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Combat Sports in the Process of Rehabilitation of a Socially Maladjusted Person in the Light of Scientific Research

Abstract: The literature on this subject offers a number of suggestions regarding the participation of incarcerated individuals in sports rehabilitation programs. Furthermore, if this specific human activity is further specified and focused on combat sports, it may cause social unrest and anxiety threatening the sense of security. There are opinions that sports programs for socially maladjusted individuals may potentially increase crime rates by grouping people with the same criminal problems, thereby reinforcing antisocial tendencies and facilitating the development of criminal subcultures. Therefore, it appears necessary to define the role of combat sports in the rehabilitation process of socially maladjusted individuals. To what extent do they contribute to correcting the personal competencies of individuals who violate the law? Seeking answers to the questions at hand, an in-depth search was made of foreign and domestic research reports published mainly in the English-language literature on the subject. The scientific communications used included data confirming as well as denying the rehabilitative function of combat sports, and their analysis made it possible to formulate conclusions. It turns out that combat sports in the process of creative rehabilitation do not become an autonomous or universal means of resocialization. They can complement the existing educational activities taking into account the potential of the persons concerned, their penitentiary formal-legal category as well as the conditions and personnel capabilities of the institution. An important issue in this unique form of rehabilitation carried out through sport is the skillful management of the peculiar potential of socially maladjusted individuals.

Keywords: resocialization, combat sports, criminal, sports.

Introduction

It is difficult to clearly address two common statements: “Sport equals health” and “sport educates”. On the one hand, this human activity can perfectly support the healing process, but on the other hand, it can deliberately violate it. The same is true of the correlation of sports with education, where this form of human activity, on the one hand, contributes to the promotion of mental and social growth, shapes character and essential life skills of a person, while on the other hand, it can promote lawless behaviors and moral decay, and teach the worst educational patterns. There is no doubt that the proper direction of this form of human activity depends on the quality of relationships: between coach and athlete, athlete and athlete, sports official and coach, or fans and athletes. “Educational situations are not created by movement alone, nor by the intensity of physical effort, nor even by years of systematic training. Education is the introduction into a world of norms, good customs, values, a certain kind of social sensitivity, and behavioral patterns within these domains” (Osiński, 2011, p. 63).

The literature on this subject offers a number of suggestions regarding the participation of incarcerated individuals in sports rehabilitation programs. However, reducing the debate to the role of combat sports in resocialization may raise public concern and spark fears that threaten the general sense of safety. R.M. Kalina argues that the choice of sporting activities in resocialization should be made with care. He believes that disciplines associated with aggressive behavior should not be introduced into creative resocialization. Sports such as boxing, rugby, karate, ice hockey, handball, judo, wrestling, and football, in his view, carry a risk of reinforcing such behaviors. Kalina considers non-contact disciplines—such as volleyball—to be acceptable for use in the resocialization of inmates (Kalina, 1991, p. 257; quoted from Klimek, 2006, pp. 67–68).

If increased aggression is seen as a sign of psychological dysfunction during personality development, then—drawing on instinct theory—sport may offer a socially acceptable way to reduce aggression. In low mood states, physical activity can help release the inner tension that often accompanies such emotions, leading to a calming effect. Likewise, self-discipline—an inherent part of sport—can also moderate aggressive behavior. This raises a critical question: how should one interpret the claim that combat sports encourage the development of aggression among their practitioners? To what extent does intense sports participation, such as karate training, reduce aggression levels in those involved? (Jarvis, 2003, p. 55)

Partial support for M. Jarvis’s view—that martial arts help channel aggression by instilling the rules, regulations, and underlying philosophy of the discipline, thereby positively influencing the outward behavior of socially maladjusted individuals—comes from the study by J. P. Andrews and G. J. Andrews (2003).

They assessed twenty demoralized youths aged 10 to 17 who were voluntarily training in taekwondo. Their findings showed that when physical training was integrated with mental development and exposure to the sport's philosophical principles, aggression in these young offenders was significantly reduced. However, in the absence of mental and emotional engagement, such training could actually increase criminal and aggressive tendencies (Trulson, 1986).

Resocialization through physical activity "is aimed at developing specific personal competencies and, in this way, at shaping identity parameters" (Konopczyński, 2009, p. 238). It enables individuals to take on "social roles that differ from those they previously occupied—roles that have all the attributes of active, culturally accepted forms of self-expression, allowing individuals to publicly present their strengths and capabilities" (Konopczyński, 2009, pp. 238–239).

The aim of this study is to attempt to capture the rationale for educational activities in the field of physical culture pedagogy and to incorporate physical culture sciences in the process of effective, multidirectional social rehabilitation. The wide range of divergent research and social viewpoints on this issue prompted the author of the present study to explore the role of combat sports in the resocialization of socially maladjusted individuals based on available scientific research results and theoretical studies. To what extent do combat sports contribute to correcting the personal competencies of individuals who violate the law? What is the overview and analysis of scientific literature on the use of combat sports in resocialization pedagogy, psychology, and sociology? What are the mechanisms by which combat sports influence individuals exhibiting socially maladaptive behavior (e.g., impact on aggression, self-control, self-esteem)? What empirical research findings on the effectiveness of combat sports in resocialization programs (e.g., in juvenile detention centers, prisons, and correctional facilities) can be found in the literature? What are the potential benefits and risks of introducing combat sports into educational and resocialization activities? This question was examined through an in-depth review of both international and domestic research literature, primarily in English. The selection included sources from countries with substantial experience in the use of sport-based resocialization methods for socially maladjusted individuals, and took into account how frequently these sources were cited in relevant studies. The scientific communications used included data both supporting and contradicting the rehabilitative function of combat sports.

The selection of literature was deliberate and problem-oriented. The focus was on publications that directly address the topic of combat sports as a tool supporting the resocialization process, in particular in the context of socially maladjusted individuals. Both empirical research as well as theoretical and review studies in the field of resocialization pedagogy, psychology, sociology of sport, and physical education were taken into account. The literature was selected by searching reputable databases (Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, EBSCOhost, ProQuest, PubMed, CEON, BazHum, and Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Cyfrowa) using

keywords such as: *resocialization, combat sports, aggression, social maladjustment, education through sport, martial arts in rehabilitation and social reintegration*. The selection was made on the basis of an analysis of titles, abstracts, and then full texts. The “snowballing” method was also used – an analysis of the literature references of key publications.

In order to minimize reporting errors, clearly defined criteria for exclusion and inclusion of publications were applied (e.g., papers that were not peer-reviewed, papers of low methodological quality, or not directly related to the issue of rehabilitation were rejected), a methodological framework for a narrative review with systematic elements was used, transparency was maintained in documenting the selection process – reference lists were created and the reasons for rejecting items were recorded, and sources were triangulated and data verified by comparing the results of various studies.

A key criterion for the selection of publications for this article was their substantive relevance (the papers had to address the relationship between combat sports and educational or resocialization processes), empirical content (preference was given to studies based on data from resocialization centers, prisons, juvenile detention centers, etc.), methodological reliability (studies that did not meet research standards were excluded), topicality (publications from the last 10–15 years were preferred, although older publications with a significant impact on the development of the topic were also included), and presence in reputable sources (indexed journals, peer-reviewed scientific monographs).

The Empirical Dimension of Resocialization Through Combat Sports

In 2010, D. R. Lubans, R. C. Plotnikoff, and N. J. Lubans searched six electronic databases—EMBASE, OVID MEDLINE, PsychINFO, PubMed, Scopus, and SPORTDiscus—for peer-reviewed articles to answer their primary research question: what impact do physical activity programs have on the social and emotional wellbeing (e.g. depression, anxiety, self-acceptance, self-esteem, resilience) of at-risk children and adolescents aged 4–18? (Lubans et al., 2012). All identified studies were assessed for risk of bias using the CONSORT (Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials) criteria. Ultimately, 15 studies were included in the analysis: seven focused on outdoor activities, seven evaluated interventions based on sports skill development (Basile et al., 1995; Goodway and Rudisill, 1996; Tester et al., 1999; Bonnette et al., 2001; Palermo et al., 2006; Maiano et al., 2007; Robinson et al., 2009), and one examined the effects of a physical fitness program (Collingwood et al., 1994).

The analysis revealed improvements in participants’ self-esteem, self-acceptance, coping skills, self-perception, feelings of alienation, and self-control

(Lubans et al., pp. 4–9). Sports training implemented during these interventions—including karate—contributed positively to the character and physical fitness of the younger participants. However, among adolescent boys with behavioral and conduct disorders, improvements in self-esteem and self-acceptance were more difficult to achieve. This was likely due to the nature of the activities (e.g. shooting basketball hoops), which allowed participants to attain a satisfactory skill level without significant physical effort (Lubans et al., p. 9).

Notably, variables such as self-acceptance, self-worth, and resilience—understood here as involving self-awareness, a sense of belonging, problem-solving abilities, and critical thinking—improved. These are considered protective factors against mental illness, which is particularly relevant for at-risk youth. The authors of the meta-analysis concluded that there is credible evidence to suggest that outdoor adventure (educational) programs—and to a lesser extent, sport and fitness interventions—may enhance the social and emotional wellbeing of at-risk adolescents (Lubans, 2012, p. 9).

In northern Belgium's Flanders region, a study conducted in 2010 examined the effects of the "Boxing Upward" resocialization program, focusing on the link between structured boxing training and social sensitivity among marginalized youth. Research material was collected through direct observation of training sessions (9 visits), as well as in-depth interviews, focus groups, and surveys (11 visits). In total, 35 individual interviews were conducted with youth participants ($n = 15$), coaches ($n = 13$), and "key informants" ($n = 7$), alongside focus group discussions involving coaches ($n = 5$), young participants ($n = 5$), lead coaches and coordinators ($n = 2$), and project leaders from other sites where the program was implemented ($n = 12$). The study found that the traditional sports training model—centered on competitive performance—was less effective when working with juvenile offenders. It often imposed high technical standards that only a few participants could meet. The findings suggest that sport can play an indirect role in secondary socialization, but overly rigid or hierarchical structures may hinder the desired changes in attitudes and behaviors. Voluntary participation and a more informal, recreational approach to the discipline proved more effective in promoting positive personality development among antisocial youth (Haudenhuyse et al., 2009).

The Teddy Bear Clinic for Abused Children (TTBC), a non-profit organization based in Johannesburg, South Africa, focuses on the protection and rehabilitation of children who have experienced abuse of any kind. The organization runs the 12-week SPARC program (Support Program for Abuse Reactive Children), designed for children and adolescents who have committed sexual offenses. As part of SPARC, participants undergo the Fight with Insight (FWI) component, which combines boxing training with cognitive-behavioral group therapy. Upon completing the full SPARC program, participants can continue training through the

external Box Office Boxing Gym initiative. TTBC also provides support groups for the parents of children enrolled in the FWI programs (Draper et al., 2013, p. 520).

Researchers C.E. Draper, S. Errington, S. Omar, and S. Makhita (2013, pp. 520–521) conducted a qualitative case study evaluation of the FWI program. Their aim was to provide a detailed description of the program, assess its outcomes, explore the mechanisms believed to underlie its effectiveness, and monitor the factors influencing its success. They examined both the results achieved and the resources and processes employed, paying particular attention to participant needs and how effectively those needs were being met. Data were gathered from multiple sources, with meaningful engagement from the program's stakeholders forming a key part of the evaluation.

Focus groups were organized, comprising 5–6 individuals per group: FWI participants ($n = 17$), their parents ($n = 7$), and a control group of young offenders ($n = 10$) who took part only in cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), without any involvement in alternative activities such as boxing.

In addition to reduced rates of recidivism, the evaluation highlighted important intrapersonal and interpersonal changes observed among FWI participants. Intrapersonal effects included the redirection of cognitive processes and defense mechanisms, which led to increased awareness among participants about the factors driving their negative behaviors. Other key indicators included the rebuilding of self-esteem and self-confidence, improved problem-solving and decision-making skills, better anger and impulse control, and a greater sense of accountability for one's behavior and choices (Draper et al., 2013, pp. 522–523).

Interpersonal outcomes included improved relationships with parents, better adaptation within local communities, stronger conflict resolution skills, and the development of trust between participants and group facilitators (Draper et al., 2013, p. 523).

Violence served as a key variable in both the FWI and CBT groups. Participants in the FWI group reported greater improvements in anger management and aggression control—a result likely linked to the clear distinction drawn between the rules of boxing and street fighting. An interesting observation was the difference in empathy levels between the two groups. Participants in the CBT group generally demonstrated higher empathy, potentially due to the narrower focus of the therapy. In contrast, FWI participants were simultaneously engaged across all four program pillars, which may have diluted their focus on emotional awareness (Draper et al. 2013, p. 528).

In studying the relationship between combat sports and the social reintegration of offenders, researchers employed a biographical case study, structured interviews, and participant observation. According to Z. Łagosz (2014), this combination allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the subject, capturing the emotional and psychological responses of individuals within their specific social contexts.

The case in question concerned Tomasz Garguła, a decorated boxer serving a prison sentence in the Tarnów and Wołów correctional facilities. To qualify for a resocialization program, he had to demonstrate a genuine commitment to change, which he did by returning to school, achieving strong academic performance, and maintaining perfect attendance—all seen as a first step toward resocialization through sport. After eight years in prison, Garguła, once actively involved in the inmate gang subculture, earned a reputation as a cooperative and disciplined inmate. He reliably followed orders, achieved an academic average of 4.44, and recorded 100% attendance. This led to his acceptance into the sports resocialization program and the issuance of a professional boxing license — a precedent in the Polish prison system (Łagosz, 2014, p. 791).

Combat sports, particularly MMA, Krav Maga, kickboxing, and boxing, often mirror the mindset and values of street fighting, making them highly appealing to incarcerated individuals. Securing a boxing license required Garguła to undergo a series of medical and neurological tests, including an EEG. So strong was his motivation to return to the sport that simply learning about the possibility led him to begin training on his own¹. Within six months, he had restored his physical fitness and returned to his competitive weight of 74 kg down from 95 kg prior to training (Łagosz, 2014, p. 794).

As noticeable progress was made in his resocialization, prison staff submitted a request for early release. Following a positive court review, the release process was initiated. This case demonstrates that “Sport can unquestionably serve as a tool for social inclusion, as evidenced by the complete transformation of inmate Tomasz Garguła” (Łagosz, 2014, p. 795).

Coaches involved in sports-based resocialization of offenders believe that boxing—more than other disciplines—promotes emotional stability and self-awareness. It helps channel behaviors that were previously socially unacceptable, enforcing strict adherence to rules—and thus becomes a form of sporting activity that aligns with the expectations of offenders, embedding a coded system of conduct. Where once they were punished for illegal street fighting, offenders now receive positive reinforcement for regulated, purposeful combat—at the very least, through a sense of accomplishment (Haudenhuyse et al., 2012).

Further insights come from a study examining emotional tension among 98 athletes: 20 practicing Kyokushin karate, 19 practicing jujutsu, 19 football players, and 20 basketball players. The findings showed that combat sports—despite their reputation for aggression—do not provoke more frequent or more intense socially undesirable behaviors than other disciplines (Momola et al. 2016).

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¹ Because combat sports training is officially prohibited in prisons, Garguła practiced secretly in his cell, using a mattress as a punching bag, towels as makeshift gloves, and fellow inmates as sparring partners.

Combat Sports and Social Maladjustment

The literature contains claims that sport has a relatively minor effect on improving the behavior of offenders (Coalter, 2008; Hartmann and Kwauk, 2011; Haudenhuyse et al., 2013; Collins and Haudenhuyse, 2015; Coakley, 2016; Spaaij et al., 2016; Woods et al., 2017). These studies report that, despite inmates actively participating in sports programs, there were no meaningful reductions in aggressive behavior or substance use. Only slight improvements were observed in rates of arrest and conviction (Smith, 2004).

However, such controversial claims—that sports activity, including combat sports, has minimal or even negative rehabilitative impact—are difficult to accept in light of longstanding practice. In the United States, programs that promote creative resocialization through sport have been in place since the 1870s. Following the Attica prison riots in the USA nearly a century later, sports activities were formally sanctioned as part of resocialization programs. Many experts have argued that the four-day prisoner takeover of the facility was, in part, the result of a lack of sports training opportunities, which could have served as a form of social control, a constructive use of free time, a means of building healthy social relationships, and a way to maintain prisoners' physical and mental health (Alexander, 2017).

According to M. Jarvis (2003, p. 55), combat sports do not stimulate the development of aggressive behavior among participants. He demonstrated that increased sports activity among karate practitioners led to a reduction in their aggression levels.

Similar conclusions were drawn by K. Daniels and E. Thornton (1990), who found a negative correlation between hostility and the duration of karate training. Using the Buss-Durkee Aggression Inventory, they demonstrated that tendency for subjects to react with physical violence decreases with increasing training experience ($r = -0.64$). T. A. Nosanchuk (1981; quoted from Jarvis 2003, p. 55) also reached similar conclusions.

Other empirical findings come from research aimed at analyzing the impact of sports interventions on youth crime and antisocial behavior. The "Get Sport" program was implemented by seven sports/youth clubs in three cities and targeted individuals aged 14–25. The study focused particularly on: (1) the effectiveness of a boxing-based intervention in the West Midlands (an area with high rates of violent crime, gang activity, and antisocial behavior); (2) the outcomes of a multi-sport program at a young offenders' institution in South Midlands (mainly football-based, conducted in collaboration with the local community); and (3) the role of a multi-sport rehabilitation program run by a charity in local sports/youth clubs. Between 2010 and 2015, interviews were conducted with 80 respondents—60 program

participants and 20 coaches or project leaders. The results suggest that sports activities (including combat sports) can support the social integration of individuals undergoing “social reintegration”, largely through the interpersonal acceptance they experience (Morgan and Parker, 2017; Parker et al., 2017).

Reflecting on the Resocialization Function of Combat Sports

Public opinion on the use of sports training in prisons remains divided. Even among professionals involved in the resocialization of socially maladjusted individuals, there are differing views on whether inmates should participate in sports training. Some claim that penitentiary sports programs of all kinds help offenders improve their criminal skills while simultaneously reinforcing antisocial tendencies (Szaszkiewicz, 1997; Feinstein et al., 2005; Coakley, 2016; Woods et al., 2017).

A key element in the resocialization process is the ability to harness the potential of socially maladjusted individuals and manage it in a way that redirects their previously destructive, socially unacceptable behaviors into constructive, prosocial outcomes. This kind of human resource management requires a high level of professionalism and continuous training of staff. For example, behaviors that on the street would have been regarded as social failures—often due to a lack of self-control—can, in the boxing ring, become sources of public achievement. Utilizing an individual’s traits such as character, temperament, combativeness, physical strength, agility, and speed during boxing training can help channel their potential and encourage them to operate within a world of regulated combat sports. This may lead to greater behavioral control (Konopczyński, 2013, p. 212).

Sport, due to its inherent nature, can either stimulate or moderate specific emotions, differentiate cognitive processes, regulate motivation to act, influence human responses, and shape attitudes (Gracz, Sankowski, 2000). This is why it is crucial to assign appropriate forms of *physical activity-based resocialization* to specific types of offenders or rehabilitation groups. Such selection may be guided by E. Kretschmer’s typology (Mościskier, 2001, p. 144) (pyknic, leptosomic, athletic, dysplastic), M. Radochoński’s categorization of antisocial disorders (e.g. attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, conduct disorder, antisocial personality disorder), or the rehabilitation group typologies proposed by A. Rejzner and T. Bulenda (1985). Somatic types of offenders (ectomorphic, endomorphic, mesomorphic) may also be taken into account (Mościskier, 2001, p. 145).

It should also be remembered that sport will only fulfill its resocialization role if it is made accessible to a broad audience that varies in needs, abilities, gender, and demographic background. Accessibility here also refers to the appropriate level of difficulty of a given discipline. S. Lyng’s research (2005) indicates that individuals often become involved in crime because of this type of *entertainment* is more

accessible than organized sport, especially elite sports disciplines. Therefore, it is essential that inmates perceive their chosen sport as a voluntary pursuit—one that offers them agency in how they train and compete, and is viewed as innovative: something new, engaging, emotionally stimulating, and a welcome distraction from boredom. It is equally important that the environment in which physical activity-based rehabilitation occurs is safe, inclusive, and supportive. Such a space should be neutral—a place where participants feel confident expressing themselves, developing their abilities, and maturing at their own pace (Martos-Garcia et al., 2009).

Prospects for Resocialization Through Combat Sports

It is increasingly recognized that successful contemporary resocialization is closely tied to transgression—the ability to move beyond existing boundaries—and to creativity, understood as the capacity to think and act in new and unconventional ways. Preparing individuals for life after incarceration requires sustained investment in their development and a commitment to embedding them within the realities of modern society, shaped by ongoing civilizational progress. An inmate must be an active participant in this process: fully engaged in their own growth and able to approach change with openness and flexibility. For institutional resocialization to generate positive and lasting outcomes, certain conditions must be met. These include: effective organization (with sport established as a permanent component of creative rehabilitation, rather than used merely as a tool for control and discipline); access to specialized support (through highly qualified sports professionals), and opportunities for broad social engagement (e.g. conducting training sessions and matches in local clubs, with local teams (Barnasiewicz and Noszczyk-Barnasiewicz, 2019; Siemionow 2022)).

These goals can be realized when supported by an institutional culture grounded in cooperation, cross-sector integration, and the sharing of external resources. Relying exclusively on in-house assets makes it difficult to restructure the system within a short timeframe. Resocialization institutions often lack the material and human resources necessary for meaningful innovation in the realm of sport. As a result, drawing on external partners and infrastructure is often quicker, more cost-effective, and more accessible—and it aligns with the model of *socially inclusive* resocialization (Siemionow, 2022).

Furthermore, the development of interest in physical culture can be linked to new technologies, such as information technology, and to modern forms of physical activity, including combat sports like boxing and mixed martial arts, which have emerged as more relevant alternatives to outdated forms of sport. Participation can also take place virtually: by following current sports news, publishing personal blogs that facilitate the exchange of experiences related to physical activity, consulting regularly with physical fitness professionals, or managing websites

with results from inter-prison competitions or matches against local teams. The integration of modern information and communication technologies into the resocialization process not only helps reshape the attitudes of socially maladjusted individuals, but also equips them with new skills that can prove valuable upon release (Siemionow, 2022, p. 210).

Conclusions

Public apprehension regarding the use of combat sports in the resocialization of socially maladjusted individuals often stems from limited societal awareness, shaped by negative life assumptions and stereotypes. Such lack of understanding frequently leads to intolerance, undermining the legitimacy of combat sports as a tool for creative resocialization. However, if sport—including combat disciplines — can facilitate positive physical, psychological, and social change among individuals who have violated the law, then it can serve as a meaningful and effective method of educational influence within correctional systems. Naturally, the introduction of sport into prison settings does not, by itself, make it an autonomous or universal method of social reintegration. Rather, it should be viewed as a complement to existing educational programs—one that is responsive to the interests and capacities of participants, the legal and formal correctional categories they fall under, and the available institutional resources and staffing. Repeat offenses, such as acts of robbery, often reveal both a failure to internalize socially acceptable coping strategies and a tendency toward primitive, reactive approaches to conflict resolution, such as impulsive street violence. Yet such behaviors may also indicate latent potential, as seen in the trajectory of individuals such as Mike Tyson. These actions, often emotional and unregulated, lack the structure that would make their outcomes predictable or socially acceptable. Providing such individuals with the opportunity to engage in structured boxing training under the guidance of competent coaches can help redirect their previously uncontrolled aggression into determined, goal-oriented discipline—fostering not only athletic improvement but broader personal development. By learning to follow the rules of sport—including restrictions on illegal moves and the strategic pacing of competition — fistfighting is rechanneled into a codified, rule-bound form of “boxing as fencing,” conducted within the framework of recognized athletic norms.

Combat sports, as part of broader physical activity initiatives, can therefore function as a valuable supplement to penitentiary interventions, with cooperation with a range of other strategies and sectors in the resocialization of inmates (as confirmed by the vast majority of scientific studies cited above). When carried out in partnership with sport leaders and embedded within socially engaged programs, this approach can yield clear, positive outcomes. Its success is closely tied to sound program design, the appropriate institutional setting, and adequate investment

in necessary infrastructure (Cameron, MacDougall, 2000). Sustained success also requires continuous monitoring of participants' progress, skillful management of their individual potential, and the setting of realistic, meaningful objectives.

The diversity of physical specializations within combat sports does not restrict access, on the contrary, it enables participants to choose activities that align with their interests, aptitudes, and personal goals. Such involvement may even shape a rehabilitative "career path," where interest in physical activity is nurtured through physical education and then maintained, in various forms, during incarceration. This engagement supports mental, physical, and general health—all of which are fundamental to the institutional resocialization process. Moreover, the extent to which a socially maladjusted person engages in combat sports may directly influence their behavior and social functioning, both during imprisonment and after release. It can serve as the foundation for rebuilding a prosocial identity, evolving from spontaneous participation to fully professional commitment. Any method of resocialization that produces positive results offers hope to those who are open to change. Rather than imposing a rigid framework, it offers opportunities for voluntary participation—a chance to begin again.

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