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Impact of Contemplative Landscape Characteristics on Martial Art Practices: A Study with Reference to Karate Practitioners

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Abstract

Being merged with the natural environment contributes positively to mental health. Practicing physical activities in outdoor space makes a high impact on positiveness in the human mind as well as physical well-being due to the impact of the senses of the space. The study focuses how martial art practitioners can benefit contemplative characteristic of landscape by using spaces for practices. The study was conducted with the participant of Karate practitioners of the University of Moratuwa. It mainly concerns the sense of space, Mind relaxation, ability to concentrate, feel the freedom of space, the adeptness of learning, and the ability to tolerate. Visual perspectives are considered as the main criteria of the landscape character of the space. Research method surveys were carried out along two main streams as literature review survey and case study survey. Literature review includes research related to the connectivity among the natural landscapes, human mind, and martial arts. The case study survey was based on experiences in different practicing environments, and interview with professionals. Due to the current health situation of the country, three case studies were selected by concerning landscape characteristics of spaces that have been used as training environments for previous Karate sessions. The questionnaire explores the way the practitioners experienced and sensed the setting of each space. The landscape involvement, availability of natural landscape forms and natural sceneries of each case study is varied from one to the other. As a martial artist is highly sensitive to the balance of body, the floor surface is also concerned as a sensible factor. Data were collected through two questionnaires and one online face to face interview with a professional Karate instructor. The first questionnaire was filled by 54 participants in the Karate team, and the second one was filled by 35 practitioners who have used selected three training environments. Data collection explored both importance of Karate practices in the practitioner's life, and the impact of changes of the training space in the mental situation of the practitioner. Results indicated positive results in keeping a good mental condition while using spaces with more possibility of providing contemplation. According to the obtained results, using an outdoor space with more contemplative characters may benefit by generating better outcome of Karate practices as well as for successful day-to-day.

Keywords: Mental and physical health, Martial arts, Contemplation, Form characteristic of landscape