

**TAE KWON DO AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHOSOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

A Dissertation

Submitted to the

Faculty of Argosy University Tampa

In Partial Fulfillment of

The Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

by

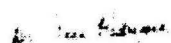
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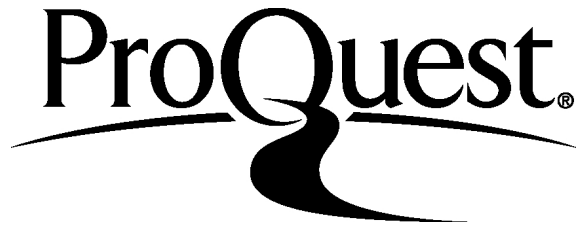
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Abstract of Dissertation

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College of Education

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by

Ronald Reaco Budd

Argosy University

December, 2012

Chair: Dr. John Muehl

Committee:

Dr. Anne Rodrigue

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Department: College of Education

ABSTRACT

The following research was completed in an attempt to document the existence of any correlation between youth participation in Tae Kwon Do and various psychological and social traits evident within the participants. The data of this dissertation was gathered and recorded within the format of the qualitative case study. At the end of the case study the researcher was able to document evidence that individuals who participate in Tae Kwon Do demonstrate positive psychological and social traits. It is the researcher's hope that further studies will be undertaken to enhance the aggregate data base regarding participation in martial sports such as Tae Kwon Do and positive psychological and social development.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The traits and qualities comprised by a person's entity, contributing to a successful individual, are many (Walker, 2003). When considering all the various methods utilized to develop a young person into a successful and competent adult, one can't ignore the wide array of choices parents have. Also, parents don't always know the best after school activities available to develop critical competencies essential for success in their kids and this dissertation will provide qualitative data to assist them in their decision making process. In making the right choice for developmentally appropriate activities for their child, parents must choose the best alternatives rather than the least desirable ones (Thrall, 2010). Studies have shown participation in sports has a positive corollary relationship with academic, physical, and social self-concepts (Fawcett, 2007). Concerned parents seeking to develop competent, offspring want to know just what activities can best enhance the development of their children into a competent individual. In this study I provided information to help concerned parents choose the best extracurricular activities for their children to participate in.

In this study evidence was uncovered of the beneficial developmental qualities within middle and high school Tae Kwon Do students as a result of their exposure to the curriculum and the instructors. Specifically, I looked for evidence of the traits comprised by the two components of individualized developmental competencies and socialized group social competencies. This dissertation was concerned with participation in Tae Kwon Do to create a testimonial from the standpoint of its participants and the effect that Tae Kwon Do has on adolescent developmental

outcomes. This paper was completed by interviewing and recording the responses of the participants of J. Park's Tae Kwon Do Dojang in Tampa, Florida. This interviewer conceptualized and designed a study concerned specifically with how Tae Kwon Do participation effects the psychological and social development of its adolescent participants. It was initially my contention p that participation in Tae Kwon Do contributed to the development of an adolescent into a healthy individual. In this study I sought evidence to support or repudiate this claim.

Need for the Study

Concerned parents seek to impart, grow, and nurture developmental and social competencies in their children. Parents, in the best interest of their child, attempt to engage their offspring in activities that can best enhance their child's development, with the ultimate desire of eventually helping their child to develop into a healthy and productive adult citizen. However, parents don't always know the best ways to develop critical competencies essential for success in their child's future. Tae Kwon Do is an activity where many children participate. No study to date has researched the psychological and social effects adolescent participation in Tae Kwon Do affords. In this dissertation links between adolescence participation in Tae Kwon Do and the presence of psychological and social characteristics essential for successful human development were sought by the researcher.

Human Development

The seminal researcher, for the purpose of my study, was Urie Bronfenbrenner. Urie Bronfenbrenner provided a concise definition for human development. Bronfenbrenner wrote:

Human development is the process through which the growing person acquires more extended differentiated, and valid conception of the ecological environment,

and becomes motivated and able to engage in activities that reveal the properties of, sustain, or restructure that environment at levels of similar or greater complexity in form and content (1978, p. 27).

Tae Kwon Do is a sport and a discipline explicitly attempting to enhance human development through the participant's application of its mental and physical doctrine (Kim, 1985). This development is facilitated by conduits or instructors employed by the dojang master. In Tae Kwon Do, instructors attempt to develop the individual into a living ideal of the discipline through both philosophical and physical activities (Kim, 1985).

Developmental Activities

Evidence supports participation in sports contributes to greater psychological well-being and greater mental health (Greenleaf, Boyer, & Petrie, 2009). Activities like sports "influence the development of key psychological characteristics or factors that in essence contribute to a positive psychological outcome" (Greenleaf, et al, p. 715, 2009). Psychology experts contend sports activity enhances feelings of instrumentality and psychological well-being (Parsons & Betz, 2001). *Instrumentality* is defined as, an individual's personal perceived ability level and the personal goal set by that individual based upon this perception (Ino-Oka, & Matsui, 1977). Tae Kwon Do is a sport whereby its adherents claim lead to positive outcomes such as feelings of instrumentality and ultimately contributing to the development of a competent adult (Kim, 1985).

A Competent Adult

Parents' and educators' desires are to develop a competent child. What is an academically accurate definition of a competent person and, what can be described as the traits possessed by a competent person? A simple definition of a competent person is one who is able to make use of

environmental and personal resources to achieve a good developmental outcome (Schneider, 1989). Sroufe (1983) and the researchers Givner, Lane, and Pierson (2004) provided us with another definition of a competent adult. According to Sroufe, a competent adult possesses 6 psychological competencies. They are: a) *Physiological Regulation*, b) *Management of Tension*, c) *Establishing an Effective Attachment Relationship*, d) *Exploration and Mastery*, e) *Individuation*, f) *Management of Impulses*, (1983). Givner, Lane, and Pierson reported that a competent adult possessed two social competencies, which were the ability to cooperate and the ability to exercise self-control (2004). In aggregate, a competent adult possesses both psychological and social competencies.

Importance of the Study

This study was important because the collected data sought to document and record (from the standpoint of the practitioners) the psychological and social effects experienced by the adolescent practitioners of the sport of Tae Kwon Do on their overall sociological and psychological development. Ultimately, the information collected enhances the seminal aggregate data pool related to the psychological and social effects individuals report exist as a result of participation in a sport such as Tae Kwon Do.

Theoretical Framework

Urie Bronfenbrenner developed the *Ecological Systems Theory* (1979). This theory merits mentioning because the *Theory of the Ecological Perspective of Human Development* (as it is also known) has enabled this researcher to crystallize the roles of the various stakeholders within this study. It has also helped the researcher to form a theoretical paradigm used as a cognitive and conceptual framework. Within Bronfenbrenner's theory, the idea is introduces systems/groups of stakeholders forming an environment and interacting within that environment

(York, 2000). Bronfenbrenner identified, divided and described 5 systems and their interconnected relationships within all complex human social environments. Three of these systems were useful in this study. They were *microsystems*, *mesosystem* and *exosystems*. Proponents of Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective of human development argue the developmental outcomes of an individual takes place within interconnected elements (environments). Richard York described these interconnected elements as environments, which can be understood as different levels of contexts where people operate. Some of the environments are more immediate, while others are more distant (York, 2000). Bronfenbrenner described several environmental systems where an individual develops. Three of those systems were incorporated into the ideological paradigm of this study. Most the research for this study will focus upon the realm of the Tae Kwon Do Dojang acting as a microsystem where the related participants interacted in the micro-environment of the *dojang* (the term *dojang* is the Korean word for gym).

Significance of the Study

The data acquired in this research from recorded interviews, is also useful for parents and researchers who are attempting to decide what type of activities might best enhance an adolescent child's psychological and emotional development. Teachers, and those who work with young adolescents, can also benefit from this data because it documents some of the psychological and social results of participating in Tae Kwon Do. Finally, the research data provides help for concerned individuals when deciding about guiding youth into potential avenues of growth, development, and actualization. Additionally, it was the hope of the researcher that the evidence presented in this study informs the research community about a

potential method of sport participation which works at enhancing the positive development of middle and high school aged children.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study was to describe any evidence (as provided by the participants) between an adolescent experiencing and learning Tae Kwon Do and the development of psychosocial characteristics necessary for an individual's entrance into adulthood. In this research, psychosocial characteristics were generally defined as comprising both developmental and social characteristics defined in this study (see p. 9).

Central Question

Does learning Tae Kwon Do lead to the development of critical developmental (Sroufe, 1983) and social competencies (Bierman, & Welsh, 2001) within the psychological makeup of the 7th through 12th grade adolescent participants? This dissertation attempted to answer this central question through the exploratory qualitative case study model applied to the 7th through 12th grade students and the adult staff of J. Park's Tae Kwon Do Dojang in Tampa. In implementing this case study, the researcher sought to understand why students engage in Tae Kwon Do and how it influenced their personal growth and development.

Research Questions

The specific research questions in this study were: 1) Why did the current participants choose to take Tae Kwon Do? 2) Do the staff and faculty work consciously or subconsciously to impart critical competencies in the development of their students emotional and psychological well-being? 3) Do the students see evidence of these competences within their personal development?

4) Is there any evidence of these critical competencies being specifically imparted through the curriculum?

Personal Perspective

Finally, I would like to personally position myself within this research by adding this study was important to me because of the experiences I have had with learning the discipline of Tae Kwon Do. I have been a student of this art since 2008 and am currently a holder of the purple belt. For me, on a personal level, I have benefited both spiritually and psychologically on my present journey to master Tae Kwon Do. It is my intention to document the benefits of this sport. This can be accomplished through a qualitative case study. From my perspective, qualitative case study is broad enough (in the creation of its narrative) where that all bits of information provide analyzable, testimonial data useful in constructing the final written product.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study the following terms were defined:

Competencies. According to the *Washington State Department of Personnel* website (2010), “Competencies are measurable or observable knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors critical to... (social interaction and)... successful job performance” (n.p.).

Developmental Competencies. According to the *Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction*, “Developmental competencies, which are types of functional life competencies... (are competencies that)... each person must attain in order to learn, achieve academic success, and prepare for a satisfying and productive career” (1986, p. 12). They are best viewed as individualized personality traits (1986).

Social Competencies. *The Encyclopedia of Childhood and Adolescence* defines social competencies as the social, emotional, and cognitive skills and behaviors that children need for successful social adaptation (Bierman & Welsh, 2001).

Tae Kwon Do. According to Dr. Park's book, *J. Park's Essence, Tae Kwon Do: From White Belt to 4th Dan* Tae Kwon Do is defined as the art and lifestyle of fighting with fists and feet through punching, jumping, and kicking (1995).

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Overview

The following literature review comprised a sample of current published research associated with the topic of this dissertation. Some of the topics included in this literature review are concerned with developmental theory, sport participation, martial arts, and Tae Kwon Do. These and other topics are reviewed by the researcher based upon previous published academic research in books and academic journals and to lay a foundation for the dissertation's subject matter.

Bronfenbrenner's Terms

Bronfenbrenner's theory of Ecological Human Development forms the essential guiding framework of this dissertation. This is due in part to his theory's ability to explain the interconnection and interaction of the various components that exist within environmental settings. Bronfenbrenner described these environmental settings in terms of systems comprised of structures through where the individual must interact and exist. These systems influence and are influenced by their individual components. The following three systems are the most relevant to this study.

Microsystem

The microsystem is the area closest to the child and contains the structures where the child has immediate contact. The microsystems encompass the relationships and interactions children have with their immediate surroundings. Structures in the microsystems include family, school, neighborhood, or childcare environments. Moreover, according to Bronfenbrenner, "A microsystem is a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material characteristics"

(Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 22). At this level, relationships have impact in two directions away from the child and toward the child. For instance, a child's parents may affect his beliefs and behavior; however, the child also affects the behavior and beliefs of the parent. Bronfenbrenner named these *bi-directional influences*, and he demonstrated how they occur among all levels of environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The interaction of structures within one of the identified and described layers, and the interactions of structures between layers, is paramount to this theory. At the Microsystems level, bi-directional influences are greatest and have the greatest impact on the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). However, interactions at the outer levels have the ability to impact the inner structures. In the case of this study the primary "setting" or place where people can readily engage in face-to-face interaction is the dojang (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The definition of dojang, according to Tae kwon Do Master Y.K. Kim is the place where one practices and learns the way or method of Tae Kwon Do (1985). Interpreted in Bronfenbrenner's paradigm the "activity" is learning Tae Kwon Do. The "role" is that of student, parent, or teacher. The "interpersonal relationships" elevate each of the stakeholders into a higher *Zone of Proximal Development* (Vygotsky, 1978). The zone of proximal development as defined by Vygotsky is, "The distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in a collaboration with more capable peers" (1978, p.86).

Mesosystem

The mesosystem is the connection between the structures of the child's microsystems. Some examples are, the connection between the child's teacher and his parents, between his school and his neighborhood and other connected environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The mesosystem

also, “comprises the interrelations among two or more settings in which the developing person actively participates such as, for a child, the relations among home, school and neighborhood peer group; for an adult, among family, work and social life” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p 25). In this research, the interrelating settings are the dojang, school, community and immediate family.

Exosystem

The exosystem is the area defining the larger social system where the child does not function directly. In the exosystem there are one or more settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant. The structures in this layer impact the child’s development by interacting with some structure in their microsystems. The exosystem affect the individual and the setting. Government policies, or the demographics of the larger community, are good examples. The child may not be directly involved at this juncture but the child does feel the factors involved within the system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Recognizing Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Perspective of Human Development as the theoretical framework forming the cognitive paradigm behind my study, this research attempted to crystallize the Ecological Perspectives Theory as the outside framework affecting the developmental process by interacting directly and indirectly with the young person’s development.

Six Specific Traits of Developmental Competencies

In this study the researcher defined *development* as the changes taking place within a person’s psychological makeup over a given time frame. These changes can best be recognized as specific traits or components of a person’s psychological composition created and cultivated within the mind as a result of stimuli. These changes are understood as adaptations to outside environmental circumstances. These adaptations are either beneficial to the individual in terms of

results produced, or detrimental in terms of results produced. If the adaptations are beneficial, then the results are an individual's ability to experience an actualization of their desires, and a greater efficacy in their daily life experience. If the adaptations are detrimental, the actualizations of the individual's desires are stifled and personal efficacy is limited.

The first competency is *homeostasis*. According to *The Dictionary of Psychology*, homeostasis is the psyche in balanced equilibrium or a balanced/ stable mental state (Corsini, 1999). Stress management involves controlling and reducing the tension occurring in stressful situations by making emotional and physical changes. The degree of stress and the desire to make the changes determines how much change takes place (Corsini, 1999). The next concept addresses *establishing an effective attachment relationship (bonding)*. According to *The Dictionary of Psychology*, bonding can be described as the process by which individuals become emotionally attached to one another (Corsini, 1999). The fourth definition described both *exploration and mastery*. Exploration was defined by the *APA Dictionary of Psychology*, as the confidence of an individual to examine their environment in an attempt to successfully orient themselves to their current situation (Anonymous, 2007). *Mastery* is defined by *The Dictionary of Psychology* as the impetus to be in control of inner drives and the outside environment. In addition to mastery, is the drive to be a successful individual (Corsini, 1999). The sixth definition is *individuation*. Individuation is defined by *The Dictionary of Psychology* as a state of independence in an individual and a tendency to be free to control oneself (Corsini, 1999). And lastly, according to McGraw-Hill Concise Dictionary of Modern Medicine, *management of impulses* is the degree to which a person can control the desire for immediate gratification or other,... (this trait)... may be the single most important indicator of a person's future adaptation in terms of number of friends, school performance and future employment (Segen, 2006).

Experts concerned with developmental/psychological competences disagree about the specific age where a person develops these competency traits; however, these competencies are the essential components of a psychologically sound individual. In terms of social competencies, or those skills measured in terms of group interactions, Givner, Lane, and Pierson (2004) reported that the two main elements, identified by educators, constituting the most important traits of social competencies are *self-control* and *cooperation* (2004).

Because the terms are so closely related, the researcher used both terms, *teamwork* and *cooperation*, interchangeably (Salas, Sims, & Klien, 2004). Teamwork was used in the larger group setting, and cooperation was used in dyadic situations (when just two individuals are concerned). The following are definitions of the two mentioned components/traits cooperation (which can be also defined as teamwork) and self-control (in a social setting).

Two Traits of Social Competency: Cooperation & Self-Control

According to Van Lange in the *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, “cooperation is defined by the tendency to maximize outcomes for self and outcomes for others” (2000, p. 296). In *The Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology* cooperation was defined in terms of teamwork. Teamwork was defined as:

a set of flexible behaviors, cognitions and attitudes that interact to achieve desired mutual goals and adaptation to changing internal and external environments. It consists of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are displayed in support of one’s teammates and the team’s objectives. Essentially, teamwork is a set of interrelated thoughts, actions and feelings that combine to facilitate coordinated adaptive performance and the completion of task work objectives (Salas et al., 2004, pp. 497 – 498).

For the purpose of my study cooperation/teamwork was understood as behaviors only exhibited in a group setting, or a setting of interdependence.

Self-control in this dissertation was recognized as different from a personal definition but one based upon an individual's interaction within a group. Self-control is a concept used by social scientists to explain differences among people in the frequency of engaging in a wide variety of acts causing harm to others (Gottfredson & Hirschi 1990). Furthermore, self-control was defined as the tendency to avoid acts whose long-term costs exceed their momentary advantages. These costs included penalties from institutions such as schools and the criminal judicial system, the loss of affection from family and friends, loss of jobs and advancements in employment, and bodily injury and physical pain (Gottfredson & Hirschi 1990).

Parental Involvement and Its Influence on Their Child's Development

“Parental involvement is broadly defined as the dedication of resources by the parent to the child in a particular domain, such as school or home, as well as parental participation in the educational processes and experiences of their children (Mahoney, 2011, p. 12). For over a century, psychologists have argued that numerous parental behaviors have wide-ranging and significant influences on the thoughts, behaviors, and emotions of children (MacCoby, 1992). It is believed these influences are beneficial or costly for the children and can constrict or widen the possibilities for a child's future success (Bugental & Grusec, 2006). While the theories explaining this relationship have shifted historically with the psychological paradigm of the time, the conviction has remained, parenting behaviors influence many aspects of children's internal and external lives (Buri, & Gunty, 2008). Within this context, experts described parental contributions to the early development in children of internal working models (schemas) of reality. These schemas serve as an organizational framework for the way adults make sense of

their lives. The schemas also act as lenses in a person's life, influencing the way one selects, interprets, organizes, and evaluates experiences (Buri, & Gunty, 2008).

In terms of concerned parents we know they seek an active role in the cognitive and social development of their child (Mahoney, 2011). Research supports the fact that parents can have an influence on their child's development (Witt, 1997). Family contribution to the development of traits increasing the chances of academic success and the family, also plays a meditational role in linking things, such as, social class to adolescent academic competence (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Research has consistently shown, "children are able to internalize and actualize the desires and expectations that parents have for their children" (Gair, 2001, p.12). Research has also demonstrated there was no measurable difference between males and females with regard to internalizing and actualizing parental expectations (Gair, 2001). However, were there other factors, in addition to parental involvement, which contribute to a child's development? According to some theorist, there are. Researcher Silvia McDonald has done extensive research regarding parental influence on their child's behaviors and the theorists associated with this topic. In her dissertation, "An Examination of Parents' Expectations, Attitudes, Scaffolding Behaviors, and Children's Developmental Outcomes." McDonald mentioned the researcher Lev Vygotsky. Lev Vygotsky was an individual who wrote extensively regarding the power of parents, and ultimately, the community influencing the development of children (McDonald, 1998). According to Vygotsky all children's development is formed, in a large part, by society, language, and socializing (McDonald, 1998). The interactions between parents and children are believed to be crucial for children, because the mental processes initially developed during these early parent-child relationships, much later, can become a part of the child's psychological makeup. According to Vygotsky, children's internalized mental processes are a direct product of

social relationships and interactions (McDonald, 1998). During a young person's development, "family/cultural socialization is an important influence on children's physical activity and behavior because a large part of a child's time is spent in the context of the family" (Janett, 2005, p.13). Family experts argue, parents, are the significant socialization agents to their children. Parents serve as the decision makers to determine which activities children participate in (Janett, 2005). "A number of studies have indicated that children's early sport interest, initial sport involvement and self-perceptions of physical competence are all linked to parental beliefs and behaviors" (Janett, 2005, p. 13). The argument for parental involvement when choosing their child's activities and parental efficacy, with regard to their positive desires being actualized through these activities, is supported.

The need for parents to influence and direct their children's activities is important to mention (Brotman, Gouley, Chesir-Teran, Dennis, Klien, & Shrout, 2005). If children are left on their own to decide what activities they desire to engage in, negative behaviors and consequence are the potential outcomes (Fawcett, 2007). This is especially the case if the child is allowed to devote much of their time to unconstructive leisure activities (Fawcett, 2007). In addition to this, there is a negative correlating relationship between sports participation and deviant behavior that has been identified (Fawcett, 2007). Lillian Fawcett also argued some forms of youthful leisure activities can become all-encompassing and destructive (2007). One instance of this is gang participation (Fawcett, 2007). Gang participation begins as a leisure activity and then usually develops into large harmful behaviors. Society does not want children, and more explicitly adolescents, involved with unconstructive leisure activities (Fawcett, 2007).

One might question the importance or necessity of shaping a child's personality. The importance in shaping a child's personality is justified in parent's (and more largely, societies')

desire to produce successful adults (Mahoney, 2011). In shaping a child's personality, desired traits are instilled and cultivated into the child's psyche. These desirable traits are considered advantageous to the child, and ultimately, the developing adult. An example of a helpful trait (with regard to the child's self-actualization) parents and educators seek to instill inside children is the concept of *self-efficacy*. Self-efficacy is the belief a person can achieve goals by behaving in a set way (Colella, Morano, Bortoli, & Robazza, 2008). In one study self-efficacy was associated with self-esteem in studies of young people. This suggested, "the development of self-efficacy is valuable in the development of a young person" (Manktelow, 1996, p.12). Traits such as the one previously mentioned form the core elements of a well-adjusted and competent adult. (Minnix, 2010). According to research, family relations and peer relations interact synergistically (Hartup, 1983). They interact in a cooperative way such that they are mutually enhancing to one another in social development (Hartup, 1983). Research has demonstrated young people remain oriented toward the attitudes of their parents in situations where implications for future status are implied. Traeger & Larson (1972) showed there was greater parent than peer influence in decisions about club membership and social activities, as well as those choices between alternative school curriculums. Participation in positive activities, like sports, is a valuable experience due to the positive outcomes for the practitioner later on in life (Department for Education and Skills, 2005).

Importance of Sport Participation

The necessity of youth participation in physical activities, such as sports, was demonstrated in a report published online at Afterschoolalliance.com's website. The report stated in 2002 the Surgeon General declared childhood obesity was national epidemic (<http://www.afterschoolalliance.com>). Since the Surgeon General's statement experts at the CDC

placed their attention upon studying the health risks associated with sedentary lifestyles and poor eating habits (2003). One particular concern was the astounding increase in the prevalence of type 2 diabetes in youth. The CDC estimated one in three U.S. children, born in 2000, would develop diabetes in their lifetime (2004). The odds for African-American and Hispanic children are higher. Nearly half of all African-American and Hispanic children are likely to develop the disease. There is also growing concern about the rising costs related to unhealthy lifestyles.

According to the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, medical costs related to poor health as a result of physical inactivity in 2000, has been estimated to be approximately \$76.6 billion (2004). The cost of obesity related to the tax payer, have been estimated at approximately \$117 billion in 2000, nearly as much as the \$140 billion in costs associated with public health care dealing with the medical costs of smoking (Parloff, 2003).

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 61.5 percent of children ages 9-13 do not participate in any organized physical activity outside of school hours, and 22.6 percent do not engage in any type of physical activity during free time (2003). Scientist are unanimous in their contentions about strategies to promote healthy behaviors in our youth must focus on reducing sedentary activities, ensuring that all youth have access to daily, quality opportunities for physical activity, and providing nutrition education and access to healthy foods (Durlack, 1997). Participation in after-school programs provided the much-needed opportunities to promote and support healthy lifestyles in our youth (Durlack, 1997). Poor physical health places children at risk for social, psychological, and academic problems and creates stress and burdens for caregivers (Durlack, 1997).

Health Benefits of Sport

When initially reviewing the literature concerning martial arts, this researcher came across research addressing the benefits of physical activity and sport. A brief overview of some of the research was merited and concluded regular participation in physical activities helped to improve and develop the practitioner's physical health (Leboeuf, 1991). According to experts, physical activity decreased the risk of dying from heart disease, lowered the chance of developing non-insulin-dependent (type II) diabetes mellitus and colon cancer, prevented high blood pressure and helped controls body weight (Janett, 2005). For children and adolescents, physical activity helped in the development maintenance of healthy bones, muscles and joints (Janet, 2005). Physical activity has been shown as beneficial to the body. Experts contended physical activities promoted not only the physical health of the youth, but also their mental health and the development of their self-concept (Leboeuf, 1991).

Participation in Sport and Mental and Social Development

This dissertation as stated was concerned with sport participation and any positive influence it had on mental and sociological development. In terms of issues related to personality and mental development, there was a correlation link between certain psychological characteristics present within an individual, and their participation in sports (Suzuki, 2007). For example, a trait such as high self-esteem was generally present within an individual who participated in sports (Suzuki, 2007). Participation in athletic activities increased a youth's sense of self-esteem and widened their cognitive, physical, and emotional repertory (Plenk, 1993). "One might imagine that high self-esteem would be linked to healthy sport participation and low self-esteem would be linked to unhealthy sport participation. Not surprisingly, studies have confirmed that these relationships exist" (Alvmyren, 2006, p. 20). Other positive traits associated with sports participation were:

deferred gratification and the development of the work ethic within the participant (Suzuki, 2007). Sport participation showed a correlating link between a participant's sense of self-discipline and self-control (Suzuki, 2007). Sport participation helped youth to enjoy the scope and abilities of their physical prowess (Plenk, 1993). In Herbert Marsh's study on the benefits of participation in sports it was concluded (after controlling for background variables) participation in sports was significantly and favorably related to such positive outcomes as positive social and academic self-concept, higher educational aspirations, higher coursework selections, homework completion, class attendance, and academic achievement (Marsh, 1988).

Other experts such as Lillian argued positive traits, such as, self-efficacy can be developed in children through academic and physical/sport activities (2007). Another example of the positive impact of sports and mentioned by Suzuki, was that participation in sports was effective when used as a promotional tool to get youth involved in larger programs designed to regeneration objectives (Suzuki, 2007). It has also been argued participation in sport reduced truancy and disaffection by the youth (Bailey 2005). Some studies indicated a positive effect of increased physical activity in sports on a student's attendance, as well as their attitude about school (Suzuki, 2007). Studies have shown that participation in extracurricular activity was associated with higher self-concept. Participation in extracurricular activities, such as sports, increases perceived social status leading to higher educational aspirations (Marsh, 1988). Extracurricular activities, such as sports, provided participants with varying degrees of status and prestige; they also facilitated the development of skills and attitudes serving as resources in students' quests for future success (Spady, 1971).

Additional studies have shown physical activity also promoted a greater sense of well-being and confidence via teamwork and individual accomplishments. Studies found children between

the ages 9 and 10, who practiced sports, tended to have higher feelings of self-worth and physical competence than their peers who did not participate in sports (Catalano, Loeber, & McKinney, 1999). Physical fitness activities and sports also provided youth the opportunity to challenge cultural and gender stereotypes (Catalano, Loeber, & McKinney, 1999). According to the U.S. Department of Justice, supervised physical activity also helped steer youth away from crime and delinquency (Catalano, Loeber, & McKinney, 1999).

Young people should have fun together and participate in activities like sports, which promote enjoyment (LuEtta, Al-Saadi & Goos, D. 1970). In group activities youth are able to develop a communal identity, essential in cooperation. It is also important to note, group activities are educational (LuEtta, C. et al., 1970). Besides developing basic skills, activities should provide for the broadening of knowledge and widening of horizons. Young people who are able to enjoy their associations in a group setting are preparing for a time when they can also enjoy associations in the future as an adult (LuEtta, et al., 1970).

A plethora of correlating evidence supported students who participated in extracurricular activities benefitted from the opportunities presented to them (Wilson, 2009). Some of the documented correlating evidence supporting participation in extracurricular activities were: higher grades, higher standardized test scores, less truancy, higher educational attainment/achievement (O’Dea, 1994) and higher self-esteem (Wilson, 2009). Participants in extracurricular activities showed evidence of numerous positive outcomes. Extracurricular activities such as sport have demonstrated the ability to positively influence the building and strengthening of academic achievement within its participants (Marsh & Kleitman, 2007). Participation in structured extracurricular activities provided important opportunities for social, emotional and civic development during adolescence (Mahoney, Larson, Eccles, & Lord, 2005).

There was evidence supporting participants in extracurricular activities showed less use of alcohol and illicit drugs (Nikki, 2009). Additionally, “those students who were most actively involved in the activities programs were also likely to achieve the highest academic success” (Castle, 1986, p 29). Test showed that individuals who participated in athletics were estimated to have increased adult-hood wages up to 6.7% over average for individuals with a bachelor’s degree, and up to 4.2% for those with only a high-school diploma (Costa, 2010). Researchers have also found, “delinquency is negatively related to time specifically spent in organized sport activities such as Tae Kwon Do” (Mistretta, 2006, p.19). Various scholars have suggested participation in extracurricular activities was associated with positive mental development because it facilitated membership in a pro-social peer group (Barber, Stone, Hunt, & Eccles, 2005). There was also evidence showing a negative, or inverse, relationship between sports participation and academic achievement (Foltz, 1992). It should be noted though, most of this evidence was found at the post-secondary level (Foltz, 1992). However, when considering correlations between sports participation and psychological health in K-12 sport participants the evidence is present (Ruoff, 1995). Psychological health is the absence of depression or the presence of self-esteem (Ruoff, 1995).

Returning to correlating evidence between sports participation and academic achievement a study published by the American Sport Institute (1995) stated participation in sports by K-12 students, in comparison to the control group, showed students who participated in sports had higher grades and maintained higher academic eligibility (1995). Further evidence supported involvement of young people in sports produced multiple benefits. “At their best, sports participation promotes responsible social behaviors” (Poinsect, 1996, p.15). Participation in sports also increases the formation of strong social bonds between individuals and social

institutions (Poinsect, 1995). Sports can also provide a venue for helping young people work toward an ethical understanding between participants. “Sport participation can stimulate good study habits and encourage the expression of ethical behaviors such as fair play, sportsmanship, integrity, and compassion as long as they are modeled by parents and coaches” (Poinsect, 1995, p.16). Also, sports participation has a high potential for contributing to the development of a nation’s young people (Poinsect, 1995). In terms of GPA, student athletes have higher GPA’S (Marsh, 1988). Sport participation was significantly related to educational aspirations (Marsh, 1988). One study finding was that the positive effects of participation in sports was not associated with football, basketball, or baseball, but were associated with participation in other sports. (Marsh, 1988).

One of the most consistent empirical findings in the steadily increasing research literature in the sociology of sport reveals that high school athletes manifest higher level educational orientations than their non-athlete counterparts” (Picou & Curry 1974, p.2). Even when, “outside variable such as educational encouragement of parents, socioeconomic status and academic performance the relationship between K-12 athletes and educational achievement still stands (Picou & Curry 1974, p.2).

On a broader scale according to the research the benefits of youth participation in sports included prevention of youth crime, improved self-esteem and competence. Participation in sports may enhance self-esteem either by external influence, or by internal reflection (Suzuki, 2007). Fredricks and Eccles, (2005) found participation in structured extracurricular activities, such as sports, were associated with positive adolescent behavior. The sense of achievement developed by the individual in sports can prevent the individual from choosing a delinquent form

of adaptation (Suzuki, 2007). Sports participation may take a person who has an inclination for delinquency into a more positive social association. Sports participation provides every individual an opportunity to interact with individuals of higher moral values (Suzuki, 2007). Studies have shown a positive statistical association between high levels of involvement in interscholastic athletics and low levels of delinquency (Suzuki, 2007). Any controversy notwithstanding it can be argued individuals less prone to delinquency may well become delinquent if there is no alternative to delinquent peer groups (Suzuki, 2007). When sports provide peer groups with conventional norms, it has the potential to prevent delinquency (Suzuki, 2007). Sports participation creates demands on the young person to act against immediate impulses (Vygotsky, 1978). At every moment in the game the child is faced with a conflict between the rules of the game and what he would do if faced with a conflict between the rules of the game and what he would do if he could suddenly act spontaneously. In the participation of the game the participant acts counter to the way he wants to act (Vygotsky, 1978). According to Vygotsky, a young person's greatest self-control occurs in play (1978). He displays the maximum amount of willpower when he renounces any immediate attraction in the game (Vygotsky, 1978).

In aggregate there has been little research done regarding questions such as, "Does participation in sports make a person a better citizen?" In terms of social development, the studies of Suzuki and other researchers on the benefits of sports in relation to community/citizenship have made it clear that this is an area where little tangible evidence has been accumulated (2007). This can be largely attributed to the ill-defined nature of the concepts in question (Suzuki, 2007). Some experts have attempted to make them operational by breaking them down into several dimensions, but the evidence collected remains at the perception level

and superficial (Suzuki, 2007). Despite the generally consistent pattern of relations found between participation in sports and high personal and professional aspirations, an important caution should be noted. Most studies, like the previously mentioned ones, are not longitudinal and measured in one school. (Marsh, 1988). This leaves ambiguous the ordering of variables. It is initially possible that higher personal and professional ambitions lead to greater participation in sports (Marsh, 1988). It is obvious that questions remain regarding these issues. It was my intention for this research to enhance the general range of knowledge regarding this subject.

Previous Definitions of Social and Developmental Competencies

Researchers who focus on competencies, both developmental and social were extensive, and I have chosen to describe the works of just one namely, Gail Pavgila. In defining social/developmental competencies Pavgila wrote, “in the broadest sense, social/developmental competencies can be defined as pro-social skills or problem solving skills that end for the benefit of the person possessing them in social interactions” (2008, p.23). Social and developmental competencies have also been described as the essential social skills needed for success. It should also be noted individuals who are deficient in social and developmental competencies are at risk for short and long term negative outcomes (Kathleen, et al., 2004). Examples of such outcomes are substandard academic performance, school dropout, impaired social relationships, unemployment underemployment, substance abuse, unstable and unfulfilling personal lives and a lack of post-secondary education and training (Kathleen, et al., 2004).

Martial Arts

The Chinese Cultural Society's website, located at www.chineseculturecenter-abq.com, martial arts is defined as more than just an aerobic activity designed for defending yourself (2011). The website also reported that martial arts are not just about fighting (2011). The website reported that martial arts skills are developed to defend people you care about, yourself and those that can't defend themselves (2011). In summation the website reported that martial arts attempts to: 1) preserve rather than destroy 2) avoid, rather than check 3) check, rather than hurt 3) if it has to hurt, it will hurt, instead of maiming 4) if it has to maim, it will maim rather than kill (2011). The website concluded by arguing that for the disciples of the martial arts all life is precious and it can't be replaced. In Tae Kwon Do athletes try to reach the highest level of body and mind development. In Tae Kwon Do, "a person gains self-satisfaction, peace of mind, a strong body, and becomes a master of a self-defense art" (Park, 1995, p. 12). In the martial arts classroom, the principal values promoted are honor, loyalty, courage, and humility (Cored, 1999). Experts have argued that martial arts, such as Tae Kwon Do, promote the development of thinking during the training process. In martial arts many techniques are derived from one basic principle (Choo, 2002). In the repetitious training of the basic techniques students develop a wide knowledge base for creative movements to be manifested later (Choo, 2002). Martial arts schools create an environment that encourages experimentation and promotes creativity. In martial arts practice, it is not looked down upon if a student performed a technique different from the one being taught (Choo, 2002). The ability to use an alternative technique when the partner changes his/her form of attack is highly encouraged. The discipline of martial arts is practiced for the development of creativity (Choo, 2002). Martial arts also help to develop mental skills (Harpold, 2008). An example of some of the interrelated mental skills developed in the sport of

martial arts are confidence, visualization/mental rehearsal, arousal regulation, discipline/mental toughness, and motivation (Harpold, 2008). These mental skills argued Harpold are currently being utilized by amateur mixed martial arts athletes (2008). These mental skills were not only utilized in competition, but in practice and training. Some athletes utilized more of the mental skills than others, but all were represented in the athlete's experience of the use of mental skills in the sport of mixed martial arts (Harpold, 2008). Martial arts are a complex form of training linked to such measurable aspects of health such as physical, social and psychological health (Mainland, 2008).

Martial Arts and Cognitive Development

For hundreds of years, supporters of martial arts have spoken about their ability to promote the personal development of the practitioner (Lu, 2008). The connection between personal development and mind-body training practices is illustrated in the Japanese concept of *budo*, which applies, generally, to the martial arts with a combat dimension (Mainland, 2008). While the physical training is similar to other forms of combat, it is the philosophical focus of the training, which makes *budo* a unique characteristic of certain forms of martial arts practice (Mainland, 2008). While “*bud*” is a word used to describe the philosophical center of those martial arts associated with personal and spiritual development through training, “*do*” refers more broadly to the western idea of spiritual life path and specific philosophical orientation of the traditional martial artist (Lawler, 1996).

“Initially, it might seem that cognitive development and training in martial arts are far apart; however, this is not the case” (Hekimoglu, 2010, p.35). The first thing to remember is that both are human activities concerned with personal development (Hekimoglu, 2010). “Martial arts are more than just kicks, punches and throws” (Hekimoglu, 2010, p. 35). Cognitive development is

not merely learning rules, facts and skills (Hekimoglu, 2010). When fully understood and developed within an adult, both can teach empowerment by providing an inner psychological and physical framework for thinking that better enables us to use our bodies and minds by maximizing their efficiency (Hekimoglu, 2010). Discipline is crucial, since the improvement is a gradual, day-by-day process. One can only achieve genuine success by making full use of those experiences sometimes referred to as failures (Hekimoglu, 2010). There is no shame in being knocked down by an opponent or being unable to solve a problem. Once you have learned how to turn pain and frustration into self-knowledge and personal growth, the challenges focus more on what is being learned and how it can be fully developed. Only those interested enough to persevere through the rigors the discipline entails will ever truly understand the sport (Halmos, 1985; Bolelli, 2008). Those who do persevere will find that the harder they train the more fascinating the art becomes. While the price extracted from martial artists for their expertise may seem extreme and frequently takes the form of sweat, bruises, and blood, the final payout is their earned mastery of the art (Hekimoglu, 2010). The more time a person spends training in martial arts, the more he is able to appreciate the true depth and discipline of the sport (Hekimoglu, 2010). Learning martial arts requires as much use of the brain as the body. The word *dojo* means the place of enlightenment. Both martial arts and cognitive development are intersections of art, practical skills, and high ideals that provide a structure to develop an awareness of life through a process of discovery (Hekimoglu, 2010). Martial arts have also been shown as an effective intervention program for students with severe emotional disturbances in an alternative education setting (Edelman, 1994). Studies have shown participation in martial arts can enhance positive behaviors by student participants (Mainland, 2010). It has also been shown

to enhance respect for authority and peers, improve conflict de-escalation skills, and enhance the participant's feelings of self-worth (Mainland, 2010).

Another interesting aspect of the martial arts experience is the opportunity for peers to positively influence each other. Positive peer behavior and pressure can be particularly important in influencing behavior related to drug taking, sexual activity, delinquency and academic performance (Durlack, 1997). Using credible, high status peers as models for other student's behavior is a way of modeling student's behavior (Durlack, 1997). Social support is another construct that is a preventative factor (Durlack, 1997). One group of researchers suggested that social support could be strongly related to positive aspects of well-being (Meehan, Durlack, & Bryant, 1993; Vaux, 1988).

Tae Kwon Do

The constructive/educational leisure activity at the center of this research proposal is Tae Kwon Do. Tae Kwon Do is a martial art that provides the student with the opportunity to develop traits parents desire to cultivate in their children, long with a sense of well-being within the participant (Kim, 1985). "Central to the proposed benefits of martial arts is a belief in the ability to achieve higher levels of personal well-being through dedicated training practices" (Mainland, 2010, p 8). Tae Kwon Do does this by combining both mental and physical activities in a constructive leisure activity. Tae Kwon Do empowers children to achieve certain goals through the mastery of certain physical and mental actions.

History of Tae Kwon Do

In Dr. Jung Hwan Park's book titled, *J. Parks Essence of Tae Kwon Do: From White Belt to 4th Dan* the history of Tae Kwon Do is explained. Park (2003) wrote that Tae Kwon Do was developed over 15 centuries ago in Korea. The meaning of the phrase Tae Kwon Do is the lifestyle and wisdom of kicking, jumping, and punching (Park, 2003). The first students of Tae Kwon Do were called Hwang Rang Do (Kim, 1985) and they lived in the Silla Kingdom of Korea. The Silla kingdom of Korea was located in the southeastern side of the Korean peninsula (Park, 2003). Due to the knowledge of Tae Kwon Do the Silla Kingdom was eventually able to dominate the entire peninsula (Park, 2003). At that time Tae Kwon Do was known as Subak (Kim, 1985). Subak was practiced consistently up until the early 20th century (Park, 2003). Subak was banned, due to the invasion of the Japanese sometime around 1910 (Kim, 1985). However, training in Subak was continued by anti-Japanese resistance movements throughout Korea (Park, 2003). Following the liberation of Korea from the Japanese in 1945, Subak was revived under the name Tae Kwon Do (Park, 2003). In 1961 the Korean Tae Kwon Do Association was established. It was eventually added to the Olympics and it is now practiced throughout the world.

Organizational structure of Tae Kwon Do: The Belt System

There are nine stages to learning and eventually mastering Tae Kwon Do. At each stage the student masters specific skills associated with their level. In order to proceed to the next level the student is administered a test by the master of the dojang. Once the student has mastered the skill, the student can then proceed to learn the skills necessary to master the next level. Belts are

given to the student signify their current skill level. There are nine belts each with specific colors. Each belt's color has a significance and meaning. Y. K. Kim described in his book the significance of the belts:

- 1) White Belt – The white belt is the first belt the student of Tae Kwon Do receives. The color white in Tae Kwon Do signifies innocence, as that of the beginning student has no knowledge of Tae Kwon Do.
- 2) Yellow Belt – The yellow belt is the second belt. The color yellow signifies the earth. The beginning student begins to create a firm foundation in Tae Kwon Do technique just as a seed begins to expand its root system deep in the earth as it begins to grow.
- 3) Orange Belt – The orange belt is the third belt. The color orange signifies the changes of autumn, as the student's mind and body begin to develop and grow as a result of the new Tae Kwon Do experience.
- 4) Green Belt – The green belt is the fourth belt. The color green represents growth, like the green plant as it sprouts out of the ground. The student has to build a firm foundation and now begins to grow in the art of Tae Kwon Do.
- 5) Purple Belt – The purple belt is the fifth belt. The color purple represents the changing sky of dawn as once again the student undergoes a new change and prepares for the transition to advanced student.
- 6) Blue belt – The blue belt is the sixth belt. The color blue represents the sky. It reminds the student to reach for heavens and continue their Tae Kwon Do journey.

- 7) Brown Belt – The brown belt is the seventh belt. The color brown represents the ripening or maturing process as that of the advanced Tae Kwon Do student whose techniques are beginning to mature.
- 8) Red Belt – The red belt is the eighth belt. The color red, or of blood, signifies danger and is a warning to the student to temper their newly found skills and techniques with control and wisdom.
- 9) Black Belt – The black belt is the ninth and final belt. The opposite of white it signifies maturity and dignity, as that of a senior student of Tae Kwon Do who has learned the curriculum of Tae Kwon Do (Kim, 1985).

Bronfenbrenner, The Belts of Tae Kwon Do, and Metaphor

Urie Bronfenbrenner provided the seminal philosophical framework that guided me throughout this process of research. His theories can be interpreted through the belt system of Tae Kwon Do. By using the belt system as a metaphor about the various points in Bronfenbrenner's theories, it is possible to establish a philosophical connection between the two. For this purpose, this researcher described the relationship between three of Bronfenbrenner's points and three of the belts, within the nine belt system of Tae Kwon Do. The three belts chosen were white, the purple, and the black belt. Each of these belts can be understood and interpreted through metaphor to be elements of Bronfenbrenner's theoretical matrix.

Beginning with the white belt, the first belt that every student receives, is like a blank piece of paper, as of yet unwritten upon or an open clear and young mind. The belt itself is without markings or color. When receiving the white belt, the student has accepted his/her role being a Tae Kwon Do student. A role as defined by Bronfenbrenner is, "a set of activities and relations

expected of a person occupying a particular position in society, and of others in relation” (1979, p. 85). The Tae Kwon Do student now occupies a particular position in the social structure of the Dojang and relationship between themselves and their teachers. There is an interconnection between the two components of Bronfenbrenner’s role and the role of the Tae Kwon Do novice. Moving to the fifth belt, which is the purple belt. It requires certain set behaviors by the holder. The individual who holds this belt is teacher and student, though they are masters, they are expected to assist the more inexperienced members of the class. In relation Bronfenbrenner wrote, “the tendency to evoke behavior in accord with expectations for a given role is a function of the existence of other roles in the setting that invite or inhibit behavior associated with the given role” (1979, p. 94). Finally, as the student progresses to black belt they are now considered masters with a new set of responsibilities, and becomes a part of their new identity in the Dojang. Similarly, Bronfenbrenner argued, “the placement of persons in social roles in which they are expected to act competitively or cooperatively tends to elicit and intensify activities and interpersonal relations that are compatible with the given expectations” (1979, p.101). These were just a few examples of the interconnectedness between the two concepts.

Curriculum

Curriculum in this study was defined as all the learning, which was planned and guided by the school, whether carried on in groups or individually, inside or outside the school (Kelly, 1999). Additionally, curriculum defined is the body of knowledge transmitted to the student with the intention of achieving certain ends (Smith, 2000). Curriculum can also be understood as an organized process producing something within the student over cognitive and psychological makeup (Smith, 2000).

Tae Kwon Do Curriculum

Park presented the original principles of Tae Kwon Do, introduced to the Korean peoples over a thousand years ago by a Buddhist monk (2003). That monk was a martial arts practitioner named Won-Kwang Pub-Sa (Park, 2003). The following were the five principles created by Won-Kwang Pub-Sa: *Loyalty to Country; Respect and Obedience; Friendship; Confidence and an Indomitable Spirit*, and *Defense* (Park, 2003). These five principles form the basis of the philosophical paradigm of Tae Kwon Do. Taken into account individually, one can best understand them as the intellectual foundation of the curriculum. The first principle, loyalty to country means Tae Kwon Do should be used to by the practitioner to protect their country from attack (Park, 2003). Secondly, practitioners should show respect to parents, teachers, seniors and others. Showing respect produces respect in return. Remember to obey your instructor (Park, 2003). It is also important to gain good friendship in the practice of Tae Kwon Do. One must attempt to unite with fellow practitioners on a spiritual level on the basis of common goals. The practitioner of Tae Kwon Do also experiences a growth in inner confidence and an inner awakening of a deeper spirituality. Finally, Tae Kwon Do is for defense; remember to protect yourself and the weak (Park, 2003).

Self-Reporting Bias in Qualitative Research

I would like to end the literature review with a brief overview of some of the research concerned with bias in self-reporting. This is always potentially present within the data gathered from qualitative interviewing. At the inception of any qualitative research project the researcher must remember that:

People are not always truthful. They may deceive themselves, such as when an alcoholic cannot admit his dependency to himself, or they may deceive the researcher, such as when a young offender does not want to reveal his socially undesirable thoughts or behavior. Furthermore, research participants may not be able to provide the level of detail, or use the concepts, that the researcher is interested in (Baker, Pistrang, & Elliott, 2003, p. 2).

Faced with this realization I as a researcher reported only what was observed and suspended any doubt or disbelief regarding the responses of the participants. I was aware of the many manifestations of untruthfulness within any research project or case study. One of the most common manifestations of untruthfulness in qualitative research exists in the realm of bias present in the responses of qualitative research participants. In the journal article titled, “How True Is True? Assessing Socially Desirable Response Bias” the subject of bias in responses to research questions is discussed. In the article, “Bias is defined as anything that produces systematic error in a research finding” (Mathew, Baker, & Spillers, 2003, p.328). Many times, in qualitative research, according to Donaldson and Grant, “participants want to respond in a way that makes them look as good as possible. Thus, they tend to under-report behaviors deemed inappropriate by researchers or other observers, and they tend to over-report behaviors viewed as appropriate” (2002, p.247). This tendency is called *social desirability bias*. Social desirability bias is defined as giving responses to the researcher that the participant perceives as a more acceptable response than the initial response that the participant would like to have made under different circumstances (Vogt, 1993). This is a result of the fact that respondents in the course of the interview frequently are trying to answer the questions as they feel *should* rather than in a way that they actually think, believe or want to respond (Vogt, 1993). Social desirability is a

common source of bias seriously affecting the validity of the survey findings (Nederhof, 1985). In addition to this, in some circumstances, participants are tempted to give the socially desirable response (Phillips & Clancy, 1972) that they perceive as being desired of the researcher. Rather than describe what he/she (the participant) actually thinks and does (Phillips & Clancy, 1972) the participant describes his/her idea behavior. This is assumed to be the result of two factors, the general strength of need for approval felt by an individual and the demands of a particular situation (Phillips & Clancy, 1972)

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Overview of the Methodology Section

This research project was an exploratory case study. The methodology of this project has been developed to study the most word-explorative descriptive way to gather data and the impact of studying and learning Tae Kwon Do's on a youth's psychological and social development. This researcher sought to find through qualitative evaluation any evidence of Tae Kwon Do training facilitating an environment that grows and nurtures those valued and critical developmental competencies that parents (and educators) seek to instill in their children. When mentioning qualitative evaluation, this is specific to analyzing the content of all the narrative and observational data that I as a researcher collected. Additionally, I recognize that the purpose of this study was to look for recurring patterns present in the narrative and observational data in an attempt to observe and document any evidence present between the student's perceptions and my perceptions of evidence for the enhanced development of actual developmental competencies as a result of their experiences in Tae Kwon Do. In an attempt to answer these question the implementation of this dissertation's methodology was planned and executed carefully.

Statement of Subjectivity

Ethics is one of the most important components of any research project (Groundwater-Smith, S., & Mockler, N., 2007). It was my intention as a scientist throughout this project to follow a principled approach to executing ethical research. In the implementation of this research project, several principles acted as a guide for attaining all goals as defined by (Shamoo & Resnik, 2009). Some of these principles were honesty, objectivity, integrity and sincerity.

I the researcher have been honest in all scientific communications: honestly reporting data, results, methods and procedures, and publication status. There has been no falsification, fabrication or misrepresentation of the data. The researcher did not deceive colleagues, granting agencies or the public (Shamoo & Resnik, 2009). The work done was also objective. I strove to do objective work and to avoid bias in experimental design, data analysis, data interpretation, peer review, personnel decisions, grant writing, expert testimony, and other aspects of research where objectivity was expected or required. I the researcher have worked to avoid or minimize bias or self-deception (Shamoo & Resnik, 2009). This was accomplished by my careful recording and analysis of data. Another principle followed was integrity. Promises and agreements were kept. I the researcher have acted with sincerity. Additionally, this researcher strived for consistency of thought and action (Shamoo & Resnik, 2009). This consistency was accomplished through a methodological implementation of the research process.

These and other related principles have been followed because I desired to promote the notion of *Ethical Teacher Professionalism* (Groundwater-Smith et al., 2007) as one of the results of this research. The notion of Ethical Teacher Professionalism or ETP is grounded in the basis where ethics form the framework for a teacher's research projects (Groundwater-Smith et al., 2007). Elizabeth Campbell described ETP as having the potential to provide a renewed sense of professionalism, a basis for renewed school cultures, and a catalyst for renewed teacher education and professional learning (Scheopner, 2005). It was the desire of this researcher to monitor performance at the *macro* level, thereby improving his performance at work on the *micro* level (Groundwater-Smith et al., 2007). Macro is defined by Webster's dictionary as large

in scale, scope, and capability; and micro is defined as small in scale, scope and capability (2008).

Research Design

The specific design for this dissertation was the exploratory case study. This type of case study was chosen as an empirical inquiry enabling the researcher to investigate a phenomenon within a real-life context (Merriam, 2009). Also, a study such as this, offered the researcher the means of investigating social units in an attempt to understand the problem (Merriam, 2009). In addition to this, the case study ultimately results in a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). These results offered insights and illumination for the researcher (Merriam, 2009). Pamela Baxter & Susan Jack provided an additional and final reasoning supporting this format framing my research. According to Baxter & Jack:

Case study research is more than simply conducting research on a single individual or situation. This approach has the potential to deal with simple through complex situations. It enables the researcher to answer “how” and “why” type questions, while taking into consideration how a phenomenon is influenced by the context within which it is situated. For the novice researcher a case study is an excellent opportunity to gain tremendous insight into a case. It enables the researcher to gather data from a variety of sources and to converge the data to illuminate the case (2008, p.556).

From a personal standpoint, I think a case study was appropriate since it documented and described the dynamic effects of the potential results of Tae Kwon Do participation. From my own personal experience as a practitioner of Tae Kwon Do, I understand the collective and

individualized results of participation in this discipline and I felt that a case study was the best way to document individual outcomes. Additionally, when designing this case study, I took extra precautions to provide the participants with the maximum opportunity to disclose their perceptions of the overall effects that their participation in Tae Kwon Do afforded them.

Philosophical Assumptions

Case study approach was decided upon due to the fact that I felt as a conscientious researcher a case study was the most appropriate means of accomplishing my goals. I valued case study for this research since the reporting is not simply storytelling (Stake, 1995). It was my goal for this research to provide the readers an opportunity to connect, in meaningful ways with the subjects of my study. I constructed this experience by capitalizing on ordinary ways of getting acquainted with the subject matter (Stake, 1995). I consistently reminded myself throughout this process that the, "Two principal uses of case study are to obtain the descriptions and interpretations of others (Stake, 1995, p. 64). My ultimate goal was to connect the teaching and learning of Tae Kwon Do with human development.

"All researchers have a great privilege and obligation: the privilege to pay attention to what they consider worthy of attention and the obligation to make conclusions drawn from those choices meaningful to colleagues and clients" (Stake, 1995 p.49). The statement resounded with me because I wanted to focus this research on those facts having the greatest impact upon the opinions of my readers. In constructing resounding research, I have had the privilege and obligation to focus my attention on what was important to parents and educators. I have done this by following Dr. Robert K. Yin's advice. Dr. Yin wrote a researcher should use multiple sources of evidence as the way to ensure construct validity. In completing this research I used interviews,

testimonials and observations in my attempt to ensure the construct validity of this project. Yin also argued that the researcher must use the following skills: 1) the ability to ask pertinent questions, 2) having the ability to interpret responses 3) being a good listener 4) being adaptive, 5) being flexible so as to react to various situations 6) having a firm grasp of issues being studied and lastly, 7) being unbiased by preconceived notions (1994). I possess and have adequately cultivated these skills, as a researcher, to accomplish my goals.

My Worldview

It has always been my worldview that individuals within society are the product of those aggregate outside influences surrounding them and their personal choices. I do not think a person's personality is only influenced by one individual, one choice made, or one event experienced in that individual's life environment. The individual's personality is influenced by several factors and several choices he/she makes every day. My concern, in this case study was what extent and degree did Tae Kwon Do influence an individual's personal makeup.

Researcher's Personal and Professional Bias

In the Literature review some of the published research concerned with the ever-present problem of self-reporting and bias in the qualitative interviewing data gathering process was highlighted. Addressing some of the additional problems associated with qualitative research and specifically addresses my own personal bias as a researcher within this particular environment. At every step of the qualitative research process the individual researcher must face and come to terms with the many inherent weaknesses present within their discipline (Stake, 1995). Qualitative

researcher and author Robert Stake pointed out some of the many problems associated with qualitative research in his book, *The Art of case Study Research*. Stake commented:

Qualitative study has everything wrong with it that its detractors claim.

Qualitative inquiry is subjective. New puzzles are produced more frequently than solutions to old ones. Its contributions to disciplined science are slow and tedious.

The results pay off little in the advancement of social practice. The ethical risks are substantial. And the cost in time and money is high, very high (Stake, p. 45 1995).

These comments withstanding, I would like to address an additional problem with case study research on a personal level. For me (also included in the previously mentioned faults associated with qualitative study) the criticism most associated with qualitative case study was namely, researcher bias. As a qualitative case study researcher, I situated myself within the research and I accepted the fact that my perceptions of the subjects were biased due to my integration with the subject matter. My previous experience with Tae Kwon Do has defiantly been positive. This positive experience proved to be the initial inspiration for the study. I desired to document any evidence present of positive outcomes related to Tae Kwon Do participation. The students and teachers that I have interviewed have also had a positive experience with Tae Kwon Do.

So I admit that as a researcher I have bias and I was biased in favor of participation in the sport and the individuals taking part in the sport. My only defense of the research is that qualitative research is subjective (Stake, 1995). The intent of any qualitative research study is to promote a subjective research paradigm (Stake, 1995). In qualitative

research, “Subjectivity is not seen as a failing needing to be eliminated but as an essential element of understanding (Stake, p.45).

Data Analysis

“Qualitative data consist of words and observations, not numbers. As with all data, analysis and interpretation are required to bring order and understanding. This requires creativity, discipline and a systematic approach” (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003, p.1). In order to most accurately interpret and understand the qualitative data this case study produced. I have used the qualitative data analysis system of *Content Analysis* (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003). Using this form of qualitative assessment was attractive to me because it is at its root holistic, contextual, empirical and empathic (Stake, & Munson, 2008). Content Analysis is the process in which the content of the interviews, field notes and documents gathered would be analyzed by the researcher (Merriam, 2009). The content was analyzed qualitatively for themes and recurring patterns of meaning (Merriam, 2009). As a researcher, I identified similarities and differences within the respondent’s responses in an attempt to build upon any perceived pattern of meaning. Finally, In the course of constructing this study (in the qualitative tradition) I eventually provided data that is, interpretive, personal, and diverse in scenes and characters (Stake, & Munson, 2008). It was always important for me to remember while doing this research that, “qualitative assessment concentrates on ordinary events more than extraordinary, and neither the best nor worst activities but those that provide good insights into what is happening” (Stake, & Munson, 2008, p.15).

Central Premise of Study

The central premise of this research was, 6th through 12th grade students participating in Tae Kwon Do at J. Park's Dojang, reported and showed evidence of developing valued psychological and social competencies as a result of their training. I sought, through case study, to find evidence supporting my central premise.

Choice of Population

The researcher chose J. Park's Tae Kwon Do Dojang for the diversity of its population. In the interviews the investigator sought (as mentioned earlier) evidence for the presence of those social and developmental competencies deemed essential for the psychological and social well-being of a healthy young person. The researcher attempted to seek out this evidence in the framework of the case study. This researcher attempted to create a case study that is, "an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (Merriam, 2009, p.40). This exploratory case study presents evidence for these developing student competencies by, and with, the teachers and curriculum of the dojang. All data was based upon an interpretation of the recorded dialogue created through a series of interviews conducted with the participants. Finally, this researcher engaged in observations concerned with the documenting of evidence of a sense of self-awareness, within the 6th through 12th grade students and the teaching staff regarding the presence and inner growth of these competencies.

Population and Sampling Procedures

The population that forming the basis for this research were 4 teachers and a sample of (16) 6th to 12th grade students of J. Park's Tae Kwon Do Dojang in Tampa, Florida. One of the most important considerations, when carrying out a qualitative study, is selecting the right participants

(Pavliga, 2008). The selection of participants is important because the validity of the study is directly related to this selection process; that is, the knowledge of the participants must be relevant to the questions being posed (Pavliga, 2008). Another important consideration is the establishment of boundaries or parameters for your population. “An accurate specification of boundaries in research is necessary to meet the basic statistical and measurement principal of minimizing within-group variance” (Foster & Hipp, 2011, p.25). Boundaries must be clearly defined because, “Inaccurately specified boundaries/parameters may lead to excessive variance within the group, increased measurement error, and unreliable results” (Foster & Hipp, p.25, 2011). In defining the parameters/boundaries for choosing who participated in this study college students and elementary students were not included. This dissertation was only concerned with middle and high school students and the staff at J. Park's Tae Kwon Do.

J. Park’s Tae Kwon Do School of Martial Arts, run by Master Hoon, provided the data source for this study. The staff and students of the dojang were observed for approximately three months. The dojang (at the time of the study) was organized in a hierarchical structure with Master Hoon as the top leader. Below, Master Hoon were two primary instructors and four assistant instructors at the bottom tier of the organizational /instructional structure. There were approximately one hundred student members of J. Park’s Tae Kwon Do School of Martial Arts. The dojang draws its members from the surrounding community in Northwest Tampa. The population in this area ranges from middleclass, lower middle class to working-class or proletariat. Most of the students were male with a ratio of approximately 3 males to every 1 female. The ages of the students ranged from 9 to 50 years of age. In the early afternoon the main client population was elementary school children. The after school program which began at 2:30pm was titled “After School All-Stars.” Following, at 5:00pm and continuing to 6:00pm,

was their “Basic Training” class for 5 to 12 year olds. In the evening, starting at 7:00pm, middle and high school classes began. Attendance varied but from my preliminary observations, attendance hovered around 50% for the 7:00pm class. Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays have the strongest nights of attendance. Thursdays and Fridays showed the most truancy. Typical of a major metropolitan area, the student population was multicultural. There were students from all nations and races currently attending J. Park’s. In my preliminary contacts I met students from Philippines, Columbia, Vietnam and South Korea. From my initial observations I received a sense of intercultural and interclass unity through the collective training in Tae Kwon Do. The curriculum associated with J. Parks Tae Kwon Do was also reviewed to determine the existence of the development of the mentioned psychological/developmental competencies.

The sampling for this research was purposeful sampling (Merriam, 2009). Purposeful sampling is based upon the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore selects a sample group where the most is learned (Merriam, 2009). The sampling takes the form of interviews, personal testimonials and supplemented by direct observations. All data gathered was concerned with generating insights and a greater understanding of how Tae Kwon Do cultivates human developmental competencies. The ultimate intention of this project was to expand the general knowledge base related to participation in Tae Kwon Do. This research has attempted to document through several interviews any evidence of the competencies in question. The qualitative interviews initiated by the researcher, were opened ended; the interviewee had the opportunity take their responses to the questions in any direction they choose. The information gathered through these interviews, professional observations, and individual testimonials were compiled and analyzed by the researcher.

Instrumentation

In order to complete this research, I spent three months interacting and gathering data from over 15 individuals of the teaching staff and students of the dojang of J. Park's Tae Kwon Do located in Tampa, Florida. The researcher utilized open-ended questions, direct observations and personal narratives to construct my data. Open-ended questions were used since they allowed the subject the freedom to answer the questions in an un-coached and ingenuous fashion (Creswell, 2007). In addition to open-ended questions, I also recorded my direct observations of the inner workings of the dojang and the personal testimonials of the student participants. I created both reliable and valid data gathering tools (see Appendixes D, E &F). Appendixes D & E are student and faculty questionnaires and Appendix F is a direct observation log. The direct observation log or logs were filled out over a period of three months in the course of several observations of the students and teachers in class. It was my contention that these data gathering tools were reliable and the researcher's observations and the participants' responses have been carefully recorded. All data recorded was valid because I have documented and recorded the all data participants have given me regarding any evidence of the subject in question. I recognized while doing this research that it was, "not enough to gain perspectives and terms" (Creswell, 2007, p.207). All data was translated and presented for the ultimate presentation to readers. I am confident participation in Tae Kwon Do at this dojang, which dated back to 2009, has given me the prolonged engagement and built trust between myself and the participants, which enabled me to learn the culture of the dojang. These two factors, understood in their aggregate, increased the validity of my study.

Prior to the interviews, all participants were presented with participant consent forms and confidentiality agreements (see Appendixes A, B & C). All required consent forms were dated and signed before any research proceeded.

Procedures

In the course of this study I the researcher questioned the students and staff of the dojang, recorded direct observations and documented select participants' personal testimonials. The questioning was implemented by each participant being interviewed with different questionnaires (see Appendixes D and E). Their identities have been protected and all information collected is considered confidential and will not be disclosed to any individual not affiliated with the university (see Appendix C). These qualitative interviews followed the pattern of the participants briefly filling out a questioner and then submitting to an interview to discuss their answers. The observation protocols followed were based upon standard IRB guidelines. All student participants are and will remain anonymous.

I have supplemented the data gathered from interviews with a series of direct observations in addition to the audio and video recording of select individuals' personal testimonies regarding their experience with learning the discipline of Tae Kwon Do. The observations were recorded on a log developed for the purposes of this dissertation (See Appendix F). The testimonials were recorded by a digital camera and a digital voice recorder.

In the Appendixes the format for the questionnaires and log used can be found. These tools were used to gather data. After first contact was made, the master of the dojang provided the institutional permission necessary to conduct the research. The data

gathering/documenting material includes audio and video recorders in addition to the filled out questionnaires.

Methodological Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations

Assumptions

“In the choice of qualitative research, inquirers make certain assumptions” (Creswell, 2007, p. 16). The process of qualitative research as methodological assumptions are characterized as inductive, emerging, and shaped by the researcher’s experience (Creswell 2007). “The logic followed by the qualitative researcher is inductive, emerging from the ground up, rather than handed down entirely from a theory or from the perspectives of the inquirer” (Creswell, 2007, p.19). This researcher assumed, as the data emerged, sometimes the questions had to change. The researcher also assumed the data gathering event is crystallized by the interactions of all the participant components. Throughout the data analysis of this project the researcher has followed, “a path of analyzing the data to develop an increasingly detailed knowledge of the topic being studied” (Creswell, 2007 p. 19).

In addition, methodological assumptions contain several philosophical assumption that the researcher embraces they are, *ontological*, *epistemological*, *axiological*, *rhetorical*, and *methodological*. In regard to the *ontological* issue, I the investigator acknowledged that there are multiple realities (Creswell, 2007). The investigator also held an *epistemological* assumption, by attempting to get as close to the subjects being studied as possible (Creswell, 2007). Additionally, this researcher held an *axiological* assumption. The researcher acknowledges that their research has been value-laden and that biases are present (Creswell, 2007). As a qualitative researcher, this investigator embraced the *rhetorical* assumption and understood the writing needed to be personal and in literary form (Creswell, 2007).

Limitations

The primary limitation of this study was centrally concerned with the credibility of the participants. The researcher had no control over a participant who chose to lie or misrepresent themselves and their experiences. Participants could have chosen to provide false responses to the questionnaires. Additionally, any of the participants could have chosen to misrepresent their identities and experiences at the school in order to offer pleasing answers or make themselves look better. Aligning this with a *constructivist* viewpoint, the researcher understood if any of the participants chose to misrepresent themselves or lie during the data gathering event, the, interpretation of the ideas generated and produced from the interviewing experience were invalid. In terms of constructivist viewpoints this entails *Constructivist Theory*. Constructivist Theory argues that people develop their own understanding of the world, through learning things and creating new knowledge based upon those experiences (Bruner, 1960).

It is necessary to clarify my position as a researcher and my familiarity with the participants in the study. Due to my prolonged engagement within this particular dojang I have concluded that the students see me more as a disciple of Tae Kwon Do rather than as a third party researcher. As a result of my frequent training and presence at the dojang, I have conclude the participants' responses and participation within this study have been as honest as any case study researcher can expect given the idea situation presented to me due to my relationships with the teachers and students of the dojang.

Delimitations

The readers of this research project might assume the parents of the students were part of this research project. However, the scope of the research was narrowed to only include data gathered from the 6th through 12th grade students of the dojang and their teachers. The rationale behind

excluding parental responses was based upon the logistical difficulty of interviewing individual parents. The exclusion of parents was seen as one of the potential flaws in generating an accurate final interpretation of the aggregate data collected. Also, the data of this study was based upon one dojang and experts could argue any results of this study cannot apply to other dojangs.

Conclusion to Chapter Three

This researcher presented information critical for understanding the quantified data collected. This quantification was necessary and provided evidence supporting the hypothesis. The researcher gathered data useful to members of academia in the future. Lastly, the researcher intended for all data gathered to be useful to members of academia in the future. The researcher intended for the data gathered to have real world applications.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Introduction

The following section contains the overview of the research results based upon three data sources I gathered during my fieldwork. Included is an example of the data gathering rubrics in Appendices E, D, F & J. Also included are three samples of my first hand information collected from each data source in the Appendices G, H & I. The first data source I collected were the student participant's unguided personal written testimonials regarding their experiences in Tae Kwon Do. The second data sources are the audio/video interviews I held with several of the student participants. Juxtaposed upon these data sources and essential in crystallizing the data, is the third data source, which was my own personal observations regarding the subjects. All individuals in these data sources, with the acceptance of Master Hoon Park and Instructor Andrew Sung, remain anonymous. This chapter I provide a summarized overview of the data I collected.

Additionally, during my observations and data gathering experience, I encountered the use of Korean words and vocabulary regularly being spoken by instructors and students. I have included several of those words and phrases (with definitions) in the following section. The following diagram illustrates showing the crystallization of the data.

Crystallization of the Data

Crystallization of the Data

When considering the final manifestation of the data gathered, in this research is conceptualized in its aggregate form, it becomes necessary to relay the information so that the reader can understand it in its totality. In order to accomplish this task, the researcher crystallized the data in a way that the final results of my research can be presented in an

intelligible manner. In the following sections of chapter four data is delivered and it is my hope that the readers of this comprehensive document will understand and recognize several recurring themes throughout the narrative. These themes were then interpreted within the context of addressing the research questions. None of the data was meant to be seen by the reader as precisely causing a related event. Data was presented in the participants' words where merited, and the researcher when appropriate. It is important to emphasize the data presented only provides situational based correlation and does not prove one event causes another. If in the course of reading chapter four and finally chapter five the reader encounters language by the researcher and the participants that might have the appearance of seeming to indicate causality. However, one must remember the limitations of case study data and cognate on the eventual aggregate based conclusions this data affords.

Implementation

All of the data gathered was collected primarily in the months of June and July of 2012. All information was gathered at J. Park's Tae Kwon Do Dojang in Tampa, Florida. The primary and only researcher in this project gathered all information either written or in video recordings and audio recordings. All data is first handed accounts and gathered only by the researcher.

Section One: Personal Testimonials

The personal testimonials were elicited from 16 high school and middle school participants of the study over a one-week period. I desired as a researcher to have each of the students write without any coaching of their personal thoughts and feelings regarding their experience with Tae

Kwon Do. Appendix H contains Master Hoon Park's completed personal testimonial. Appendix J contains the blank rubric.

Respect, Self-Confidence, Physical Fitness, Mental Health and the Tae Kwon Do Lifestyle

After reading the personal testimonials the researcher discovered similar patterns of response with regard to subject matter. The following was a summary of the five most common recurring themes I encountered throughout my reading. The five main, topics or themes, repeated frequently were: respect, self-confidence, physical fitness, mental health and the Tae Kwon Do Lifestyle. I have attempted to summarize the students' comments regarding these topics.

Respect

Almost every single respondent used the word respect and the development and awareness of respect including the ethic of respect, in their daily lives as a result of their experiences with Tae Kwon Do. One practitioner wrote, "practicing Tae Kwon Do has taught me to respect others and myself." The respect, students described entailed a respect for self, a respect for others and being respected by others. One student commented, "because of Tae Kwon Do I am now respected by the people around me." This respect, as recorded in the essays, was founded upon the students' sense of value and importance as human beings but also it is founded upon their developing skills in the dojang. The students in the dojang, with little exception, had a respect for themselves and (I surmised) each individual's physical prowess and ability. This idea of respect also transcended the dojang and, according to the students' comments and was present in their daily interactions in school and with their family members. According to the students' writing, their heightened sense of respect stemmed from their training in Tae Kwon Do. Several

students mentioned specifically Tae Kwon Do taught them a greater sense of respect for themselves and their community. One student wrote, “in the practice of Tae Kwon Do I have learned respect and have made a lot of friends.” This respect was directed toward the Tae Kwon Do community and the larger society outside the dojang as a whole.

Self-Confidence

The next most common and recurring theme within the personal testimonials was the idea of self-confidence. Students reported participation in Tae Kwon Do contributed to a greater sense of self-confidence. This self-confidence was related to their mastery of skills and achievement of belt ranking as described by a majority of the students. One student commented, “this self-confidence... it’s just (gotten) huge when I got involved into Tae Kwon Do.” One student mentioned their Tae Kwon Do training enabled them to play soccer with more courage.

Physical Fitness and Appearance

The topic of physical fitness and appearance was mentioned several times. I added appearance at this stage because frequently in the participants’ responses the topic of physical appearance was frequently coupled with the topic of physical fitness. In the course of analyzing the students’ and instructors written responses, most wrote about how Tae Kwon Do increased their physical strength, appearance, and made them healthier. One student wrote that, “I have reached a certain level of physical fitness thanks to Tae Kwon Do practice. Students also mentioned the strength development on several occasions. A participant commented that, “I am stronger than most of my class group. They were challenging me in the arm wrestling and I would beat them every time.” Other topics that frequently arose were related to how Tae Kwon

Do participation increased perceptions of their physical attractiveness. A participant stated, “Once I took Tae Kwon Do I got better health, better look.” Another young man explained:

Yes, my physical appearance, because I’m in shape, of course. And, you know, while I’m in here I can do the things that a lot of people are not able to do if they’re not taking any martial arts. So I’m faster, I’m quicker, I’ve got more determined...abilities. Physically, um...I feel good, best shape of my life. I mean I couldn’t...couldn’t ask for...couldn’t ask for a better, you know, fit.

These examples demonstrated the common pattern of answers provided by the participants in the course or reviewing the recorded data.

Mental Health

In the practitioners’ essays, several students also directly related their sound mental health to their participation in Tae Kwon Do. A high school student wrote Tae Kwon Do was, “a light that guided me on the way to become a better man.” Students’ responses also revolved around topics, such as, the psychological sense of increased personal power as a result of participation. One student felt, “this self-power it’s just huge when I got involved into Tae Kwon Do.” A Student trainer also reported an increase in their sense of personal happiness:

Oh, yes, of course. Well, not only does...do the training, does the training make me happy, but actually the whole part of teaching...when I’m teaching the children actually, uh...brings joy to me, too. Yeah, Ha. All my students, I mean I love them to death, especially, you know, all my little ones, the little ones are the best. Um... But my adults, too, I have a good bond with the adults, especially the

guys that are, you know, that are like 18, 17, 16, in the high schools, I see a little bit of myself in them.

In addition to the euphoria associated with participation in Tae Kwon Do, students also expressed the overall effect Tae Kwon Do had on their sense of motivation. A respondent wrote, “Tae Kwon Do is a driving force in my life and always will be.” Another student felt empowered by their Tae Kwon Do experience and wrote, “Without it (Tae Kwon Do) ...I would just be a lifeless corpse walking, living with no purpose.” The perceived positive effects of Tae Kwon Do upon the mental health of its practitioners constituted, among the participants a common felt sentiment of having a lifelong devotion to the sport as a result of their experiences. This was best summed up by the written comments of one individual. This individual stated, “Tae Kwon Do is and will always be a part of my life.” This final comment was included as a bridge to proceeding onward to the next topic of *Tae Kwon Do Lifestyle*.

Tae Kwon Do Lifestyle

On a few occasions students referred to the concept of the lifestyle of Tae Kwon Do. One female’s response specifically stated Tae Kwon Do was her life and she wouldn’t know what to do without it. Many students wrote about how the practice of Tae Kwon Do was tied to their future plans as individuals. Many commented they wanted to continue Tae Kwon Do into adulthood.

Miscellaneous Topics

Words like courage, responsibility, self-respect, self-control, and power were also brought up by various participant respondents when describing their impressions and experience with Tae

Kwon Do. However, none of the previous topics mentioned had any demonstrated pattern of presence within the essays. Several students wrote sentences that covered a wide range of topics. A middle school student described how Tae Kwon Do participation had helped him gain, “self-control, strength, agility and technique.”

Section Two: Interviews

The interviews took place over several days and each interview was recorded with a digital voice recorder or with a digital camera. Several of the audio recordings were transcribed (see Appendix G). Included is an example of one of the transcribed audio interviews I conducted with Andrew Sung. All of the interviews were based upon the participants’ responses to a set of questions created. The questions are presented in Appendix E and D. Each of the interviews, both audio and video, varied in length from 15 minutes to 25 minutes.

Discipline, Mastery, Respect, Physical Efficacy and Future Goals

Discipline

A measurable majority of the students during the course of the interviews expressed their experience of learning discipline when engaged in Tae Kwon Do. None of the students described the component of discipline in negative terms. Students expressed a desire to practice a disciplined behavior while practicing Tae Kwon Do. Several of the students spoke of discipline in enthusiastic and motivating terms. It was obvious the ethic of discipline was a part of their cognition of the sport.

Many of the students drew and explained connections between learning discipline in Tae Kwon Do and using it outside the dojang to produce success in other activities. One student even

mentioned that this discipline would lead to greater success in life due to their ability to see a task through until the end. Other students said that Tae Kwon Do gave them an edge in life. One student said, “So, of course, I possess more discipline when I put out there compared to myself to others that don’t take the Tae Kwon Do.”

Mastery

All structured training events in the dojang were centered on the action of mastery. All students must master the specific forms signifying each belt. When a first time student enters the dojang to begin training they are given a white belt to wear around their waist. In order to advance to a higher belt ranking, the student is required to learn a set of movements specifically designed for their belt. These forms were created for the student to systematically deal with several imaginary opponents under various poses using attacking and blocking stances. When students attended training each student worked on mastering the set of movements required of their belt to move up and learn the next belt form.

In the course of the interviews every student expressed the desire to master all the belts and proceed to black belt. This collective goal was accepted and desired by the students but there was little explanation given as to why specifically they desired this achievement. A student commented, “I’m trying to master every single level, I’m trying to take it one step at a time.”

When, during the interviews I inquired as to why they wanted to move up in belt ranking most students gave me simple replies such as, “because I want to” or “because it’s cool.”

Respect

In the interviews, the topic of respect was frequently brought up. Although it was not greatly expanded upon by any of the students, almost every student mentioned respect. Whenever the word respect was mentioned, it was always in the context of how Tae Kwon Do taught them respect for themselves and respect for others. A student commented that:

Um...Basics is, uh...just respect and honor. Ever since I started Tae Kwon Do, ever since I was younger, that was the main thing that they, uh...instilled in us, was self-control, respect and honor. Respect your family, respect your elders, respect your place of work, respect your dojang, everywhere you go, you must show respect and in return in life you will gain respect back. That's what I was taught (through Tae Kwon Do) when I was younger.

Physical Efficacy

The act of breaking boards was frequently brought up throughout the interview by the individual students. A significant and measurable percentage of the students described the act of breaking boards as fun but an even larger percentage of students stated the breaking of boards built up their sense of confidence and personal power. A student stated:

Oh, of course. Of course, you're absolutely right, (when breaking boards) you're exhibiting the power. You're exhibiting a lot of stuff, you know, power, confidence, you know, that's... That's like one of the little mini obstacles in Tae Kwon Do, little stuff like that can just boost, it's like a confidence booster. I've seen plenty of times where a kid, as soon as he breaks his first board, from there

on he's...he's super confident, he feels like he could take on the whole world.

And that's...that's the feeling that these kids should have, you know.

The last section of this chapter I devoted a few lines to further expand upon this topic based upon my personal observations.

Future Goals

In the interview, several students expressed a desire to compete at the armature and professional level in Tae Kwon Do. One student expressed a desire to move from Tae Kwon Do into mixed martial arts training. Students also expressed the idea that practicing Tae Kwon Do would enable them to meet their future goals as individuals. In one interview a student expressed a desire to use Tae Kwon Do as a bridge into other forms of fighting. The student said, "I'm also trying to get into MMA which is mixed martial arts, which is also another branch of...of martial arts, uh...fighting that I'm trying to get into."

Section Three: Personal Observations

Introduction and Overview

My personal observations of the dojang took place at the microsystem level. Microsystem as defined earlier, in the text as, "a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material characteristics" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.22). At this level the student is directly interaction with the stimuli on a first person basis. By the world stimuli I am referring to the entire dojang setting as understood as a learning environment.

As a member of J. Park's Tae Kwon Do Dojang in Tampa Florida I have had several years to observe the comings and goings of the dojang. However, for this research I dedicated several days to doing formal observations in the dojang and I took time to record my impressions in an observation log (see Appendix F). A sample of a completed log is included in Appendix I.

The first phenomenon I noticed was that there was a light, yet very present, sense of hierarchy. For example, the teaching/administrative staff was divided into three categories. These were master, instructor and mister. A person who had achieved any level of black belt mastery was called a master. A high level of black belt mastery is called a *Sa bum Nim*. A *Sa bum Nim* is a person who has achieved the rank of 8th or 9th *dan* in black belt training. The Korean word *dan* means rank or level. A person with a lower level of black belt mastery was called an instructor. In Korean the term is *Kyo bum Nim*. Any person below black belt, who had any respect and authority in the dojang (like myself), was called a mister. It was commonplace at this dojang to add the person's first or last name to the respected title. For example I was called Mister Ron.

Among the students, hierarchy was divided according to belt ranking. Higher belts having greater authority and, even at times, were called upon to lead drills. In an environment like this, one centered on a person's ability to do a particular task, personality was subject to ability. A person with greater abilities in martial arts takes a more dominant role in the dojang than an outgoing person with very limited martial arts abilities.

Most of the time the dojang was centered on structured drills and skill building activities. However, the students have plenty of time to interact with their classmates. From my interviews I was able to conclude that many of the students spent time together outside the dojang in unstructured social activities. I inquired, during the course of my research, about the students'

participation in other organized activities and sports. Most students were mostly involved with Tae Kwon Do and school with little time left for other activities.

One thing that I noticed during my observations was the lack of factions within the dojang. All students were accepted and there was a very strong and (not consciously) recognized sense of equality and unity. The students were not aware they didn't form clicks and interacted fluidly within the larger group setting. I documented some of the behaviors I witnessed in the structured class setting. Whenever students were about to spar, all of the students sat in a lotus position. Their positioning formed a square around the sparing opponents. "Sparing is the application of all the technical aspects of Tae Kwon Do exchanged between two or more partners or opponents" (Kim, 1985, p.350).

Even though most of the activities in the dojang focused around the physical components of the sport attention was paid to the spiritual dimensions of Tae Kwon Do. Unfortunately, the spiritual aspects of Tae Kwon Do were fairly muted within the dojang. I did notice during class, the intimate spiritual elements being touched upon very lightly, but most of the class time was spent on drills, exercise, and mutual combat.

On occasion the instructors did set aside time for the students while in the lotus position to clear their minds through meditation or as it is known in Korean, *Muk-nyum*. This time was light hearted and lacked clear spiritual depth of meaning or practice. True Tae Kwon Do meditation is defined as an act of concentration. When in a state of meditation an individual concentrates. Tae Kwon Do practitioners have been using meditation for thousands of years to heighten their learning potential and to discover better ways of practice (Kim, 1985).

Instructors, at times, mentioned the importance of cultivating or developing the *chi* within each student, but the use of this word was infrequent and never deeply expanded upon. Chi energy is an inner power source giving each individual the ability to farce life's challenges and confront those opposing forces present in everyday life, which seek to stifle an individual's personal desires or daily ambitions.

Every one of the students was willing to answer any questions that I had concerning their experiences at the dojang. This might have been due to the instructors prompting, or to their general enthusiasm and openness frequently present in a healthy adolescent.

Tranquility, Discipline, Respect and Physical Efficacy

In this section of chapter four I have chosen three common themes that I observed in the dojang of the course of my study and my life experience as a student practitioner of Tae Kwon Do. Three of the most present impressions that I received from my observations were the themes of tranquility, discipline and respect.

Tranquility

Even though Tae Kwon Do is a highly competitive and a skill based sport, my impressions of the dojang were based upon the sense of tranquility that I experienced while participating and observing the sport. Even during sparing, an event pitting two students generally of equal belt ranking in oppositional pugilistic exercise. I never got the impression that the event was creating an undue or extraordinary amount of stress or even discomfort upon the participants. The mood I observed of the event of training was serious, competitive and fun. I never witnessed a student crying while participating nor did I feel the instructors were placing any exorbitant amount of

stress upon the students. There was, of course, the loud shouting of commands stern direction but the atmosphere was more organic unity rather than tyrannical training.

In a conversation had with one of the students, the young man commented, “hey look, you know what, if you have anger stuff, go...go punch the bag, you know, just take care of it.” From similar statements such as this and other observations, I gathered that some students entered the dojang with pent-up anger or anxiety and left, after training, feeling more calm and tranquil.

Discipline

From my personal observations I think discipline is a word that best describes one of the paramount characteristics displayed by the students of J. Park’s Tae Kwon Do. It was evident in their behavior, dress, and verbal communication. Their behavior contained certain prescribed actions that students and instructors performed. Bowing was mandatory. In addition to this students knelt when required. The students also practiced the act of repeated physical drills of various martial arts actions. Without the ethic of disciple a student could not progress to the next belt level. Students must discipline their body and train it to perform the required routines or forms as it is called of each specific belt. This discipline was imposed upon the student by their individual willpower motivating them to master the next belt. Their individual degrees of willpower and disciple are based upon each students desire to master a belt and move on to black belt. I should note that some students are not able to generate the willpower to continue their Tae Kwon Do to its eventual end. I observed a few students who expressed the intention of quitting without achieving the highest belt ranking.

Respect

I wanted to take this opportunity as a researcher to write about my own personal perceptions of the respect ethos as manifest in the dojang while I was involved in direct observation. Students were required to bow. At the beginning and the end of every class students bow to the black belts and then bow to the masters and instructors. Bow in Korean is *Kyung neh*. Kung neh, in addition to the beginning and ending of class, was performed several times by the students (called *Do-woo*) in Korean on several occasions throughout the training. The ethos of respect was also reinforced with the physical aspect of bowing before Master Hoon Park before entering his office and the required bowing before instructors and students who had achieved black belt. The required bowing before the office is called *Sa bum Nim Keh*. Called in Korean, *Kuk ki yeh* students are also required to bow before the Korean flag and flag of the United States. I felt this respect of symbolism enhances the students respect for the visible symbols of organized structures. These symbols could be a deputy's badge, a religious text, or even a professional's uniform. And as mentioned earlier students engaged in the bowing to instructors called *Kyo bum Nim keh*. "To bow is a symbol of respect not only for others but also for oneself. It is a sign of humility, forsaking pride and the display of pride" (Kim, 1985, p.58). Master Hoon and the other instructors also modeled the behavior of respect by being very courteous and attentive to parents and any potential member.

Physical Efficacy

In its most common usage the word efficacy is widely understood to mean, the ability to produce a desired effect. For this section of my personal observations I have added the word *physical* to denote the fact that the efficacy actualized by the students was primarily one of a physical nature. The students kicked, punched, and broke objects; all three actions were

encouraged by the instructors in the process of training. Students kicked into the air at each and at other objects. Sometimes the students *danjeol* or broke those objects.

The breakings of objects (wooden boards) are a specific part of the curriculum, and an action integral part not only of training but an essential part of the belt testing process. “Breaking technique is a physical demonstration to measure one’s progress in Tae Kwon Do. Breaking is practiced against targets such as targets boards, concrete and red bricks. Proper form involves following a certain order of steps, combined with these necessary elements “(Kim, 1985, p.156).

The act of physical efficacy manifested in the dojang was something that I observed every day. I wondered how this might effect the physical manifestation of kinetic power influencing the students’ everyday outlook. When I questioned some of the students regarding their feelings and impressions regarding the breaking of boards, the students expressed feelings of power and confidence as a result of the measured actions.

The exercise of physical efficacy also provided the students with a visible outlet for any pent-up energies or frustrations that they may be carrying. Many times the individual student’s physical efficacy was exercised through practicing forms and hitting and punching objects. About one third of the students’ time was spent practicing and learning the various required forms. I witnessed this from my personal observations and conclusions, and also from several of the students expressing great satisfaction in the striking and punching of objects. On more than one occasion students spoke about how punching the boards helped to the release their frustrations and take out their frustrations on the inanimate objects such as the punching bag. I must add here that it was not considered appropriate to deliver extremely harsh blows upon an

opponent when sparing. I noticed that the severest blows were regularly delivered upon the objects in the gym such as punching bags and kicking stands and not between sparing partners.

During one observation I asked master Hoon the reason why the boards particularly are an essential part of Tae Kwon Do training and practice. Master Hoon replied to this inquiry by explaining how the breaking of boards was practiced to build up strength, speed, and accuracy. He also went on to explain that through the act of breaking boards, the student will develop confidence in their physical bodies. The action of breaking the boards, as I learned, was called by its Korean name, and used during testing. *Kyuk-Pa* is the Korean word that means the art of breaking. Frequently, when students are exercising physical efficacy their action is accompanied by the phrase *Ki-Hap*. *Ki-Hap* is a word that connotes the imagery and sensation of energy within the participant. The shouting of this word is encouraged and is a mandatory element in the testing and training process. One master commented that the yelling of *Ki-Hap* in the practice of Tae Kwon Do helps to increase concentration in class and relieve apprehension or shyness when learning in class (Kim, 1985).

The instructors at the dojang had informed me during one of our frequent conversations that the shouting of *Ki-Hap* builds a person's internal power and awakens the energy of the fighting spirit. In the shouting of *Ki-Hap* the student is bringing up their "*Ki-Ryuk*." *Ki-Ryuk* is the energy which is the combination of your mental and physical power (Park, 2003).

Conclusion

I found the data gathering process fruitful. I found some patterns of response, which were observed and analyzed in further detail in Chapter Five. It was comforting to discover the participant enthusiasm manifested by the instructors and students during my research. I have

gathered an adequate sample of data and I have finished the final analysis. It is important to note that my summary of the participants' responses and specific idiosyncratic responses have at certain junctures been amalgamated with the collective responses.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Research Questions Revisited

There are researchers who contended there are certain characteristics of an environment responsible for stimulating development in the brains of children (Hackl, 2009). This researcher supports the concept that Tae Kwon Do provides an environment which contributes to the stimulation necessary for the brain development needed for a successful life. There have been studies, which have provided evidence where life experiences can positively influence brain and cognitive function (Farah, Betancourt, Shera, Savage, Giannetta, Brodsky, Elsa, Malmud &, Hurt, 2008). I am convinced that learning and participation in Tae Kwon Do stimulates and contributes to the beneficial cognitive development and ultimate development of a person. My research supported the contention that the structural makeup of the Tae Kwon Do environment facilitated the mental development of an individual due to the social and psychological elements of the curriculum. Moreover, Tae Kwon Do provides the life experiences which have a positive influence on the psychological and social development of an individual.

Throughout the research process it was my intention that the participants' responses would allow me to address the central question and the research questions as well. Once again the research questions were: 1) Why did the current participants choose to take Tae Kwon Do? 2)

Did the staff and faculty work consciously subconsciously to impart competencies that are critical in the development of their students emotional and psychological well being? 3) Did the students see evidence of these competences within their personal development? 4) Was there any evidence of these critical competencies being specifically imparted through the curriculum? In the proceses of gathering and catagorizing my research it appears that most participants kept their responses within the desire parameters of response.

Data Gathering Purpose

Sports have a positive impact on development and the potential to lead to positive human development (Parsons, 1954). The purpose of this study, and the gathering of this data, was to document for further analysis any evidence between the participants of Tae Kwon Do and the development of psychosocial characteristics necessary for an individual's successful entrance into adulthood. For the purpose of this dissertation I divided these characteristics into psychological and social characteristics. As mentioned earlier in this dissertation, according to Sroufe, a competent adult possesses 6 psychological competencies. They were: (a) Physiological Regulation, (b) Management of Tension, (c) Establishing an Effective Attachment Relationship, (d) Exploration and Mastery, (e) Individuation, (f) Management of Impulses, (1983). Also, Givner, Lane, and Pierson report that a competent adult possesses two social competencies, which were the ability to cooperate and the ability to exercise self-control (2004). I took these two categories of competencies and gathered data which supported the existence of these competencies within the developing adolescent.

Summary of the Findings

As a researcher, I constructed my study where any data gathered contributed to answering the central question which was, “Did learning Tae Kwon Do lead to the development of critical developmental and social competencies within the psychological makeup of its adolescent participants?” In order to answer this central question I provided the participants with two methods of providing information regarding the study’s purpose in addition to my personal on site observations.

Comments and Conclusions on the Author’s Bias and Subjectivity

It had been my intention to eliminate as much bias from my research methods as possible. It is known, by those familiar with the field of qualitative case study, one of the weaknesses in case study qualitative research is in its intrinsic bias (Stake, 1995). The researcher’s data collection was subjective and the researcher’s perceptions and interpretations of the data are subjective (Stake, 1995). In my attempt to face this criticism I produced data sources entirely from the subject participants’ point of view. I always attempted to reflect upon and consider the role my individual bias played in generating the responses of the participants. After recording the data, I interpreted it as accurately as possible. In spite of these precautions however, I accepted the limitations experts recognized and were imposed upon individual who were attempting to generate a case study

Research Questions Revisited in Context

Why did the current participants choose to take Tae Kwon Do?

After the initial research and data analysis, I concluded the students took Tae Kwon Do out of selfinterest. The students (for the most part) felt taking Tae Kwon Do benefitted their physical and emotional benefit. This discovery caused consideration about some of the parallels between the students' desires to improve themselves and a theory created by the late psychologist Abraham Maslow. Maslow introduced a theory related to the term *self-actualization*. The term self actualization was first coined by Kurt Goldstien (Maslow, 1987). This term, and the subsequent related theory associated with it referred to a person's desire for self-fulfilment. Some people have the tendency to become potentially more of what they are (Maslow, 1987).

In the analysis of the research data, a large majority of the students' motives for self-improvement in many ways resulted in them becoming more of what they potentially are. If the potential did not exist in the students' minds they may not have considered Tae Kwon Do as an endeavor with a potential for experiencing success. Maslow defined the process of developing a person's full human potential as self-actualization. I should add here a further definition of Maslow's definition in the context of paradigm. In Maslow's paradigm self-actualization was defined as, the full use and exploitation of talents, capacities and potentialities surrounding a person in their environment (Maslow, 1987). Maslow argued healthy people exist in a world where they are motivated by their inner desires to actualize their fullest potentials and capabilities (Maslow, 1987). Based upon the analysis of the aggregate data collected, I have concluded the students (for the most part) take Tae Kwon Do in the spirit of self-actualization to develop their potential. From the data I gathered, the idea students took Tae Kwon Do to build their confidence, improve their health, and enhance their future coincided nicely with Maslow's concept of self-actualization. Other factors discovered (coinciding with Maslow's theories) included confidence building, health, and the related concept of improving physical fitness. In

addition the students' collective responses, was pursuit of a career in Tae Kwon Do, or some related field of martial arts. These I concluded stemmed from a desire to improve the self. From my personal perspective as a qualitative researcher, I support the students motivations all stemmed from self-interest and a desire to become successful adults. Framed in the microsystem of the dojang, the student was able to experience the self developing environment of the Tae Kwon Do environment. The microsystem of the Tae Kwon Do dojang facilitated the students' desire to self-actualize. The research pointed toward individuals joined Tae Kwon Do to develop their psychological and physical capabilities and individuals, such as this, sought out environments where the opportunity for mental and physical development was available.

Did the staff work consciously subconsciously to impart competencies that are critical in the development of their students emotional and psychological well being?

The faculty worked to impart competencies critical for human development. However, I did not think they were fully cognizant of what they were doing as mentors. Ideas like respect, efficacy, and mastery were not fully conceptualized regarding their wider implications for their students' psychological and social development within the paradigm of traditional Eastern martial philosophies. The staff stressed certain moral values, Eastern cognition, and encouraged the physical manifestation of those values; but they didn't cognate the impact their actions had on or the potential for deeper implications upon their student's psyche. In terms of Eastern cognition, I refer to the seminal Eastern philosophies forming the wider guiding paradigm of martial arts instruction. Eastern philosophy, in relation to Tae Kwon Do, was mentioned at times but I felt the individual instructors never had a strong grasp of these concepts. The deeper spiritual meanings of Eastern martial arts philosophy or *budo* were never really relayed to the

students over any extended period of time. I am convinced, by my observations, there was psychological and social development taking place as a result of the physical activities, but there was no clear time dedicated to Eastern philosophical instruction in the context of the Tae Kwon Do paradigm.

Did the students see evidence of these competences within their personal development?

Yes, the students saw the result of their participation in Tae Kwon Do as enhancing their personal and social development. To quote one participant's response:

I would have to say that, before being in Tae Kwon Do, ...I was a little bit more shy, wasn't, ...really out there. After Tae Kwon Do, I've experienced, you know, the feeling of not being shy ...I know now that you have to go out there, you got to put all of it, you know, into it if you want to be liked and all that. Um...I believe I've made a lot more friends, I'm a lot more...more likable, traits um... I would have to say that also I'm very active now that I am (practicing Tae Kwon Do)... I'm in better shape as well, and psychologically I am just...I just, I feel more positive around myself and others.

The following is evidence From my perspective for the following critical psychological competencies specifically imparted and developed through the curriculum and practical instruction.

- *Physiological Regulation*: (homeostasis or the balanced state of mind) This psychological competence was present and cultivated through meditation (which, took place infrequently) and the performance of the belt forms. During meditation the student focused upon an idea (as given

by the instructor) which encouraged maximum concentration upon a single essence of the self. In the performance of the belt forms, once the instructor gave the verbal command and the student responds (thus beginning the form), all of the student's physiological and psychological energies were compounded into one exhibition of human performance. This exhibition can best be performed by the student when the mind is in a state of homeostasis. The psychological state of homeostasis was regularly practiced, encouraged and developed as an essential part of Tae Kwon Do training.

- *Management of Tension*: Equals the reduction of stress through the emotional and physical changes that take place as a result (in this case) of participation in Tae Kwon Do. I think training in the dojang facilitated the management of tension and ultimately enhanced personal inner tranquility through the structured expenditure of pent-up energy, often present in developing adolescents. In addition to the instructed opportunities available for students to punch and kick various padded leather targets there was also the managed drills. The managed drills lead by the instructors where drills during which the student expelled energy, both physical and psychological, through participating in the activity. This lead to an easing of psychological and psychological tension. Another stress relief, I observed in the dojang, was of yelling Ki-Yap this experience allowed the student to release any pent up anxiety incurred through training.
- *Establishing an Effective Attachment Relationship*: One clearly evident phenomenon I documented, from my experiences in the dojang, was the development of those essential attachment relationships or bonds all humans cultivate with other humans for sanity and emotional health. There is an abundance of research supporting the positive effects of bonding on health and over all well-being (Depue & Morrone-Strupisky, 2005). While within the dojang environment I observed several instances where students would pair off to train, talk, and take a

short trip to the convenience store for a soda. Essential components of the formation and maintenance of attachments and bonds between individuals.

- *Exploration and Mastery*: One of “the most effective way an individual develops self-efficacy is through mastery” (Chowdhury, Endres & Lanis 2002). With regard to this question, I offer a resounding affirmation. In the Tae Kwon Do classes I observed students explored their body’s abilities and limitations. Pushing themselves with the help of the staff to achieve new heights of physical performance. Each belt represents their physical attainment of a level of mastery unrecognized or achieved until accomplished and actualized. I am confident to report that exploration and mastery were definitely a part of the students’ developmental process. Of all the aforementioned traits I think exploration and mastery were the most consciously recognized by both students and teachers. What adds to this cognition is the fact that there were belts and ribbons given out whenever a student achieves a mastery of a required skill through the exploratory development of as of up until that moment undeveloped and unrecognized. This I argue leads to an actualization of physical and mental ability that contributes to a persons’ overall efficacy.
- *Individuation*: In Tae Kwon Do the individuation which occurred most evidently, was when the student practitioner recognized themselves as not only at a different belt and mastery level but when they engaged in the sport, recognizing their new role as a changed student. The student is changed by the process of moving from novice to mentor and, ultimately, mentor to master. The role changes were also changes in power. Power in our modern society is influenced and shaped by uneven human and social relationships (Parsons, 1954). In the practice of Tae Kwon Do, the individual is able to develop power in relation to others, and the practitioner’s roles many times are defined by power.

- *Management of Impulses*: My perspective corroborated this effect. Students developed an inner sense of self-control through the orchestrated exercises. Any adrenaline built up in the course of exercises was released via a controlled event. One student commented, “If you’re ever stressed out, you know, you just come in here and you just take it all out. At the end of the day you’re more relaxed, you’re calmer, and you’re just a lot better person, you’re more peaceful.”

Secondly, from my research perspective, was there any evidence of the following two critical social competencies being specifically imparted through the curriculum and practical instruction?

- *Cooperation*: The act of cooperation was evident in every class period. It was consistently reinforced by the instructors and among the students. Based upon my observations of events such as, students assisting each other in the completion of drills. I have concluded that not only is the ethic of cooperation being practiced and demonstrated daily by the students, this ethic is being reinforced internally through daily repetition of this behavior. Scholars have given considerable attention to the importance of increasing the level of cooperation and teamwork (Jones & George, 1998). In teamwork what one person does is determined by what all the others are doing and all members of the group must, constantly alert to the ways others are behaving in order to respond appropriately (Jones & George, 1998). The power of sport is its intrinsic capability to be used for the realization of elementary values and aims of development cooperation like justice, social integration, solidarity improvement of health (Ogi, 2006).
- *Self-Control*: The social ethic of self-control is another social skill present in the daily activities and curriculum of those present in the dojang. A student cannot proceed through the various

levels of training without developing and exhibiting the act of self-control. I observed evidence supporting this. One example was where the students regulated the intensity of their strikes and kicks in order not to injure their opponent during sparing.

Outliers in the Study

In this section the data related to the topic of outliers is discussed. Outliers in research are defined as: an observation that appears to be inconsistent with other observations in the aggregate data set (Walfish, 2006). My encounters with outliers in this research project were rare. This was because most of the students engaged in Tae Kwon Do were involved were involved and were gaining some form of constructive satisfaction out of it. In concluding my argument by adding that due to the scope and depth of the research, the presence of outliers were virtually eliminated due to the all-encompassing nature of the students' responses.

Surprises in the Data

Traditionally, most case study data results in the appearance of information patterns once manifested and presented – which may surprise the researcher. My case study was no exception. Within the course of collecting the data I was presented with a recurring theme of several students desire to pursue Tae Kwon Do into adulthood as a professional career. After thoughtful consideration and a retrospective reanalysis of the data in context with the students' professional ambitions, this seemed less surprising given the immense impact this martial discipline has had upon their lives.

My Professional Recommendations

I would like to challenge my colleges to consider a new discipline, science or perhaps even field, connecting pedagogy, philosophy, and sports science into a new field of research that promoting the pursuit of combat sports as a healthy and patriotic lifestyle. I would encourage my

colleagues to create associations and organizations designed to promote the ethic of the physical martial lifestyle. The devotion to this ethic and its growth among the masses may result in reawakening people's untapped physical and mental powers. I think that if a new breed of scientist can unite under this new ethic the impact upon the local community and even the greater society as a whole will be nothing less than paramount.

I did not take the opportunity to review the data on the health and fitness crisis among youth, I think there is one. Introducing the ethic of the physical martial lifestyle to the nation could, in its eventual impact, restore the health and vigor of our physical national identity. These claims are speculation and unsubstantiated, or proven. Yet, it is my hope the work I have produced will be something new in the community. In addition I hope this newness will have an impact upon our national collective identity, and the ethic of the physical martial lifestyle would even impact the culture of government.

Conclusions for Chapter Five

There was evidence in the dojang supporting my initial contentions. The martial arts community and the governing bodies of Tae Kwon Do need to begin to reconsider the role of instruction and pedagogy from the psychological sense and its impact upon their sport. For too long the Tae Kwon Do community has focused only on the physical aspects of the sport. The imbalance in the discipline can be seen in the reported obsession many masters and dojang instructors have with form and fitness, rather than a holist approach embracing all aspects of the true nature of Tae Kwon Do. I do not think Tae Kwon Do was developed as a ritualized form of fighting, nor do I see it as a complicated set of dance routines. Tae Kwon Do is a martial art and at times an injury prone sport. I do not believe Tae Kwon Do should be a death match between

opponents but I do question what I perceive as the feminization of the sport and the subsequent negative consequences of this action. I think the psychological and social power of Tae Kwon Do exists in the actualization of its ancient nascent form or birth form. This birth form was more combative and spiritual something that I believe all members of the Tae Kwon Do family needs to embrace. I have used the final segments of this dissertation to encourage a Tae Kwon Do culture based upon efficacy and empowerment.

Implications for Further Research

It has been my experience in the field of pedagogy, to observe that researchers tend to look out for new trends. This may enhance my research's popularity since it was not an observational trend. I found little on the developmental impact of martial arts training on adolescent development. I also found almost no research on the impact of Tae Kwon Do training on adolescent development. From a researcher's standpoint, I hope my research may generate a martial arts awareness in the academic community.

Moving past that sentiment I think my research could provide a grand opportunity for further researchers to study any existing evidence supporting some type of martial arts training as an integral part of public and private school education. Also, from my observations future researchers might explore the validity for many individuals, not inclined to large group organized activities (such as football or baseball) to participate and even excel in a sport like Tae Kwon Do. A future related hypothesis might be constructed upon the theory that Tae Kwon Do participants are accepted and promoted according to their developing ability level and not an existing inclination or natural ability. In Tae Kwon Do, a novice to the discipline can begin training with little or no knowledge of the sport. The Tae Kwon Do novice can do this at any time in their life. In contrast, if a person wanted to participate within an NFL (National Football League) football

team at the age of 25 or 26, with no experience or knowledge of the sport nor of the demands both at the skill and physical level of the sport their chances for success would be greatly diminished. Even with intense training their chance to become a paid participant within the NFL would be (I argue) impossible. Moreover, that same person may alternatively choose to begin participating in Tae Kwon Do however in time that person could eventually compete, join a team and participate in local and international Tae Kwon Do culture. Given the benefits and broad appeal of the sport, I think further research is justified as to the benefits Tae Kwon Do can add to a school's curriculum. It is the validity of these previous statements that make Tae Kwon Do an appealing topic of research and participation.

I am convinced that Tae Kwon Do's appeal can potentially justify further exploration on the subject generated by pedagogical researchers. One of the first responsibilities of an academic professional is to publish and to produce applicable data, which can be utilized by other individuals within and outside the related research fields. Research concerned with the topic/field of Tae Kwon Do has the potential to resonate with large populations for its equality of participation and the related potential physical and psychological benefits it provides its participants. Anyone can participate in the sport and anyone can excel. For researchers, the challenge is to generate data to support academic interest transferable into concrete application and action.

Final Thoughts

- After careful consideration of the data, I conclude that the students engaged in Tae Kwon Do are engaged in the sport out of a self-centered desire to improve themselves. I also conclude that this desire was by facilitated by their learning experience. Although the staff did not completely

grasp or understand the depth of their curriculums impact, I believe there was evidence, which supported the idea of their psychological and social development being enhanced by their exposure to the curriculum. In the microsystems of the dojang, the students were able to actualize their desires through the curriculum and instruction of the teachers, and also through the collective experience of training. In the collective experience of training, critical competencies were imparted into the students thus contributing to the dynamic process of human development

- It is beneficial for the understanding of my research to comment on the ethic of power. In sports, the highest power of individuals is demanded to face the game (Ogi, 2006). Additionally, the individual participating in sports actively cultivates their power actualization associated with its practice (Ogi, 2006). Ethics are the branch of philosophy involving the concepts of right behavior in the context of their outcomes. The exercise of the ethic of power, in the context of development, is essential for any healthy individual's psychological makeup. Power, or self-determinate free will, is an essential human element for success. Thus I argue it is ethical for an individual to exercise their power whenever the outcomes are beneficial to their personal self-interests. Sport participation within the contexts of martial sports provide the greatest opportunity to develop the right concept of the power ethic within the individual.
- Throughout my observations, I saw the expression of personal power within the dojang. This power conformed to traditional observations of power, and was shaped by uneven human and social relationships (Parsons, 1954). In the practice of Tae Kwon Do the individual is able to develop their power, in relation to others, in ways unavailable through traditional educational environments. This power, as cultivated in the dojang gave the students the potential to translate their energies into real world efficacy outside of the training environment. I reiterate, that the

activity of breaking boards can be interpreted as an expression of physical efficacy. Efficacy is the power to make change. In the process of breaking the boards, the student, through the use of their hands and feet actualizes their ability to change the shapes of the boards. Ultimately, this is an expression of their physical power to permanently alter the material structure of the wooden boards.

- In the sport of Tae Kwon Do the individual's personal power and efficacy is enhanced through mastery of this discipline. Characteristic of many of the martial arts Tae Kwon Do develops a person's skills to potentially apply to any of the daily challenges in life. Tae Kwon Do at its best develops one's personal power. It is the applicability and also the spirituality of Tae Kwon Do, which makes it such an appealing exercise in human capabilities and behavior. The skill set cultivated in the dojang gives the student the potential to translate their skills into real world efficacy outside of the training environment. It is for these reasons, I am an ardent supporter of the martial arts lifestyle.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A



Participant Consent Form

As a Graduate student attending Argosy University I am asking you to participate in a research study. This form is designed to give you information about this study. I Ronald R. Budd will describe this study to you and answer any of your questions.

Project Title: A Research Study on the Impact of Tae Kwon Do on Young People's Psychological and Social Development

Principal Investigator: Ronald R. Budd
Argosy University Graduate School of Education
Email: tenington@yahoo.com Phone: 813-294-0686

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Nancy Hyland, Chair Argosy University School
Of Education who can be reached at 813-463-7168.

What the study is about

The purpose of this research is to seek out and document any correlating evidence of critical developmental and social competencies being cultivated within the environment and among the participants in the setting of a Tae Kwon Do school. This dissertation is an exploratory qualitative case study on J. Park's Tae Kwon Do Dojang in Tampa. Some of the questions I sought to answer were: (1.) Does the staff and faculty work consciously or subconsciously to impart competencies that are critical to their students emotional and psychological well being? (2.) Do the students see evidence of these competences within their personal development? (3.) Is there any evidence of these critical competencies being specifically imparted through the curriculum? Curriculum in this study is defined as all the learning which is planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried on in groups or individually, inside or outside the school.

What I will ask you to do

I will ask you to answer a few questions (in the setting of an interview) regarding your experiences with the educational experience at J. Park's Tae Kwon Do Dojang. Your identity will remain secret at all times throughout this process. The only identifiers will be your role in the Dojang. Be it staff, student or parent.

Risks and discomforts

I do not anticipate any risks from participating in this research.

Benefits

This study is beneficial because the data that has been collected can be useful for parents when deciding what type of activities might best enhance their adolescent children’s psychological and emotional development. Teachers and those who work with young adolescents can also benefit from this data because it documents some of the psychological and social results of participating in Tae Kwon Do. Finally, the research data can provide help for concerned individuals when decide whether or not to guide youth into this avenue of growth, development and actualization.

Payment for participation

There is no payment, compensation or financial incentives for taking part in this study.

Audio/Video Recording

In order to complete this study a series of audio recordings will be made during our interviews. The recordings are needed for this research so that your answers can be transcribed into written form. Upon completion of the research all audio recordings will be destroyed no later than 6 months after the dissertation has been awarded.

Please sign below if you are willing to have this interview recorded through an audio recording. You may still participate in this study if you are not willing to have the interview recorded.

- I do not want to have this interview recorded.**
- I am willing to have this interview recorded:**

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Privacy/Confidentiality

I anticipate that your participation in this survey presents no great risk.

However, please note that any email communication that may take place between us is neither private nor secure. Though I am taking precautions to protect your privacy, you should be aware that information sent through e-mail could be read by a third party.

Taking part is voluntary

Involvement in this study is voluntary; the participant may refuse to participate before the study begins, discontinue at any time, or skip any questions/procedures that may make him/her feel

uncomfortable, with no penalty to him/her or their affiliation with J. Park Tae Kwon Do Dojang. Including any other institution that may be involved with the research.

Concerns

The main researcher conducting this study is Ronald R. Budd, a graduate student at Argosy University. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Ronald R. Budd at tenington@yahoo.com or at 813-294-0686. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Participants at 607-255-5138 or access their website at <http://www.irb.cornell.edu>. You may also report your concerns or complaints anonymously through Ethicspoint online at www.hotline.cornell.edu or by calling toll free at 1-866-293-3077. Ethicspoint is an independent organization that serves as a liaison between the University and the person bringing the complaint so that anonymity can be ensured.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Your Name (printed) _____

Signature of person obtaining consent _____ Date _____

Printed name of person obtaining consent _____

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least five years beyond the end of the study.

If you have questions...

Please feel free to contact me at any time using the contact information provided at the top of this page.

Appendix B



Parental Consent Form

As a Graduate student attending Argosy University I am asking your child to participate in a research study. This form is designed to give you information about this study. I Ronald R. Budd will describe this study to you and answer any of your questions.

Project Title: A Research Study on the Impact of Tae Kwon Do on Young People's Psychological and Social Development

Principal Investigator: Ronald R. Budd
Argosy University Graduate School of Education
Email: tenington@yahoo.com Phone: 813-294-0686

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Nancy Hyland, Chair Argosy University School
Of Education who can be reached at 813-463-7168.

What the study is about

The purpose of this research is to seek out and document any correlating evidence of critical developmental and social competencies being cultivated within the environment and among the participants in the setting of a Tae Kwon Do school. This research is an exploratory qualitative case study on J. Park's Tae Kwon Do Dojang in Tampa. Some of the questions I sought to answer were: (1.) Does the staff and faculty work consciously or subconsciously to impart competencies that are critical to their students emotional and psychological well being? (2.) Do the students see evidence of these competences within their personal development? (3.) Is there any evidence of these critical competencies being specifically imparted through the curriculum? Curriculum in this study is defined as all the learning which is planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried on in groups or individually, inside or outside the school.

What I will ask your child to do

I will ask your child to answer a few questions (in the setting of an interview) regarding your experiences with the educational experience at J. Park's Tae Kwon Do Dojang. Your identity will remain secret at all times throughout this process. The only identifiers will be your child's role in the Dojang. Be it as staff, student or parent.

Risks and discomforts

I do not anticipate any risks from participating in this research.

Benefits

This study is beneficial because the data that has been collected can be useful for parents when deciding what type of activities might best enhance their adolescent children’s psychological and emotional development. Teachers and those who work with young adolescents can also benefit from this data because it documents some of the psychological and social results of participating in Tae Kwon Do. Finally, the research data can provide help for concerned individuals when decide whether or not to guide youth into this avenue of growth, development and actualization.

Payment for participation

There is no payment, compensation or financial incentives for taking part in this study.

Audio/Video Recording

In order to complete this study a series of audio recordings will be made during our interviews. The recordings are needed for this research so that your answers can be transcribed into written form. Upon completion of the research all audio recordings will be destroyed no later than 6 months after the dissertation has been awarded.

Please sign below if you are willing to have the interviews recorded through an audio recording. You child may still participate in this study if you are not willing to have the interview recorded.

- I do not want to have this interview recorded.**
- I am willing to have this interview recorded:**

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Privacy/Confidentiality

I anticipate that your child’s participation in this survey presents no great risk.

However, please note that any email communication that may take place between us is neither private nor secure. Though I am taking precautions to protect your privacy, you should be aware that information sent through e-mail could be read by a third party.

Taking part is voluntary

Your child’s involvement in this study is voluntary; the participant may refuse to participate before the study begins, discontinue at any time, or skip any questions/procedures that may make

him/her feel uncomfortable, with no penalty to him/her or their affiliation with J. Park's Tae Kwon Do Dojang. Including any other institution that may be involved with the research.

Concerns

The main researcher conducting this study is Ronald R. Budd, a graduate student at Argosy University. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Ronald R. Budd at tenington@yahoo.com or at 813-294-0686. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Participants at 607-255-5138 or access their website at <http://www.irb.cornell.edu>. You may also report your concerns or complaints anonymously through Ethicspoint online at www.hotline.cornell.edu or by calling toll free at 1-866-293-3077. Ethicspoint is an independent organization that serves as a liaison between the University and the person bringing the complaint so that anonymity can be ensured.

Upon your request you will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent for my child to take part in the study.

Your child's name: _____

Your signature: _____ Date

Your printed name: _____ Date

Signature of person obtaining consent: _____ Date

Printed name of person obtaining consent: _____ Date

If you have questions...

Please feel free to contact me at any time using the contact information provided at the top of this page.

Appendix C



Confidentiality Agreement

I Ronald R. Budd agree to the following:

All data at the individual record level obtained or acquired by the researcher in the course of this study shall be treated as strictly confidential and shall not be disclosed or provided to any person who is not affiliated with Argosy University or to any person who has not signed a Data Confidentiality Agreement. In addition:

1. No attempt shall be made to identify any individual contained in such records.
2. No aggregate data from such records shall be reported or published until all participant's identities are coded and their anonymity is secured.
3. All data at the individual record level on computer tape, cartridge, disk, CD-ROM, other computerized storage media, or in hard copy shall be archived in a locked location until its destruction.
4. All data at the individual record level on a computer hard drive shall be password protected.
5. Any breach or suspected breach of data confidentiality shall be reported immediately to Dr. Nancy Hyland, Chair Argosy University School of Education who can be reached at 813-463-7168.

Any intentional violation of this agreement shall be the basis for legal prosecution.

(Signature)

Date

(Print Name)

Appendix D

Student Questionnaire

Domain One: *Developmental Competency*

Physiological Regulation (Homeostasis)

1. Do you think that participation in Tae Kwon Do makes you a better all around person?
2. If so how?

Management of Tension

1. After participating in a Tae Kwon Do class how would you describe your emotional and physical state?
2. Do you think that participation in Tae Kwon Do helps you to feel more relaxed?
3. Does participation in Tae Kwon Do make you feel happy?

Establishing an Effective Attachment Relationship (Bonding)

1. How would you describe your relationship with your fellow students?
2. Would you consider your fellow classmates as friends or potential friends?
3. Would you/do you spend time with your fellow classmates outside the dojang?
4. What words would you use to describe your relationships with your fellow classmates?

Exploration

1. How has learning Tae Kwon Do effected your sense of confidence?

2. Do you think that learning Tae Kwon Do has given you the courage to try other activities with your fellow classmates at school, with your friends or with your family?
3. If so describe those activities.

Mastery

1. What belt have you achieved at this point in time?
2. Do you plan on mastering every level in the belt hierarchy?
3. Why do you feel it is or is not important to achieve the rank of black belt?
4. How important is self-discipline in achieving a higher belt rank?

Individuation (Autonomy)

1. How has participation in Tae Kwon Do influenced your athletic and physical abilities?
2. Do you think that participation in Tae Kwon Do has given you a greater sense of personal power?
3. Has participation in Tae Kwon Do increased your sense of self and independence?

Management of Impulses

1. What other fun activities would you be engaged in if you weren't in Tae Kwon Do class?
2. Have you made any sacrifices to be a student of Tae Kwon Do?

Domain Two: *Social Competency*

Cooperation

1. Describe how cooperation plays a part in your learning experience at the dojang.
2. How essential is the act of cooperating with other individuals in learning Tae Kwon Do?

Self-Control

1. In the Tae Kwon Do curriculum do you and your classmates take turns when performing prescribed activities?
2. If you are feeling angry or upset in class over a perceived wrong how is it addressed in the dojang?
3. Under what circumstances and for what reasons do you ask for permission while in class?

Appendix E

Faculty & Staff Questionnaire

Domain One: *Developmental Competency*

(Answer all questions based upon from your personal observations)

Physiological Regulation (Homeostasis)

1. Do you think that your students participation in Tae Kwon Do makes them a better all around person?
2. If so how?

Management of Tension

1. After leading a Tae Kwon Do class how would you describe your students' emotional and physical state?
2. Do you think that participation in Tae Kwon Do helps your students to feel more relaxed?
3. Does participation in Tae Kwon Do influence your students' feelings of personal happiness?

Establishing an Effective Attachment Relationship (Bonding)

1. How would you describe your relationship with your students?
2. Would you consider your students as friends or potential friends?
3. How would you describe your relationship with your students?

4. Would you/do you spend time with your fellow instructors and students outside the dojang?

5. What words would you use to describe your relationships with your fellow

instructors and your fellow students?

Exploration

1. In what if any observable ways does learning Tae Kwon Do effected your student's sense of confidence?

2. Do you think that learning Tae Kwon Do has given your students the courage to try other activities with other fellow classmates at school, with their friends or with their family? (from your personal observations)

3. If so describe those activities.

Mastery

1. What belt do most students achieve?

2. Do most students master every level in the belt hierarchy?

3. Why do you feel it is or is not important for your students to achieve the rank of black belt?

4. How important is self-discipline in achieving a higher belt rank?

Individuation (Autonomy)

1. How has participation in Tae Kwon Do influenced your students' athletic and physical abilities?
2. Do you think that participation in Tae Kwon Do has given your students a greater sense of personal power?
3. Has participation in Tae Kwon Do increased your sense of self and independence?
4. Explain the significance of breaking the boards?

Management of Impulses

1. What are some of the sacrifices that a student must make in order to be a student of Tae Kwon Do?
2. Explain the significance of bowing?

Domain Two: *Social Competency*

Cooperation

1. Describe how cooperation plays a part in the learning experience at the dojang.
2. How essential is the act of cooperating with other individuals in learning Tae Kwon Do?

Self-Control

1. In the Tae Kwon Do curriculum do students take turns when performing prescribed activities?
2. If a student is feeling angry or upset in class over a perceived wrong how is it addressed in the dojang?

3. Under what circumstances and for what reasons do students ask for permission?

Appendix G

Audio Transcription of Interview

*The following is a transcript is in the Naturalism format. Naturalism format in transcript interviews does not omit any word or utterance from the interview documentation. This transcript was created from an interview that I had with Instructor Andrew Sung.

Res: Today's the 11th?

Int: Eleventh. Alright.

Res: Yes.

Int: Okay, now what we're doing here is we're preparing a presentation and, um...uh...I'm gonna be presenting this, um...in the process of completing a dissertation and eventually a book. And, uh...what I have here is a, uh...lifetime participant of Tae Kwon Do who actually experiences the lifestyle. And now why don't you go ahead and introduce yourself.

Res: Alright, I'm Andrew Sung, I am 22 years old and I have been doing Tae Kwon Do ever since I've been seven years old.

Int: Okay. And what level of belt have you reached?

Res: Second degree.

Int: Second degree, for people that don't know about this?

Res: Oh, second degree black belt, that is, um...uh... Black belt is the first degree, of course, and then there's 10, 10 de...10 degrees after, I'm on my second.

Int: Okay, excellent. And, um...um...what we're talking about here is the spiritual, psychological, social elements of this experience that you're engaged in, and how it's influenced your...your life, your development psychologically and socially and, uh...and at the end of this, I'd like to if we could, if it's possible, I want you to be most honest with me though, uh...about if any...any potential or possible spiritual components to this, um...to this discipline, and I'm not talking about Christianity either, I'm talking about Asian...

Res: Yes, sir.

Int: ...Asian components if you feel like there's any present. Because now you can...you're gonna start answering questions here in a minute, but, uh...as... From my experience, and I think from yours, we know that Tae Kwon Do is more than just a physical activity, is that not correct?

Res: Yes, sir.

Int: Isn't there spiritual and academic aspects to it?

Res: Yep, you're absolutely right, sir, ____.

Int: And philosophical?

Res: Yes, sir.

Int: Alright. So, um...with all that said, uh... Do you think that participation in Tae Kwon Do makes you a better all-around person?

Res: Yes, sir.

Int: How?

Res: Um...Basics is, uh...just respect and honor. Ever since I started Tae Kwon Do, ever since I was younger, that was the main thing that they, uh...instilled in us, was self-control, respect and honor. Honor your family, honor your elders, honor your place of work, honor your Dojang, everywhere you go, you must show respect and in return in life you will gain respect back. That's what I was taught when I was younger.

Int: Alright, that's good. Uh... After participating in Tae Kwon Do, how do...would you describe your emotional and physical state?

Res: Um... Emotional? Calm. Um... Not really angry, not really, uh...uh...I wouldn't say, uh...now older-wise, I, uh...a lot of energy. A lot of energy. Usually people say, you know, exercising will bring you down and make you tired, but it actually does the opposite for me, actually it keeps me at a good pace, um...physically...

Int: Well, I... I agree with that, too.

Res: Alright.

Int: It's...that's true, I agree with you.

Res: Physically, um...I feel good, best shape of my life. I mean I couldn't...couldn't ask for...couldn't ask for a better, you know, fit ____.

Int: Well, you're... You're... You're fit, you're a fit young man, you're a handsome young man.

Res: Thank you. Thank you, sir.

Int: Uh...and, uh...and so would you, you know, this is probably be attributed to your experience in Tae Kwon Do?

Res: Yeah, being healthy and being fit, yeah, absolutely, 100%. If I didn't have Tae Kwon Do, I wouldn't be as healthy as I am right now.

Int: And you do think that it makes you feel more relaxed?

Res: Yes, sir.

Int: Alright. And it makes you... Does it or does it not make you feel happy?

Res: Oh, yes, of course. Well, not only does...do the training, does the training make me happy, but actually the whole part of teaching...when I'm teaching the children actually, uh...brings joy to me, too.

Int: And how do you feel when you don't participate in Tae Kwon Do for an extended period of time?

Res: Ha ha, Lethargic. Lazy. Um...Out-of-shape. What more can I say? It's that, it's like being a couch potato. If you sit at...sit at home all day, you're not gonna feel good afterwards.

[Phone rang]

Int: You want to take this call?

Res: Yes, sir.

Int: Alright, we're gonna keep on just going on, it's managerial, the manager, he's managing this.

Res: Hello, J. Park Tae Kwon Do. Um... Sorry, Master Hoon is not in right now. Would you like his, uh...personal number? Oh, yes, sir, is this, uh...Mr. Harris? Hey, how's it going, sir? Yes, I already gave Master Hoon a heads up that you were gonna call him, so, um...if you call that 394 number on the business card, that should get ahold of him asap. Yes, sir, alright. Okay, you're welcome.

Int: Cool.

Res: Alright.

Int: Alright. Okay, Yung, uh... How would you describe your rela... I mean, you are an instructor.

Res: Yes, sir.

Int: Okay. But you were a student. And how would you describe your relationship with your fellow students when you were a student, and now as a...as a Master instructor?

Res: Um... When I was younger, um...the same...my same, well I guess my peers when I was younger, they're not around now, but, uh...when I did train with them when I was younger, it was...it was all...it was... Everything worked. There was no, uh...animosity, no anger. Always friendly competition though. There's always friendly competition. One thing I do remember as a kid, we always competed against each other but not in a sense of becoming better than each other...better than the other one, but, uh...in a sense of just becoming better yourself because, uh...I remember Grand Master Park always used to tell us, it's not about winning, as long as you do it, you're winning.

Int: Yeah.

Res: You know, as long as you exercise and you get the...the training, you, yourself fulfill something that nobody else can give you. Um... Now, with my students, my relationship with my kids? I think I got a good relationship and hopefully... Hopefully, none of my students hate me. Um...

Int: I don't think so.

Res: Yeah, Ha ha. All my students, I mean I love them to death, especially, you know, all my little ones, the little ones are the best. Um... But my adults, too, I have a good bond with

the adults, especially the guys that are, you know, that are like 18, 17, 16, in the high schools, I see a little bit of myself in them.

Int: Um hm.

Res: So, um... They're all good kids. All great kids.

Int: And... But, I mean in terms of when you're participating in Tae Kwan Do, um...is, uh...your...you know... Everybody's not of equal ability, isn't that correct? I mean...

Res: Of course.

Int: ...not everybody's gonna be able to demonstrate what you can demonstrate.

Res: Yes, sir, of course. Yeah.

Int: So, is there any... And when does the spirit of competition come into play in the Tae Kwan Do experience?

Res: Um... Tournament, usually. Um... But it also depends like, um...friendly competition can be a part of their class, um...especially with the adult class, with especially like with, uh...Mr. Angel, Mr Wi, all these guys that, um...these guys, you know, they compete throughout the whole class against themselves, you know, against each other, you know,

how can do the more pumping, who can do the most pushups, who can throw the fastest kicks. So, in a sense, competition is always relevant, it's always there because they're trying to compete to make themselves better.

Int: Um hm.

Res: But, um...in the whole aspects of Tae Kwan Do nowadays, Tae, uh...the most...like the most I guess aggressive, uh...type of competition would be tournaments.

Int: Okay.

Res: Tae Kwan Do tournaments would be the most type, uh...most aggressive type, but even in that sense when you go to a tournament, you go 100% respect. You should not go in there thinking that you're gonna destroy everybody. You should not go in there thinking that you're the best because in a sense a tournament is ran by a fellow Master, and if a fellow Master's running the tournament, you have to show him respect and not only about showing him respect, you gotta show his event, his students, all the same respect as well. Because now it doesn't, uh...it doesn't look good, it doesn't give your school a good name. So, you must show respect in a sense of to all those, so you can get it back. But I mean, competition is relevant in every type of physical activity, you know, that's how you get better. You know, survival of the fittest. If there's no competition, everybody would be, uh...plateauing. So, that's how I look at it.

Int: Um...how would you describe your relationship with fellow students? You say it's cooperation, respect...

Res: Okay.

Int: Um... Do you consider your fellow classmates, students, and other instructors as being, uh...potential friends, or are they friends?

Res: Oh, yeah, of course. Oh, yeah, without a doubt they're all friends, even my little ones, even the little kids, even though you can't show any...any friendship during the teaching in the class, but, you know, if I see any of these guys out in public, I'll be more than happy to talk to them, you know, and hang out with them.

Int: What words would you use to describe your relationship with your fellow classmates, just to kind of wrap it up?

Res: Um...

Int: We're not ending this, this is just this section.

Res: Alright. Uh...fellow classmates? Um... Respect, I guess, you know.

Int: Respect, alright. Uh...how has learning Tae Kwan Do affected your sense of confidence?

Res: A lot, actually. Um... Not in the fact of I feel...I feel like I can take anything or, um...I can go out there and destroy. I'm not... I'm not thinking in that way. In the fact, uh...if something did happen to me, if trouble did find me, I feel confident I myself to...so I could defend myself. So...

Int: Alright. Uh... Do you think that learning Tae Kwan Do has given you the courage to try other activities with your...

Res: Oh, yeah, without a doubt. I've, uh... Since doing Tae Kwan Do, I mean I just started Tae Kwan Do first, but since doing Tae Kwan Do, I mean I've done rock climbing, I've done, uh...wake boarding, soccer, football, I've done a whole bunch of other physical activities. And I feel like Tae Kwan Do is the reason why. When I was younger, it got me fit, got me into it, and then from there hasn't stopped, kind of been like a snowball effect, in a sense.

Int: Cool. Uh... So... So some of those activities then would be, like you said, the rock climbing...

Res: And sports.

Int: ...uh...soccer... Okay.

Res: Yeah.

Int: Uh... What belt have you achieved at this time?

Res: Uh... Second degree black belt.

Int: And you've tried to... Are you gonna try to master every level?

Res: Uh... Yes, sir. Uh...But the only thing is, the catch of mastering every level is a lifetime thing, so I'm pretty sure I can do it, Grand Master Park is almost 80, he's probably one of the, uh...the youngest 10th degree black belts. Master Hoon and Master Joon are on their way as well so I plan to follow in their footsteps.

Int: And why do you feel it is or is not important to achieve the rank of black belt?

Res: Why it is important?

Int: Is or is not.

Res: Well, I believe it's important in many ways, especially, um...in the sense it's just a goal, it's a... The basics of the idea is a goal. If someone can...can understand the concept of accomplishing a goal and overcoming stuff to get to that goal, then that can help them in the rest of their lives, from the littlest stuff to the biggest stuff. So, I believe getting a black belt is very important. If you could set out and dedicate yourself to one thing, for example, getting a black belt, then who goes to say that you can't do it with getting your Ph.D. or...or getting, um...you know, becoming the next multimillionaire, stuff like that.

Int: Yeah.

Res: Um hm.

Int: How important is self-discipline in achieving higher belts?

Res: Very important. Very important. Self-discipline and, um... It's pretty much a self-control. You know, we... Me and Master Hoon, we don't even promote kids that we believe can't even control, you know, their...their bodily, you know, I guess, you know, physical reactions. If we have a kid that...that can't keep his hands to himself, he...it's gonna be hard for him to move to a higher belt, to a higher ranking. So physical control is very important.

Int: Okay, that's pretty cool. Alright. Do you think that participation in Tae Kwon Do has given you a greater sense of personal power?

Res: Um... In what sense?

Int: Just personal power, the... Efficacy is the word. The ability...

Res: Yeah.

Int: ...to make change or make something happen.

Res: Oh, yeah, without a doubt, yeah. I mean, in a good sense of power, um... Like I have the authority to, you know, to make decisions here.

Int: Um hm.

Res: Which I believe, you know, help, and, you know, benefit the kids.

Int: Um hm.

Res: So, yeah, I do feel like having that...

Int: Right, because I mean, uh...and we're just...this is kind of an open-ended conversation at this moment and...or this juncture. I mean the breaking of the boards, isn't that a... Aren't you exhibiting your power when you're breaking the board?

Res: Oh, of course. Of course, you're absolutely right, you're exhibiting the power. You're exhibiting a lot of stuff, you know, power, confidence, you know, that's... That's like one of the little mini obstacles in Tae Kwon Do, little stuff like that can just boost, it's like a confidence booster. I've seen plenty of times where a kid, as soon as he breaks his first board, from there on he's...he's super confident, he feels like he could take on the whole world. And that's...that's the feeling that these kids should have, you know.

Int: Excellent. Good. Um... Has participation in Tae Kwon Do increased your sense of self and independence?

Res: Oh, yes, without a doubt. Um... Because not...not only being a student of Tae Kwon Do and, um...representing our school, but I'm also now an instructor, so I have to carry myself in that manner. Um... I have to carry myself...um... Can you repeat it? What... What was the question?

Int: That's alright.

Res: Yeah.

Int: Has participation in Tae Kwon Do increased your sense of self and independence?

Res: Yes, eh...that's what it was, independence, yeah, I feel totally independent, you know, I have to be. I have to be, uh...a role model for these guys, I can't be relying on anybody.

Int: Now, what other fun activities... Well like... Have you ever given up doing something so that you could train at Tae Kwon Do?

Res: Oh yeah, all the time...uh...

Int: And, what would be some examples of those things?

Res: Um... When Master Hoon needed me to work here a little bit longer, I actually gave up one of my classes, it took, uh...me to stop becoming a fulltime student to a part time student for one semester.

Int: Um hm.

Res: Um... Other activities, uh...just, you know, just activities like, you know, other...other...actually I was like going to the gym instead of going to, uh...a weight lifting gym...gym and pumping iron, I'd rather come to Tae Kwon Do and exercise here. Um... Time of just, you know, doing nothing at home, wasting time, you know, I come here and exercise on my free time. If I have nothing to do and I want to get a good workout, I come here.

Int: Um hm.

Res: So, yeah, Tae Kwon Do is always my first option.

Int: So... So then it... What would be your answer to this question? I have made sacrifices to be a student of Tae Kwon Do. Yes or no?

Res: Yes.

Int: Alright.

Res: Oh, yeah.

Int: Uh... Describe how cooperation plays a part in like your learning experience or in your teaching experience. You are an instructor.

Res: Yes, sir. Well, cooperation is, um...is very important in the sense of, you know, me cooperating with my fellow instructors, and, you know, me cooperating with, you know, my...my students, because if it doesn't...if there's no cooperation, it won't work, it'd just be chaos. So... And, you know, there's a lot of stuff comes into that, you know, with authority and stuff, but, um...it's very important. You have to be at... You have to have a good environment, you know, just any type of work environment has to be cooperative, and everybody has to be able to work together for harmony.

Int: Harmony. What does harmony mean to you?

Res: Peace.

Int: Okay.

Res: Alright.

Int: How essential is the act of cooperating with other individuals in learning it? You said it is essential?

Res: Oh, yeah, it is essential, very essential.

Int: Right.

Res: Right.

Int: And peace is obviously what we want, isn't that not correct?

Res: Oh, yes, of course.

Int: If...if we had to describe all of the ethics in all the value systems of Tae Kwon Do, what would you say is the... I mean, you know, we've talked a little bit about this before so I'm not...

Res: Um hm.

Int: But, what would you describe as the, uh...the paramount ethic of Tae Kwon Do?

Res: The paramount ethic of Tae Kwon Do is, um... In traditional time, a long time ago I mean and I believe it's still the same thing, is honor.

Int: Honor?

Res: Yeah.

Int: Okay.

Res: Honor. You know, because honor and respect are very the same, but, um...you know, honor is something that, you know, you have to...you have to uphold for your school...

Int: Um hm.

Res: ...for your family...

Int: Uh huh.

Res: ...and for yourself. So, I...

Int: Honor.

Res: ...yeah, I believe in Martial Arts, the main thing is honor.

Int: And honor, and what would be some other ones? We mentioned honesty, we mentioned peace. What else?

Res: Undominatable spirit.

Int: Undominatable spirit. What else?

Res: Um... Discipline. Of course, respect. Like I've... Like I've said a lot, um...some main self-control, you know, just, you know, focus, period, too. Tae Kwon Do, especially where, I mean, I know I'm coming back to the children and stuff, but, um...a lot of kids nowadays can't focus, their attention spans are like this...this long. So, you know, Tae Kwon Do, a lot of...a lot of new...new modern, you know, philosophies of Tae Kwon Do is they are kind of...kind of tailor made for kids now, you know? It's, uh... Like focus is very important, especially when you know that, I guess the ADD, uh...epidemic that's going around and stuff, you know? I... I don't personally believe that, you know, about ADD, but, you know, I do see it, I do see kids with low attention span and I believe Tae Kwon Do helps them out.

Int: Um hm.

Res: I believe, you know, the focusing and the discipline, you know, just...just the...just the... out___ of them, you know, paying attention on one thing and, you know, putting their whole efforts so we can help them out.

Int: Okay, that's really cool. So... So this interview's gonna be a little bit longer than the others because you're...you're a little bit more of...experienced, you have a high belt ranking. Um... What, uh...let's talk about like kids and, um...kids with problems like you kind of mentioned kids with ADHD.

Res: Um hm.

Int: You know, how... Can you give me some real concrete, um...

Res: Examples?

Int: Examples. Yeah. Give me some concrete examples. I mean, you're talking about kids coming in here, what is it about Tae Kwon Do that helps these kids that you...that you can argue or we can argue?

Res: Um... That we can argue?

Int: Now, yeah, if we're trying to say...

Res: Yeah, I know, I know how it is...

Int: ...because I mean we've taught, you know, we're on the same vibe on this.

Res: Okay, so what helps the kids, you know. I think, um...the initial thing that helps the kids is the...is just the flash, is just the attention getting at first, when they see the kicks, when they see the punching, and they see the fun drills, that gets their attention. But, when they start doing it and it's all about the instructor as well, but when they start doing it, that's when we start implementing, you know, the...the, you know, the...the keys, the lifestyles of Tae Kwon Do, while they're learning, the kids, we're teaching them self-control, not to do it on others. While they're doing the drills, we're learning them how to...how to control their running, control their jumping, you know. A lot of kids are...are so hyper in a sense to where they just lash out and they can potentially hurt themselves, you know? Um...a kid trying to do a cartwheel can break his neck, so we try to teach these kids how to, you know, how to...how to manage and how to use their own body, how to be comfortable within themselves.

Int: Um hm.

Res: And I believe that, just, you know, that helps them out in the whole sense of, you know, just self-control. So like with ADHD kids, you know, kids that can't pay attention, we can get their attention off of the flash, and then as soon as we got their focus, we could sit them down and give them, uh...give them I guess like a speech or give them like, you know, like a little...a little... What's the word for it? It's on the tip of my tongue. I guess like, uh...a life lesson. You know, we can sit them down and teach 'em. Teach them why... Why these kids are so cool, why...why these kids are having fun, why...why the Tae Kwon Do is so important, how can it help you. Uh... One thing I like to, uh...like to

tell my kids, it's a lifestyle. Tae Kwon Do is a lifestyle. You have to live it that way. That's what Do means, Do of Tae Kwon Do means the way of, so you're living the way of, you know, what you're learning, Martial Arts.

Int: Alright, last two ques...last two comments here. Um... If... Well, how do... If people are feeling angry or upset, how is that addressed in the dojang?

Res: Um...it depends. I mean, uh...

Int: Is there a formal... I mean, if I'm mad at you, do I just try to give you a...

Res: Well, it depends.

Int: ...karate kick, even though I'm not a very good kicker?

Res: Yes... No, well that's absolutely... That's absolutely unacceptable. We don't... We don't... We do not condone any type of, you know, lashing out, any type of, you know, physical revenge in a sense. Um... If there's a problem between two students, usually the Master handles it. If there's a problem between a Master and a student, which I've never heard before, traditional style, the Master would put the student in line.

Int: Right.

Res: Ha ha. But, uh...unfortunately nowadays it doesn't go like that. So, if there was ever a problem between a Master and a student, it all, you know, goes on the Master, how he would handle the situation. Me, personally, if there was a problem between me and one of my students, I'll sit them down and talk it out. Because there should be no reason for anger in, uh...in Tae Kwon Do. I like to refer it to Star Wars, you know, um...anger leads to... Well, sadness leads to anger, anger leads to evil, evil leads to the Dark Side. So, we try not to, you know, we try not to enforce that. We try to, you know, stay away from all that stuff because in a sense a good experience would make, you know, good days are better than bad days and people remember good days more than bad.

Int: Okay. Under what circumstances and for what reasons do you ask... Oh... No, let me rephrase that. Explain the process of bowing. What does it mean when you're bowing to the flag, bowing to the dojang, uh...office, they're bowing to you? What's going on there when you're bowing?

Res: Um...like bowing to... When bowing... First, in the Asian culture, bowing is like...it's like, uh...a wave, it's like saying hello.

Int: Um hm.

Res: You're saying in a sense that, you know, a greeting. Um... In the Martial Arts sense, uh...when you bow to the flag, you don't bow to the flag in the sense of worshipping, it's nothing about worshipping.

Int: Um hm.

Res: Some people do get it mixed up like, oh...I...are we bowing in a religious manner? No.

Int: Um hm.

Res: We bow to the flags to respect... We bow to two flags. The Korean flag, because that's where Tae Kwon Do came from, and we bow to the American flag because that is our home, that is where we stay, so we are...we are not bowing to worship those flags, but we are bowing to show respect to our nations.

Int: Um hm.

Res: Um... When you enter the dojang, the reason why you bow in your dojang because traditionally when it first started, when you came into Tae Kwon Do school, you would bow to greet the Master, you'd bow to him and, you know, shake his hand and say hello. So, it's in a sense it just kind of evolved to where when you walk into the dojang, you have to bow.

Int: Um hm.

Res: Yeah.

Int: Alright. And, uh... And obviously... Okay, here's the only other last comment I'd like to make about this. You're talking about, uh...Tae Kwon Do... What would you describe yourself as, a Christian, or what?

Res: Uh...Christian.

Int: Okay.

Res: Yeah, that's what I was raised, Christian.

Int: Okay. And, um... Is there, uh... What would be the religious, uh... Traditional Tae Kwon Do... We'll touch on this and then we're done. Traditionally, what would be the religion of...of people in Tae Kwon Do, like let's say in Korea, would you know? Or...

Res: Um... In South Korea it is predominately, I believe, Buddhist or Christian.

Int: Buddhist or Christian. Okay. Alright, thank you very much. Anything else you want to say? You've been excellent.

Res: Uh, no. That's all, thank you. I appreciate the, you know, time and talk.

Int: Okay, dude, you're cool.

Res: Alright cool, alright.

Int: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW

Appendix H



Personal Testimonial

Name Hoon Park

Having done TaekwonDo all my life and growing up with a father as a TaekwonDo Grandmaster I had the privilege of having many experiences through the martial art. Through TaekwonDo the very first principals I learned was self-discipline, self-respect and of course reaching a certain level of physical fitness. Thanks to TaekwonDo I grew up respecting others and being able to reach my goals. Through my teenage years I was always in a positive environment within my DoJang and once achieving my blackbelt I was able to share my knowledge and art to others. ~~Through~~ ^{Through} TaekwonDo I was able to make a living and not only teach as an art but use for life skills. I ~~am~~ ^{am} very thankful ~~to~~ ^{to} help out juniors, peers & seniors through TaekwonDo & what it has taught me. to have the opportunity & ability

Master Hoon Park's Personal Response

Appendix J



ARGOSY UNIVERSITY.

Direct Observation Log

Observer's Notes

Students are about to begin sparring. Master Floor has the students sit in the lotus position and all the students form a square surrounding the inner sparring section of the Dojang. Two male high school students of equal belt ranking (both) are called forth. Both spar after being fitted with head and chest protection. The blows and ~~mutual~~ mutual kicks are measured and the atmosphere is playful but competitive.

R. Bunn

Fieldwork Observation Sample

