According to G.G., discipline is related with individuality. G.G. states that, *“Individuality is in the foreground. For that reason concentration, discipline and obeying the conditions are very important.”* G.G. gives a different perspective than G.A. For G.A. the perspective was from the continuum of the trainings whereas for G.G. the perspective is from individuality.

After discussing these different perspectives of new beginners, we would like to exemplify the advanced student I.G.’s viewpoint of whole Aikido as a discipline art. I.G.

states the property of Aikido as follows. *“The participant puts all his mind and body under discipline through Aikido.”* From the perspective of I.G., Aikido itself is a discipline art.

4.5.3 Not Using Force

Although a key difference of Aikido is that Aikido can be done to everyone by everyone regardless of age, sex etc, it is surprising that this is not mentioned by most of the participants. Only one advanced and one new beginner included this property of Aikido among its differentiating characters. The advanced student among these two (B.O.) puts it in the following way *“...techniques are more gentile and moderate and even without using force.”* B.O. puts gentility and modernity together.

The other participant among the two participants mentioning not using force label as a differentiating point is G.A., who is a new beginner. G.A. states it as follows. *“Even the techniques of it (Aikido) are so serious that can result in death, it (aikido) does not aim to kill or harm, it aims to return the coming attack”* (G.A.)

4.5.4. Love & Respect

As we mentioned earlier, in the etymology of Aikido Ai means “harmony” in Japanese. “Ai” also means love. The not harming principle of Aikido actually stems from the love of the other. Love and respect are considered to be fundamentals of Aikido in its formal definitions and in its philosophy, Although this property of Aikido can be seen as highly differentiating, it is rarely mentioned by participants as a differentiating point.

Only three out of the 23 participants mentioned it as a differentiating point.

For the intermediate participant B.A., Aikido is such a sport that it develops respect from two perspectives. *“Aikido is a sport that teaches me self-respect as well as respect to*

everything around me.” The advanced student B.O. finds respect as the most important differentiating point and links it to inner development.

More than physical benefits, it leads to inner development. According to me this inner development is the most differentiating character from all other sports. The things in life we find respect is becoming fewer in number. The respect I have to my Dojo and to my Sensei helped me in improving my inner respect and self-esteem.

B.O. here makes a very philosophical point about life in general and transforms it into Aikido.

4.5.5. Physical Improvement

Physical improvement is not a property of Aikido alone. It is a property nearly for all sports. Although this is the case, 6 participants mentioned physical improvement property of Aikido as a differentiating point. At the same time, many participants indicated that Aikido brought about improvements in their lives other than physical improvement.. For instance, according to E.K., there is more in improvement in Aikido than just physical improvement.

... Aikido is not a field of sport where there is only physical education. In addition to that it also covers a general education, like the education of emotions and thoughts. In other sports these educations are only body-based. On the other hand, education has to cover everything that makes up human.

According to E.K., education in Aikido is not only physical. Another advanced student, An intermediate student (U.H.) states it in a more specific form under the advantages category. *“The advantages are to control and be aware of the body, which results in physical development and flexibility”*. Among the intermediate students, four out of twelve find the physical development part of Aikido as a differentiating point. The

fraction of intermediate practitioners who sees physical development as a differentiating property is higher than that among beginner or advanced practitioners.

4.5.6. Defending

Although there have not been any studies on the motives for starting Aikido, defending could be a motive. In our study, while two of the six new beginners find “defending oneself” as a differentiating point, only one among the seventeen intermediate practitioners and no advanced practitioner find “defending oneself” as a differentiating point.

For beginners, defending is a body related difference of Aikido, whereas for advanced and intermediate practitioners defending loses importance as a differentiating character. The motives for practicing Aikido could change over time. In addition, a better understanding of Aikido as a martial art could be the reason to this change.

A new beginner, N.A., claims that it is an advantage of Aikido “*to defend oneself against sudden attacks*”. On the other hand, an intermediate student (U.H.) calls this point a disadvantage in humorous way. He argues:

It is a disadvantage of Aikido at the start in that you might look at people in the street as if you are going to attack, think about the technique you would do if somebody were to attack you, or make a technique to a friend who grabs your arm un-wantedly and unintentionally.

4.5.7. Awareness

Awareness is the aim of all Zen oriented martial arts. For instance, Zen Monks train long years to improve their awareness because awareness is very hard to acquire and requires years of training in Aikido as well. In our study only two participants mentioned awareness as a differentiating point.

K.Ç., an intermediate participant, states the awareness within the training as follows: “*..the practice area is isolated from the outer world and this creates awareness.*” This is the view point of an intermediate participant. On the other hand, E.K.—an advanced participant—gives a detailed explanation of awareness in life.

A person who trains swimming can walk fast, and can have advantages of physical condition. On the other hand, a person who trains Aikido, based on my experience, is aware of his surroundings much more and tries to pay attention to surroundings much more. To realize how far I am to the people in my surroundings or hearing the footsteps of someone coming from my back could be more detailed examples. Sometimes while walking in the street we are so close that I or the other person can easily attack the other. To be aware of someone coming from behind is a direct result of being aware of the surroundings.

From the perspective of E.K. awareness is a state. Participants who become aware can live it even in daily life and in the street. In our analysis we did not get any return on the property of awareness from new beginners. The reason could be the long time of training needed to achieve an awareness shift in martial arts.

4.6. Sub-Question 4

Do practitioners approach Aikido as a sport or art?

From the open-ended answers of participants this question is constructed. Whether Aikido is an art or sports and how competition plays a role in this discussion are presented from the view-point of our participants. The review and analysis of documents revealed Art/War and Competition as a category and the following labels reveal that category.

| | SUBJ | Art of War | Not Sports | Not Having Competition | Not having winning Losing |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| ADVANCED | B.T. | X | | | X |
| | B.O. | | | X | |
| | E.K. | | | X | |
| | I.G. | | | X | |
| | T.K. | X | X | | |
| total | 5 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| INTERMEDIATE | B.A. | | | | X |
| | B.K. | | | | X |
| | E.A. | | | | |
| | E.K. | X | X | | |
| | E.B. | | | | X |
| | G.B. | | | | |
| | H.M. | | | | |
| | K.C. | | | | X |
| | S.S. | X | | | X |
| | U.H. | | | | X |
| | C.Y. | | | X | X |
| R.Y. | | | | X | |
| total | 12 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8 |
| NEW BEGINNER | G.A. | | | X | X |
| | M.A. | | | | |
| | N.Y. | | | | X |
| | E.A. | | | X | X |
| | G.G. | | | X | |
| | H.A. | | | | |
| total | 6 | - | - | 3 | 3 |
| | 27 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 11 |

Table 9: Category of Sports and Arts Table

- Is an art of war / Is not sports
- Not having competition / Not including winning losing

4.6.1. Is an art of war / Is not Sports

In this section we will try to figure out the participant perspectives on Aikido as an art of war and as sports. We have combined the two labels (is an art of war / is not sports) for a better understanding.

In the formal definition of Aikido, Aikido is defined as a martial art. In addition to being an “art of war”, it is at the same an “art of harmony” and also an “art of love”. It can be suggested that this is a strong differentiating point of Aikido. In fact, participant

perspectives reveal that only 5 out of the 23 subjects indicate that Aikido is a war activity, In addition, only 2 indicate out of 23 that Aikido is not a sports. Those two people also mention that it is an art of war at the same time.

An advanced participant, T.K., explains this point as follows:

Aikido in reality is not a sport at all. At first sight I had this deception that it is a sports and come to Aikido because of that. But after some time I understand that Aikido is far more than a sport, as something above sports... Aikido is definitely an art that changes my perception about life, helps me in overcoming my ego, and changes my standing in life.

None of the new beginners mentions this side of Aikido as a differentiating character. S.S., an intermediate practitioner, argues: *“According to me Aikido is an art. It is like life. It is an art that includes conflicts. It is an art of understanding life and an art of being in harmony with it.”*

4.6.2. Not having competition / Not including winning losing

In its formal definition Aikido is defined as a non-competitive martial art. Its philosophy involves “not having competition” or “not including winning or losing” but also Aikido claims to refrain from any possible conflicts in real-life situations where competition is one of them. In fact, most of the subjects—16 out of 23—share this idea. The exceptions are 1 advanced, 4 Intermediate, 2 New beginner practitioners,

Next, we present some particular practitioners’ responses. Advanced practitioner B.T., argues *“I think the most important difference of Aikido is that there is no winner or looser...”* Another advanced practitioner claims

...one property of Aikido is there are no tournaments or competition. At least I do not train Aikido to say that I can beat that person, I can beat other one, or I do not train to take medals.

The differentiating character of Aikido in terms not having competition is explained by one of the practitioners, R.Y., in detail:

In competitive sports the feeling or the myth that one tries to overcome oneself is an illusion. In reality the other people are being overcome and you do not want to enter that game, but the reaction of the other (happiness, upset, and anger) takes you into the game.

The point stated by this practitioner reveals that he/she deeply synthesized philosophy and not having competition. One intermediate subject, C.Y., called “not having competition” as an advantage by comparing Aikido with Kick-box.

Not having competition is a good side. The non-existence of the concepts such as winning or losing is forging the sharp sides of humans like arrogance and ambition. From that side it is also one step away from the dirt of modern life. Nowadays kick-box, where men beat each other, is a fashion in all TV channels. That is disgusting. That is not sports, that is just being animal.

4.7. Sub-Question 5

How do practitioners perceive advantages, disadvantages and the risks of Aikido?

There can be many advantages and disadvantages of training a sport that can be differentiating for that particular sport. Those presented here are the ones from the viewpoint of our participants. The review and analysis of the documents revealed “disadvantages” as a category and the following topics as labels.

- Injury
- No disadvantage
- Working with two people

| | SUBJ | No disadvantage | Injury | Working with two people |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| ADVANCED | B.I. | X | | |
| | B.O. | | | |
| | E.K. | X | | |
| | I.G. | | | |
| | T.K. | | | |
| total | 5 | 2 | - - - | - - - |
| INTERMEDIATE | B.A. | | | |
| | B.K. | | | |
| | E.A. | | | |
| | E.K. | X | | |
| | E.B. | X | | |
| | G.B. | | | |
| | H.M. | | | |
| | K.C. | | | |
| | S.S. | X | | |
| | U.H. | | | |
| | C.Y. | | | X |
| | R.Y. | | | |
| total | 12 | 3 | 1 | — |
| NEW BEGINNER | G.A. | X | X | |
| | M.A. | | X | |
| | N.Y. | | X | |
| | E.A. | X | X | |
| | G.G. | | X | |
| | H.A. | | | X |
| total | 6 | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| | 23 | 7 | 6 | 1 |

Table 10: Category of Advantages Table

Aikido is based on the principle of not harming the other. In some cases some sports can be identified with their advantages or disadvantages. For instance, a person can go running to lose weight or a person can do body-building to get into shape. The disadvantages of Aikido are centred around injury. Another disadvantage that is reported is working with another person; however, this was reported only by 1 participant among 23.

4.7.1. No Disadvantage

Under the disadvantage category in our open-ended question, 12 out of the 23 participants gave an opinion about disadvantages. Of those 12 participants, 7 of them agreed on the fact that Aikido had no disadvantages. These participants just stated that “Aikido does not have any disadvantages” and did not further interpret the point. For

instance, an advanced participant, E.K., after at least 2 years of training says “*Up to now I have not seen any disadvantages.*” Another intermediate student, E.B., argues “*I cannot see any disadvantages in Aikido*”.

4.7.2. Injury

Injury is a problem for many martial arts. The fear of injury or the realization of an injury is a problem, especially for new beginners. In our study, 5 of the 6 new beginners indicated possible injuries as a disadvantage, which is very remarkable, whereas only one intermediate participant and no advanced participant stated injury as a disadvantage. Among the 17 intermediate and advanced students only one intermediate student C.Y. sees injury as a disadvantage. He/She states it as follows: “*Doesn't it have disadvantages? Of course it does: Chronic injuries (My left thumb is injured for the last 1.5 years.)*”

Five out of the six new beginners see injury as a disadvantage. From a point of view for; G.A., who argues “*The possible injuries that can happen are not the fault of Aikido, it is rather the fault of the participant.*”

According to N.Y. “*..the biggest disadvantage is while training even it is minor injury there is the risk of injury.*” The risk of injury is an important concept N.Y. puts forward.

4.7.3. Working with two people

Aikido is classically worked in pairs of two people. Only 1 participant, who is a new-beginner, indicated “working with at least two people” as a disadvantage. On the other hand, among intermediate and advanced practitioners there was no such indication at all.

4.8. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Specific findings by themes and categories are listed as:

4.9.1. Mind, Body and Mind & Body Theme

1. The mind theme dominated in conceptualizing Aikido.
2. The body theme was less mentioned by the practitioners.
3. The Mind & Body theme, which is based on harmony and discipline was the least mentioned differentiating theme.

4.9.2. Philosophy

4. Most of the practitioners agreed that Aikido has a philosophy.
5. Practitioners' view on the philosophy of Aikido was the center of inner development.

4.9.3. Properties

6. Harmony is the most mentioned property of Aikido.
7. As the years of experience in Aikido increases, participants reported a higher number of properties and discussed these properties in details.

4.9.4. Art/War, Competition

8. Most of the practitioners agreed that there is no competition and there is no winning or losing in Aikido.
9. Few practitioners conceptualized Aikido as an art of war.
10. Few practitioners conceptualized that Aikido is a sport.

4.9.5. Disadvantages

11. Almost all the beginners see injury as a risk of Aikido whereas the intermediate and advanced practitioners did not.
12. Most of the practitioners revealed that Aikido has no disadvantages.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Category -A– Philosophy

Label 1 – Inner Development

As stated in the findings section, 14 out of 27 subjects indicated inner development as a label. Inner development was the most frequently cited label along with the ‘harmony’ label. Inner development was combined with spiritual and personal development for a better discussion. Even though Aikido is a physical activity, a substantial fraction of practitioners indicated that inner development is acquired through Aikido.

While a high percentage of intermediate and advanced students mentioned Aikido’s inner/spiritual development, only 2 out of 6 new beginners did so. This can be interpreted as the understanding that Aikido’s spiritual and inner development side requires a definitive time of training. Although we do not have so called “evidence” to defend this phenomenon so clearly, there still is a tendency among intermediate and advanced students to enumerate and answer this question in detail and from various perspectives compared to the new beginners.

Although it can be seen as a moral or spiritual maturation that accompanies training, Palmer (2001) indicated this as a ‘conflict of resolution’, like Brawdy (2001), as did Levine (2007). In Lantz’s (2002) study on couples this was presented as a moral development. Our findings are in accordance with those of Ingalls (2002) in particular,

with his theme ‘anger and aggression reduction’, which is more specific than our findings. Although anger reduction and inner development may have a connection no study focused on that point. Our findings are also in accordance with Tapley’s (2007) findings on feelings of pleasantness, reduced nervousness and restlessness, more satisfaction with self, less wishing to be as happy as others, more happiness, less discontentment and more steadiness, which are also more specific versions of inner development.

When we examine the deeper findings like those of Danahoue (1987), we see that Aikido is unique compared to other martial arts in the way that Aikido stresses the primacy of the spirit in the development of technique. (p. 279) For McLean (1989) this inner development is deeper in the form of a sacred warrior. He or she “*sees the inside from the outside*”. As Rumi says, he or she finds “*hundreds of mysteries even where minds are deranged.*” (McLean 1989, p.259) Another deeper side of Aikido was reported by Newton (1996). For Newton, the underlying focus of training in the practice of Aikido may be to move through personality and ego levels into a sense of a more embodied and expanded self. Deeper purposes of Aikido training and inner developments are stated by the founder of Aikido in a much more summarized form: “*The purpose of training (Aikido) is to tighten up the slack, toughen the body, and polish the spirit.*” (Ueshiba, 1992, p. 55)

Both in the sense of “polishing the spirit”, as Ueshiba puts it, and in the form of reducing anxiety, as Tapley puts it, Aikido contributes to inner development in the broadest sense of the word. The point here about aikido philosophy that needs to be discussed is this: “How can a physical activity/sports/martial arts contribute to inner/moral/spiritual development?”

This is a major question concerning the ethics branch of philosophy, which more specifically refers to ethos (ἠθικός). In philosophy of sports, when competition is

concerned philosophers discuss it under the theme of “fairness”. According to Loland and McNamee (2000), most ethical discussion on sports is compressed to fairness (p.63). Loland and McNamee introduced the term “ethos” to those discussions. Although the discussion of Loland and McNamee is on “sports games,” whether Aikido may be understood as a sports game is open to discussion. There is, however, a certain and dominating ethos in Aikido as there is in sporting games.

Label 2, 3, 4 – “Overcoming Ego”, “Having a philosophy”, “Applicability to Life”

In terms of the reported frequencies, the total number for these three labels is about the same as that for inner development. These three labels can be seen as complementary to inner/personal/spiritual development. An interesting finding here is that among 27 cases only one advanced and one intermediate practitioner mentioned these without inner/personal/spiritual development. All of the other practitioners noted inner/personal/spiritual development along with these three labels. Although 2 out of 6 beginner students mentioned the inner/personal/spiritual development label, none of these students mentioned “overcoming ego”, “having a philosophy” or “applicability to life”. This can be interpreted as the labels of inner/personal/spiritual development converting to “overcoming ego” “applicability to life” and “having philosophy” with time spent in training.

Whether the philosophy of Aikido is systematic (a coherent set of ideas) or is only limited to a looser kind of “ethos” has not yet been discussed.

On “overcoming ego”, Newton (1996) argues that transformation of ego towards the spiritual self is fulfilled by Aikido. In addition, Epstein (1985) mentions “*The dualistic nature of ego consciousness, which divides awareness into such categories as*

body-mind.” (p.25). In the field of psychiatry, Faggianelli (1995) quotes Jung (1950) as follows: “Try to live without the ego.... The realization of stillness ... is truly the Self.” (p.427) Similarly, Rush (1999) also discusses an “*egoless self*” which a therapist should maintain. Furthermore, Levine (2007) claims, “*Ueshiba created his discipline as a Budo, a martial art; he came to insist that in his particular form of Budo ‘there are no enemies.’ The only enemy consisted of the egoistic and aggressive strivings of the immature self.*” (p.46) This argument concerning the egoless self from the point of the ethos of Aikido arises only after the appreciation of the ethical code of the activity. In our study, it is mentioned only by one advanced and two intermediate practitioners out of twenty-three.

On “applicability to life” Rush (1999) states “*The types of skills developed in Aikido have great theoretical and practical applicability to the therapeutic relationship.*” Young (2009) claims that the true meaning of Budo emanates from the notion of “do”. He writes “*do is a way of life rather than simply a way of fighting.*” (Young, 2009, p.6) According to Hadot, this was also the same in ancient philosophy: “*Each school represent a form of life defined by an ideal of wisdom.*” (1995, p.57) This notion was expressed by 5 out of 17 intermediate and advanced Aikido practitioners in this study. The philosophical question that Hadot emphasizes here is the ideal of wisdom; every ancient school has different ideals. The question that we need to ask here is “what kind of wisdom or ethos does Aikido have?”

According to the writings of the founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba, “*Aikido is Budo*” which literally means “path of the warrior/samurai”. Budo contains seven virtues. These are:

Gi 義 (Justice); Yu 勇 (Courage); Jin 仁 (Forgiveness); Rei 礼 (Respect); Makoto 真 (Sincerity); Meiyo 名誉 (Honour); Chu 忠義 (Loyalty).

These seven virtues comprise the main ethical code of the Samurai warriors that Huber (1981) mentions in his book, “Revolutionary Origins of Modern Japan”. According to Yoshida Shōin (a lower class samurai), these seven virtues have to be acquired in order to become a gentleman. (p.24) Shōin was a revolutionary in modern Japan and was executed by the local government; however, his ideas impelled the new formation of Budo and modern Japan by his students Shinsaku and Takasuki. These transformations led Ueshiba, who was born as a son of a fisherman, to learn martial arts. In traditional Japan it would have been impossible for Ueshiba to learn martial arts because he did not come from a samurai family and social mobility of this kind was unheard of. The new conditions allowed Ueshiba to develop the Budo art based on non-conflict and gentleness named Aikido.

Therefore, we can state that although it is unwritten, there is a certain “ethos”, as McNamee and Loland suggest, in Aikido practice which includes not merely the notion of justice but a broader and systematic training in all the “ethos” underlying samurai culture instantiated by the seven aforementioned virtues .

Category -B – Properties of Aikido

Label 1 – Harmony

Harmony is not only a property of Aikido but is also found in the etymology of “Aikido”. Talking about Aikido without “harmony” is like talking about football without mentioning “foot” or “ball”. The “Ai” in “Aikido” means “harmony”. It is not only the

harmony of practicing as can be observed in the techniques but also “*to be in harmony with the entire universe*”. as the philosophical definition of Aikido states.

In our study, the “harmony” label of Aikido is found to be the most differentiating characteristic of Aikido, which is in keeping with its etymological meaning. Fourteen out of 27 people mentioned the “harmony” property of Aikido as a differentiating character. The frequency was the highest among intermediate practitioners. Nine out of 12 intermediate practitioners found harmony as a differentiating point of Aikido from other sports. Surprisingly, unlike the high frequency rate among intermediate students, only one advanced student found “harmony” as a differentiating point from other sports.

Moving from beginner to the more advanced practitioners, we can see from the quotes that a much more philosophical way of understanding “harmony” develops. The ultimate “harmony” is that harmony of all humans with the universe. However, this point—“*harmony with the universe*”—, mentioned by advanced practitioners is not something new. It comes from the words of the founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba, and is also shared by nearly all of the Aikido Masters. In the literature, there is not a single article or dissertation that does not mention the “harmony” property of Aikido. According to Scott (1989), Morihei Ueshiba equated ai, “harmony,” with ai, “love” in his final years,

Rush (1996) points out a similarity between a therapist and an Aikido practitioner: “*A psychotherapist’s task is to lead a client to a truth or meaning that allows that client to live in greater harmony and peace.*” Hannon (1998) also in his findings states that on the 3rd item of a potentiation scale “*Potentiation occurs when all three aspects of being are working together in harmony. The three aspects of being are: thinking, feeling and bodily expression.*” Dykhuizen (2000), in summarizing his findings in his cross cultural study, states that “*Japanese Aikido practitioners structured their understandings of how*

American Aikido practitioners perceive Aikido around a central factor of harmony.” (p.753) This setting does differ from the social and individual harmony of Dykhuizen (2000), who stated that *“In Japan, Aikido instructors tended to emphasize social harmony...”* (p.757) On the other hand, examining the setting in California’s American North Bay Aikido, Rothman (2000) states that *“Members of the North Bay define the dojo as a community and take pride in their success and reputation as an exemplary “aiki” community (that is, one inspired by the principle of harmony).”* North Bay Aikido is an American setting. Levine (2007) states, *“Yoga and aikido conceive the bodily harmony promoted by their teachings as a model of mature human functioning and accordingly view social conflict as a by product of inner discord.”* As we can see, from both a social and a personal point of view, harmony is the most important finding in almost all studies on Aikido.

When we shift to Philosophy of Sports, the concept of “harmony” is present in literature on the Stoics. Stephens & Feezell (2004) argue that there are two types of Stoicism: simple stoicism and sophisticated stoicism. The transference of these two kinds of Stoicism to the coach and the player was the main focus of their article. According to simple stoicism, Stephens & Feezell (2004) suggest that *“the stoic ought to limit his desires to the things that art up to him.”* From this oversimplified idea they get to the situation of sportsman, fan, coach and player, *“The stoic sportsman...would not care in the least which team won or lost. Because the Stoic accepts every outcome as fated.”* (Stephens & Feezell, 2004, p.199)

The problem with simple Stoicism is in fact its oversimplification. According to the Stoics *“the happy life, that is the good flourishing human life, is the virtuous life,”* where *“Moral virtue is sufficient for good life”* (Stephens & Feezell, 2004, p200). Continuing

their argument for sophisticated Stoicism, Stephens & Feezell quote from the famous Stoic Epictetus, in which I see the “harmony” principle of Aikido in depth.

This is what you will see skilful ball- players doing as well. None of them considers whether the ball is good or bad, but only how to throw it and catch it...But if we catch or throw it in fear or perturbation, what kind of play will this be? One will say throw; another do not throw; a third you have thrown once already. This is a mere quarrel not a game... [after giving an example from Socrates] Thus we also should be careful how we play, but indifferent to the ball itself. (Stephens & Feezell, 2004, p.204).

This indifference to the ball, from my point of view, is nothing but “harmony itself”. This is the harmony in Aikido where Mind and Body unite.

In evaluating the idea section, according to Stephens & Feezell (2004) “*The stoic sportsman...is a virtue fan*”, and they conclude as follows “*The Stoic sportsman is incurably a virtue lover, not a sport lover.*” (Stephens & Feezell, 2004, p206). The article ends with an example from a famous athlete, Barry Zito, and his relation with his father from *Sports Illustrated*. Where Stephens & Feezell (2004) say it can be a kind of moderate Stoicism. The father of Zito says: “*The one thing I have always tried to teach him is that all of the great things in life are inside yourself: love, **harmony**, courage, conviction, commitment.*” (emphasis added) (Stephens & Feezell , 2004, p.207), in the last lines of their article, interpret this quotation of the father as follows:

Sport will test us, because the good inevitability comes mixed with the bad, but the pursuit of sporting excellence and victory should never compromise the more important goods – virtuous traits of character. Self-sufficiency and freedom from the dominance of externals are important for happiness, and we are sometimes responsible for our misery when we fail to appreciate the larger picture.” (Stephens & Feezell, 2004, p207).

There is something missing in both Osterhoudt and Stephens & Feezell with respect to the concept of harmony.. It is not easy to capture. Nevertheless, we can say that it lies in

the failure to appreciate a wholeness of harmony within the activity. Both Osterhoudt and Stephens and Feezel (as a Stoic might say) emphasize putting apart, or breaking down, or dichotomizing within their conceptualisations of activity. Osterhoudt creates a dichotomy of the socialist view of sports and the capitalist one; whereas in Stephens & Feezell external dominance is the problem. From my point of view, “Ethos is ethos” and “Harmony is Harmony”. In the literature of Aikido and in the writings of the founder of it, as well as according to our practitioners of Aikido, there is no such differentiation as inner harmony and outer harmony. If such a dichotomy exists, it is self-contradictory from the beginning because harmony is the harmony of mind and body, as Osterhoudt speaks of it “once separated opposites”. In Aikido’s harmony, there is no such separation.

On the literature of sports philosophy, now we will examine a distinguished sports philosopher Heather Reid, and her article “Sport, Philosophy and the Quest for Knowledge”. (2009) We focus, in particular, on the parts of her article related to the notion of “harmony”. Reid, at the very beginning of her article, argues against the view of sport as play, “*Indeed our modern view of sport seems to better resemble ancient Greece where the athletic contest (agon) served specific political and educational goals.*” She describes her own concerns as follows: “*We moderns are becoming unaware of –or indifferent to– sport’s contemporary ends.*” (Reid, 2009, p.40). Where I have talked about indifference in the above paragraph, Reid continues in a similar vein “*What my own study of this phenomenon reveals is that sport’s social and educational benefits derive not from its playful character, but from its philosophical origins as a knowledge seeking activity.*” And, she continues, “*...sport and philosophy were adapted to the educational function of cultivating individual virtue (arête) or, in modern parlance, moral character.*” This

accounts sounds remarkably similar to the one given of Aikido discussed here. Not the particular emphasis upon the “inner development” character that we have discussed.

From the definition and use of philosophy, Reid (2009) gets into the heart of the problem “...we are philosophers only as long as we pursue authentic questions with uncertain answers. Sport, likewise, is philosophical only as it is actually open to finding answers which may conflict with what people already believe.” (Reid, 2009, p.41) Reid continues her valuable ideas on seeking the truth activity side of sports, which is not our concern here and exceeds the scope of our present discussion.

What is important to our present concerns is where Reid (2009) states the situation of Plato’s *Republic*. “The *arête* sought in Plato’s *Republic* is described as a healthful and harmonious organization of intellectual, spirited, and appetitive parts of the soul.” (Reid, 2009, p.47) The harmonious organization is a key term here for our concern. Plato, from my point of view, in a sense describes the aim of Aikido in his own words. Another great analogy that Reid (2009) takes from Plato is from the dialogue *Phaedrus*. “...this virtuous harmony is illustrated by the athletic metaphor of a two-horse chariot in which the intellect drives a noble and spirited horse alongside the strong but less obedient appetitive horse” (Reid, 2009, p.47) “Virtuous harmony” is the key term for us here. I think it is what is meant in the concept of harmony in Aikido. The educational and social characteristic of Aikido is also undeniable. Reid concludes her article by emphasizing this characteristic of ancient sports

Sport philosophers may preserve the social and educational value of athletics if we view sport not just as a form of play, but also as a form of knowledge seeking-one still capable of serving social and educational goals, as it did in ancient Greece.(Reid, 2009, p.48)

We have examined the notion of harmony from different philosophers' view of sports. Some of them accept dichotomies. On the other hand, as Reid (2009) suggests, the concept of "virtuous harmony" is the closest concept to the harmonious nature of Aikido. On the other hand we should not ignore the bodily function of Aikido, where you move and control your body in harmony with the "ate" (this technical term for the attacker in Aikido etymologically means "friend"). Boxill (1985), another sports philosopher, discusses the aesthetic characteristics of sports in his article "Beauty, Sport and Gender" and claims "*Only when there is harmony can there be beauty.*" (Boxill, 1985, p.42)

Label 2 – Discipline

The main aim and the way of martial arts is discipline. Therefore, martial arts and practicing martial arts go through a strict way of discipline. Since Aikido is a martial art, discipline is highly structured in Aikido.

Discipline **is a central** property of Aikido. It was mentioned generally as a differentiating character of Aikido in our earlier conceptualization. Two of the five advanced students and three of the six new beginner students called discipline a differentiating character of the activity. On the other hand, perhaps surprisingly, intermediate students did not highlight "discipline" as a differentiating property of Aikido. This point requires further analysis and questioning since advanced students give much more detailed perspectives on the discipline label in Aikido.

Our findings are in line with other studies on Aikido. In Ingalls' study (2002) the results on one theme indicate that "*Aikido was a helpful tool that they [adolescent participants] used to become nicer, more loving, peaceful, confident, and disciplined people.*" (Ingalls 2002 p.64) Rush (1999) states from the point of a therapist that

Training and self-discipline allow the martial artist or therapist to minimize the interference of the six diseases in interpersonal interactions, because training and self-discipline focuses a person on the constant consideration of his or her own diseases.” (Rush, 1999, p.332)

Tapley (2007) highlights discipline of the mind: “*An analysis of the educational foundations of aikido training reveals a complex system of mental discipline which transcends its obvious utility as a means for physical development and self-defence.*”

In the philosophy of sports literature, Bäck & Kim (1979) state and discuss the reason for becoming involved in martial arts. Bäck & Kim, in their manuscript entitled “Towards A Western Philosophy of the Eastern Martial Arts”, state that there are “*three claims engaging in martial arts (1) promotes the formation of good moral character (2) promotes non-violent attitudes and behaviour [in other words discipline the individual] (3) leads to enlightenment, or some sort of mystic consciousness or divine union.*” Regarding discipline, the second claim is important for us here. In discussing the second claim, Bäck & Kim gave us a cunning argument:

... it could be that the martial arts tradition allows only non-belligerent people to attain a high degree of proficiency. In this way, it may be that it is not so much training for as the criteria for promotion that ensures that practitioners of martial arts tend to be non-violent, whereas those of other arts of combat do not. (Bäck & Kim, 1979, p.23)

Although they think that there are sufficient empirical data to query it, the justification of the second claim for Bäck & Kim lies through the art characteristic of martial arts.

This is perhaps hinted in the name martial arts. ‘Arts’ here is used in the strict sense, not in the sense that motorcycle maintenance is an art (techne). In all martial arts there are forms or katas which are set sequences of attacks and blocks...a practitioner of the martial arts also does forms for the sake of doing forms, although they (katas) are effective in their

purpose, they are also worthy goals in themselves. In effect, the training in martial arts is such that the desire for fighting competence can be transformed and sublimed into the desire for competence in an art form...It is then these katas or forms that make it possible that engaging in the martial arts promotes non-violent attitudes and behaviour, by channelling the interest in fighting in such a way that artistic enjoyment is gained at the same time as fighting prowess. (Bäck & Kim, 1979, pp.24-25)

The argument Bäck & Kim give us is typical for martial arts. It is not, however, specific to Aikido. First of all, there is no competition in Aikido. Secondly, there are no katas or forms in Aikido. There are certain blocks; however in advanced forms they tend to be more relaxed and loose in their forms.

Most of the studies on Aikido are conducted with and on adolescents. The studies on discipline are centered around adolescents and on their behavioural problems, and how martial arts can affect them. Trulson (1986), studying the Korean martial art tae-kwon-do, found that adolescents studying old style tae-kwon-do showed lessened aggression, lowered anxiety, and increased self-esteem. Nosanchuck (1981) studied 42 adolescents and concluded that it did not increase aggressiveness. Layton, Higaonna, and Arneil (1993) also found the two different kata styles of karate lowered aggression.

In an article entitled “The application of traditional martial arts practice and theory to the treatment of violent adolescents” Twemlow & Sacco (1998) conclude that: *“Martial arts—in a therapeutic setting with properly trained and supervised instructors—can be an extraordinarily helpful ego-building form of psychotherapy. The training strongly supports synthetic ego functions, particularly control of aggressive impulses.”*

Ken Min (1979), in his article “Martial Arts in American Educational Setting”, captures an interesting point: *“In fact, the discipline is so strict that martial arts (especially aikido, hapkido, kendo) and Zen might be considered synonymous.”*(Min, 1979, p.97)

Label 3 – Not Using Force

Aikido can be applied on everyone by everyone regardless of physical characteristics, age, sex etc. This is a commonly used difference of Aikido; in fact, it is also used in its advertisement. However, this label was rarely mentioned by our participants. Only one advanced student and one new beginner student mentioned this property of Aikido as a differentiating character among the 23 participants. The fact that not using force was rarely mentioned by participants, despite the fact that it really underlies a key difference of Aikido from other sports, requires a clarification.

In Aikido literature terms like “not using force”, “using the attacker’s force against him”, “ki” (which is in the etymology of Ai-Ki-Do meaning inner power and is also used in the discipline rei-ki, meaning healing with ki), “blending with the attack” are used synonymously. One of the reasons that participants did not use it could be found in the words of the founder of Aikido: *“the ‘ai-ki’ experience-the blending of universal and individual ki-into language has been a complicated task to define.”* Our finding is also consistent with that of Ingalls (2002) who found the *“Theme of Using Entering, Blending, and Resolution Within Emotional as Well as Physical Relationships.”* (Ingalls , 2002, p.74) Another idea comes from Jonathan (2001), *“Where the aggression or the attacker’s conflict can be resolved by the principle of Aikido and blending.”* In addition, Mclean suggests that a therapist needs to use Aikido: *“As a result of this study, I have become convinced that it is possible to compassionately identify the circumstantial roots of violence in a given life, that it is possible to defend oneself without resorting to violence in the face of others’ violence.”* (McLean, 1989, p.275) In one of his interviews, Newton also emphasizes the importance of “blending” in Aikido and uses it to explain why women can

work easily in Aikido: *“I don’t know another martial art that has so many women in the art. The fact is that it’s not competitive, the fact is it’s an incredibly beautiful art. The fact is it works with blending, which I think women are culturally and genetically geared to do.”* (Shari in Newton, 1996 p.86)

The results of Epstein also include “blending” as a theme: *“... Blending and Extending.”* (Epstein 1985 p. 87). Fagienelli’s study on therapists who were also Aikido practitioners highlighted a result that was in line with our findings: *“In addition, Aikido provides strategies (centring, off the line, blending, extending) which enable them to be safe in conflictual relationship.”* (Faggianelli, 1995, pp. 187-188)

In the philosophy of sports literature, there are very few articles mentioning “ki”, “not using force” or “blending”. Bäck & Kim (1979) explained “ki” in the following way: *“Soft styles tend to explain the development of powerful blows in mental terms, in terms of concentration, volition and inner force (ki).”* I do not, however, agree with the term “soft styles”. Aikido can be dangerous and hard on one hand; on the other hand what we understand by “soft” is a fictional entity. The term “harmonious” can explain the characteristic of Aikido better. However, it is too crude simply to state that this one is soft whereas the other one is hard.

I will argue against the idea of R. Scott Kretchmar, one of the distinguished philosophers of sports in America. In his 1992 article on the philosophy of sports entitled “Reactions to Tamboer’s ‘Sport and Motor Actions’”, Kretchmar states,

This point can be made both logically and empirically. The building blocks of sports actions are space, time and force. All sports skills require concurrent and reciprocally

influencing judgments about where (space), when (time), and how much (force).

(Kretchmar, 1992, p.50)

However, this argument fails when we consider Aikido's "not using force" property. I may not be able to prove it empirically; however, from my own Aikido experience I can claim that there is actually "no force", meaning that there is a rechanneling of force of the attacker at very high levels of Aikido. When I was training with one of the living legends of Aikido—N. Tamura Sensei, who is the head assistant of the founder of Aikido and is currently 73 years old, I found myself on the ground as soon as I grabbed his arm. There was no time that I conceived and no force that I felt. I was on the ground and unable to move because of the wrist lock. Tamura Sensei in this course also told about his teacher, the founder of Aikido Morihei Ueshiba, and his saying: "you can perform Aikido with the force you need to carry three pieces of rice".

This "not using force" property can also be transferred to different areas in sports. In an editorial in the journal *Sports, Ethics and Philosophy* (2008), Jespersen & McNamee discussed the history of APA (Adapted Physical Activity) and different notions of health from a phenomenologist's standpoint. I started to think about this point when one of my black belt students lost one of his legs in a motorcycle accident in Germany. He could still perform Aikido. Aikido techniques are presented in three ways: Suwariwaza (both people are on the ground on their knees), Tachi-Waza (both people are standing upright) and lastly Hanmi-Handachi-Waza (where one person is on his knees and the other person is standing upright). Aikido techniques are performed with one's whole body – whether it is complete or not. If you do not have two legs, you can still perform all the techniques in Suwariwaza. If you do not have two arms, you may not be able to perform a few techniques; however, you could still perform most of the techniques. Even though this is theoretically possible, it

requires testing of course. I believe that not having arms or legs is not a disability in Aikido. It can in fact be a reason for the acquisition of higher ability. A person performing the techniques only of Suwariwaza can be a better expert in it than any of us.

Label 4 – Love & Respect

Love and Respect are embodied even in the name of Aikido. The meaning of Ai is harmony as well as “harmonious love”. Not hurting your attacker and controlling him is taught as the highest form of love. In that sense Aikido is based on the art of love and respect in its definition. In its formal definitions and philosophy, love and respect are considered to be fundamentals of Aikido. This property is hard to find in any other sports. Our qualitative study on Aikido participants revealed that although Aikido is based on love and respect, this as a label and property was mentioned by only 3 of the 23 participants.

The love property of Aikido is explained by the founder of Aikido and his followers in the following ways:

In a lecture, O Sensei (founder of Aikido) described the union of the body and the universe as it may be experienced through Aikido: The actual forms of the universe are revealed within the human body. We must begin to see the universe within us and awaken to the principles of balance and of love, sacred principles given to us by the universe (Saotome, 1986, p.49)

In his final years, Morihei equated ai, “harmony,” with ai, “love.” In true Budo, there are no enemies. True Budo is a function of love. It is not for killing or fighting but to foster all things and bring them to fruition. Love protects and nourishes life. Without love nothing can be accomplished. Aikido is the manifestation of love. (Stevens, 1987, p. 112)

These may seem very abstract terms. One can ask “How can a martial art turn out to be a ‘manifestation of love?’” This could be the reason that most practitioners in our study did not mention love as a label. This finding, I think, can be best explained by the

arguments of Hadot. Pierre Hadot (1995) does have a concept for that in his book “Philosophy as a way of life”. He explains the philosopher and everyday life-conduct in this way: Hadot says there is a true rupture between everyday life and the philosophers. According to Hadot, by the time of the Platonic dialogues it is called “atopos”, which means “unclassifiable”. Hadot explains it as follows:

What makes him [Socrates] atopos is the fact he is a ‘philo-sopher’ in the etymological sense of the word; that is, he is in love with wisdom. For wisdom, says Diotima in Plato’s Symposium, is not a human state, it is a state of perfection of being and knowledge that can only be divine. It is the love of wisdom that can be foreign to the world that makes the philosopher a stranger. (Hadot, 1995, p.57)

As we think of this together with Ueshiba’s concept of love, we can say that Ueshiba is in a state of atopos. The spiritual exercise that Hadot puts forward can be maintained in various ways and teachings, one of which could be Aikido.

In the Aikido literature, Fagienelli’s findings on psychotherapy are in line with love. In theme #7, he argues, “*Theme: #7: Aikido and psychotherapy stem from the same source, love. As aikido is a synthesis of a martial art and a spiritual practice advocating love and peaceful resolution of conflict, psychotherapy practice is deeply affected by this view.*” (Faggianelli , 1995, pp. 98-99)

Next, we move on to the respect property of Aikido. Although it is not in the etymology of Aikido, unlike love, harmony or “ki”, it is in the ritual of Aikido practice in the dojo. Respect is shown by the bodily act of “bowing”. “Bowling” in Aikido martially means “I am unable to use my weapons against you”. When a student enters the Aikido dojo, he/she bows to the dojo first and then to the mat. When a Sensei enters the dojo, he/she does the same, then everybody bows to the “Kamiza” (where valuable things like the sword and dojo emblem are kept), and, finally, students bow to the Sensei. In addition,

after the Sensei shows the technique, they bow to each other; and when the Sensei comes and shows some particular things to the pair who are working, they bow to the Sensei. When the Sensei stops the training to show another technique or fallacies in the technique, the bowing ritual again takes place because students can change the person they work with. This much “bowing” is a sign of respect in a classical dojo setting.

In the Aikido literature, a qualitative study was conducted comparing family therapy and martial arts by Jim Lantz (2002). In that study, Aikido was included as a martial art. Thirty-two couples and families with at least four months of martial arts experience were interviewed to collect data and data themes about how the martial arts enhanced family development. One of the themes identified by Lantz was respect. Couples developed respect to each other as a result of Aikido training.

In another study carried out by Danahoue (1987), respect is explained in different terms: *“The sensei, or teacher, is accorded respect not due to any social prestige he may enjoy outside of the dojo, but due to the very real skills he must demonstrate within it.”* (p.99)

The findings of Edelman (1994) also reveal respect as an important property of Aikido. *“Enhanced respect for authority”* was found to be significant in a training program used for reducing disruptive and assaultive behaviours among severely emotionally disturbed adolescents. Of course the respect in the sense of Danahoue (1987) and Edelman (1994) study do have different meanings. One is respect to each other and the other is respect to authority. However our qualitative study did not reveal what kind of a respect is it? This needs further analysis.

Studies on respect are rare in Aikido literature contrary to its ubiquity in practice. On the other hand, when we examine the literature on the philosophy of sports, “respect” is

one of the most frequently discussed items. There is a huge literature on it in the philosophy of sport unlike for love, discipline, not using force. Respect is discussed with regard to sportsmanship, fair play, enhancing drugs, and so on.

We may begin our review of the philosophy of sports literature on “Respect” by the most cited article, which is “Fair Play as Respect for The Game” by Butcher and Schneider (1998). In this article, Butcher & Schneider start by discussing other forms of fair play, and explain their standpoint, *“It is generally agreed that sports teaches values.”* They assume, however, the truth of this point without argument. They merely go on to present their argument as, *“Sport should be used to teach positive values.”* This also leaves many questions unanswered. For example, one may ask “Who decides” whether sports do in fact teach values, or if they do, which or whose values do they teach? In my physical education classes, I learned how to march, turn left and turn right, without ever recognizing that it was martial training adopted from Germany.

Butcher & Schneider (1998) say that sport provides *“a method for determining right conduct in sport which refers directly to sport itself, not to a set of external, culturally determined, and variable values.”* (Butcher & Schneider, 1998, p.2) On the other hand, as was noted previously, one may ask “Whose ethos is it?”

According to Butcher & Schneider (1998) *“Fair play as respect for the game is applicable at all levels of sports and readily lends itself to adaptation and implementation in education programs”* (Butcher & Schneider, 1998, p19) Let us say for the sake of argument that Aikido is a sport (although we have not yet come to this discussion). Talking about fair play could be quite inappropriate because these people in Aikido already agreed on an ethos of not harming each other. From that point of view, harming, and violence do have great importance in a discussion of fair play, which Butcher & Schneider do not see..

Butcher & Schneider end their article with the words “*philosophy in action for a better world*”. I completely disagree with that particular claim, even more so than the others. Philosophy has existed for the last 3000 years. Has the world become a better place for ordinary people because of it?

Aicineta (1997) also included “respect” in his title: “Respect: The missing content of modern athletic competition”. After telling a story about seagulls and a man, Aicineta addresses the point that

...one may observe good and bad which results from the competition of human beings in athletics. Individuals can become bold and confident in their quest for victory and in their effort to realize personal goals of performance. Others may fold under the pressure. On the seamier side, improper and violent behaviour may result.”(Aicineta, 1997, p.1)

I think Aicineta catches the point well. This can happen and violence is the proper term to describe it. “*Playing and coaching to win at any cost*” can result in violence, cheating, and other forms of injustice. For Aicineta, respect must become more prominent in athletic fields. On respect for the game, there can be many instances where the spirit of the game “grieves” for Aicineta. “Spirit” is an important term as well. Lastly Aicineta talks about the respect for the self, which is a quite an important term as well.

According to Arnold (1994), “Sport and Moral Education,” participation in sports is important to develop mutual respect. There is a sense of morality that should be present in sports education. Arnold refers to Kant, “*For Kant the primary end of education is development of moral character.*” It is important to develop not only respect for the other but also self-respect. Arnold then refers to Rawls, a modern interpreter of Kant. His theory of fairness is based on two terms: equality and freedom. The rest of the article is based on these discussions. When we examine Aikido in this context, we can claim that there is

equality in Aikido for sure. I have practiced with Aikidokas in Israel, Lebanon and Syria, and they have also practiced with each other.

The work of the liberal political philosopher John Rawls has also been the theme of another paper: Keenan (1975) “Justice and Sport”, which itself leads to many other papers as well. What is discussed in this article is simple: Rawls’s “theory of justice” as “*justice as fairness*” which focuses “*on institutions rather than people ... institutions like sports*” (Keenan, 1975, p111).

We will not get into the details of this paper; however for the sake of argument we need to see the bigger picture. We started with “respect” as a form of “fair play”, and to have a good understanding of fair play we need to examine justice. When we consider Aikido, there is no need to look that deeply; they are in the ethical code of the samurai. Gi 義 (Justice), and Rei 礼 (Respect) both exist in the ethos of Aikido.

Howe (2004), in her article, figures that out from the point of “Gamesmanship: *“In fact, I eventually want to argue that to resort to gamesmanship demonstrates a failure of self, of self-respect, and of commitment to oneself in sport: an athletic failure that might ultimately be traceable to a moral failure.”* (Howe, 2004, p.216)

A similar line of argument applies to PEDs (Performance Enhancing Drugs), and one key figure in those arguments is Nicholas Dixon. He claims, “*Paternalistic arguments do not justify banning of PEDs.*” But what is a paternalistic argument? For arguments against it and for arguments on respect, we listen to Dixon, “*Respect for the autonomy of competent adults requires that we allow them to act on their own values, even if they are likely to incur harm in so doing*” (Dixon, 2008, p.247)

On genetic testing and drugs, McNamee et al. (2009) asks a very good question to think about.

Which genetic anomalies are deleterious to given athletes in specific sports? Should sports employers be allowed to hire and fire based on unexpressed genetic abnormalities? How should an athlete's right to know other deleterious conditions be respected? (McNamee et al., 2009, p.342)

While these are important issues, these questions and arguments lose their force when we consider Aikido. Has anyone ever seen or reported anyone using PEDs or thinking about genetic testing in Aikido? Aikido dojos' doors are wide open to everyone in every condition. The use of PEDs could need further analysis and be asked to participants. (In other words, it will not do to answer this question from on high.) There is always a counter-argument against Aikido in these cases because it is not a sport. But how participants perceive it will be discussed in detail under further labels.

Label 5 – Physical Improvement

Physical improvement is not a property of Aikido alone. It is a property of nearly all sports. Although this is the case, six participants mentioned the physical improvement property of Aikido as a differentiating characteristic from other sports. That new beginners did not mention it is understandable because physical development can take time. There have been studies on the physical development of Aikido and on reaction time. On the other hand, physical development specific to Aikido has not been studied in detail, especially among different groups.

In the Aikido literature, such studies are rare because it contradicts the “not using force” label that we discussed above. On the other hand, in a study by Veronghen & Theeboom (2008) on other martial arts' effects on parents, parents reported “*having a better physical condition, more muscles (10.0%)*” as a label. Ingalls (2002) study also

reflects on both mental and physical conditions: *“In conclusion, through practicing Aikido and incorporating the lessons learned from it, participants became more “balanced” and “centred,” both mentally and physically.”* (Ingalls 2002 p.97) In Lantz’s (2002) study on couples training Aikido, this was presented as *“physical vitality”*. Faggianelli (1995) states this in the following way: *“transformation in Japan attempts to lead the practitioner to a unification of physical, psychological, and spiritual functioning”* and finds this in one of his themes: *“Theme # 1: The practice of aikido results in a mind-body unification which is physically and psychologically healing.”* (Faggianelli, 1995, pp. 98-99)

Therefore, finding physical improvement as a label is not surprising because as we have seen in other findings physical improvement is a factor in Aikido. Yet, in Aikido there is much more than mere physical development. Moreover, the founder of Aikido states, *“But most importantly, extending in the martial arts indicates the process through which concrete, physical practice extends a person into the spiritual realm.”* (Ueshiba, 1981/1984, p. 11) He means that it is a bridge to the spiritual realm.

When we shift to the philosophy of sports literature, we come across a discussion on “physical activities” and “physicality”, which even goes far toward the definition of sport. Those arguments start with the Paddick (1975) article, where he asks, *“What makes a physical activity a physical activity?”* At first, Paddick takes a look at gross motor movements. However, he observes that a cello player also makes gross motor movements as well. Paddick’s standpoint on physical activity is value. *“Physical activity is physical because the bodily movements are valued”* and he takes note of *“the different contexts which can be marked by such terms as ‘sport’, ‘athletics’, ‘exercise’”* (Paddick, 1975, p.20)

After discussing Paddick's arguments, we continue our analysis of the physical improvement theme with Kretchmar's reaction to Tamboer (1993). Tamboer's article "Sports and Motor Actions" focuses on a very distinctive question: "*Why do philosophers of Sport not ask themselves why the concept of sports should be restricted to the domain of physical activity?*" (Tamboer, 1993, p.43) This is a quite interesting question, which also bears upon Aikido. For Tamboer (1993) we do not need to add the word "bodily" in defining actions because they are bodily anyway. "Motor action" is the key term for Tamboer.

Kretchmar (1993) argues against this point, arguing that it is a "*linguistic confusion*". Tamboer's mistaken point, for Kretchmar, is that "*Tamboer believed he was arguing substantive points in replacing skill with motor action; he did not discuss the linguistic superiority of his terminology*" (Kretchmar, 1992, p.49) Then, Kretchmar draws the conclusion as follows: "*If athletes are to creatively employ the elements of time, space, and force they need this additional phenomenological room*" (Kretchmar, 1992, p.51)

On the other hand, Osterhoudt (1995) takes "physicality" as a virtue. In his article entitled "Physicality: One Among the Internal Goods of Sports", he combines McIntyre's internal goods and Paddick's definition of physicality argues that it is not dualistic as Kretchmar suggests, and concludes in the following way:

As such 'physicality' comes to very much other than the vacuous, base, indulgent, or incidental feature of sport that it is fashionably taken as. If this argument comes to anything persuasively compelling, sport's uniquely physical character is among its most importunate attributes and makes a highly notable contribution to the good sporting life (Osterhoudt, 1995, p.97)

Wertz (1995) in his article "Is sport unique? A question of definability" criticises Osterhoudt's point as follows: "*Physicality is shared by dance as well as sport.*" (p.88)

Wertz's argument in the conclusion is quite interesting among others and may also be disappointing:

An additional consequence of my initial question (Is sport unique?) is that philosophy of sport has no distinctive problems or issues—they are ones covered by other areas of philosophy. The philosophical problems of human movement are ones found in action theory, metaphysics, and theory of knowledge. There is no autonomous (in the strong sense) philosophy of sport with its own agenda (there is of course in the constellation sense). What this means is that philosophy of sport is truly applied philosophy—no more, no less. (Wertz, 1995, p.88)

Wertz's argument starts with the notion of physicality, and goes on to the definition of sports where his contention is quite discouraging. Then, where do we put Aikido, in arts or in sports? We will have a different section about that, keeping in mind the arguments stemming from physical improvement.

Label 6 – Defending

Self-defence could be a motive for starting Aikido. Although there have not been any studies on the motives to start Aikido, Aikido is generally misunderstood as a “self-defence” art/sport. In our study, two of six new beginners named “defending oneself” as a differentiating point, whereas only 1 of the 12 intermediate and none of the advanced students called “defending oneself” a differentiating point and part of the conceptualization of Aikido. How should this be explained?

For beginners, defending is a property of Aikido differentiating it from other sports. However, this loses its importance at the advanced and intermediate levels. In other words, the differentiating character of Aikido from other sports as “defending oneself” drops as the level of Aikido rises. There could be two separate explanations of this fact: either the starting motive could have changed over time or the understanding of Aikido as a martial

art could be the reason. This point can further be analyzed. From my point of view, as I will argue in the later chapters, Aikido is much more like a game in the levels of beginners and intermediate. However, in advanced levels it becomes more real. Attacks are faster and dangerous. The meaning of black-belt in Aikido (Sho-Dan) is “new beginner”.

Surprisingly, neither the literature of Aikido nor the philosophy of sports includes “defending”. The main reason could be, as we have seen above as a label, that Aikido is based on “blending”.

Label 7 – Awareness

Awareness is the aim of all Zen oriented martial arts. For instance, Zen monks train long years to improve their awareness, which is very hard to obtain and requires years of training in Aikido as well. In our study, only two participants mentioned “awareness” as a differentiating point. In addition, in our analysis we did not receive any return on the property of awareness from new beginners. The reason could be that a long time of training is required to achieve an awareness shift in martial arts.

According to Brawdy (2001) “*gaining self-awareness, interpersonal awareness, and teaching it to others through Aikido*” must be sought. However, there are few studies on the awareness effects of Aikido. According to Epstein (1985) “*Centring: sensory awareness is the first theme. Being centred is a dynamic form of awareness that integrates mind and body through a process of centring that is initiated by the therapist.*” (Epstein, p.64) Hannon (1998) finds awareness as a statistically significant result in the Personal Orientation Dimension Scale: “*Awareness showed a statistical significant difference lower than $p < .05$* ” In addition, Levine (1990) also finds that Aikido has an awareness result,

“Finally, many students came to an awareness of the possibility of new forms of body-mind integration.”

When we go deeper in the Aikido literature, we see that awareness is a key term in the words of Ueshiba, the founder of Aikido: *“...the individual ki-mind-body integration that occurs in practice extends to a person’s awareness of and integration with the larger existence of “the fundamental creative principle, ki, permeating the universe”* (Ueshiba, 1981/1984, p. 11). Of course, as we have discussed earlier, it is hard to understand Ueshiba. However, in the more easily understandable philosophy of sports literature, one distinguished philosopher of sports, Wertz, also discusses that point; he even adds sportsmanship into his discussion in an article in *Philosophy of Sports* entitled “Zen, Yoga, and Sports: Eastern Philosophy For Western Athletes.” For Wertz, the still mind is the key to self-awareness. On this point of still mind, the philosopher and the athlete comes together: *“By stilling the mind, one’s self-awareness reveals itself via the body; it is then, as Gallwey notes, that ‘his full potential as a human being is allowed’”* (Wertz, 1977, p.76)

Milan Hosta (2009), another sports philosopher, explains his ideas in an editorial in the *Journal of Human Sport and Exercise* from a different point of view, which I call “harmony”. *“There is no place for division of body and mind, no place for awareness of that is setting the opposite. It is about awareness of self and environment in which we are present and which we create.”* (Hosta, 2009, p.77)

Another philosopher of sports who we have mentioned before, Howe (2003), argues for the value of athletics and is against the ideal autonomous individuated self in her article entitled “Athletics, Embodiment, and the Appropriation of Self”. On awareness, she states in the context of rowing,

The only way to defeat one's opponent, to (at its extreme) "row through" them, is for the entire crew to "swing" together, to exactly mesh their bodily movements with each other and with the boat, an achievement that requires both a fine awareness of one's own body and receptivity and accommodation to the movements of the crew and the shell itself: to row as one. (Howe, 2003, p.93)

This oneness is a very familiar term for Aikido practitioners. For instance, in a very common technique called "*irimi-nage*" (entering technique), you must become one with the attacker/ate (friend); even your toes have to become one. Only then can you unbalance him/her.

The point that Howe (2003) suggests is "*The creation of an authentic human self...must involve body ownership, which is a process of integration of body awareness at both the phenomenological and moral level into a coherent conception of self.*" (Howe, 2003, p.105) As we can see from the literature, this has not been done. Awareness has been a concept of less contention compared to the other issues.

A recent article in the *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, by Hopsicker (2009), "Polanyi's 'From-To' Knowing and his Contribution to the Phenomenology of Skilled Motor Behavior," is a transformation article from philosophy to sports to the philosophy in Michael Polanyi's work. *Meaning* (with Harry Prosch) (1975). Polanyi is the inventor of the concept "tacit knowledge".

Hopsicker (2009) gets into the epistemology of Polanyi: "*he explores the development of 'personal knowledge' through 'from-to' knowing and the notions of subsidiary and focal awareness. Focal awareness is simply that which is focused on.*" (p.79) In contrast "*subsidiary awareness, or tacit knowing, constitutes 'items of particulars that we are aware of in the act of focusing our attention on something else, away from them'*" (p.80) According to Hopsicker, Polanyi's experience of subsidiary awareness is

“that of feeling the hammer in our hand as it performs the nail-driving action” (p.80) For Polanyi, two different yet connected kinds of awareness occur *“during skilful handling of the hammer.”* Polanyi clarifies this point: *“I have subsidiary awareness of the feelings in my hand which is merged into my focal awareness of my driving the nail”* Finally, they give the definition of skilled action over awareness: *“the sophistication of interplay between subsidiary and focal awareness as integrated by the individual constitutes our levels of practical skill in given activities.”* (p.82)

When we widen our analysis to philosophy in general, again awareness is very rarely discussed. In an article, Johnson (2008) explains the ideas of Gallagher as follows:

This phenomenological dimension of embodiment is extremely difficult to describe, because it is not reducible to our conscious awareness of how our bodies feel. In order to explain how we are conscious of our bodily comportment and structure, we must explore also the pre-reflective, non-conscious structures that make it possible for us to have any bodily awareness. (Johnson, 2008, 165)

I agree with this point and it may be the reason why a branch of philosophy called metaphysics exists. Moreover, it could also be the reason why it is very hard to read Kant on *“a priori”* principles.

When we get back to Aikido again, I believe that “awareness” is something that we can explain when we do make a shift. This means that we are in awareness all the time. However, when we do have a shift in awareness, we can speak of “differences” as Ueshiba or Krishnamurti calls them. This is a very hard thing to discuss not because of its *a priori* position but because it is an unlived position. Aikido can offer “peak experiences” as McLean (McLean, 1989, p.275) puts it. Nevertheless, being able to discuss them is quite another thing.

Category -C – Art/War and Competition

Label 1- “Art of War” Label 2 – “Not Sports”

For the sake of argument, we have combined these two labels for a better understanding and a better discussion because in the philosophy of sports these two discussions go hand in hand. In the formal definition of Aikido, Aikido is defined as a martial art. Moreover, it is an “art of war”, and at the same it is an “art of harmony” as well as an “art of love”. Several books are written on this subject. It might be suggested that this is a strong differentiating point of Aikido from other sports. However, participant perspectives indicate that only five out of 23 practitioners conceptualize Aikido as a “war activity”, which is quite interesting. Among these five practitioners, there were no new beginners; new beginners do not see Aikido as a “**war** activity”. Again, very interestingly only two people out of 23 indicated that Aikido “is not sports”; one was an intermediate practitioner and the other one was advanced. Those two people also mentioned that it is an art of war, which shows an internal soundness at the same time. This implies that in the eyes of these people Aikido is not a sport, it is an art of war.

In the Aikido literature, Ingalls’s (2002) study results show that participants start to “*expand and to do things: (b) mentally/academically that they would not have thought about doing before (e.g., read more about Aikido, other martial arts, cultures, and religions).*” (Ingalls 2002 p.97) In Lantz’s (2002) study on family therapy and martial arts, which we already mentioned in earlier sections, the author claims, “*In this study Aikido is included as a martial art.*” Lantz found “*with at least four months*” the following themes: “*self-defence, self-confidence, physical vitality, concentration, respect, friendship, moral development, spirit, training for life, grades, respect for life, and the importance of the martial arts instructor.*” In another study, Scott (1989) explains why he chose Aikido:

The martial arts, in this case Aikido, serve as a model for human transformation. Unlike Western sports practice, the Aikido model includes the balancing of mental, physical, emotional, spiritual, and fraternal aspects of the student. (Scott, 1988, p.19)

Moreover, Newton (1996) explains why he chose Aikido in the following way: “*Aikido is within the frame of the Eastern martial arts which have the tradition of do, where it is expected that one’s practice and one’s life are to be interwoven. This is in contrast with the Western sport of fencing.*” (Newton 1996 p.4) This is very similar to Scott’s explanation. Faggianelli (1995) actually found it as a theme,

Theme: # 7: Aikido and psychotherapy stem from the same source, love. As aikido is a synthesis of a martial art and a spiritual practice advocating love and peaceful resolution of conflict, psychotherapy practice is deeply affected by this view. (Faggianelli, p.98-99)

Everywhere Aikido is conceived of as a martial art. As we have quoted earlier, Ueshiba—the founder of Aikido—states, “*But most importantly, extending in the martial arts indicates the process through which concrete, physical practice extends a person into the spiritual realm.*” I underlined the terms concrete and physical practice. However, how much concrete and physical practice extends the spiritual realm is my first question. It is not my question, but the question for practitioners as well, which they have in mind. The literature on Aikido definitively agrees that Aikido is a martial art.

A second question then arises: “What is the relation between art and sports?” This is a philosophical question that is very much discussed in the Philosophy of Sports. Here, I will express my own opinion before I get to the discussion. From my point of view, at the beginner and intermediate levels, Aikido is sports without competition. (We have seen no new beginners saying that it is not sports but an art of war. Only at the advanced level,

does it become a martial art.) Nonetheless, it is quite hard to draw a clear line between arts and sports as we will see.

The main discussion on sports and art comes from two distinguished philosophers: Best, in his book "Philosophy and Human Movement" (1979), and Wertz, in his book "Talking a Good Game" (1991). Here, we will start with Best and his 1980 article entitled "Art and Sport", where he gives an answer to Wertz. Best is very straightforward "*I contend that no sport is an art form.*" (Best, 1980, p.69)

A distinction is important for this discussion between purposive sports where "*there are a variety of ways to achieve the purpose*"; on the other hand, an "*Aesthetic sport is one which the purpose can be specified only in terms of the aesthetic manner of achieving it.*" (Best, 1980, p.71) Best gives a very good example of a sunset:

It is not necessary, since clearly all or most physical education activities are not primarily, if at all, of aesthetic interest; it is not sufficient, since most phenomena which are of aesthetic interest (such as a sunset) are obviously not part of physical education (Best, 1980, p.72)

The second distinction in Best is this: "*there is a tendency to differentiate purposive and aesthetic activities in terms of competition.*" It is a misconception, for Best, to equate aesthetic activity with competition. He gives the example of Korean violinist Kyung Wha Chun's statement, which is also important for Aikido, made after winning one of the best prizes. "*It was one of the worst experiences of my life, because competitions bring out the worst in people.*" For Best, this is what Wertz misses. According to Best, this problem can easily be overcome by making the distinction between purposive and aesthetic sports "*recognizing there can be competition in both activities*" (although it can bring the worst).

Best then discusses spectators and contemplation, and argues that there still can be room for aesthetic considerations without spectators for a sportsperson. For him, it is “important to try to locate the source of this misconception that the aesthetic is exclusively a spectator enjoyment.” Then, he gives the example of an ace tennis service :

I can, if sufficiently competent, have the aesthetic experience of producing a perfect ace service, but not if there were no game of service, not if I have not learned how to play, and not if I do not perform the requisite action in the appropriate context. The action is observable, but I do not have to observe it. Indeed I may be practicing alone, so no one observes it. but that does not preclude the possibility of my having the experience.” (Best, 1980, p.75)

Best continues with what he thinks he agrees with Wertz about: sport as art in *objet trouvé*, meaning *found art*. Then Best discusses his most fundamental disagreement with Wertz: the difference between “aesthetic” and “artistic”. He thinks that they are used synonymously by Wertz. Best argues that the term “*Aesthetic applies for sunsets, birdsong..., whereas the artistic tends to be limited, at least, in its central uses, to artifacts or performances intentionally created by human beings.*” (Best, 1980, p.75) On “artistic” and “aesthetic”, Best points out a main difference: “*It is certainly a central factor in the ways in which the arts have influenced society . By contrast, such possibility is not intrinsic to any sport, even of the aesthetic kind, since the performer cannot, within its conventions, express a view of life issues.*” (Best, 1980, p.78)

I think it is sufficient to understand the thinking of Best in its general terms at the least. I would like to quote one more paragraph where he summarizes himself:

In contrast to Professor Wertz, I would insist that the aesthetic sports do not, as he puts it, ‘have more claim of art’ than purposive sports but rather their claim is more plausible- which, of course, is by no means the same thing. That plausibility depends upon a misconceived and misleading elision of the aesthetic and the artistic.” (Best, 1980, p.79)

Before getting into the view of Wertz in “Talking a Good Game”, I would like to comment on Best while taking Aikido in consideration, in particular on Best’s distinction between “artistic” and “aesthetic”. Aikido—or ethos including sports at large—, can change society. Is this change inherent in the performance? For Aikido I would say “yes”. Someone attacks you, but you do not harm him/her. Moreover, you “love” him/her. Whatever that love is (leaving its definition on one side), it is easy to love baby animals—cats, lions, eagles, crocodiles—because they do not have potential to create harm on you. As one of my good friends always says, “Everything is beautiful when it is young.” Loving someone who attacks you is something that can change society even in the performing from my point of view. From this perspective, Advanced Aikido (of course, I have to make this distinction in favour of my argument) is both artistic and aesthetic. We will discuss the point of Aikido in the following parts that; in beginner and intermediate levels it is sport/game and in advance levels it is an art.

Wertz in his book “Talking a Good Game” gives his ideas on Best by first praising Best’s book (in Chapter 7, entitled “Representation and Expression in Sport and Art”). Wertz claims, “*Our notion of art is far richer than just the notions of representation and expression*” (Wertz, 1991, p.178) According to Wertz, the philosophy of art begins with these concepts and the relationship of sports to them must be mapped out. Wertz also straight-forwardly explains his idea, “*At the outset I want it to be clear that I do believe that sport (or at least some of it) is or can be art*” (Wertz, 1991, p.178) On Best, Wertz argues, “*Best’s view of art is what Jacques Barzun has described as art from ‘the classical -sector, gilt-edged, consecrated art.’ Best reiterates an ‘old dogma of art’*” (Wertz, 1991, p.179) Wertz gives the Living Theatre example where audience can also become players.

According to Wertz, Best's argument from the *objet trouvé* could have been true 20 years ago. Wertz gives examples from Ludic Art, where Ludic interfaces are playful interfaces.

Furthermore, Wertz gives the example of a baseball player.

It is quite possible that in pursuing artistic goals (like a baseball game) an athlete might well incur failure in his/her sport's end. (defined by the non-artistic goals-points, runs, goals, .etc.) This suggests that art may be tangentially present in these sports but not necessarily that sport is art" (Wertz, 1991, p.183)

From this argument, Wertz moves on to discuss symbolical things that make something art even if it is actually a sport. When a tennis match is played in Wimbledon, it is symbolical and it is art. He also asks, "Could village cricket be art?" For Wertz, "*Usually village cricket is not art. But under appropriate circumstances it could be*" (Wertz, 1991, p.183)

Wertz gets into the Best's line of argument on the distinction between "aesthetic" and "artistic". The aesthetic value of a game is perceived in the visual value alone whereas its artistic value is based on history, context, etc. Unlike Best, Wertz thinks that the spectacular aspect of sports cannot be ignored. He asks, "*Why then do we build stadiums, arenas?*" and continues, "*It may not be the principal goal of sports but it is one of the principal goals of sport (i.e. Aristotelian goals).*" (Wertz, 1991, p.186) For Wertz, "*categories like art and sport change by the very fact that people who employ these categories apply them to different objects*" (Wertz, 1991, p.187)

On the claim that I make a claim about Aikido, from Best's argument about life and art, Wertz makes a cunning claim as well. "*Best claims that life issues that make up an imaginative work of art have no analogue in sport. In other words sports have no content or subject matter. But why not?*" (Wertz, 1991, p.189) Wertz here gives a very clever example of body-builders, who shape their bodies like a sculpture from ancient Greece.

Wertz continues with the example of a gymnast: a former student of his performed gymnastics with the music “The Lord’s Prayer” and made his movements accordingly.

Another point they disagree on is that while Best claims that sports do not represent anything, Wertz argues that they do. He gives examples that also come to my mind. Jessie Owens’s four gold medals in the Nazi Olympics (1936) gave strength to Americans. Wertz then asks, “*Can athletes be expressionists in their play?*” (Wertz, 1991, p.194) Wertz gives the example of Boris Becker, the 1985 Wimbledon champion, whose play revealed sadness and remorsefulness, according to journalists, after learning about his grandfather’s death at the break of a game.

Wertz believes that Best’s general argument is too narrow. At the same time, however, he thinks that he opened up things too much. He summarizes his argument as “*My argument is that a sporting event may be a symbol or it may in fact function as a symbol at a certain time under certain circumstances but not at others.*” (Wertz, 1991, p.196)

After seeing those distinguished philosophers and their lifelong argument and seeing their respect for each other—it is a very good example of philosophy—I would like to take the argument and apply it to Aikido. I partly agree with Wertz. In Aikido, certain techniques have names that sound “crazy” or “un-understandable”; e.g., “Kokyu-ho” means “breath of world” and “Tenchi-nage” means “heaven and earth technique”. In the technique tenchi-nage when the attacker holds both of your hands (left and right from front), you lower one of your hands toward the ground while raising the other one up in the air. At the same time, you take the control of his center by stepping a foot toward him. During the first ten years of my Aikido practice, it did not mean much to me. I just performed it, raising one of my hands up to the point that Sufi dervishes (followers of

Rumi or Mevlana) do. Then, searching for its meaning, I realized that their meanings were not the same. There are other similarities between Sufi dervish practice and classical Aikido practice. When the Sufi Dede (chief of dervishes, who is older) comes to the Dergah (ritual place), he makes very small movements at the center of it. This is also what I experience in Aikido. Tamura Sensei or Shihan (which means “aware of all directions”) does the techniques similarly with minimum movements. As your level of Aikido and years of practice increase, this is what your Sensei wants to see in you. This may not be a totally mutually exclusive metaphor; however, it is a metaphor that I have built from my own experience.

There are other articles written on the point of art and sports as well, which I will mention very briefly. Cordner (1988) discusses both Best and Wertz, and gives his view on the point. Platchias (2003) in his article entitled “Sports is Art” argues against Best through Kantian aesthetics. In another article, Young (1999) discusses it from a Heideggerian point of view. In order to defend my thesis, I want to discuss in more detail an article of the distinguished philosopher Allan Bäck (2009), entitled “The way to Virtue in Sport”.

Bäck starts with the claim that the idea that sports develop moral virtues is supported by many philosophers; nevertheless, he thinks that sports might promote more vices than virtues. He claims, “*Moreover there are other activities that actually do provide the benefits claimed erroneously for sports: the traditional martial arts.*” (Bäck, 2009, p.217) Bäck continues by giving brief definitions of both: “*A sport is a form of play involving a contest or competition, typically measuring physical things*” and “*A (traditional) martial art (Japanese: Budo; Korean: MooDo) is a ‘way of do’ or method of enlightenment on the human condition through the ritualized practice of techniques designed to neutralize violence.*” (Bäck, 2009, p.217)

For Bäck “*martial arts are not sports*”. He states, “*war is serious not playful business...Yet! Unlike Western combat traditions, Eastern ones alloyed the combat with a quest of non-violence and spiritual enlightenment*” (Bäck, 2009, p.217); and continues with his arguments against certain martial arts, “*In contrast, a martial art sport like Olympic Taekwondo stresses the game of competition. Its goal is to win the athletic contest. The training here places little emphasis on combat applications, ritual or formal patterns.*” The point that Bäck makes here I totally agree with. When competition is involved in martial arts or any arts, as Best suggested with an example, things become worse.

The martial art training (bugei) evolved from merely being jutsu (skills) to being also “do” (Chinese: Tao): ways to enlightenment. As the military application of martial arts waned in modern times, the focus shifted from jutsu to do, from skill to art. Many martial practices changed their names accordingly: jujitsu became judo; kenjutsu became kendo.” [Aikijitsu became Aikido, but why did he not mention it?]

Bäck summarizes different views of sports and makes his point as follows: “*defining sport as a mutual quest for excellence fits all modern sports.*” (Bäck, 2009, p.221) However, as we will discuss in the writings of Parry below, this is not always the case. Bäck then discusses his argument in the context of dangerous (I prefer risky”) sports and states in response to both Russell (Russell, 2005) and Fischer (2002), which is important for us,

...still they both have a better than average chance of acquiring certain values or virtues through the practice of dangerous sport. So we have the dilemma either we pursue this dangerous path or we lessen our chances for excellence..Yet I will argue that this is a false dilemma: there are other options, other ways to acquire those same virtues. The option I will explore is training in martial arts. (Bäck, 2009, p.224)

On this point I totally agree with Bäck. After a quick examination of virtues of sports in the section ‘Virtues of sports: Empirical Data’, Bäck states, “*For despite the common claim, the evidence given in studies in the social sciences is that sport does not produce a good moral character. On the contrary, it tends to produce a bad one*” (Bäck, 2009, p.226)

Then, Bäck shifts back to martial arts again and discusses the empirical data on martial arts as well as the moral character of martial arts. He claims, “*Outside of Korea and other Asian countries the decline in the moral character of martial arts competitors has already been noted by many involved.*” (Bäck ,2009, p.228) This important and interesting fact presumably proves why the founder of Aikido insisted that Aikido stays away from any form of competition. Bäck cites the trainer of the U.S. Olympic Taekwondo team: “*I don’t train martial artists, I train athletes*” and states they are not interested in self-defence but winning.”

Bäck thinks that “*A lot of things are lost. Traditional martial artists are good people well grounded. They have good morals, good ethics, good family values, and are aware of culture and society.*” (Bäck ,2009, p.228) I cannot agree with Bäck, I think that Bäck misses the fact that Aikido still remains as a traditional martial art without competition and still preserves the values Bäck considers as “lost”.

Bäck then proceeds to an argument on Aikido that is germane to our purposes. He writes:

Above I have claimed that a martial art as traditionally practiced is not a sport. To be sure, there is martial art, sport. A martial art can be practiced as a sport. It is a physical activity and we can arrange contests and make rules to judge who is more proficient at this or that aspect of the sport: breaking; speed of strikes; expertise in the formal patterns (kata; poomse [in Aikido there is only simple Katas in weapon training]) On the Olympic level we have judo and taekwondo. Yet many martial arts traditions [like Aikido] reject the sport competition. And even sparring (jiyu-kumite) just for practice. Here I am focusing on martial arts, not on martial art sport. (Bäck, 2009, p.229)

Bäck's theory is contextualised as follows: "First, a martial art is not removed from ordinary life." This was also one of the labels in this thesis, as we have discussed before. "Hence virtues and vices gained in martial arts practice will tend to transfer more easily to ordinary life than sport practice." This label was inherent in the properties of Aikido. "Applicability to Life" was a label in our open-ended question.

Bäck also claims:

Martial art schools hardly ever have philosophy lectures – or listen to papers like this one. [The dojo I train with 150 people did.] Rather, in the spirit of Zen Buddhism, the practitioners are supposed to gain some sort of practical wisdom and spiritual insight via the physical practice itself" (Bäck, 2009, p.230)

I partly agree with Bäck on this point. Although it might have stemmed from Zen Buddhism, Aikido has nothing to do with religion. It is like football. Football originated in England; but there is also Brazilian football, European football, etc; Yet all are football. It is the same in Aikido. I have practiced in many dojos and been to many other ones. I have seen dojos following Zen Buddhism; however, following Zen Buddhism is not necessary. On the spiritual insight I agree with Bäck because this thesis showed that the "inner development" and "harmony" labels are shared among Aikido practitioners.

Bäck gives a quotation from Ueshiba, without mentioning Aikido because Aikido is one of the rare non-violent martial arts. "*To injure an opponent is to injure yourself. To control aggression without inflicting injury is Art of Peace.*" (Ueshiba, 1992, Art of Peace). Then, Bäck adds, "*the goal of the sword master is never to draw a sword.*"

Bäck also divides martial arts into three stages. At the first stage, there is violence and injury, however, "*the third and final stage resembles Gandhi's ahimsa: the total elimination of or absence of violence and struggle.*" (Bäck, 2009, p.232)

In parentheses, Bäck states there is still doubt in his mind: “(Of course there remains the empirical issue, whether or not the martial arts actually have all the characteristics described in their traditions.)” I think we do not have doubt for Aikido, as a result of this thesis (given its limitations). The practitioners’ responses to the open-ended question of conceptualization of Aikido revealed “inner development” and “love and respect” as properties of Aikido,

Finally, Bäck makes the point on which we built our thesis: that at the beginner and intermediate levels Aikido is a sport, whereas it is an art at the advanced level. For our thesis we take Bäck’s following argument:

... a sport remains cut off from the serious business of real life as it is a type of play. It focuses on artificial contest. [This sentence we ignore since it is Aikido with no contests] In contrast martial art is not a type of play. Rather it supports the serious part of life—and its transcendent contests. It has no winners or losers, [as we will discuss in the next label] just as life ultimately does neither. The martial arts have a meditative and spiritual tradition of a sort that Western sports lack. (Bäck, 2009, p.232)

I again partly agree with Bäck. While what Bäck says is true, I believe that at the advanced level of Aikido even though all attacks are real, generally no one gets hurt.

From my point of view, it is in the form of play that I take Loland and McNamee’s definition of sports for granted: “if voluntarily engaged in sport games-keep the ethos of the game if the ethos is just ...” (Loland and McNamee, 2000, p.69) In Aikido, beginners and intermediate students are learning the practice. It takes a lot of time in martial arts even to learn the basic movements. For that reason, the attacks in the beginner and intermediate levels are semi-real, meaning that they are not that serious as long as the practitioner learns the basic movements. Therefore, at the beginner level Aikido is a sports game, voluntarily

engaged in, whose ethos is what we discussed in “inner development”. It took its ethos from the code of Samurai.

We can prove this point with the meaning of the black belt as well. In Aikido there are only two belts (white and black) in order to prevent “belt wars”. The black belt in Aikido means “Sho-Dan”. Sho in Japanese means beginner. It shows that you have just begun training Aikido. The black belt practically means that you have learned all the forms. Now you are going to practice them with “reality”. This reality we have mentioned above.

From those aspects, Aikido at the beginner and intermediate levels is a sports game; only at the advanced level is it an art. I would like to end this discussion by again quoting from Bäck: *“One might continue to wonder whether the Way of the martial arts is the best way, especially due to some side effects of the intermediate level on many practitioners.”* (Bäck, 2009, p.234) This also proves our point about the “intermediate” because it is a transition level to reality. When they are not properly trained by the instructor, many practitioners give up at this level. We would like to end like Bäck by a quote from Spinoza: “The path to virtue is as difficult as it is rare.” (Bäck, 2009, p.234)

Label 3 – “Not having Competition” Label 4- “Not having Winning or Losing

In its formal definition Aikido is defined as a non-competitive martial art. This means not only “not having competition” or “not including winning or losing” but also refraining from any possible conflicts in real-life situations, where competition is sometimes present. This is one of the major differences or differentiating cultural features of Aikido as presented by Aikido instructors or Aikido clubs. This non-competitiveness of Aikido training is not only a major difference; it is in the very meaning of Aikido training.

“*The only competition in Aikido is the competition within oneself*” says the founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba.

Most of the subjects also share this idea and in fact mentioned it in their responses. Most of the people—16 out of 23, all except for 1 advanced student, 4 intermediate students, and 2 new beginners— mentioned this viewpoint that it does “not have a competition” or it does “not include winning or losing”. This is actually quite a large number given that the question was open-ended. It also has to be noted that the advanced practitioner who did not mention it sees Aikido as an art of war and not sports, and one intermediate practitioner who did not mention it sees it as “not sports”.

In the Aikido literature, Levine (2007) states that :

A good deal of contemporary Budo practice exhibits ...Excessive competitiveness. Some schools of Budo place considerable emphasis on competition, both within the dojo and with other, rival, dojos. It becomes a primary goal to defeat the “enemy,” which can be another student, members of another school, or another martial art. [not Aikido]

There are not many articles or studies involved with competition in Aikido because there is no competition in Aikido and researchers did not find it interesting. Our study revealed that this is to be expected.

When we shift to the philosophy of sports literature and follow Bäck on competitiveness, we do have an account of competitiveness in sports. Weiss sees positive effects of participating in sports: “*The athletes turn body form, a creature of vagrant stimuli and poorly focused objectives, into ‘one which is taut and directed towards a really excellent end’*” (Weiss 1970) For Robert Simon, a sports game is “*a mutual contest for excellence in the face of the challenge of competition.*” (Simon, 2004, “Fair Play Ethics in Sport” p.27) Lynne Belaief talks of sports as “*cooperative competition and ritual model for excellence.*” (Belaief, 1977, Meanings of the Body p.422) Bernard Suits makes the

following point: "*Sports involves the exercise of physical and mental excellences for overcoming certain physical obstacles*" (Suits, 1979, pp. 8-15)

Bäck makes the following interesting remark on the distinguishing features of two types of competitive sports:

...one playful where the winning or losing has no 'real', biological sociological, or economic consequences; the other where the competitors (and/or audience) take the contest seriously. Perhaps in the end these two types end up having the same structure and functions. (Bäck, 2009, p.225)

Whether or not competition is a necessary condition for the definition of sports is quite a big discussion. As I have already stated, I take McNamee's (2000) definition for granted. Nevertheless, I would like to examine two more distinguished philosophers: Parry and Skillen.

In an article named "The idea of record", Jim Parry (2006) examines the notions of excellence, achievement and progress in sports. Parry makes the point about ancient athletes that there was only a winner or loser whereas "*the modern athletes also run against an abstract, timeless standard that is the record.*" (Parry, 2006, p.199) According to Parry, a record is not important in football whereas it is more important in athletics. It is something that is made popular by the civilized society. There was a problem of recognition prior to the 21st century athletic performance. In that sense "Did the better team win?" becomes an important question, where in some instances it did not. This highlights the difference between game-sports and athletic sports. Parry borrows the following ideas from Ryle (1969): "*Achievements are not acts...but....the fact that certain acts...have had certain results.*" (Parry, 2006, p.206) The next point Parry makes is somehow against Bäck's view of sports. "*In athletic sports excellence is necessarily connected to winning, but in the case of game-sports, excellence may be exhibited which*

does not produce a win” (Parry, 2006, p.207) For Parry, there are different types of excellence which we will not discuss; however, educative excellence has to be maintained by the coaches. As the Olympic motto “*citius, altius, fortius*” means faster, higher, stronger (not fastest, highest, strongest), it indicates a commitment not just to absolute excellence, but to other kinds of excellence as well.

On records Parry says, “*The internal logic of record sport carries the seeds of its own destruction, since the demand for unlimited quantitative progress comes up against the finite limits of human performance*”. (Parry, 2006, p.207) That is a great argument to explain doping, PEDs and genetical modification. In Aikido we do not need any of them. Excellence is surely important; however, this is within the limits of the practitioner. At every age, we can practice Aikido. However, at the age of 65 we would not expect a new beginner or an intermediate practitioner to progress as fast as practitioners in their twenties.

Another article we will mention is by Skillen (1998) entitled “Sport is for Losers”.

Skillen claims:

That sport may reach such an ideal [the ideal of educating in the good, true and beautiful], is surely possible precisely through the central fact that blinds some people to its value: its being ‘only play’, its abstraction from the serious business of life, its pointlessness.

(Skillen, 1998, p.1)

I think we have already disproved Skillen by the example of Aikido as both play and sport and art. On the other hand, Skillen makes good points about post-modernists and the good sports in which we see our limits as we do in Aikido.

Category -D – Disadvantages

Label 1. “No disadvantage”, Label 2. “Injury”, Label 3. “Working with two people”

For the sake of argument, we group all of the above labels together. Aikido is classically practiced in pairs of two people. Only one person, a new beginner, indicated “working with at least” two people as a disadvantage. Among other groups, there was no such indication. This again can be explained by the lack of knowledge of Aikido. Therefore, we will not get into the details of it here.

Under the disadvantage category in our open-ended question, 12 of the 23 participants gave an opinion about disadvantages. Of those 12 participants, 10 of them agreed on the fact that Aikido has no disadvantages, which is a very high percentage. The participants who stated an opinion generally used only one sentence, “It does not have disadvantages.” and did not further interpret this point. On the other hand, two participants who stated that Aikido has no disadvantages mentioned “injury” as a disadvantage at the same time. This is quite interesting and requires further clarification.

Injury is a problem for many martial arts. The fear of injury or realization of an injury is a problem especially for new beginners. In our study, very remarkably, 5 of the 6 new beginners indicated possible injuries as a disadvantage; on the other hand, only one intermediate participant among 17 intermediate and advanced participants mentioned injury as a disadvantage. It is important to understand why there is such a clear cut between beginner and intermediate students. Whether they really get injured or do not get injured would be a good quantitative study. I think that it is not the realization of an injury, as we will see in Aikido literature, but the fear of injury when they watch the Sensei or an

advanced student performing. Whether or not Aikido is a risky sport is another issue from the viewpoint of philosophy of sports.

Aikido is based on the principle of not harming the other. In some cases, some sports can be identified with their advantages or disadvantages. For instance, a person could do running to lose weight or a person could do body-building to get into shape. In this sense, the advantage that certain sports create could be important for differentiating them from other sports. The disadvantages of Aikido are centred around injury. However, this category when compared to other categories created the fewest labels. Only 3 practitioners mentioned this label. The two labels nearly make a whole: participants either reported that Aikido does not have any disadvantages or that injury is a disadvantage for training Aikido.

Yard et al. (2007), in their interesting article entitled “Paediatric martial arts injuries presenting to emergency departments, United States 1990-2003”, indicate that nearly 6.5 million children between the ages of 6 and 17 practice martial arts according to national data. Karate comes first, with a percentage of 79.5%, Judo second with a percentage of 6.4% and Taekwondo third with a percentage of 9.3%. Other Martial arts, including Kick-boxing, kung-fu and Aikido with a percentage of 9.3%, are not reported. Of course, we need to do such a study in our setting as well. Nonetheless, this supports our argument that it is the “fear of injury” (presumably resulting from watching advanced students) rather than “injury itself”.

In the philosophy of sports literature, we can place Aikido into risky sports, whose discussion we mentioned in Bäck (as dangerous sports). In contrast to Bäck, we may note the following with respect to Aikido as a “risky” activity. As McNamee (2007) puts it with respect to philosophers writing on risky sports “*A person sceptical of the legitimacy of*

these interests might well ask: ‘Aren’t philosophers to be found in their dust crusted studies; wearing slippers; and ancient woollen sweaters pondering the meaning of great theses?’ (McNamee, 2007, p.1) Well, as a practitioner of Aikido, I broke my neck 5 years ago while practicing Aikido with some large Slovaks. I am 1.65 cms tall, while they were nearly 1.90 cms. tall and much heavier. I only learned about the status of my neck a year ago. How ironic! The doctor asked ‘How the hell do you live?’ and also questioned me about my sports history. After I summarized it, he said ‘The only reason you are alive right now is that you are a sportsman because those muscles there prevented your spinal cord from becoming injured and kept the bones intact.’ Isn’t this a dilemma? I broke my neck because I am a sportsman and also did not die because I am a sportsman. (Clearly, then, I am not one of those dusty philosophers.)

McNamee takes the point of Rawls’s life-plan and then takes Brown’s question. *“How ought we to plan for and engage in sports over the course of a lifetime with equal regard to the whole lifetime?”* In response to McNamee, I propose a simple answer: Aikido. I do have a Sensei (Shihan). I mentioned earlier that he is the 73-year-old N. Tamura, who was the assistant of the founder of Aikido. Although he is 73 years old, he came to Turkey twice. There is a saying in Europe: “powerful as a Turk.” He was easily throwing around these Turks, including me, despite his age. So it is based on the sport you choose sometimes, although Aikido could be seen as an extreme example. That extremity I guess spoils some arguments in the philosophy of sports.

McNamee (2007), as it was in Brown’s thesis, puts forward a point: *“So, compare relatively settled dispositions, attachments and projects now, in-my mid-forties, with those that will adhere in my sixties.”* (McNamee ,2007, p.5) Of course, this question that McNamee raises is again a logical one, and again I will give my answer from the reality

position: I will suggest to McNamee the way of Aikido. I have plenty of students in their mid-forties, who are doing very well and progressing well on the road to a black belt even though I am a quite young instructor without a beard and sweet smile. McNamee has two good points on idea of a life-plan. The first point is *“it is not that we fully see the future to plan for it”*, and the second one is *“We have to be open to different possibilities that life may put our way.”* (McNamee, 2007, p.5) (As I put Aikido as a possibility for McNamee) I totally agree with this point. The first “harmony” thesis we discussed previously fits into that: to be harmonious with what life brings to you.

McNamee gives the examples of heart-attacks and car crashes. I also exemplified one of my black belt students with a car crash. He still can do Aikido. For Aikido you do not need arms or legs. As for heart attacks, one must ask the (sports) doctors. McNamee also discusses the arguments of Wollheim (1984): *“Wollheim claims that life is a product, but the living of a life is a process”* (McNamee, 2007, p.7) and continues *“risky activities are pursued by the joys and satisfactions they bring to life, but not in an irrational or carefree way”*(McNamee, 2007, p.8) as in the case of Aikido. An advanced practitioner is raised through the ‘not harming the other principle’ and long years of practice.

McNamee ends his article in the following way:

We must acknowledge nevertheless that there are those for whom considered risk-taking, the joie de vivre [joy of life] to be found in the imminence of adventure, the élan [desire in French] of gliding on the pistes, the climbing of challenging crags, or in free bird-like falling, or reading and riding wild water, is the very essence of the good life. (McNamee ,2007, p.8)

On this, I totally agree with McNamee. On the other hand when I think of Aikido, based on both the qualitative results of this thesis and personal experiences, I still do not see it as a “risky sport”. However, I must admit that some risk is certainly involved in it

when we study with real knives and swords, which is quite interesting. The reason for that lies in the person I train with. I know that if that person is there to harm me, he will be eliminated in long run in the training of classical Aikido. And I trust him as ‘special forces’ trust each other.

Concluding

In this discussion part, we have summarized the qualitative findings, we have compared them with the other findings in Aikido literature and lastly we have entered into the literature on Philosophy of Sports. We made up arguments stemming from both qualitative findings and Aikido Literature which are open to discussion. Like Art/Sport argument that Aikido is a sport/game in new beginner and intermediate levels but it becomes an art in advanced levels and we have raised philosophical questions like, Aikido has a certain ethos resulting from the history of samurai, and there is a transference of that ethos where as on other sports where history is missing, whose ethos comes into the stage.

From here there are still remains arguments and points to be discussed and evaluated and questions to be raised as it always the case and the curious mind attempts. I wish these arguments and question and this discussion part will put a piece of curiosity on the minds of sports philosophers and Aikido researchers and will lead to new studies, papers and books.

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Appendix C

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Papers presented in International Congress

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Appendix D

TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu tez iki ana bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci bölüm Aikido katılımcıları üzerine nitel araştırma, ikinci ana bölüm felsefi tartışmayı içermektedir. Tezin birinci ana bölümünü giriş oluşturmaktadır. Giriş kısmın Aikido'nun kısaca ne olduğu okuyucuya tanıtılmıştır. Aikido kelime anlamıyla “uyumlu enerji yolu” olarak Türkçeye çevrilebilir. Aikido'nun bazı temel özelliklerinden bahsedilmiştir. Müsabakası olmama, iki kişi ile çalışma, güç kullanmama prensibine dayanan teknik bir sanat olması gibi. Ardından limitasyonlar, de-limitasyonlar, ön kabuller, ve araştırmanın yapılma nedenleri sıralanmıştır.

Tezin birinci ana bölümünün ikinci bölümünde ise Aikido üzerine yapılmış nitel araştırmalar incelenmiştir. Bu nitel araştırmalar temel olarak üç ana grupta toplanabilir. Ben ötesi (transpersonal) psikoloji üzerine yapılan çalışmalar: bu çalışmalarda genellikle insanların “doruk” olarak betimledikleri deneyimler üzerinde durulmuş Aikido ve psikoterapi ilişkisine deyinilmiştir; sosyoloji alanında yapılan çalışmalar: bu alandaki çalışmalar “kültür” ve “çatışma çözümü” (conflict resolution) çevresinde yoğunlaşmıştır, Aikido'nun farklı kültürlerde nasıl algılandığı, kendisinin nasıl bir kültür oluşturduğu çalışmalara konu olmuştur. eğitim bilimleri alanında yapılan çalışmalar: bu çalışmalarda genellikle sorunlu çocuklar üzerine yönelinmiştir. Bütün bu çalışmaların ortak özelliği olarak tümünün ileri seviye aikido katılımcıları üzerinde yapılmış olduğu görülebilir. Buradan yola çıkarak başlangıç ve orta seviyeyi içerisine alan ilk nitel çalışma bu çalışmaya özgün bir nitelik kazandırmaktadır.

Tezin birinci ana bölümünün üçüncü bölümü ise metodolojidir. Metodoloji kısmında, nitel araştırmanın nasıl yapıldığı açıklanmaktadır. Buna göre, Ankara ilinden, ortalama katılımcı sayısı altmış olan, üç ayrı Aikido Dojo'su (çalışma yeri) seçilmiştir. Bu altmış kişilik dojolara ilgili açık uçlu sorular, söz konusu araştırma anlatılarak dağıtılmış,

ve belirli bir zaman zarfından sonar açık uçlu sorulara cevaplar toplanmıştır. Yalnızca yirmi üç kişinin soruyu cevapladığı görülmüştür. . Cevaplayan kişilerin dağılımı altı yeni başlayan, on iki orta seviye ve beş ileri seviyedir. Bir ila üç aya arası aikido çalışanlar başlangıç seviyesi, üç ay ila dokuz ay arası çalışanlar orta seviye, dokuz ay ve üzeri çalışanlar ise ileri seviye Aikido katılımcıları olarak tespit edilmiştir. Açık uçlu soru ise : “Sizce Aikidoyu diğer sporlardan ayıran yönler nelerdir ? Aikido yapmanın avantajları ve dezavantajları nelerdir” şeklindedir. Söz konusu soruya katılımcılar herhangi bir limit olmaksızın açık uçlu olarak cevap vermişlerdir. Alınan cevaplar üç farklı nitel araştırma uzmanı tarafından kodlanmış, bazı kodlamalarda kararsız kalırsa da hemen hemen aynı kodlama ve etiketleme ortaya çıkmıştır.

Tezin dördüncü bölümü açık uçlu soruların kodlanması sonucu ortaya çıkan bulguların belirtildiği bölümdür. Açık uçlu soruların kodlanması sonucunda ortaya çıkan bulgularda: on sekiz etiket (label), dört kategori ve iki ana tema ortaya çıkmıştır. Söz konusu iki ana tema akıl ve beden’dir. Akıl teması altında, dokuz, beden teması altında yedi, hem akıl hem beden teması altında ise sadece iki etiket ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu da bizlere Aikido katılımcılarının Aikidoyu akıl ağırlıklı kavramsallaştırdığını göstermektedir. Etiketlerin altında toplandığı kategoriler: “Felsefe”, “Aikido’nun özellikleri”, “Sanat/Savaş Müsabaka” ve “Dezavantajlar” olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Felsefe kategorisinin altında: “İçsel Gelişim”, “Ego’yu yenmek”, “Felsefesi olmak”, “Hayata uygulanabilirlik” etiketler olarak karşımıza çıkmıştır. Bu etiketler arasında katılımcıların en çok vurguladığı etiket yirmi üç katılımcıdan on ikisinin değindiği “içsel gelişim” etiketi olmuştur. Diğer etiketler arasında “Felsefesi Olmak” dokuz katılımcı tarafından deyinilmiş, “Egoyu Yenmek” ve “Hayat Uygulanabilirlik” ise beşer katılımcı tarafından deyinilmiştir. İkinci kategori Aikido’nun özellikleri içerisinde en çok sayıda etiketin oluştuğu gözlemlenmiştir. Bu etiketler: “Uyum”, “Güç Kullanmama”, “Sevgi ve Saygı”, “Disiplin”, “Farkındalık” “Kendini Koruma” ve “Fiziksel Gelişim” olarak karşımıza çıkmıştır. Bu etiketlerden “Uyum” etiketi yirmi üç katılımcıdan on ikisi tarafından konu edilerek en çok bahsedilen etiket olmuştur. Uyumu sırası ile “Fiziksel Gelişim” altı katılımcı ile, “Disiplin” beş katılımcı ile izlemektedir. “Sevgi ve saygı”, “Farkındalık” ve “Kendini Koruma” etiketleri üçer katılımcı tarafından konu edildiği gözlemlenmiştir. Etiketlerden en az bahsedileni ise iki katılımcı ile “Güç Kullanmama” olmuştur. Bu etiketlerin neden bu şekilde sonuç verdiği tartışma bölümünde ayrıca tartışılmaktadır. Bir sonraki kategori olan “Savaş/Sanat ve

Müsabaka” kategorisinde is dört etiket ortaya çıkmıştır: “Müsabaka Olmaması” , “Kaybetme Kazanma Olmaması”, “Savaş Sanatı” ve “Spor Olmaması” bu dört etikettir. Bu etiketlerden en çok bahsi geçen etiket “Kazanma ve Kaybetme Olmaması” etiketi olmuştur. Yirmi üç katılımcıdan on biri bu etiketten bahsetmiştir. Ayrıca bu etiketle beraber değerlendirilebilecek bir etiket olan “Müsabaka Olmaması” etiketi yedi katılımcı tarafından bahsedilmiştir. “Savaş Sanatı” olması etiketi ise dört katılımcı tarafından konu edilmiştir. En az konu edilen etiket ise iki katılımcı ile “Spor olmaması” etiketi olmuştur. Yine bu etiketler, katılımcılar üzerine dağılımı ve tartışması, tartışma bölümünde etraflıca değerlendirilmektedir. Son kategori olan “dezavantajlar” kategorisinde ise üç etiket karşımıza çıkmaktadır: “Dezavantajı Olmama” , “Sakatlanma” ve “İki Kişi ile Çalışma”. Bu etiketlerden en çok bahsedilen etiket “Dezavantajı Olmama” etiketi olmuştur. Yirmi üç katılımcıdan yedisi bu etiketten bahsetmiştir. “Sakatlanma” altı katılımcı ile ikinci sırayı almaktadır. “İki Kişi ile Çalışma” ise çalışmanın tamamında en az bahsedilen etiket olarak sadece bir katılımcı tarafından konu edilmiştir. Burada frekanslarını verdiğimiz etiketler, tezin genelinde katılımcıların dokümanlara yazdıkları alıntılanarak, detaylı bir şekilde incelenmektedir. Katılımcılardan farklı alıntılar yapılarak farklı bakış açıları betimlenmeye çalışılmıştır. Fakat bu bölümde yorumlardan kaçınılmaya çalışılmış, bulgular sadece rapor edilmiştir. Bu incelemeler sonucunda şu özetlere varılmıştır: Akıl ve Beden teması üzerine 1- Akıl teması Aikido’nun kavramsallaştırılmasında baskın bir rol oynamaktadır. 2- Beden teması katılımcılar tarafından daha az bahsedilmiştir. 3- Her iki temanın birleşimi olan Akıl ve Beden teması, bir diğer anlamda uyumun ortaya çıktığı tema ise, en az bahsedilen tema olmuştur. Felsefe kategorisinde ise: 4- Neredeyse tüm katılımcılar Aikido’nun bir felsefesi olduğu hususunda hem fikir olmuşlardır. 5- Katılımcıların Aikido Felsefesine bakışları “içsel gelişim” kategorisi etrafında toplanmıştır. Aikido’nun özellikleri teması altında: 6- “Uyum” en çok bahsi geçen tema olmuştur. 7- Aikido katılımcılarının Aikido yapış yılı arttıkça, Aikido’nun daha fazla özelliğinden daha detaylı bahsetmişlerdir. “Savaş/Sanat ve Müsabaka” kategorisinin altında: 8- Katılımcıların neredeyse tamamı Aikidoda kazanma ve kaybetme olmadığı hususunda fikir birliği içerisindedirler. 9- Çok az sayıda katılımcı Aikido’yu bir savaş sanatı olarak görmüştür. 10- Çok az sayıda katılımcı Aikido’yu spor olarak görmemiştir. Dezavantajlar kategorisinin altında: 11- Neredeyse tüm yeni başlayanlar sakatlanmayı bir dezavantaj olarak görmüş, öte yandan orta ve ileri

seviyelerde bu durum gözlenmemiştir. 12- Katılımcıların büyük bir çoğunluğu Aikido'nun dezavantajı olmadığı konusunda hem fikirdirler.

Bu tezin ikinci ana bölümünü tartışma bölümü oluşturmaktadır. Etiketler tek tek hem Aikido Literatürü ile hem de Spor Felsefesi literatürü ile birlikte tartışılmıştır. Bu sebepten tartışma bölümü kategoriler üzerinden, tek tek etiketler tartışılarak devam etmiştir. Bu geniş özetle de söz konusu tartışmaya bağlı kalınarak benzer bir yazım yöntemi kullanılacaktır.

Kategori A: Felsefe, Etiket 1: “İçsel Gelişim”. Bulgular kendi içerisinde değerlendirildiğinde yirmi üç katılımcıdan on yedisinin içsel gelişimden bahsettiği düşünülecek olursa, yeni başlayanların içsel gelişimden bahsetme oranı, orta seviye ve ileri seviyedeki katılımcıların “içsel gelişim” den bahsetme oranından çok daha düşük olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Altı yeni katılımcıdan sadece ikisi “İçsel Gelişim” den bahsetmiştir. Bu durum Aikido çalışmasında “İçsel Gelişim” kavramının zaman gerektirdiği şeklinde yorumlanabilir. Bu bulgular Aikido üzerine yapılan diğer çalışmalarla paralellik göstermektedir. Palmer (2001), Brawdy (2001), Levine (2007), Tapley (2007) Danahoue (1987), McLean (1989). Felsefe ve özelinde Spor Felsefesi'ne geçtiğimizde ise sorulacak temel soru şu olmaktadır “Nasıl olurda fiziksel bir aktivite/spor içsel gelişime sebep olabilir?” Bu soru temel olarak hem spor felsefesinde hem de felsefe de “ethos” olarak bilinen kavramı içine almaktadır. (Ethos'un Türkçeye tercümesi tam olarak olmasa da “karakter” olarak çevrilebilir.) Aikido'nun bir spor olup olmadığı ileriki bölümlerde tartışma konusu olsa da, “ethos” kavramı spor müsabakaları için önemli bir kavramdır. Aikido'daki “ethos” kavramı ise çok öncelere, samurayların zamanına kadar gitmekte ve savaşçının yedi ilkesi diye bahsedilen ilkelere dayanmaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra pek çok sporun böyle bir tarihi olmadığı açıktır.

Kategori A: Felsefe, Etiket 2,3,4: “Ego'yu Yenmek”, “Felsefesi Olma”, “Hayata Uygulanabilirlik”: Bulgular kendi içerisinde tartışılacak olursa bu etiketler, “İçsel Gelişim” etiketinin yardımcısı ya da yanında tamamlayıcısı olarak görülebilir. Yirmi üç katılımcıdan İçsel gelişimden bahsetmeyip sadece bu üç etiketten birisini belirten sadece bir katılımcı olmuştur. Yeni başlayanlardan sadece ikisi içsel gelişimden bahsetmesine rağmen hiçbirisi bu üç etiketi değerlendirmemiştir. Bu da üstteki yorum gibi Aikido'nun zaman gerektirdiği şeklinde yorumlanabilir. Aikido Literatürüne baktığımızda “Ego'yu Yenme” kavramı; Newton (1996), Epstein (1985), Faggianelli (1995), Levine (2007) tarafından farklı

şekillerde bahsedilmiştir. “Hayata Uygulanabilirlik” kavramı ise, Rush (1999), Young (2009) tarafından incelenmiştir. Ethos kavramı aynı zamanda bu uygulanabilirliği de kapsamaktadır. Huber (1981) bu yedi kavramdan detaylı bir şekilde bahsetmektedir. McNamee (2007) ye göre spor adil bir ethos kavramı içermelidir. Adalet ise bu yedi kavramın içerisinde zaten yer almaktadır.

Kategori B: “Aikido’nun Özellikleri” , Etiket 1: “Uyum”. Uyum kavramı Aikido’nun kelime anlamında mevcuttur. “Ai” kelimesi Türkçe’ye : sevgi, uyum, uyumlu olmak; şeklinde çevrilebilir. Bu anlamda nasıl ki futboldan konuşurken top ya da ayaktan birisini göz ardı edemez isek Aikido üzerine konuşurken de “uyum” kavramından bahsetmememiz abesle iştigal eder. Bulgularda “uyum” kavramı en çok bahsedilen kavram olarak karşımıza çıkması bu anlamda şaşırtıcı değildir. İlginç olan nokta ise on dört katılımcı tarafından bahsedilen uyum kavramının ileri seviyelerde çıkmamasıdır. Fakat ileri seviyelerde nu kavramın daha felsefi bir temel aldığı ön görebiliriz. Scott (1989) a göre Aikido’nun kurucusu Morihei Ueshiba “Ai” kavramını son yıllarında uyumdan çok sevgi kavramı ile eş tutmuştur demektedir. Aikido Literatüründeki bulgular da bizim bulgularımızla paralellik göstermektedir. Rush (1996), Hannon (1998), Dykhuizen (2000), Rothman (2000), Levine (2007), farklı şekillerde de olsa uyum kavramını incelemişlerdir. Spor Felsefesi Literatürü’ne geçtiğimizde ise uyum kavramları diğer kavramlar ile karşılaştırıldığında son derece az işlenmiş bir kavramdır. Stephens & Feezell (2004) Stoacılarıdaki uyum kavramını incelemişlerdir. Reid (2009) da “Spor, Felsefe ve Bilgi Arayışı” makalesinde “uyum” kavramına değinmiştir. Platon’un Phaedrus diyalogundan alıntı yaparak sporcunun “bilgesel bir uyumluluk” (virtuous harmony) içerisinde olması gerektiğini savunmaktadır. Burada Reid üzerine kritik Aikidoda bu uyumun sadece zihinsel bir uyum olmadığıdır. Aikidodaki uyum öncelikle Akıl ve Bedenin uyumudur. Bir başka spor felsefecisi Boxill (1985)’e göre ise sadece uyumun olduğu yerde güzellik ortaya çıkar. Buradaki makaleler temel olarak uyum ile ilgilenmemekle birlikte içlerinde bazı yerlerde uyumdan bahsetmektedirler. Bu anlamda spor felsefesinde tartışmaya yer vardır.

Kategori B: “Aikido’nun Özellikleri” , Etiket 2: “Disiplin”. Disiplin “Do” adı verilen aktivitelerin genel bir özelliğidir. Aikido da bu “Do” aktivitelerinden bir tanesi olduğundan disiplini içerisinde ve öğretisinde içermektedir. Bulgular tartışıldığında ileri seviye ve yeni başlayanların disiplinden bahsettiklerini fakat ilginç bir şekilde orta seviye

de Aikido çalışanların disiplinden bahsetmedikleri gözlemlenmiştir. Bu konu daha ayrıntılı ve ileri seviye bir incelemeyi gerektirmektedir. Aikido Literatürü'ne baktığımız da ise; Ingalls (2002), Rush (1999), Tapley (2007)'nin bulguları Aikido'nun disiplin özelliğini ön plana çıkaran bulgulardır. Back & Kimm bu konuya ayrıntılı yaklaşmışlar ve disiplin sanatlarının esasen içlerinde “kavga” ve “yarışma” olmadıklarında disiplin sanatları olduğunu ve “sanat” kavramı haline geldiğini tartışmışlardır. Bunun dışında ergenler üzerine bu disiplin yaratan “Do” lar hakkında çalışmalar da mevcuttur. Öte yandan Spor Felsefesi alanına geçtiğimizde, disiplin kavramının tıpkı uyum kavramı gibi neredeyse hiç tartışılmadığını görmekteyiz.

Kategori B: “Aikido'nun Özellikleri” , Etiket 3: “Güç Kullanmama”. Aikido'nun asıl diğer sporlar ya da “Do” lardan ayrılan özelliği tam da “Güç Kullanmama” başka bir deyişle, karşımızdakinin gücünü ona yönlendirme anlamında, Aikido diğer pek çok spor ve sanattan ayrılır. Her yaştan , çocuk, genç, ileri yaşlı herkes Aikido yapabilir. Çalışmamızın bulgularını değerlendirdiğimizde, ilginç olarak sadece bir yeni ve bir ileri seviye katılımcı bu özelliği dile getirmiştir. Bu sonuç son derece ilginç ve ileri araştırmalar gerektirmektedir. Bu kadar esas ayırıcı bir özellik olan güç kullanmama katılımcıların kavramsallaştırmalarında yer almamıştır. Aikido Literatürü'nde Ingalls (2002), Jonathan (2001), McLean (1989), Epstein (1985), Faggianelli (1995) güç kullanmamadan farklı şekillerde bahsetmişlerdir. Spor Felsefesi Literatürü'nde ünlü Spor Felsefecilerinden Scott Kretchmar (1992) bütün spor aktivitelerinin yer, zaman ve güç gerektirdiğini belirtmektedir. Öte yandan Aikido tam da bu noktada Kretchmar'ın argümanına ters bir şey söylemektedir. Kendi deneyimlerimden yola çıkarak dünyanın en büyük Aikido hocalarından N. Tamura Sensei (Aikido'nun kurucusu Morihei Ueshiba'nın direk baş asistanı) bana teknik yaptığında kendim bunu hissettim. Her ne kadar bu ampirik bir temellendirme oluşturmasa da, N. Tamura Sensei hocası yani Aikido'nun kurucusunun bir sözünü bizlerle paylaştı. Üç pirinç tanesi taşıyabilecek kadar güçle Aikido yapabilirsiniz. Bu anlamda çalışmalar daha da yoğunlaştırılmalı ve bu ilginç durumun sebepleri ortaya çıkarılmalıdır.

Kategori B: “Aikido'nun Özellikleri” , Etiket 4: “Sevgi ve Saygı”. Daha önce de belirtildiği gibi Aikidodaki “Ai” kavramı aynı zamanda sevgi anlamı da taşımaktadır. Aikido aynı zamanda karşımızdakine zarar vermediğimiz bir aktivitedir bu anlamda saygıyı da zaten içinde barındırır. Bulguların tartışmasına geçtiğimizde, yirmi üç

katılımcıdan sadece üçünün Aikido'nun bu özelliğinden bahsettiğini görmekteyiz. Bu son derece düşündürücü bir bulgudur. Neden böyle olduğu ise ayrı bir araştırma konusu olabilir. Aikido Literatürüne geçtiğimizde Aikido'nun sevgi ile aynı olduğunu, kurucusunun bu yönde beyanlarını, Saotome (1986) ve Stevens (1987) açık bir şekilde ifade etmektedirler ki Aikido bir Budo'dur ve Budo da sevginin bir ifadesidir. Sevgisiz Budo olmaz. Gibi bizlere ilginç gelebilecek ifadeleri Aikido'nun kurucusu Ueshiba'nın sık sık bundan bahsettiğini bizlere iletmektedirler. Bunlar bizlere çok soyut kavramlar olarak gelebilir. Esasen bunu anlamak için bir parça günümüzün önemli filozoflarından Hadot'a kulak vermek lazım gelir. Hadot'a (1995) göre bu "atapos" kavramı ile açıklanabilir. "Atapos" felsefecinin/filozofun kendiliğinden oluşan tuhaflığı ve garipliğidir. Hadot'a göre bu bilgiye Tanrısal bir şekilde aşık olmanın doğal bir sonucudur. Bu anlamda düşündüğümüzde Ueshiba bir filozof olarak görülebilir. Saygıdan bahsetmek gerekirse, Aikido'da saygının gösterimi selam verme ile olur. Çalışma alanına girişte başlayan selam verme seremonisi, hoca dersi durduğunda, başlattığında, çıkarken, silah değiştirirken, hoca bir şey söylediğinde kendini açık bir şekilde ortaya koyar. Aikido Literatüründe Lantz (2002), Danahoue (1987), Edelman (1994) saygı kavramını farklı şekilde ortaya koymaktadırlar. Asıl şaşırtıcı nokta ise, Spor Felsefesinde "saygı" kavramı üzerine, büyük bir literatür mevcuttur. Bunun sebebi ise, "fair play" adil oyun tartışmalarıdır. Butcher ve Schinider'in yazdığı "Fair Play / Adil Oyun için Oyuna Saygı" (1998) makalesi ise son derece, popüler olmuş bugünkü fair play kavramını saygı ile şekillendirmiştir. Butcher ve Schneider 'e göre genel kabul sporun ahlaki değerler öğrettiğidir. Bu değerler pozitif değerler olmalıdır. Bu değerler direkt spora bağlı değerler olmalıdır görüşünü benimsemektedirler. Öte yandan Felsefe zaten, binlerce yıldır, bu değerler üzerinde çalışmışlardır. Aicineta (1997) ye göre "saygı" atletik müsabakalarda şu an olmayan bir kavramdır. Arnold (1994), a göre ise Kant'ın adillik anlayışı, özgürlük ve bağımsızlığa dayanmaktadır. Aikido da ise daha önce de bahsettiğimiz, samurayların "etik kodu" nda Gi ve Rei, Adalet ve Saygı zaten vardır. Adil oyunu bozan bir başka önemli şey de PED ler yani Performans Arttırıcı İlaçlardır. Aikido çalışan bir insanın ise doping olarak da değerlendirilebilecek olan bu ilaçları kullanmasının olanaksızlığıdır. Çünkü Aikido yapan kişi sadece kendisi ile yarışmaktadır. Bir başkası ile değil. Bu anlamda asıl sorunun müsabaka olduğu düşünülebilir.

Kategori B: “Aikido’nun Özellikleri” , Etiket 5: “Fiziksel Gelişim”. Fiziksel gelişim sadece Aikido’nun değil neredeyse tüm sporların ortak özelliğidir. Bu Aikido’yu diğer sporlardan ayıran bir yön olmamasında rağmen, yirmi üç katılımcıdan altı katılımcı bunu Aikido’yu diğer sporlardan ayıran bir özellik olarak görmüşlerdir. Bu bulgu son derece şaşırtıcıdır ve ileri derece araştırma yapılması gerekmektedir. Aikido Literatürü’ne geçtiğimizde ise, çok az sayıda çalışma vardır çünkü bu önceki etiketlerden olan “Güç Kullanmama” etiketi ile çelişmektedir. Veronghen ve Theeboom (2008), Ingalls (2002) çalışmaları böyle bir fiziksel gelişimden bahsetmektedir. Spor Felsefesi Literatürü’ne geçtiğimizde ise, “Fiziksel Gelişim”; fiziksellik kavramı olarak sporun tanımının içerisine kadar girmektedir. Tamboer (1993) e göre bu tartışma konusu dahi değildir. Önemli olan Motor Hareketlerdir ve sporu spor yapan bu Motor Hareketlerdir. Öte yandan Osterhoudt (1995) için ise fiziksellik bir erdemdir. Wertz (1995) ise buna karşı çıkmaktadır. Çünkü fiziksellik hem dans ta hem sporda mevcuttur. Tartışma hala daha açık uçlu olarak devam etmektedir. Fizikselliğe ne kadar vurgu yapılacağı ? Bunun Spor Felsefesi içerisinde yer alıp almayacağı?

Kategori B: “Aikido’nun Özellikleri” , Etiket 6: “Kendini Savunma”. İnsanlar aikidoya; bu konuda herhangi bir araştırma olmasa da; farklı motivasyon ve sebeplerle başlayabilirler. Fakat genellikle Aikido “kendini koruma” sanatı olarak yanlış anlaşılmıştır. Aikido bir savaş/harp ve disiplin sanatıdır. Bulgularımıza dönecek ve bunları tartışacak olursak; altı yeni başlayan katılımcıdan ikisi, on iki orta seviyeden birisi, ve hiçbir ileri seviye “kendini koruma” özelliğinden bahsetmemiştir. Bu esasen ileri seviyelerin Aikido’nun bu özelliğini anladıkları olarak yorumlanabilir. Aikido seviyesi artıkça “kendini koruma” seviyesi düşmektedir şeklinde bir yorum getirilebilir. İlginç bir şekilde ne Aikido Literatürü ne de Spor Felsefesi Literatürü “kendini koruma” üzerine herhangi bir ulaşabildiğimiz yayın ya da çalışma içermemektedir.

Kategori B: “Aikido’nun Özellikleri” , Etiket 6: “Farkındalık”. Farkındalık “zen” kaynaklı disiplin sanatlarının tümünde mevcuttur. Zen rahipleri farkındalılarını geliştirmek için uzun yıllar çalışırlar. Bu çalışmadaki bulgularda sadece iki katılımcı Aikido’nun “Farkındalık” özelliğinden bahsetmişlerdir. Bu iki kişiden hiçbirisi yeni başlayan katılımcı değildir. Bu da “Farkındalığın” gelişmesi ya da kavramsallaşması için zaman gerektiği olarak yorumlanabilir. Aikido Literatürü’nde ise Brawdy (2001) ve Epstein (1985) farkındalıktan bahsetmişlerdir. Aikido’nun kurucusu Morihei Ueshiba “Farkındalık”

üzerine beden ve akıl birliğinin, insanı farkındalığa götüreceğini ve daha üstün bir anlama yeteneğini kendisine açacağını ifade etmektedir. Spor Felsefesi literatüründe Wertz (1977) de bu görüşe katılmaktadır. Wertz'e göre bu ancak, akli durdurmak ile mümkündür. Hosta (2009) da aynı şekilde beden ve akıl ikiliğinin bir kurmaca olduğunun farkına varılmasının zor olduğunu söylemektedir. Howe (2003) ise kürekçilerden örnek vererek insanın kendi vücudunun farkındalığının onu başarılı yapacağını savunmaktadır. Benim görüşüme göre farkındalık sürekli olarak içinde olduğumuzdan, ancak ve ancak bir sıçrayış ya da değişim yaşadığımızda fark edebileceğimiz ve değişikliklerini anlayabileceğimiz bir olaydır.

Kategori C: "Savaş/Sanat ve Müsabaka" , Etiket 1 ve 2: "Savaş Sanatı" ve "Spor Değil": Daha iyi bir anlama geliştirmek için bu iki etiket birleştirilmiştir. Her ne kadar Aikido harp/savaş sanatı olarak tanımlansa da, bulgulara göz attığımız da, sadece beş katılımcının bunu diğer sporlardan ayıran bir özellik olarak bahsedildiğini söyleyebiliriz.

Her ne kadar beş katılımcı tarafından dile getirilse de bu bölüm tartışma kısmının en büyük parçasını oluşturmaktadır. Çünkü burada sorduğumuz ve araştıracağımız soru: "Katılımcıların bakış açısından Aikido bir sanat mıdır yoksa spor mudur?" sorusudur. Bulgularımızı değerlendirecek olursak, katılımcılardan sadece iki tanesi Aikido'nun spor olmadığını söylemişlerdir. Bir tanesi ileri seviye bir tanesi orta seviye olmak üzere. Bu katılımcıların her ikisi de aynı zamanda Aikido'nun bir savaş sanatı olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Bu bir anlamda içsel bir tutarlılık oluşturmuştur. Aikido Literatürüne geçtiğimizde ise, Ingalls (2002), Lantz (2002), Scott (1988), Newton (1996), Fagianelli (1995), hepsi de Aikido'nun bir sanat olduğu yönünde görüş ve sonuç belirtmişlerdir.

Spor Felsefesi'ne geçtiğimizde ise soru şu hal alır "Sanat ve Spor arasındaki ilişki nasıl bir ilişkidir?" Buradaki uzun tartışmanın özetini vermeden önce kendi tezimi ortaya atmak isterim. Bana göre, bu çalışmadan çıkan bulgulara da dayanarak, Aikido, başlangıç ve orta seviyelerde bir spor/oyun, fakat ileri seviyede sanattır. Sanat ve spor arasına ise bir çizgi çekmek son derece zordur. Bu tartışma esasen iki büyük spor felsefecisi arasında geçmektedir, Best ve Wertz. Best (1980)'e göre hiçbir spor sanat formunda değildir. Best'e göre amaca yönelik sporlar vardır. Estetik spor denilebilecek spor şekli ise, sadece estetik kaygıların bu amaca hizmet ettiği sporlardır. Best günbatımı örneğini vermektedir. Bütün fiziksel aktiviteler estetik kaygılar taşımadığı gibi, bütün estetik şeyler gün batımı gibi, spor değildir. Best için diğer bir ayırım ise müsabakadan gelir. Best'e göre estetik aktiviteleri müsabaka ile eş tutmak büyük bir kavramsal hatadır. Best burada dünyanın en

ünlü keman virtüözlerinden Kyung Wha Chun'un bir keman müsabakasından sonra söylediklerini hatırlatır. “Bu hayatımın en kötü deneyimiydi çünkü müsabaka insanda en kötü şeyleri canlandırıyor”. Best'in bir diğer düşüncesi seyirci üzerinedir. Seyirci için estetik olanın anlamsızlığı Best'e göre hiçbir seyirci olmasa dahi en iyi “ace” (karşı tarafın karşılayamadığı servisten puan almak) vuruşunu yapabilir insan. Best'in Wertz'e katıldığı nokta da; “objet trouvé” (bulunmuş/yaratılmış sanat eseri) olduğudur. Best'e göre Wertz in kaçırdığı, yakalayamadığı ayırım ise estetik ve artistik arasındaki ayırımdır. Best' göre estetik kuşların ötüşü, gün batımı gibi şeyler için kullanılan bir terimdir. Artistik ise, insanlar tarafından yapılan şeyler, performanslar için kullanılan bir terimdir. Bu noktada Aikidodan bahsetmek gerekebilir. Sadece Aikido değil bütün içerisinde “ethos” taşıyan sporlar esasen toplumun değişmesinde rol oynayabilir. Aikido'da karşındakine zarar vermeme prensibi fiziksel olarak çalışmalarında ortaya çıktıkça bu toplumsal olarak da bir değişime yol açabilir. Her ne kadar bu değişim fark edilemeyecek ya da ölçülemeyecek kadar küçük de olsa olası ve mümkündür. Wertz tarafına geçtiğimizde ise; Wertz (1991)'e göre sporun en azından bir bölümü sanat olarak tanımlanabilir. Wertz'e göre Best'in sanat tanımı çok dogmatik ve eskilere dayanmaktadır günümüzde ki sanat tanımında oyuncular ve seyircinin yer değiştirdiği yeni kavramlar ortaya çıkmıştır. Wertz' göre gerekli koşullar oluştuğunda köy kriketi dahi sanat olarak kabul edilebilir. Wertz'e göre bir sporun estetiği yalnızken dahi görülebilir fakat artistik kısmı, tarihe, bağlamına bağlıdır. Wertz'e göre sporcular spor eylemlerinde dışavurumcu olabilirler. Wertz burada 1936 Olimpiyatlarında, Nazi olimpiyatları olarak da bilinir, Jessie Owens'i örnek vermektedir. Sorduğu soru ise önemlidir “Atletler hareketleri ve sporları ile dışa vurumcu olabilirler mi?”. Wertz argümanını şöyle noktalamaktadır: tüm sporlar değil ama bazı sporlar ve spor eylemleri bazı koşullarda sembol olarak görev görebilirler. Burada Aikidodan bahsedilebilir. Aikidodaki bazı tekniklerin anlamları vardır. “Kokyu-ho” evrenin nefesi demektir. Ya da “tenchi-nage” Yer gök hareketi demektir. Teknik yapılırken Mevlevi dervişleri gibi bir el yeri bir el göğü gösterir. Bu teknikler bu anlamda belirli bir deneyim, yıllarca çalışma sonunda, katılımcı için ulaşılabilir anlamlar olabilirler. Buradaki argüman için ele alınan bir başka spor felsefecisi Bäck (2009)'tir. Bäck' göre disiplin sanatları ve “do” lar insanları şiddetten uzak tutma amacındadır. Yine Bäck' göre savaş ciddi bir şeydir. Bir oyun hiç değildir. Fakat Bäck burada Doğu ve Batı ayırımı yaparak Batı'nın müsabakaya dayanan sporlarından bahsetmediğini, aksine doğunun müsabakanın minimum da olduğu

sanatlardan bahsettiğini vurgulamaktadır. Bäck Best' bu anlamda katılmakta ve müsabaka olduğunda olayın farklılaştığını düşünmektedir. Bäck a göre spor kavramı “ortak bir mükemmelliği arama”dır ve bütün modern sporlara uyduğunu düşünmektedir. Bäck e göre spor daha iyi bir karakter değil, aksine daha kötü bir karakter ortaya çıkarmaktadır ve bunun örneklerini vermektedir. Yine Bäck'e göre Kore dışarısında çalışılan disiplin ve savaş sanatlarında da aynı çöküş yaşanmaktadır. Pek çok şey kaybedilmiştir. Geleneksel disiplin sanatçıları, iyi temeller üzerine oturmuş, iyi ahlaklı, bilge kişiler iken şimdi durum bundan çok uzaktadır. Fakat burada Bäck Aikidodan bahsetmemektedir. Aikido bozulmadan günümüze kadar ulaşmış içerisinde müsabakayı barındırmayan nadir disiplin sanatlarından biridir. Bäck e göre disiplin sanatları da spor olarak çalışılabilir. Bu ilginç görüşte Bäck doğunun bozulmamış disiplin sanatlarından ziyade Batı'nın disiplin ve savaş sanatlarından bahsetmektedir. Yine Bäck'e göre savaş sanatları hayat denilen ciddi işten uzaklaşmıştır. İçerisindeki ruhsal öğretiyi tıpkı Batı Sporlarında olduğu gibi kaybetmeye başlamıştır. Bu nokta da Bäck in görüşlerini bulgularımız ile çürütebiliriz. Çünkü bulgularımız bize “Felsefe” diye bir kategori çıkarmış ve katılımcılar tarafından en çok etiketlenen kavramın “İçsel Gelişim” olduğu görülmüştür. Ayrıca katılımcılar “Kazanma Kaybetme Olmama” ve “Müsabaka” olmama toplandığında neredeyse hemfikir bir şekilde Bäck 'in doğu batı tanımlamasını çürütmektedirler. Benim burada ortaya attığım tez ise bundan daha mütevazı bir tez. Bäck de bugüne kadar Aikido Literatürü'nde gördüğümüz hataya düşüp, yüksek seviye disiplin ve savaş sanatı çalışanları değerlendirmektedir. Oysaki orta seviye ve başlangıç seviyeleri de mevcuttur. Benim görüşüme göre Aikido başlangıç ve orta seviye çalışmalarda bir oyun/spor'dur. İleri seviye de ise sanattır. Çünkü (10 yıllık Aikido eğitmenliği deneyimime dayanarak) başlangıç seviyesindeki insanlar daha nereye döneceklerini bilmezler. Adımlarını nereye koyacaklarını v.s. Bu sebepten onlara karşı gerçek bir vuruş, saldırı yapmak olanaksızdır. Ancak ileri seviyeye geldiklerinde yeni yeni Aikido çalışmaya başlarlar. Aikido da siyah kuşağın da manası budur. Sho-Dan. Sho pek çok anlama gelse de anlamlarından bir tanesi “yeni başlayan”dır. Yeni başlayan formları bilen demektir. Formları öğrendikten sonra o formları gerçekliğe dökmek hayata dönüştürme işi başlamaktadır. Bu sebepten ileri seviye katılımcılar Aikidoyu bir “savaş sanatı” olarak görmüş fakat yeni başlayanlar çalışmamızda bunu rapor etmemişlerdir.

Kategori C: “Savaş/Sanat ve Müsabaka” , Etiket 3ve 4: “Müسابakası Olmama” ve “Yenme yenilmemeyi içermeme”: Aikido tanımında müsabakası olmayan bir disiplin sanatı olarak yer alır. Bu müsabakası olmama durumu Aikido’nun kurucusu tarafından da çok net bir şekilde ifade edilmiştir. “Aikidodaki tek savaş kişinin kendisi ile olan savaşıdır. Bulgulara baktığımızda bu durumu görmekteyiz, 23 katılımcıdan 16’sı “Müسابakası Olmama” ve “Yenme ve Yenilmemeyi İçermeme” kavramlarından herhangi birisinden bahsetmişler. Bahsetmeyen kişiler ise 1 ileri seviye 4 orta seviye 2 de yeni seviye katılımcıdır. Şu göz ardı edilmemelidir ki ileri seviye katılımcı bu kavramları bahsetmemiş fakat, Aikido’nun bir savaş sanatı olduğundan bahsetmiştir. Aikido Literatüründe ise Levine (2007) dışında, müsabaka’dan bahseden ulaşabildiğimiz herhangi bir yayın olmamıştır. Tabî ki literatürde müsabaka ve Aikido ilişkisini bulmanın zorluğu ortadadır. Çünkü Aikido müsabakası olmaması üzerine kuruludur. Spor Felsefesi literatürünü incelediğimizde, Weiss (1970)’e göre, sporun pozitif etkileri vardır. Suits (1979)’a göre is spor belirli zorlukları aşmak ve mükemmelliğe ulaşmak için bir araçtır. Bäck(2009)’a göre ise iki tip spor mevcuttur. Bunlardan birincisi; kazanma ve kaybetmenin “gerçek” anlamının olmadığı, bir diğeri ise, kazanma ve kaybetmenin gerçek anlamda önemli olduğu. Fakat Bäck her ikisinin de aynı yapı ve işleyişe sahip olabileceğini düşünmektedir. Parry (2006) ya göre ise rekor kavramı günümüz sporunu popüler kılmış ve atletik anlamda önem kazanmıştır. Parry’nin sorduğu sorulardan bir tanesi de “İyi oynayan takım kazandı mı?” zaman zaman bu önemli olmakla birlikte zaman zaman önemini yitirmektedir. Bu anlamda Parry atletik sporlar ve takım sporları arasında bir ayrım yapmaktadır. Bu ayrıma göre, atletik performanslarda mükemmellik ön plana çıkarken, takım oyunlarında oyunun kendisindeki mükemmellik ön plana çıkmaktadır. Rekorlar Parry’e göre sporun kendi kendine zarar vermeye başlamışlardır. Çünkü insan fizyolojisi sınırlarına dayanmış ve doping gibi alternatifler bu sınırları aşmak için kullanılmaya başlamıştır. Burada parantez açarak Aikidodan bahsedebiliriz. Aikido bir Zen sanatı olduğundan mükemmellik hiç şüphesiz önemlidir. Fakat Aikidoda hiç kimse, doping yapmaz. Her yaştan her tip, kilo, fiziksel görünümünde insan Aikido yapabilir.

Kategori D: “Dezavantajlar” , Etiket 1,2 ve 3: “Dezavantajı Olmama” ve “Sakatlık” ve “İki Kişi ile Çalışma” : Burada ilk olarak en az belirtilen etiketle başlamak gerekir. O da “İki Kişi ile Çalışma” olmuştur. Sadece bir katılımcı “İki Kişi ile Çalışma”yı dezavantaj olarak bildirmiştir. Bu kişi de bir yeni başlayanıdır. Esasen bu durum Aikido üzerine olan

bilgi eksikliğinden ya da daha çabuk öğrenme arzusundan kaynaklanıyor olabilir. Aikido geleneksel olarak ikili guruplar halinde çalışılır.

Değineceğimiz ikinci etiket ise Aikido'nun dezavantajı olmadığıdır. 23 katılımcıdan 12 si dezavantajlar üzerine görüş bildirmiştir. Bu 12 katılımcıdan 10'u Aikido çalışmanın dezavantajı olmadığını düşünmektedir. Bu da esasen yüksek bir frekanstır. Aikido'nun dezavantajı olmadığını söyleyen iki katılımcı ise sakatlanmayı dezavantaj olarak rapor etmişlerdir. Bu da düşündürücüdür ve daha ileri araştırma gerektirmektedir.

“Sakatlanma” etiketine geçtiğimizde, sakatlanma pek çok savaş/disiplin sanatı için ciddi bir problem oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışmada 23 katılımcıdan 6 sı sakatlanmayı bir dezavantaj olarak görmüştür. Bu 23 katılımcıdan 5', yeni başlayan katılımcılardır. Bu da ciddi bir soruna işaret etmektedir ilk bakışta. Fakat daha detaylı incelediğimizde orta ve ileri seviyelerde sakatlanmanın problem olarak görülmediğidir. 17 ileri ve orta seviye katılımcıdan sadece 1 tanesi sakatlanmayı dezavantaj olarak rapor etmiştir. Bu sebepten buna sakatlanmanın kendisinden çok “sakatlanma korkusu” diyebiliriz. Aikido'nun risk sporu olup olmadığı ise başak bir tartışmanın konusudur. Aikido karşımızdakine zarar vermeme esasında dayanmaktadır. Öte yandan genel açıdan bakıldığında “sakatlanma” dışında ki onunda bir korku olduğunu belirttik; esasen Aikido'nun bu prensibine sadık kaldığını görmekteyiz.

Spor Felsefesi Literatürüne baktığımızda, Bäck (2009) tehlikeli sporlar olarak nitelendirse de, McNamee (2007) konuya ilginç bir yaklaşımda bulunmaktadır. McNamee ye göre biz felsefeciler tozlu raflarda, aynı kazağı giyen, kalın gözlüklü kişiler olarak nasıl “risk sporlarından” bahsedebiliriz. Açıkçası burada kendi deneyimlerimden örnek vermek istedim. Hem Felsefeci hem Aikidocu olarak, boynumu bundan 5 yıl önce Slovaklarla çalışırken kırmışım. Doktora gittiğimde yaşamamın bir mucize olduğunu söyledi ve bunu sporcu olmama bağladı. Sporcu olduğum için o bölgedeki kaslar omurgamın dağılmasını engellemiş ve beni hayatta tutmuş. Bu aslında benim için de bir ikilem oluşturdu. Sporcu olduğum için boynumu kırmış, ama yine sporcu olduğum için hayatta kalmıştım ve hatta boynumu kırdığımı bile 5 yıl boyunca fark etmemiştim. McNamee(2007) ye göre risk sporlarının temel problemi sporu genele yayamamaktır. Aikido'nun böyle bir sorunu bulunmamaktadır çünkü Aikidoyu her yaştan katılımcı yapabilmektedir. Çünkü Aikidoda bir rekor bir kazanma, bir altın madalya, kupa söz konusu değildir. Benim Aikido derecelerimi aldığım kişi olan N.Tamura Sensei 73 yaşında olmasına rağmen hala daha

herkese teknik yapabilmekte ve size teknik yaptığında yerinizden kımıldayamamaktasınız. Bu anlamda, bakıldığında Tamura Sensei Türk Aikido çalışanları uyardı ve şöyle dedi: Bu şekilde Aikido çalışmaya devam ederseniz benim yaşımda Aikido çalışmıyor olursunuz. Bu bir anlamda Aikido çalışmanın da farklı şekillerde anlaşılacağı ve farklı şekillerde insanlara zarar verebilecek, ve zarar vermeyecek şekillerde Aikido çalışabileceğini bizlere anlatan güzel bir örnektir.

Sonuç olarak toparlamak gerekirse; nitel araştırmaları özetledik ve buradan ortaya çıkan bulguları önce kendi içerisinde, ardından Aikido Literatürü ile ve son olarak da Spor Felsefesi Literatürü ile tartıştık. Bazı tartışmalar bizlere daha geniş tartışma ve düşünme olanağı açmış olabilir. Örneğin Aikido'nun belirli seviyelerde spor/oyun olması ama ileri seviyelerde sanat olması. Yine aynı şekilde “ethos” kavramı üzerinde durduk. Aikidodaki ethos kavramının çok eskilerden geldiğini belirttik. Fakat diğer sporlardaki “ethos” kavramının tartışmaya açık olduğunu belirttik.

Tabi ki tartışılacak daha pek çok nokta vardır. Son olarak ümidimizi dile getirerek çalışmayı noktaladık. Umarız ki bu çalışma bu az çalışılan alanda insanların düşünmesine yol açar ve yeni çalışmalara ve kitaplara öncülük eder.