

## TECHNIQUES OF SPECIAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE FUNCTION OF PROTECTING POLICE OFFICERS

Đurica Amanović<sup>1</sup>, Milija Ljubisavljević<sup>2</sup>, Željko Nikač<sup>1</sup>,  
Suzana Talijan<sup>1</sup>, Nenad Koropanovski<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Academy of Criminological and Police Studies, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia

<sup>2</sup>Ministry of Interior, Republic of Serbia

### Abstract

In this paper, the authors have analyzed the practical implementation of methods of specialized training in physical fitness (SFO) as a means of legally permitted control activities used by the police force, that is, the method of physical control for the purpose of control of physical resistance from the suspect. There has been analyzed a total of 350 situations in which the use of physical force was justified. Special attention has been devoted to the definition of force, the quantity and nature of resistance that must be overcome, as well as the degree of force a policeman requires in order to neutralize unlawful physical action of a suspect, to be able to manage (control) a given situation. Also in the paper, there has been stressed the need to have a clearly codified and generally accepted set of rules to govern the use of force, as guarantee of ethical and lawful enforcement of police authority.

**Keywords:** resistance, physical control, method, specialized physical training.

### Introduction

The main duty of the police is to enforce effective law and maintain law and order. One of the necessary and unavoidable aspects of this duty is also the use of force (means of coercion), naturally, when necessary. The Police Force Law<sup>1</sup> regulates the use of force, which may be used only when it is absolutely necessary for the purpose of achieving a legitimate goal for security purposes, and the enforcement of rules and regulations. The principles and instructions regulating the use of force (means of coercion) are defined in the provisions of the Police Force Law, Rules on the Conditions and Method of Implementation of Means of Coercion<sup>2</sup>, Rules on the Method of Performance of Police Duties<sup>3</sup>, Instruction on Police Ethics and the Method of Performance of Police Duties<sup>4</sup> as well as other international and national standards.

In the Rules on the Conditions and Method of Implementation of Means of Coercion, there have been defined conditions for use of means of coercion and the method of use of means of coercion (use of force), and especially principles of necessity and proportionality, its duration, limitations and responsibilities after the use of force. Means of coercion are: physical

---

<sup>1</sup> The Official Gazette of the R. Serbia, No. 101/2005

<sup>2</sup> The Official Gazette of the R. Serbia, No. 133/2004

<sup>3</sup> The Official Gazette of the R. Serbia, No. 27/2007

<sup>4</sup> The Official Gazette of the R. Serbia, No. 41/2003

force, the official police stick (Brit. truncheon), means of restraining, special vehicles, specially trained dogs, mounted police, means of blocking, chemical substances and firearms (Art. 1 paragraph 2). Also, it has been provided that police staff can use force in the manner that will ensure that an official assignment is carried out with as few damaging consequences for the person that force is used against, and only during the time in which there exist legally justified reasons due to which the coercion (force) is used (Art. 2). Furthermore, in the case of each use of coercion (force), police staff must in written form make out a report to their commanding officer, not later than 24 hours from the moment of the use of coercion (Art. 31). However, police practice shows that there is a very wide and unsystematic approach to the reporting of use of means of coercion (force) by the police staff.

In this paper there has been used a modern definition of resistance which provides a good foundation for concise and good quality reporting by the police. The control of force is used by the police staff to manage a situation and control the resistance of the suspect. When verbal communication proves to be unsuccessful, a police officer must plan for the possibility of using methods of physical control as the mildest form of coercion. The choice of kind and quantity of force should be based on of the quantity of resistance used by the suspect, as well as the circumstances of the given situation. Therefore, the purpose of the use of physical force or the methods of physical control is to overcome resistance of the suspect. Resistance is considered to be all kinds of resistance of the suspect (passive or active) to the commands of the police, attack on policemen or avoidance measures and activities that the police announce or undertake in accordance with the provisions of the Law. It is understood that the kind and quantity of force used by the police should be based or be dependent on the kind of resistance used by the suspect as well as on other essential factors and circumstances of the given situation that may influence the choice of kind and quantity of the force used.

The tactical solution (form and scope of force) chosen by the police staff should be based on the form and scope of resistance used by the suspect, as well as on the other conditions and circumstances of the given situation (quantity of resistance, existence of firearms, seriousness and nature of the criminal action, traits of the suspect, environment and other). The assessment of the danger caused by the degree of resistance should be based on the technical and tactical knowledge of the police officer as well as on adequate ability of endurance (procedures responsible for the endurance ability in the structuring and control of implementation of methods of control, biochemical and physiological characteristics).

Specialized physical training<sup>5</sup> is composed of a great number of methods<sup>6</sup>, its distinct separate groups and combinations that are carried out in unpredictable and variable situations against different adversaries. Training in this fitness is performed through training by stages, namely, elementary, specialized and situational training (Milošević, M., I sir. 1989). Each of the stages has its specific goals and tasks. Elementary and specialized training teach basic

---

<sup>5</sup> Special Physical Education (SPE) is a scientific and teaching area that is present at all levels of police education. The largest portion of the SPE curricula is aimed at identifying and mastering techniques of several martial art systems (*judo, karate, aikido*), as well as on their application by means of *jujutsu* techniques, in different, specific working and living conditions of law enforcement officers. Special Physical Education therefore presents a complex self-defence system which consists of devised and systematically arranged techniques of defence and attack, their variants and combinations, which are practiced in order to be used in a specific situation, i.e. when performing certain police duties and taking other lawful measures related to police activities (e.g. techniques for physical control over a suspected offender, etc.).

<sup>6</sup> Specific motor skills (motor algorithms) or specific type of posture, movement and elaborated combat movements that are precisely defined in terms of both their execution and the related terminology (Jovanović, S., 1992).

conceptual algorithms, practiced conceptual and certain situational algorithms, while the task of situational training is the implementation of already practiced algorithms and programs, with a view to maintaining full control over the suspect. Physical control comprises a number of methods of control (SFO), such as lenient escort of persons, pressures and tight holds on vital places, the lever method, as well as “destruction of the suspect”, that is, use of dynamic methods such as punches, throws, and other. In the educational structure of the Criminal-Police Academy, special physical training is in the group of compulsory subjects in the Department of Police Studies. Special physical training is an integral part of physical education and sports (kinesinology)<sup>7</sup> and with its contents and goals is directly connected with development and achievement of a higher level of health, labor, special abilities and knowledge that are of particular significance for efficient and successful achievement of professional duties of the Interior Ministry staff.

The current interest and significance of the research is due to all the more frequent attacks on police staff (active and severe aggression), unsatisfactory criminal, and justice and misdemeanor protection of police staff. According to the statistical data of the Interior Ministry data, attacks on police staff, in the last few years, amount to somewhat less than a half of all attacks (Ignjatović, 2006). According to the same source, the largest percentage (42%), compared with the tasks carried out by policemen in the assault on their persons, took place while they were maintaining law and order (in the period 1993-2003).

### **The Topic and Methodology**

Our research maintains a purely contemplative position toward the problem of research, and as such represents a systemic non-experimental observation, that is, a qualitative and quantitative realistic implementation of methods (SFO) in the performance of operative police duties. Therefore, the purpose of our research is the analysis of implementation of force as a means of coercion, the most severe of the authorizations of the police force as per provisions of the Law, meaning use of physical strength (methods of physical control) as the mildest means of coercion. Using physical strength (The Police Act), means the use of various holds (terminologically and scientifically more accurately - methods) in combat skills or other methods on the body of another person (the suspect), with a view to resisting assault or overcoming resistance by inflicting least harmful consequences.

The research should provide data that will contribute to the more efficient training (education) and more successful performance of professional duties. For the purpose of this paper, there have been analyzed 350 situations, by random choice, on use of physical strength in a number of random selected police stations in the territory of the Republic of Serbia in the period 2010/2011. Analyzed situations in which means of coercion have been used, and presented quantitative descriptive statistical data (the absolute and relative frequencies) as shown in the table and graph.

---

<sup>7</sup> Nowadays, we still seem to be facing confusion, both in terms of terminology and the very essence, regarding the subject matter of this scientific discipline. It is sometimes included among the humanities, and sometimes regarded as part of medical science. The decision made by the National Council of Higher Education of Serbia from 2006 changed the name of the scientific area from physical culture to physical education and sport.

## **Results and Discussion**

From the total of analyzed situations, where physical strength had been used as a means of coercion, there have been classified current degrees of resistance into four (4) differentiated groups: passive resistance; defensive resistance; active aggression; and severe aggression. Physical control comprises a number of methods of SFO, such as lenient escort of the suspect, pressure and tight holds on vital points, the method of lever, as well as methods of “destruction of the suspect”, such as blows, throws, and other. Naturally, choice of method and the intensity of force depend on the quantity of resistance and the danger, which might evolve from it.

Besides that, implemented method of physical control of each individual policeman depends on the level of his previous training, experience and knowledge in specialized physical training (education), criminalistics tactics, methodic, staff, psychology, and other. By further analysis of current situations on use of physical strength for the purpose of overcoming resistance, there have been singled out the methods of SFO used in this respect.

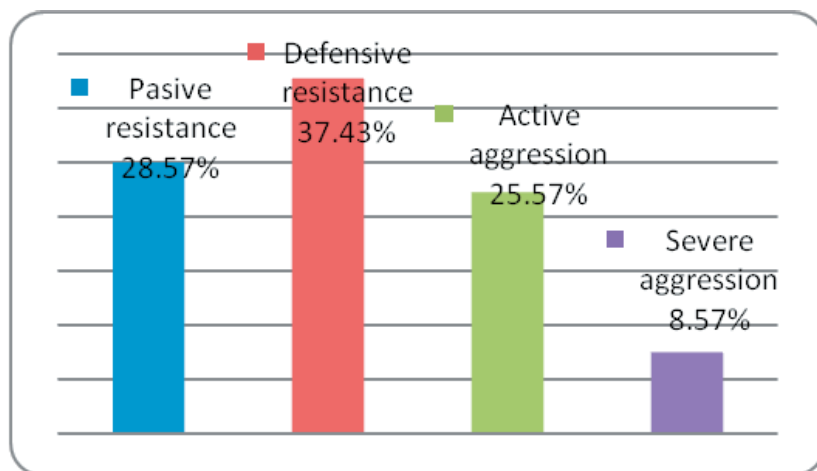
### **The Analysis of the Level of Resistance**

Of the total number of situations in which means of coercion have been used, that is, use of physical strength as a means of coercion, there were selected 350 situations that have satisfied the permitted procedure provided by Law. Current resistance in analyzed reports was manifested in some of stated levels of resistance shown in **Table 1** and **Graph 1**.

**Table 1.** The level of resistance of the suspect stated in analyzed situations

| <b>Level of resistance</b>  | <b>Absolute frequency (f)</b> | <b>Relative frequency (f %)</b> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Passive resistance</b>   | 100                           | 28.57                           |
| <b>Defensive resistance</b> | 131                           | 37.43                           |
| <b>Active aggression</b>    | 89                            | 25.43                           |
| <b>Severe aggression</b>    | 30                            | 8.57                            |

On the basis of the received results it can be concluded that from the total number of situations (350), defensive resistance was manifested in most of the cases - 131 or 37.43%. Active aggression toward police staff was recorded in 89 situations or 25.43% situations. Of that number, in 3 situations, assault on a colleague or other person had to be prevented. Of the total number of situations, 100 situations or 28.57% are attributed to passive resistance of the suspect. In 30 situations or 8.57%, severe aggression on police staff was recorded. It is important to state that 2 situations of that total number are attributed to assault with a firearm (pistol), 2 situations assault with a knife, 1 situation assault with a wooden bat, and 1 situation assault with a bottleneck.



**Graph 1.** Level of resistance of the suspect

### The Analysis of the Implemented Methods of SFO

Some situations are resolved by successful communication, verbal address (by warning and command) as well as by binding the suspect's hands/arms, but when these methods prove to be insufficient, the police use physical force (methods of SFO), as the mildest means of coercion (easy and hard control). Analyzing the current situations in which means of coercion had been used as means of controlling the suspect, there were noted individual methods of SFO, namely the lever method, the method of inflicting blows, throws, pressure and tight holds on vital places, as well as handcuffing. The methods are shown in **Table 2 below**.

**Table 2.** Methods of SFO police used to control resistance of the suspect in analyzed situations.

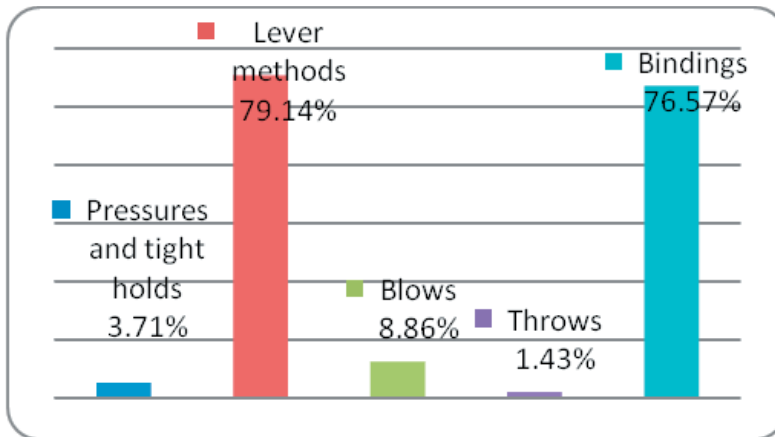
| Used methods of SFO                      | Absolute frequency (f) | Relative frequency(f%) |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|
| Pressure and tight holds in vital places | 13                     | 3.71                   |
| Lever method                             | 277                    | 79.14                  |
| Blows inflicted                          | 31                     | 8.86                   |
| Throws made                              | 5                      | 1.43                   |
| Binding suspect's hands with handcuffs   | 268                    | 76.57                  |

The analyzed Report on Use of Means of Coercion (force) states 350 situations of use methods of SFO, where 277(79,14%) situations have been resolved by using the lever method<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> The lever techniques (*kansetsuwaza*) are the most commonly recognized technical elements of the *jujitsu* system of self-defence and control techniques (*katamewaza*) present their part. The levers are combat techniques performed in such a way as to ensure fast and strong extension of tissues in the area of the articulation which is the targets of the technique. The purpose of the lever is to establish

In as much as 268 situations or 76.57%, the police handcuffed the suspect (**diagram 2**). It is important to state that in a majority of situations and after using the lever there has been used the method of binding the suspect; while in a lesser number of situations the lever has been used to escort the suspect (s) to the official vehicle. Similar results have been achieved in our research as well as in the research of other authors. During an official intervention, even 71% situations have been resolved with holds and levers, while in 79% situations official handcuffs were used (Anderson et al., 2001).

In **Table 3** there have been presented types of levers used in analyzed situations. On the basis of achieved results, it may be concluded that even 183 or 66,06% situations have been resolved by using lever-inward shouldertwist, in 41 situations (14,18 %) the lever of wrist twisting was used, while in 23 situations (8,30%) the excessive stretch of the elbow.



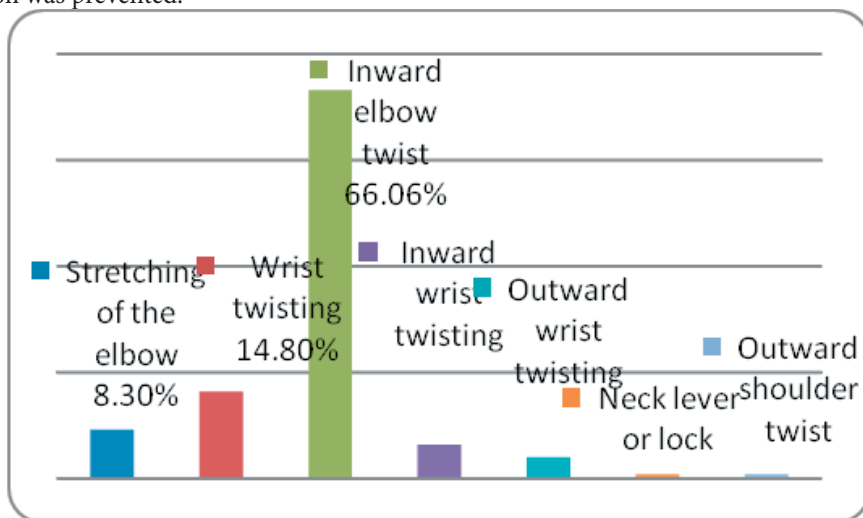
**Graph 2.** Used methods of control in current situations.

**Table 3.** Types of lever used by policemen to control resistance of the suspect in analyzed situations.

| Type of lever          | Absolute frequency (f) | Relative frequency (f %) |
|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Elbow stretching       | 23                     | 8.30                     |
| Wrist twisting         | 41                     | 14.80                    |
| Inward elbow twist     | 183                    | 66.06                    |
| Inward hand twist      | 16                     | 5.78                     |
| Outward hand twist     | 10                     | 3.61                     |
| Neck lever (hold)      | 2                      | 0.72                     |
| Outward shoulder twist | 2                      | 0.72                     |

control over the opponent (*osaewaza*) as the most lenient means of coercion (physical control) by inflicting pain, distortion, or luxating of the given articulation. It can be applied on all joint and used in different situation related to police work. They are most frequently applied to the following spots: elbow, shoulder, hand, spine, and knee.

The analyzed situations in which policeman has used a method of lever from the Special Physical Training program show that in the majority of analyzed situations the method of inward shoulder twist (inward elbow twist), has been used, namely in as much as 66.06% situations (**diagram 3**). The lever outward shoulder twist was used in only in two (2) situations, and the neck lock or lever in another two (2) situations. In both cases assault on another person was prevented.



**Graph3.** Used levers in current situations.

### Conclusion

For the police to be efficient in implementing the law, policemen enjoy a number of rights and responsibilities they are authorized to use. One of the special authorizations provided by law is the use of means of coercion (**use of force**). Physical strength (**physical force**) has been provided as the mildest means of coercion. The Rules on Conditions and Method of Use of Means of Coercion, by use of physical force, is considered as the use of a variety of holds (more precisely: **methods**) of unarmed combat skills (or more precisely: **special physical training or physical control**) or similar actions to the body of another person, with a view to repelling assault or overcoming the resistance of another person with the infliction of least harmful consequences.

A small number of researches dealing with use of force and control of resistance have prompted such a research as ours, as a theoretical basis for a broader research of this phenomenon. In support of this, police practice manifests broad and non-systemic approach in the reporting of use of force by officers. In this paper, there has been used a modern definition of resistance, offering a good basis for optimal action in the use of physical control of the suspect as well as sound and unified reporting by the police.

In the issue of the level of resistance by the suspect, it may be concluded that, of the total number of situations, in the majority of situations there was recorded defensive (37.43%) and passive resistance (28.57%), while active aggression on policemen was recorded in 25.43% and severe aggression in 8.57% situations. In the analyzed reports on use of physical strength, for controlling other persons, policemen most often use the lever method (79.14%) and hand-

cuffing (76.57%). Of the used lever methods, even 66.06% of situations accounted for lever holds – the excessive inward shoulder twist.

At the end, we think that special attention should be devoted to the problem of permanent training of police officers in theoretical subjects (human rights, police ethics, communication and legal foundation for the implementation of authorizations given to the police), operational police skills and special physical training that will lessen the risk of their victimization and optimize the use of force.

## **References**

1. Amanović, Đ. (2012). *Specijalno fizičko obrazovanje – tehnike poluga*. Beograd: Kriminalističko-policijska akademija.
2. Anderson, G.; Plecas, D.; Segger, T. (2001). Police officer physical ability testing, Re-validating a selection criterion, *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 24 No. 1, pp. 8 -31.
3. Čelik, P. (2010). Zakonitost in legitimnost uporabe prisilnih sredstev državnih varnostnih sil pri nas (1850-2010). *Revija za kriminalistiko in kriminologijo*, let. 61, št. 1, str. 64-76.
4. De Rover, C. (1998). *Služiti i štiti- o ljudskim pravima i humanitarnom pravu za policiju i snage bezbednosti*. Ženeva: Međunarodni komitet crvenog krsta.
5. Dujković, P.; Subotički, S.; Klisarić, M.: (2009). *Primena ovlašćenja policije*. Beograd: Ministarstvo unutrašnjih poslova.
6. Ignjatović, I. (2006). Kriminalitet kojim se ugrožava bezbednost pripadnika policije. *NBP-Žurnal za kriminalistiku i pravo*. Beograd: Kriminalističko-policijska akademija, br.2, str. 153-168.
7. Jovanović, S. (1992). *Karate 1 – teorijska polazišta*. Novi Sad: Sport's World.
8. Milošević, M. (1998). Opšta pitanja ugrožavanja i zaštite pripadnika policije. *Bezbednost*, br. 2, str. 161-182, Beograd.
9. Milošević, M.; Zulić, M.; Božić, S.: (1989). *Specijalno fizičko obrazovanje*. Beograd: Viša škola unutrašnjih poslova.
10. Misija OEBS-a (OEBS-a) pri SRJ, Moderna policija, 2002.
11. Pravilnik o načinu obavljanja policijskih poslova, *Službeni glasnik R. Srbije*, br.27/2007.
12. Pravilniku o uslovima i načinu upotrebe sredstava prinude, *Službeni glasnik R. Srbije*, br. 133/2004.
13. Simić, B.; Nikač, Ž.: (2009). Razvoj policijske organizacije od tradicionalne ka savremenoj u funkciji suzbijanja kriminaliteta. *NBP-Žurnal za kriminalistiku i pravo*, br.3. Beograd: Kriminalističko-policijska akademija, str. 117-131.
14. Uputstvo o policijskoj etici i načinu obavljanja poslova policije, *Službeni glasnik R. Srbije*, br.41/2003.
15. Zakon o policiji. *Službeni glasnik R. Srbije*, br. 101/2005.