# Results of the gender survey

**About the respondents**
214 answers were received, representing 14 nations. More than half of the respondents are Romanian (51,9%), 30,8% are Dutch and 4,7% Slovenian, which represent the number of inhabitants of the courtiers. Female/Male ratio is about 2/3 (40%-60%) 82 females and 132 males. The most represented age is 31-50 (60%). Amongst females, the proportion of the younger generation (16-30) is a bit higher, more than 30%.

Out of 214 respondents, 122 are white belt, 90 are black belt.
The number of male and females were almost equal for beginners and for 3-1 kyu. 1 dan is just ¼ more, but 2, 3, 4 dan is 3 times more male than female replied. 5 and 6 dan respondents are only male.
The large majority of the respondents (91.8%) take care of juniors and the same percentage of respondents feel that they are taken care of by seniors in their dojo.
33,2% (71) of the respondents do not have a role model in their dojo; nearly 50% (106) of the respondents have a male role model, 17,3% (37) have a female role model. However, if we compare the replies provided by the females and males, the result is different. Out of 82 female respondents, 20 (25%) did not have a role model, 20 (24%) have a female role model, and 42 (51%) have a male role model. As for the 132 males, 38% (86) have no role model in the dojo, 13% (17) have a female role model and 49% (64) have a male role model in their dojo. So it seems from the result that 1) more females than a male have a role model in their dojo 2) females are more likely to find a female role model than a male role model in their dojo 3) still more than 50% of females have a male role model in their dojo. However we should bear in mind that only 46,3% of all dojos have a female instructor. But of course, a role model does not necessarily have to be a teacher, it can be a more senior aikidoka as well.
As per the role models in the federations, while the percentage of male role models is a bit less (48,6 %), the percentage of the female role models is a bit better (21%) and 30,4% have no role models.

**About the dojos**
The results demonstrate the dominance of male instructors in dojos. While in 53,7% of dojos the teacher is male, and only in 6,1% of the dojo the teacher is female. 40,2% of the dojos have both male and female teachers. That also means that in 93,7 % of dojos there is a male teacher and in 46,3% of the dojos there is a female teacher.
In 65% of the dojos, there are both senior male and female in the dojo. In 22,9% of the dojos there is only male, in 3,3% there is only female and in 8,4% there is none of them.
There is a difference between male and female seniors but it is not striking: 87,9% of the dojos there are male and 68,3% there are female.
In 94,4% of dojo, the teacher takes females as uke as well.

**With whom the respondents like or dislike practising**
99,5% of the respondents like practising with everybody regardless of gender. Nearly the same result is provided for the question with whom the person does not like to practise with: 92,1% said that gender does not matter. 6,1% don't like to practise with lower grade male, 3,7% with lower grade females, higher grade male or females are almost equal. (2,3%-1,9% 5 and 4 persons).

**Why the respondent like practising with male aikidoka**
When it comes to male aikidoka, surprisingly their most important character appreciated by others is that they often challenge their partners on the mat, as nearly half of the replies demonstrate.
Their strength comes next, marked by a bit less than ⅓ of the respondents. Male dynamism and courage seems to be less important, selected by about 12 and 10%, respectively. Interestingly, challenge seems to be even more important for females than male: 60% of the females but only 38,5% of the male selected this reply. On the other hand, strength appears to be less important for females, 26% have chosen against 43% of male.

As for what practitioners identified as advantages of male practitioners, the large majority, a bit less than 50%, referred to strength/power/size/physical characteristics. Half of these replies were provided by 82 females. That indicates that a bigger proportion of females than male considered that the biggest advantage of a male practitioner lies with his physical power.

Other characteristics mentioned by some are dynamism and male energy/ warrior spirits. The rest, about 25% of the replies are individual remarks and about 13 % did not provide a proper reply.

**Why the respondent like practising with female aikidoka**
The replies are more balanced when it comes to why aikidoka like to practise with females. Nearly half of the replies indicates that female pay more attention to the technical details, about ⅓ consider that females are more flexible and ⅓ like to practise with females because they cannot rely on strength.

Compared to the male, it seems that the biggest advantage of a female aikidoka is not easy to choose. While nearly 50% of the respondents could identify the same characteristic for a male aikidoka which is their strength, only about 23% could select the same characteristic for females. The characteristic identified by this 23% is flexibility, so the biggest advantage of a female aikidoka is that she is more flexible.

It is interesting to observe that the opposite of the most important characteristic for a man is named as an important feature of a woman. It appears that it is good to train with a man because he is strong and it is pleasant to train with a woman because she is not strong, therefore cannot rely on strength. In consequence she is more technical, more patient, more spiritual and pays more attention to details.

**With whom the respondents do not like practising**
For the question why, if any, a respondent doesn't like to practise with female aikidoka, replies show that about ⅓ of the aikidoka do not have an issue with practising with females. About ⅓ does not like to practise with females because females tend to be afraid of being hurt. About ⅓ raised the issue of females being oversensitive. Only some mentioned that females tend to be helpless and mean. Further assessment of the replies provided by females/males revealed 2 interesting tendencies: 1) only ladies find that females tend to be mean. That implies that ladies on the mat are mean with each other but not with their male partners. 2) 11 persons consider that females tend to be helpless, but out of this 11 only one is female. So nearly only males find females helpless, the females see themselves otherwise.

Respondents were more divided about why they don't like to practise with male, and no reply was selected more than the 30%. The mostly selected reply was that men tend to be swift (27,1%). Men rely on their physical superiority over technical details (22%) and because they tend to use their strength (20,1%) were chosen by nearly equal numbers of respondents. More or less 10% think that men tend not to care about physical differences (12,6 %), tend not to follow technical instructions (11,7%) and tend to be patronising (11,2%). Just a few respondents consider men impolite. because they tend not to be polite 7%

**Why there is less female in dojo and how to improve that**
Most of the respondents (74) thought that generally there are less females in the dojo because aikido is a martial art and martial arts were originally practised by males. However, nearly as many had no clue (69).
Almost equal respondents found females are afraid of break-falls (35) females have more tasks at home and less time to do outside activities (34).

68% of the male respondents and 73% of the female respondents considered that the best improvement to attract more women in the dojo is to offer more suitable time for training. Proper changing room for both genders and safe dojo environment revived nearly equal votes from both respondents (about 36% of the men and 30% of the women). The hygiene of the dojo seems to be less important: 21% of men and 23% of the women mentioned it. The real difference between men and women is the weight given for babysitting. While only 7,5% of men found it as an improvement, 30% of the women thought that it would help to attract more women in the dojo.

At the end of the questionnaire respondents were asked if they had any other idea how to increase the number of female practitioners in your dojo. 145 replies were received, which means that 74 respondents, of which 24 females, had no idea or did not no reply. The 145 replies were given by 58 female (70% of overall female respondents) and only 87 male (47%) of overall male respondents. Thus the responses provided by male respondents are considerably lower in proportion.

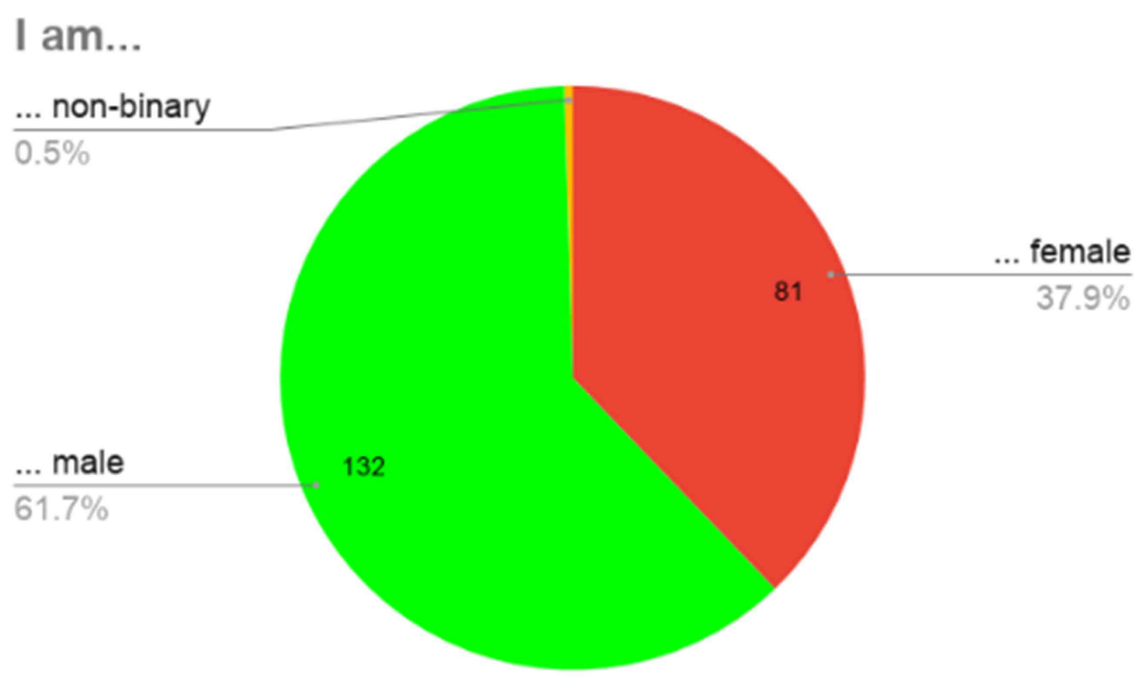
Most important measures suggested by the many respondents is awareness raising/publicity in social media/youtube/women's website, presented by women, about things which make aikido attractive for women, like: fitness value of an aikido training, the self-defence aspect of the aikido, the fact that aikido targets both the body and the mind, that physical/muscle strength is not needed to practise aikido, take away presumption on martial arts and emphasis that aikido focus on spirituality/self-development using storytelling.

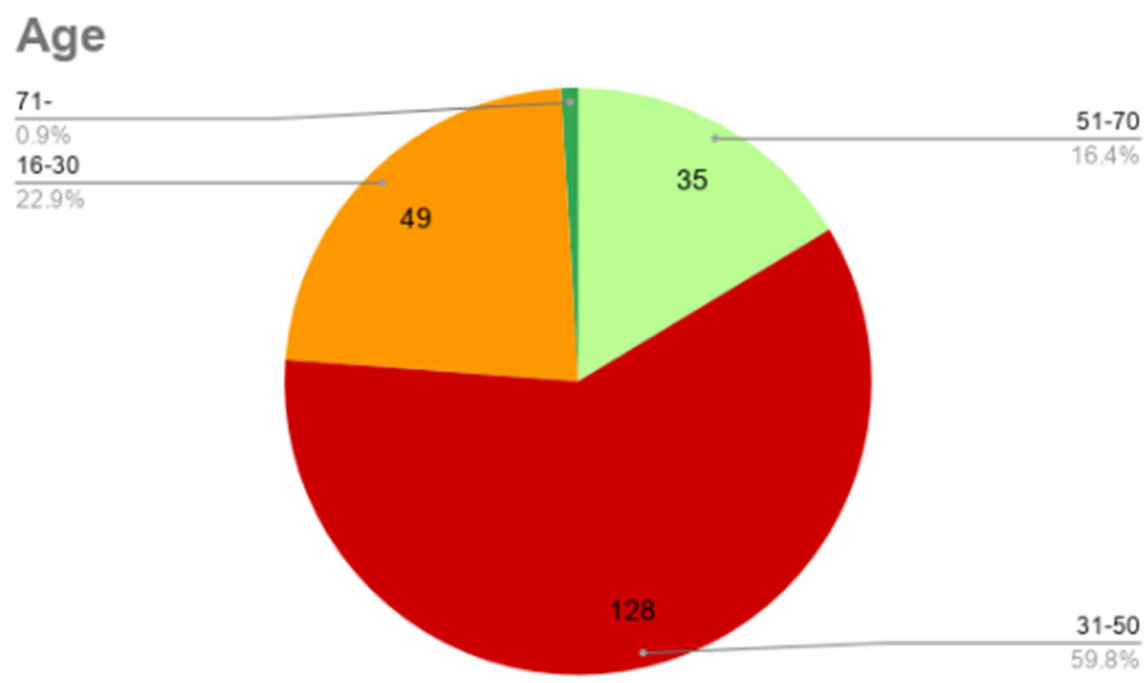
It seems that all aspects are equally important when advertising/publishing: where/which forum to present (social media), what to present (things which make aikido attractive for women), by whom (female aikido instructor/aikidokai) and by how (for example by storytelling).

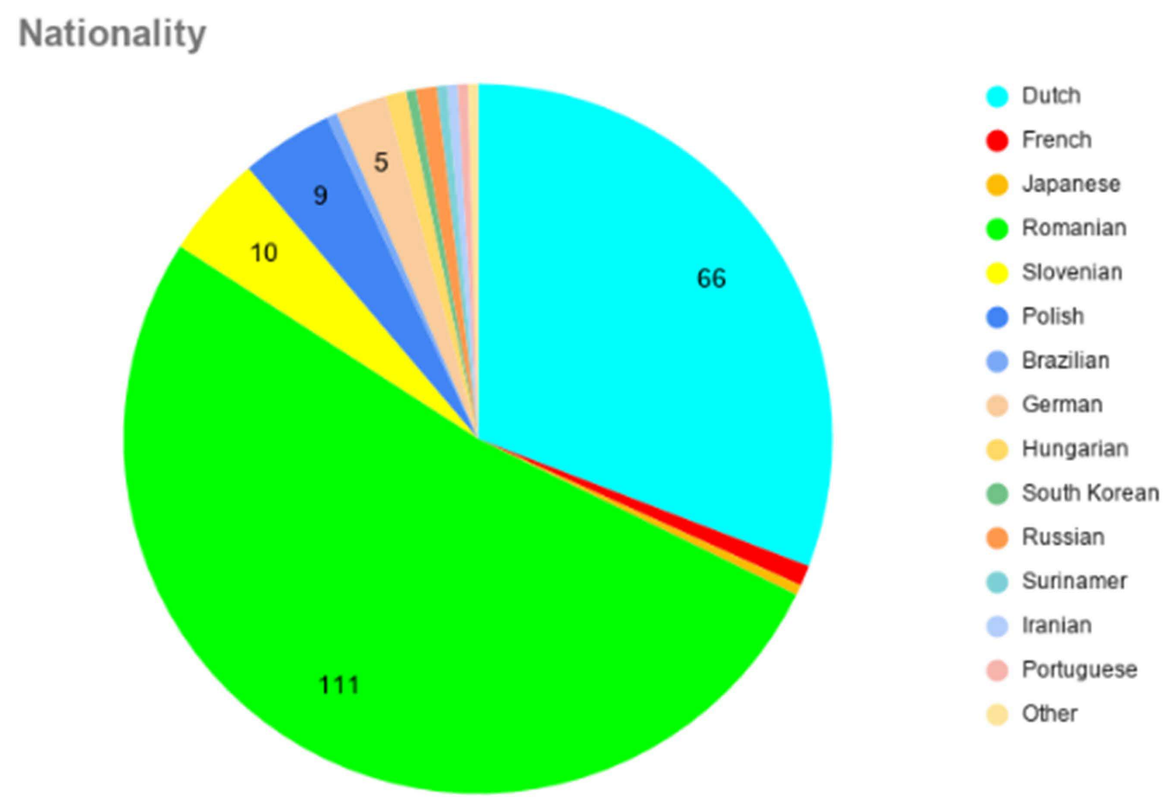
Other measures mentioned by the respondents are more female role model/female led seminars, changing the mentality of the teachers, so all radiate gender equality and practise more with women, treat ladies with equality, and promote giving more role for women in aikido federations.

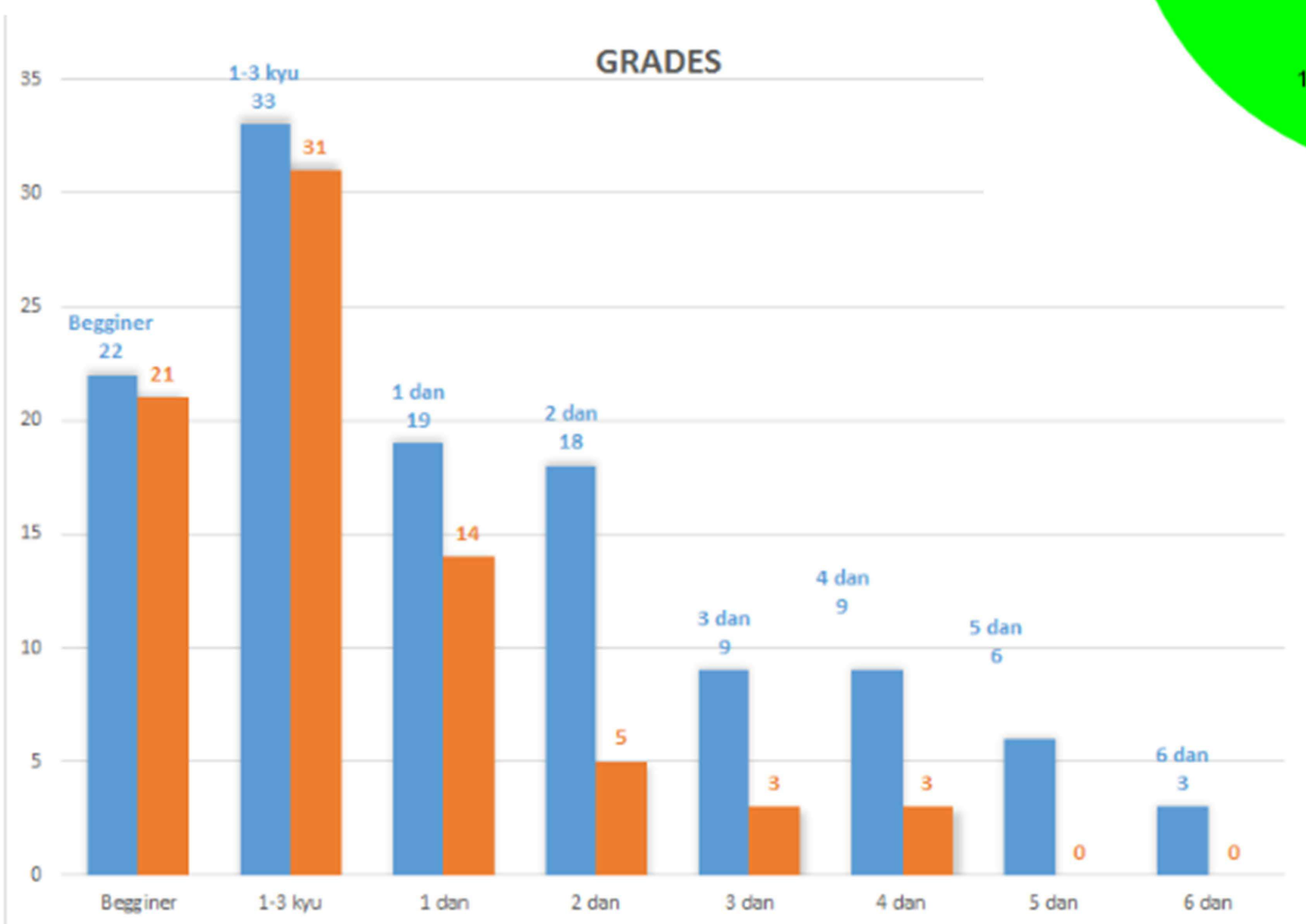
## Charts

### About the respondents

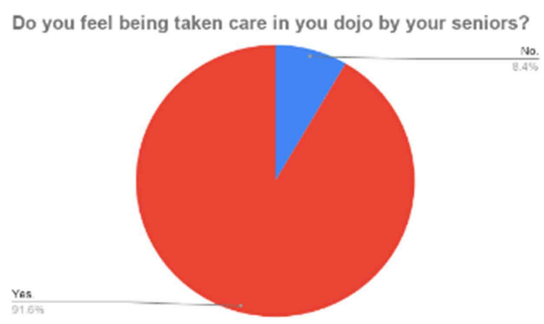


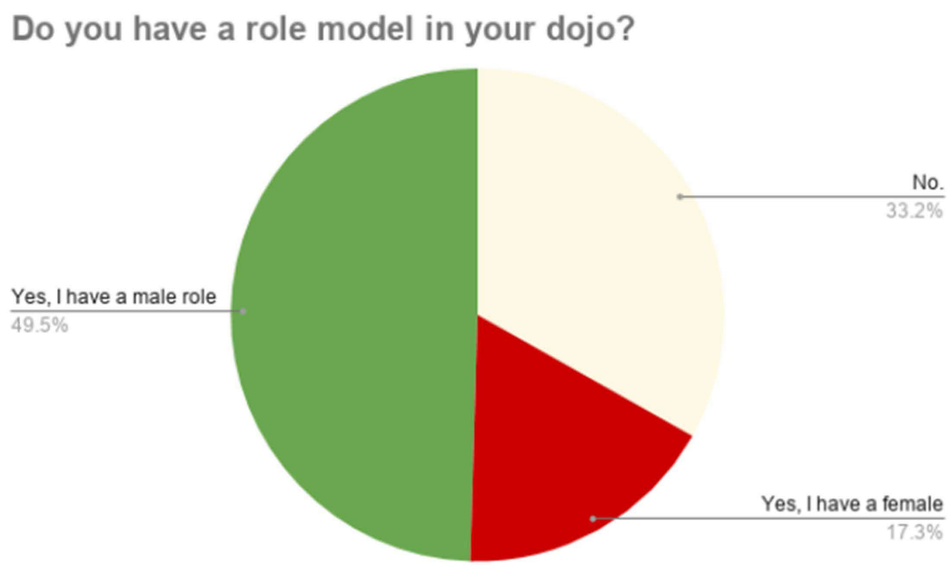



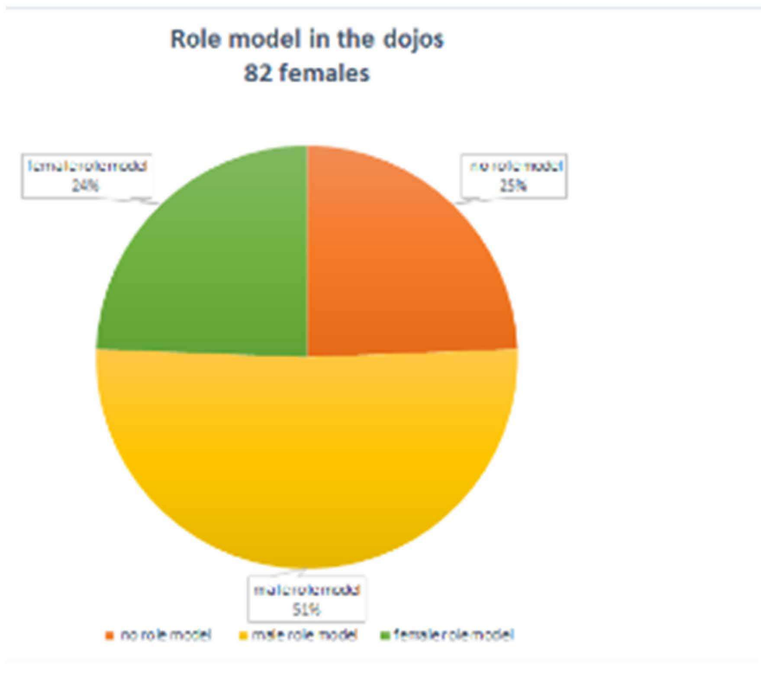



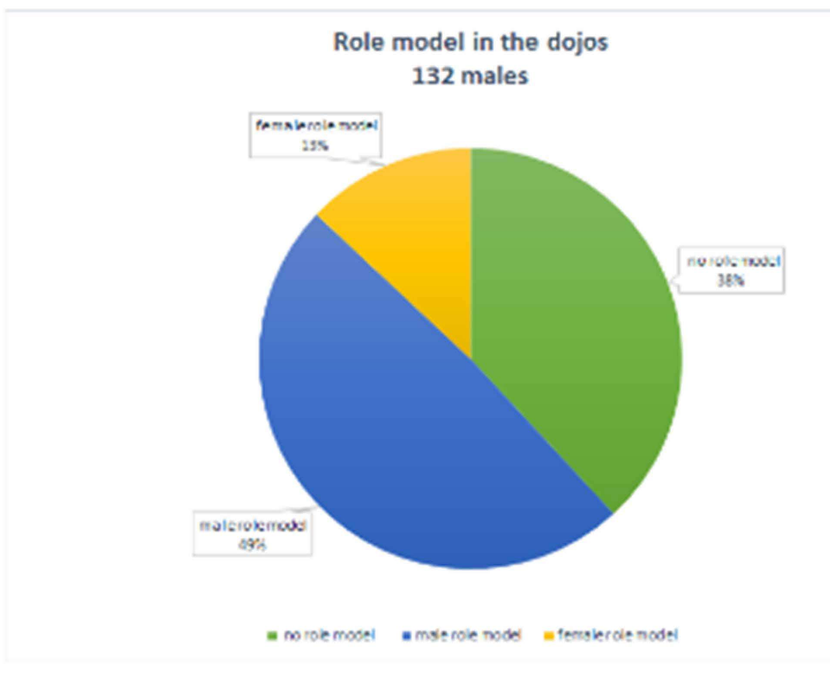



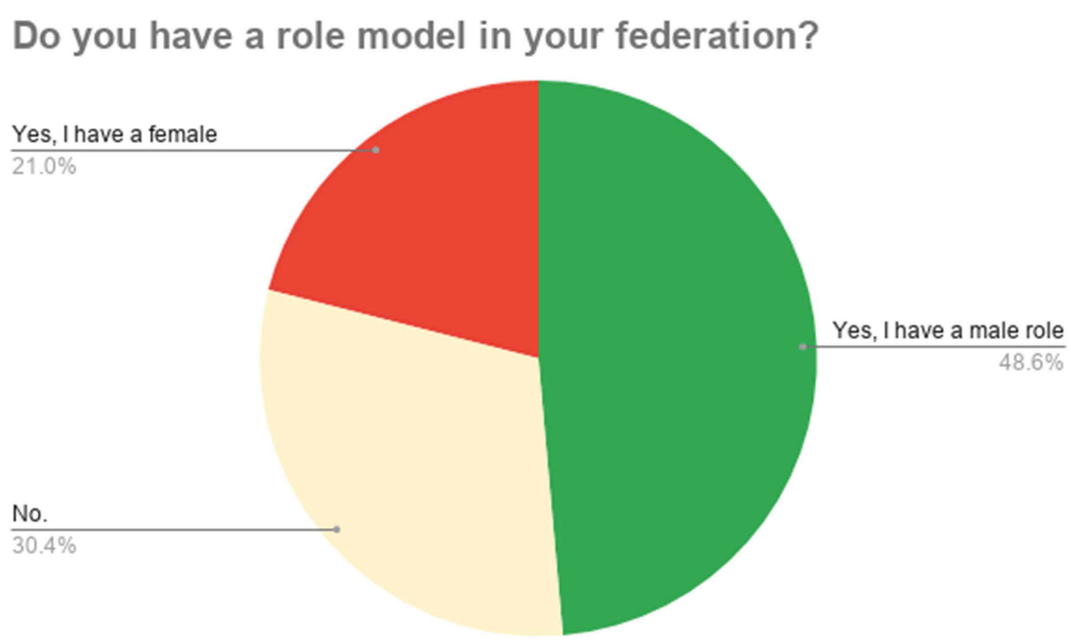

122 white belt, 90 black belt. Blue represents male, orange female.



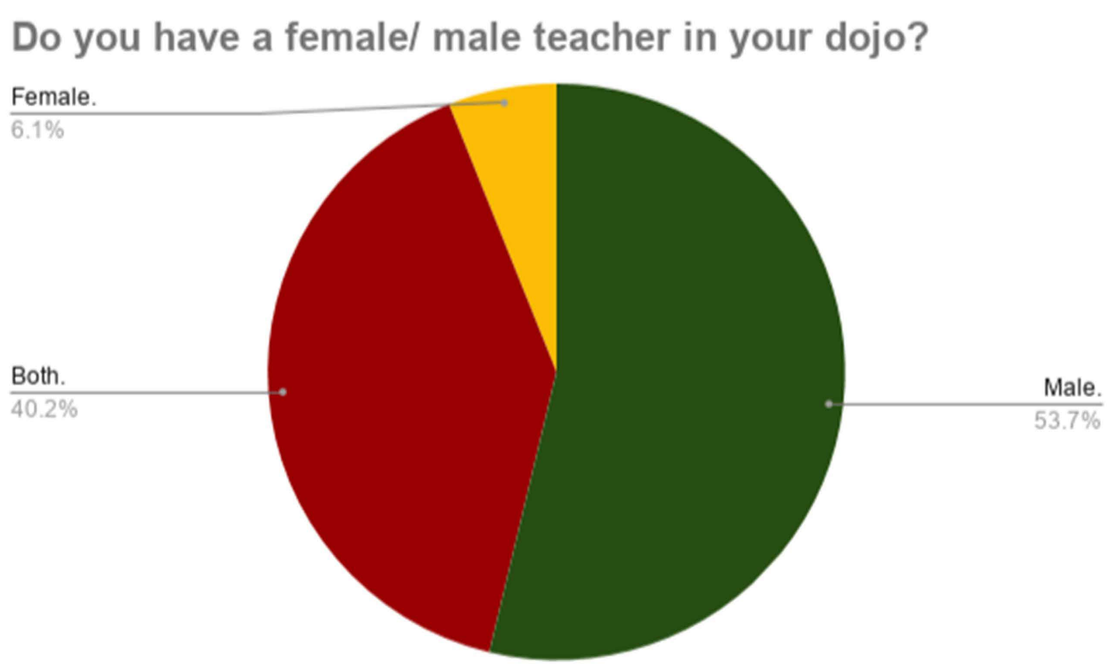



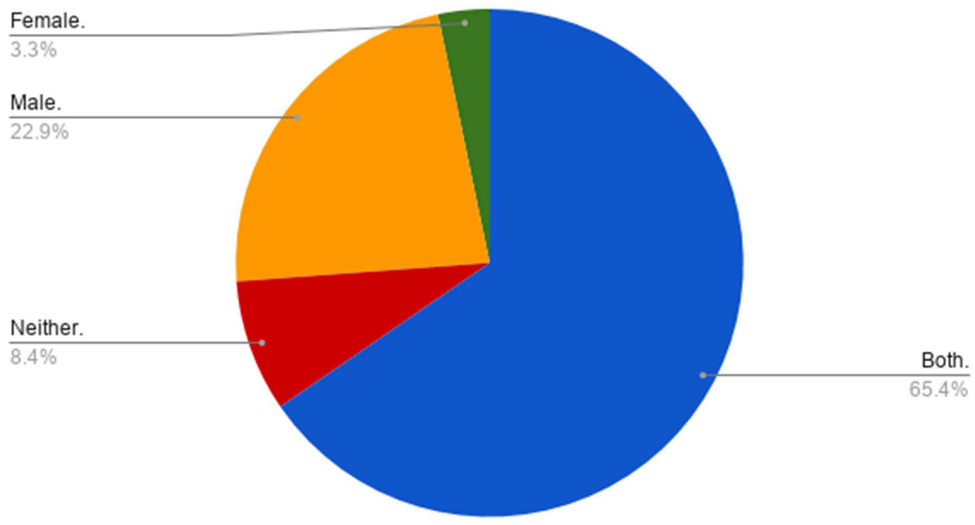



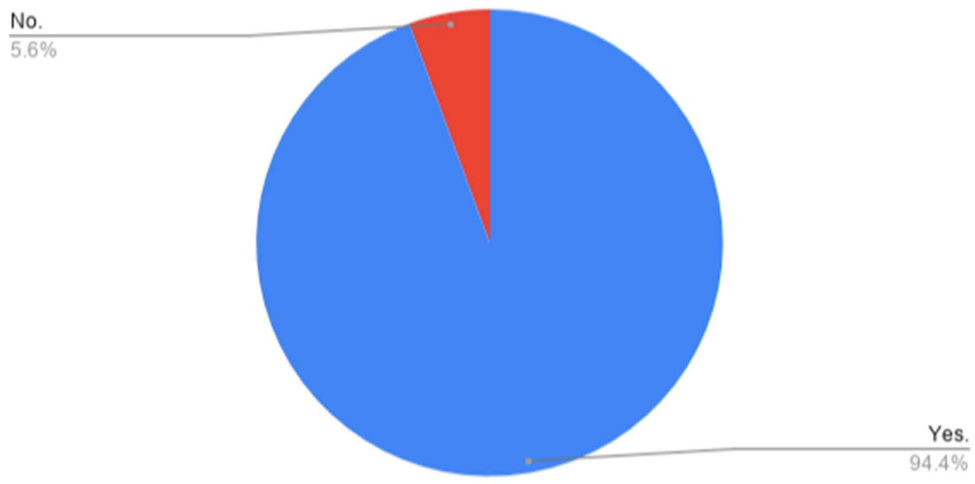

**About the dojos**



## Do you have female/ male seniors in your dojo?

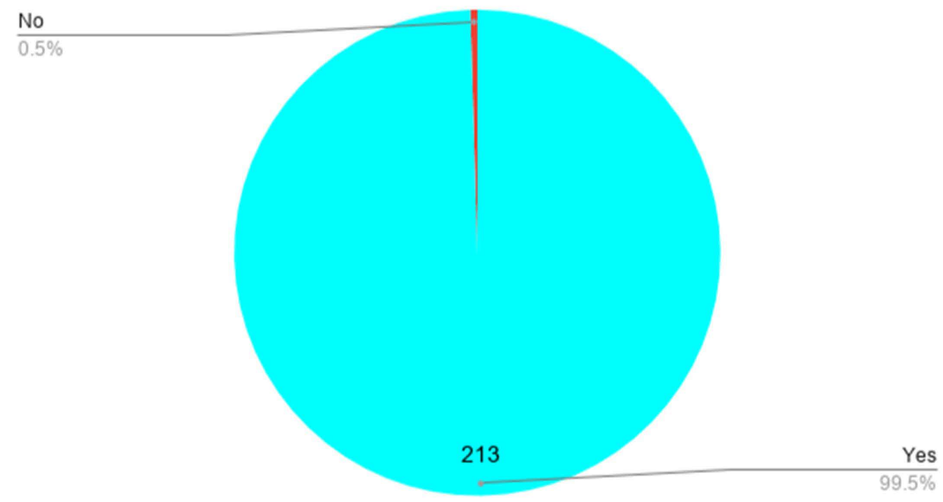



## My teacher takes female practitioners as uke as well as male practitioners.

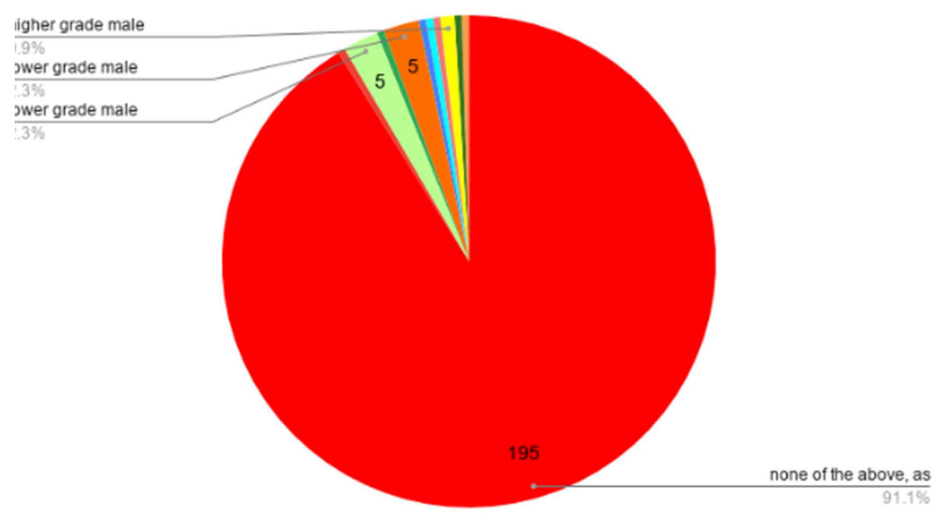



**With whom respondents like and don't like to practice**

## I like practicing with everybody regardless of gender.

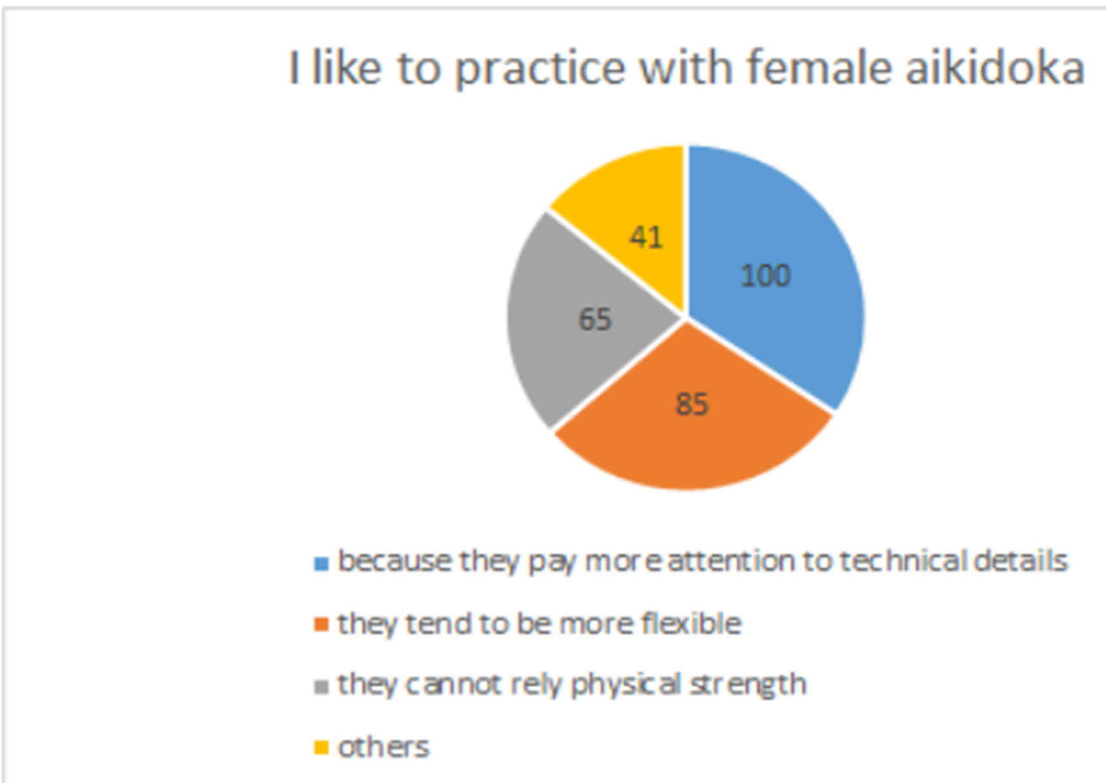


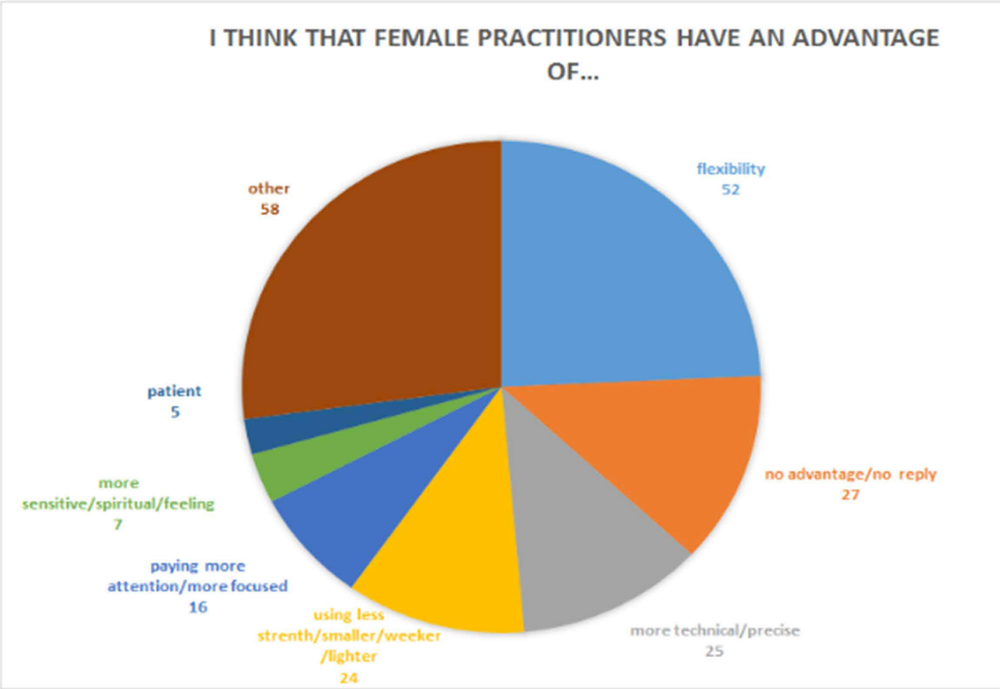

## don't like to practice with...

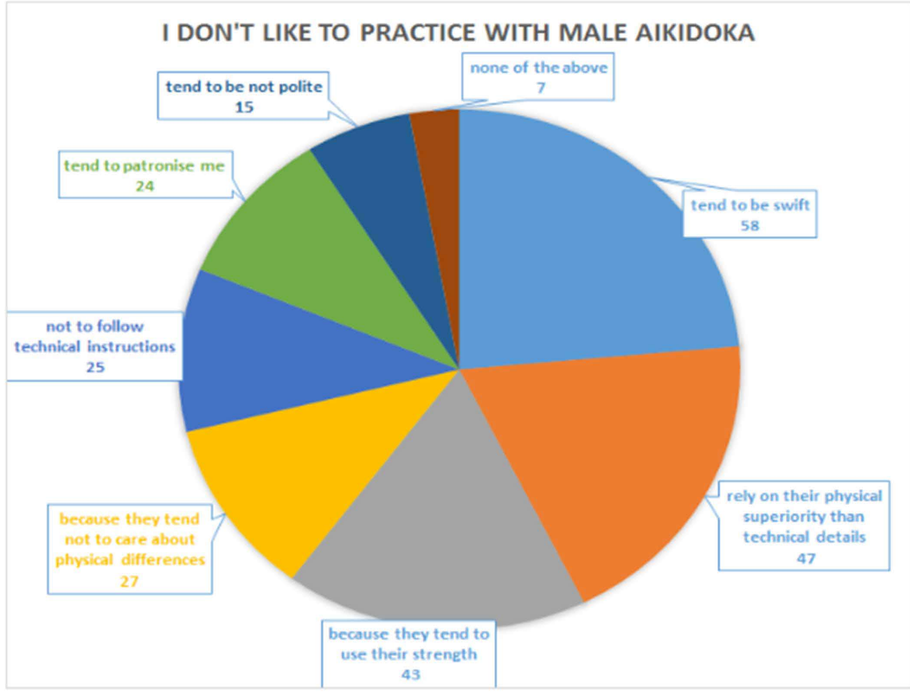
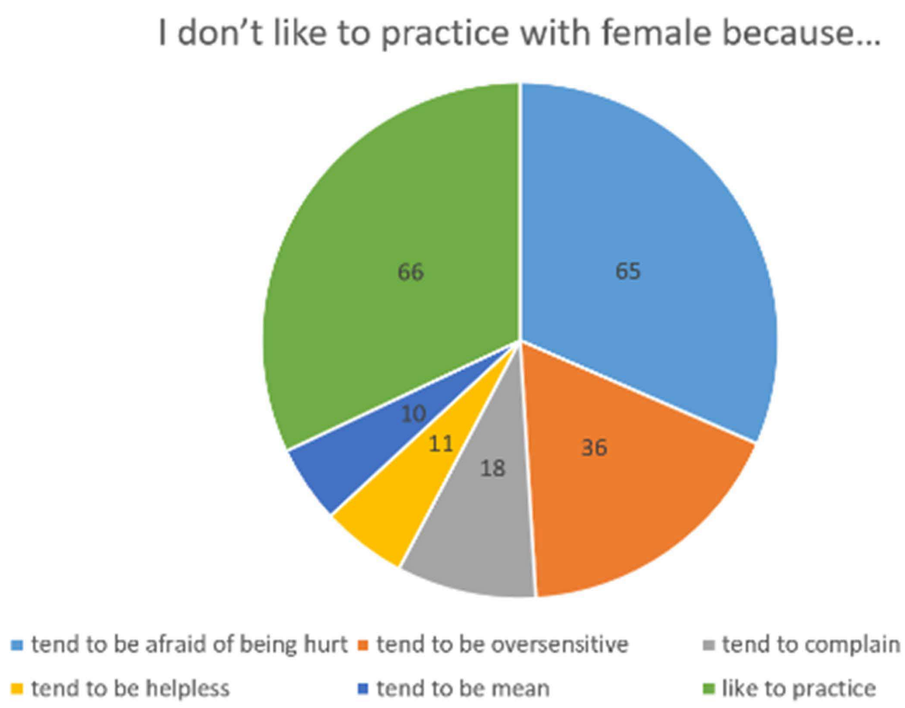
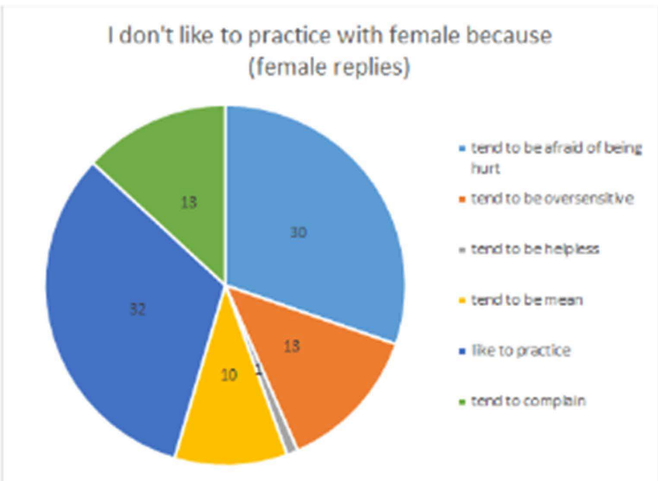
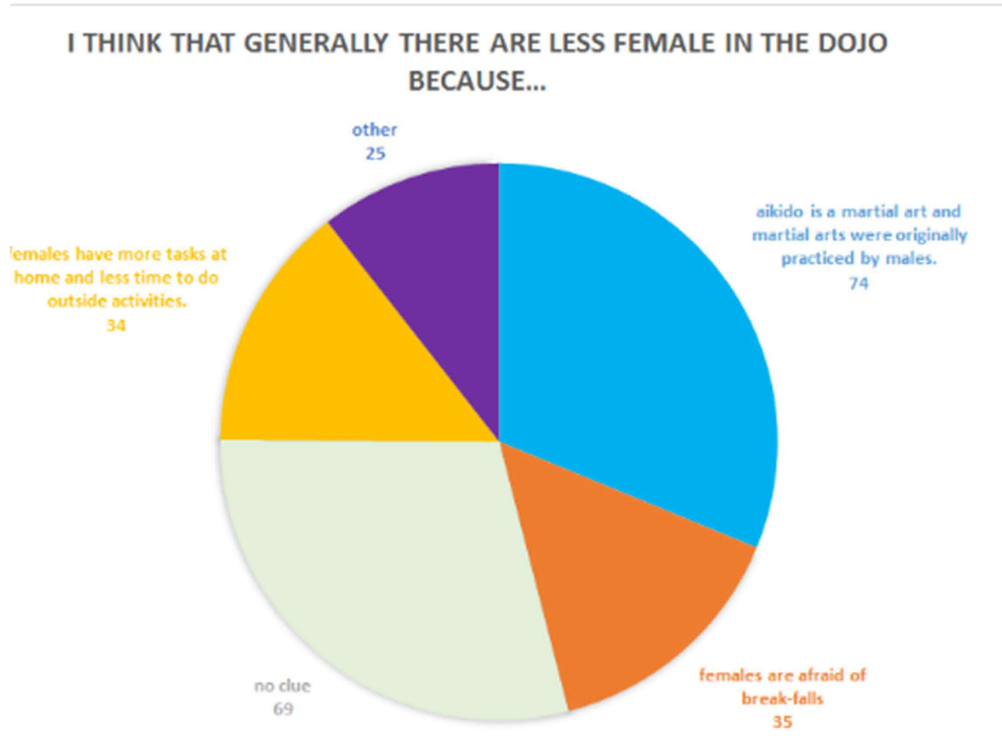
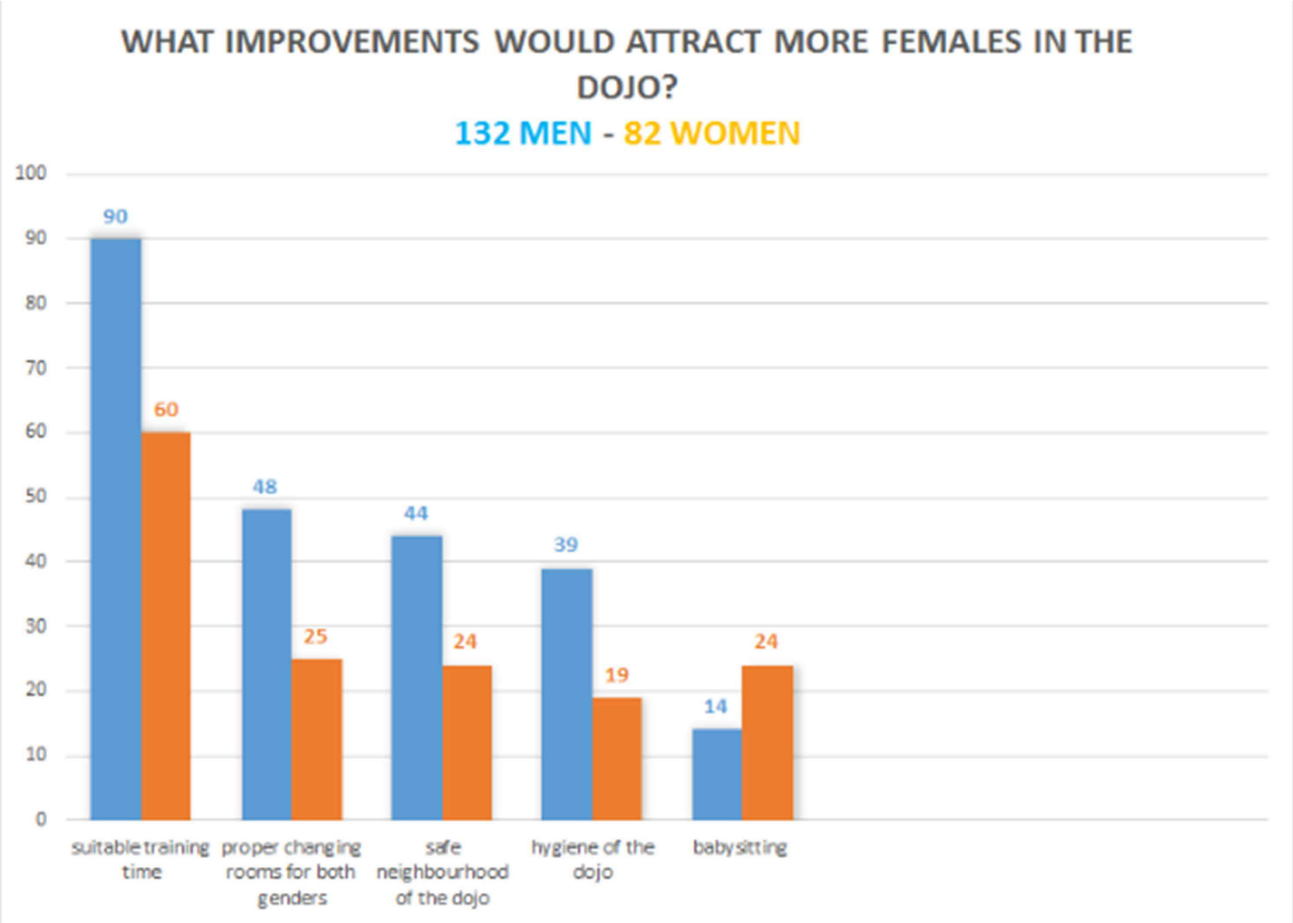



## Why the respondent like to practice with male

**Why respondents do like practising with females**






With whom respondents do not like practising