

An Analysis of Eliminating Students' Fear Psychology in Taekwondo Instruction

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Abstract: In Taekwondo instruction, students often develop fear psychology due to confrontation training, high-difficulty movements, competitions, and physical contact, which manifests as behaviors such as fearfulness, avoidance, anxiety, and resistance. The emergence of these fears involves multiple factors including students' physical and mental qualities, teachers' instructional methods and attitudes, the teaching environment and safety protection measures, as well as influences from family and peers. To effectively eliminate students' fear psychology, it is necessary to establish a gradual adaptation system that helps students progressively overcome fear. Creating immersive game-based scenarios can enhance learning interest and participation. Implementing personalized guidance and intervention allows for psychological counseling and skill instruction tailored to individual students. Additionally, improving protective support systems provides essential safety guarantees and emotional support.

Keywords: Taekwondo Instruction, Fear Psychology, Cause Analysis, Teaching Strategies

1. Introduction

As a sport emphasizing strength, technique, and mental cultivation, Taekwondo often faces the challenge of students' fear psychology during its promotion [1]. This fear may stem from the tension of confrontation training, the challenge of high-difficulty movements, competition pressure, or discomfort with physical contact, seriously affecting students' learning outcomes and participation enthusiasm. Effectively identifying and eliminating these fears is crucial to ensuring the safety and effectiveness of Taekwondo instruction. This paper aims to analyze the specific manifestations and causes of students' fear psychology in Taekwondo teaching, and to explore corresponding elimination strategies, with the intention of providing references for optimizing Taekwondo instruction and promoting students' holistic development.

2. Manifestations of students' fear psychology in Taekwondo instruction

2.1. Fear manifestations during confrontation training

During practical combat simulation sessions, some students exhibit obvious physiological stress responses: pale complexion, sweaty palms, rapid breathing, and even muscle stiffness. They often evade sparring by making various excuses, such as frequently requesting to drink water or tying their shoelaces to delay time [2]. Even when reluctantly participating, they consistently remain in a defensive stance, unwilling to take the initiative to attack, and their gaze frequently avoids direct eye contact with their opponents. These students tend to excessively focus on the consequences of failure, fearing being struck, injured, or embarrassed in public, which leads to a significant decline in their tactical execution. A typical manifestation is that when facing lower-grade students, they still cannot effectively apply the techniques they have learned, exposing the reality that their psychological barriers far outweigh their technical shortcomings.

2.2. Avoidance behavior of high-difficulty movements

As the course progresses to technically challenging movements such as flying kicks and whirlwind kicks, students' fear of difficulty becomes more pronounced. When facing these difficult movements, students often unconsciously reduce their range of motion for self-protection; for example, many students jokingly refer to side kicks as "random kicking," and during training, they tend to fall behind the main group, lagging at the back of the line. Some students even feign illness to request leave and leave the training area, which in reality may be an attempt to avoid the technically demanding training that requires hard physical effort. This self-limiting and avoidance mindset not only hinders their own technical improvement but also carries a herd mentality that affects the entire class, resulting in a collectively low technical level and causing a "low-level equilibrium" phenomenon.

2.3. Anxiety reactions in competition scenarios

More seriously, excessive nervousness can appear even before the official competition begins. Some students cannot sleep well the night before the competition, with some staying awake throughout the entire night. Others experience severe loss of appetite, trembling hands and feet upon stepping onto the stage, and perform poorly. During the competition, they may make incorrect decisions and display physical distortions; movements that were originally very proficient become chaotic and disorganized. Post-competition summaries often point to these issues, highlighting only adverse factors. This pathological perfectionism seriously distorts the essential meaning of competitive sports and causes adolescents to endure unnecessary psychological pressure during critical developmental periods [3].

2.4. Resistance psychology toward physical contact

Even basic body coordination training can trigger strong resistance, with some students becoming so tense during fall techniques and defensive maneuvers practice that they are completely uncooperative. In very rare cases, students would rather accept punishment than cooperate with a classmate of the opposite sex in back-carry lifts or supporting lifts. This abnormal sensitivity stems from a mistaken perception of physical interaction, misinterpreting normal physical contact in sports as aggressive behavior. It reflects the widespread issue among contemporary only children of

excessively strong personal boundaries. If teachers handle this improperly, students' social barriers may carry over into the training environment.

3. Analysis of causes for students' fear psychology in Taekwondo instruction

3.1. Personal factors

As adolescents undergo physical and mental developmental changes, individual differences significantly affect their motor skills, resulting in considerable variability in athletic performance. (1) Students with weaker physical fitness are prone to feelings of powerlessness when facing high-intensity confrontations; insufficient muscle strength prevents them from executing proper protective movements, thereby increasing the likelihood of sports injuries. (2) Students with poor coordination cannot effectively control the trajectories of their movements; after experiencing repeated failures, they develop self-denying psychological responses. (3) Introverted students instinctively avoid performing in front of others and fear negative evaluations from peers, experiencing a "spotlight effect" where a single mistake becomes a shameful memory. (4) Having experienced some traumatic events (such as injuries during childhood), these students develop stress behaviors triggered by classical conditioning reflexes. In such vulnerable physical and mental states, the situation progressively worsens [4].

3.2. Teaching factors

Traditional martial arts education generally follows an authoritative teaching model. For example, some instructors believe that strict teachers produce outstanding students, thus they push trainees to break through their limits during training without adhering to the principle of gradual progression. Additionally, the use of monotonous, command-based teaching lacks engaging design, and repetitive mechanical drills cause loss of interest. Moreover, during the demonstration of martial arts skills, instructors' impatient emotions may unconsciously transmit anxious signals to beginners. When beginners begin to doubt the feasibility of the discipline, they may question whether they can succeed in martial arts learning. A mismatch between teaching strategies and students' cognitive developmental stages can cause technical difficulties to exceed the zone of proximal development, leading to learned helplessness.

3.3. Environmental factors

The training environment lacks professionalism and poses certain risks. Hard floors without cushioning mats make joint bruises likely in the event of falls. Aging protective gear loses elasticity and cannot effectively buffer impacts. Disorderly placement of equipment creates visual oppression and causes psychological discomfort. A hot and stuffy environment easily leads to excessive physical fatigue. Safety precautions in hazardous areas have become merely formalities, and some safety hazards have not been promptly addressed. Expired emergency medications have not been replaced, and instructions for emergency drug use are not clearly displayed to users. All of these factors subconsciously cultivate a sense of danger in individuals, which over time causes the body to remain in a constant state of psychological alertness to potential threats.

3.4. Social factors

Family education patterns greatly influence risk perception frameworks. Parents who overly emphasize risk prevention often repeatedly stress “never fall down,” creating a psychological suggestion of fear toward falling. Families oriented toward academic or achievement performance tend to turn belt promotion into a process of earning honorable titles, which often results in pressure testing during training. Peer group subcultures form implicit normative systems, where strong students frequently openly ridicule those with insufficient technical skills to satisfy their own sense of superiority. Additionally, the stigma effect in community public opinion and the further narrowing of trial-and-error tolerance force adolescents to struggle to balance self-protection with societal expectations. Media portrayals of violent fighting scenes distort the perception of the sport, confusing legitimate competition with street brawling.

4. Teaching strategies to eliminate fear psychology in Taekwondo instruction

4.1. Constructing a gradual adaptation system

According to the hierarchical design based on the principles of motor skill development, large movements are broken down into small micro-skills. Practice is implemented through a tiered advancement method called the "Courage Ladder," progressing from an initial stage to a middle stage. In the "Courage Ladder," students advance step-by-step from standing on one foot with eyes closed to blindfolded dodging of ball strikes, using controlled exposure to acceptable risk to cultivate psychological resilience [5]. Additionally, a growth portfolio is established to record each breakthrough moment, with video playback used to display the trajectory of development, allowing students to clearly understand their own progress and pace.

4.2. Creating immersive game-based scenarios

Develop themed role-playing teaching and training formats, such as interpreting poomsae (forms) routines as martial arts novels. Use laser swords on the training ground as ancient weapons for imagined combat. In group activities, establish team-based flag capture competitions that emphasize tactical cooperation rather than individual performance to relieve pressure caused by confrontation. Utilize augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technologies to create fantasy spaces where students can enter digital environments to battle various cartoon characters. Regularly hold "Night Elf" glow-in-the-dark training sessions to harness the magical effects of lighting, creating a relaxed and pleasant psychological atmosphere. Transform monotonous strength training into fun physical fitness challenge games, and set up challenging obstacle courses with a scoring system.

4.3. Implementing personalized guidance and intervention

Establish a psychological profiling and assessment system to identify types of anxiety sources. For visual learners, increase the use of diagrammatic explanations; for auditory learners, strengthen command rhythm guidance. Form peer-support groups using a buddy system, with technically proficient senior students serving as safety supervisors. Employ the "sandwich feedback method"—first affirm strengths, then offer suggestions, and finally encourage attempts—to avoid trauma caused by negative evaluations. Design parallel course modules with selectable difficulty levels, allowing students temporarily avoiding high-impact activities to switch to gentler training such as

Tai Chi push hands. Teachers wear emotion badges to convey positive signals in real-time, using nonverbal behaviors to communicate trust.

4.4. Improving the protective support system

Upgrade intelligent wearable devices to achieve real-time biological monitoring, with heart rate overload warnings automatically triggering protection programs to pause training. Install intelligent sensing mats that automatically detect falls and deploy protective airbags. Equip graded protective gear sets to provide freedom of choice for individuals with varying levels of courage [6]. Establish safety island buffer zones for temporarily withdrawing and calming down individuals experiencing emotional outbursts. Develop a parent-monitoring app that synchronizes classroom footage and physiological indicators to establish a home-school collaborative comfort mechanism. Regularly organize emergency drills to cultivate crisis response abilities, making safety protection a natural conditioned reflex rather than an additional burden.

5. Conclusion

This paper reveals the manifestations of students' fear psychology in Taekwondo instruction, particularly in confrontation training, high-difficulty movements, competition scenarios, and physical contact. Through analysis, it clarifies that the emergence of these fears results from the interplay of multiple factors, including individual physical and mental qualities, the teaching process, training environment, and social influences. To effectively eliminate students' fear psychology, specific strategies are proposed: constructing a gradual adaptation system, creating game-based scenarios, implementing personalized guidance, and improving protective support. These strategies can systematically help students progressively overcome fear, enhance their learning experience, and increase participation. Therefore, in Taekwondo instruction, great importance should be attached to actively adopting effective measures to eliminate students' fear psychology, fostering a safe, positive, and enjoyable learning atmosphere, promoting students' physical and mental health development, and ensuring the promotion and effectiveness of Taekwondo teaching.

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