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Session II

Teenage Personality  
Education and Taekwondo

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# Teenage Personality Education and Taekwondo

## I . Introduction

Today, taekwondo is not only an Olympic event but also recognized as a global martial arts sport, with 202 member countries and more than 70 million trainees as of June 2012 (World Taekwondo Federation).

Traditionally, taekwondo has been practiced as a martial art for self-defense. There are many reasons why taekwondo has become one of the world's major sports. One important reason is the many values of taekwondo.

I think that taekwondo is popular regardless of nationality, race or age, as taekwondo is recognized not only as the art of self-defences, an exercise for slender figures and good health and a combative sports, but also as an educational medium that contributes to one's mental training and character building.

It is often cited that taekwondo is a sports that helps teenagers grow physically and builds good character.

The value of Asian martial arts, including Taekwondo, as a sports that helps teenagers grow mentally and physically is already well recognized around the world. For example, eight elementary, middle and high schools in Los Angeles officially adapted taekwondo as part of physical education programs in 2010.

Unlike other martial arts that focus only on the fighting aspect, the real value of taekwondo is that it educates teenagers, builds self-confidence, pride and respect, and helps teenagers study more effectively and form better relationships with their family members (MBC, 2010).

Taekwondo is widely known as the art of self-defense, a physical sport with a particular focus on the mental aspect. Taekwondo is also very important because it helps build character in teenagers.

Through this paper, I will relay the results of my study on taekwondo, such as the role and function of taekwondo as related to the character building of teenagers and the value of personality education with taekwondo.

The details are (1) the importance of teenager personality education through taekwondo; (2) the connection between teenager personality education and taekwondo; and (3) the status of research on taekwondo and the character building of teenagers along with real case studies.

## II. The Importance of Teenage Personality Education

### 1. The Characteristics of Teenagers

First of all, we need to look at the meaning of the word "teenager."

The Korean word cheongsonyeon (teenager) is a combination of the words cheongnyeon (adult) and sonyeon (child) and has two major meanings.

First, as a wider concept to combine cheongnyeon and sonyeon, the teenage years means the time from the end of childhood and the start of elementary school to adulthood, where one must find a job and assume more responsibility.

For example, Article 3 of the Basic Teenager Act defines teenagers as people who are between 9 and 24 years of age.

The second idea is a little narrower in concept and refers to adolescent boys and girls who are between adults and children.

The term "teenager" generally refers to most middle and high school boys and girls who are younger than 19 years old (Korea National Cultural Encyclopedia). In this paper, the definition of teenagers is anyone between 8 and 19 years of age.

The teenage period, including the schooling period, lays the foundation for people's lives. The teenage period is a transition period to grow into adult. In this period, there are changes in mental states, emotions, interest and values. This period is an unstable and unrealistic period and the beginning point for adulthood (Seo Yeong-tae, 2001).

The teenage period is one of the most important periods in life. In this period, teenagers experience much tension and confusion due to such emotional instability and unbalance.

In this unstable period, their education can decide whether or not they can grow into mentally stable and mature adults (Lee Jeong-eun, 2009).

In particular, teenagers tend to be sexual curious and become independent from their parents because they want to be treated like adults.

Teens worry about getting a job, preparing to adapt themselves to a new life and establish their views on life, society and morality (Naver Knowledge Dictionary).

In terms of age groups, those actually in their teens make up the largest part of the "teenager" period. This period is a transition period between childhood and adulthood. This period has two important points,

One is character building and the other is enjoying their lives.

With character building, the teenage period is a physical, emotional, moral and social development stage. Teenagers are very sensitive and easily affected by individual and social environments. In short, they are emotionally unstable.

Therefore, environmental conditions can have a negative impact on the character building of teenagers.

Today, the variation of and an increase in teenage problems can be attributable to the fact that teenagers are unsatisfied and facing situations where they are sensitive about their surroundings (Naver Encyclopedia).

People enjoy the fruits of industrial development and material abundance in modern society. However, their negative consequences lead to chaos for their values and various social problems.

Moral crises due to crimes, misconducts, suicides and vagrancy have had a huge impact on teenagers (Shim Seong-bo, 2000).

According to a white paper on teenagers, teenage problems are not only related to school violence, gang fights, running away from home, drinking, smoking, bullying, blackmailing teenagers for money and valuables, but assaults and thefts among teens and serious crimes such as killing their parents, robberies and sexual abuses (Ministry of Culture and Sports, 1999).

"These days, teenagers do not like to think deeply or talk seriously, but behave off the cuff and chat and make jokes," says Song Hyeong-seok et al (2001) about the negative characteristics of teenagers, which include deviation.

In addition, they like comic books rather than classical literature. They prefer violent, sexually explicit and entertainment-oriented movies to top-rated films.

As a result, some teenagers use violence "killing in some cases" to deal with this, committing suicide at times, with those unable to overcome sudden suicide impulses on a sharp increase.

Quick tempers, nervousness, impulsive acts and selfishness are behavioral norms in everyday life now.

As for causes of such teenage problems, Lee Jeong-eun (2009) pointed out that

not only indifference from parents or a noninterference foster system but also teenagers' skewed values have led to such problems.

Skewed values make life difficult for everyone and cause social chaos, so it is important to form good values not only for individuals but also for the stability of society.

Thus, strong punishment against teenage problems is the correct solution. At the same time, we need educational reflection and new measures implemented.

## 2. The Meaning of Personality Education

"Personality education" was introduced to Korean society in 1995 when the May 31 Educational Reform Measures called for strengthening practical character. We know the meaning of personality education in general, but we need a more detailed understanding of it.

Personality education is the combination of "character" and "education." Therefore, we should know the meaning of these two words.

Personality is a common word. Its definitions are numerous so it is not easy to define each one. This word is widely used in the academic sector, from pedagogy to psychology to philosophy in the East and the West.

Elements and characteristics of personality are differently defined depending on differences in academic approaches.

Theories also differ about what elements can be used as objects of artificial and intentional education, be they teaching or learning (Jo Jeong-ho, 2009).

Pedagogy and psychology collide with each other over personality. This collision is reflected in regulations and examples of language concepts.

According to Lee Sang-ro (1995), when it was first translated into Korean, the English word "personality" is connected to various synonymous Korean words: *inseong* (인성), *seonggyeok* (성격), *ingyeok* (인격), *inpum* (인품), *seongpum* (성품), *gaeseong* (개성), *seonghyang* (성향), *gijil* (기질) and *jeongseo* (정서).

That is to say, "personality" refers to people's real nature, while "character" contains valuable and ethical meaning, like when saying "He has a good character."

According to Namgung Dal-hwa (1999), personality means human nature and includes the character, actions, attitudes and symptoms of people.

Accordingly, personality is classified into a value language that contains value judgments in terms of education that are different from character. This point is a difference between personality and character, a valueless term in psychology.

This is because education generally suggests a definition related to personality,

the action of how we are formed as people or a desirable change in human nature and behavior (Cha Gyeong-su, 1985).

In pedagogy, personality means human nature from an academic or educational point of view. As an educational sense of value that such human nature should be developed in a right and desirable direction was reflected, "personality" was combined with "education," and the compound noun "personality education" is now widely used in the educational sector.

Personality education is a new term. This means mental education to cultivate the right general character. This word is widely used for school education (Seoul Educational Research Center, 1997).

The Korea Educational Development Institute (1998) says that personality education is part of education and uses personality education as a term contrasting knowledge education.

According to the institute, personality education refers to education to develop a person's nature, character, behavior, habits, attitudes and values.

In addition, Kirschenbaum (1995) defined personality education as making teenagers good, rational and gentle by teaching them knowledge, the right attitudes, beliefs and technology by covering a wide area including knowledge and technology.

Personality education is interpreted as personality and character guidance and contains two meanings:

"Personality education is 1) to form the right environment and human relationships to help students build good character and 2) to correct abnormal character," said Nam Eok-woo and other scholars (1994).

"Personality education includes not only emotional education for mental development but also value education for self-realization and moral education for becoming a constructive member of society," said Namgung Dal-hwa (1999).

Wide approaches are being made in the life and activities of teenagers, such as interpersonal relationships, habits, study guidance, emotional guidance and guidance on the prevention of delinquency (The Korea Educational Development Institute, 1998)

The approach method of personality education originated from an awareness of issues in child and teenager education, which has a more practical meaning.

People are devising detailed measures for personality education for students as an

alternative measure against various problems in an educational environment with a focus on college entrance examination-oriented knowledge education.

We know that such personality education aims at making children/students build a stronger character and fundamentally solve various teenage problems and juvenile delinquency.

### **3. The Importance of Teenage Personality Education**

The foundation for creating a better society depends on the personality education of teenagers at the elementary, middle and high school levels along with knowledge education.

Kim Chang-gi (2000) actually pointed out where the school system was threatened by a private education boom even though schools are the basis for knowledge and personality education.

Problems with our education at the middle and high school levels are rapidly spreading - even to the elementary school level.

Increasingly, more and more students and their parents think that students need to study at private institutes and have to go to school to obtain diplomas.

Teachers are losing control over students. In fact, it is difficult to find students who respect their teachers in this day and age.

Schools are facing a situation where they have to give up two goals personality education and knowledge education.

As our society suffers many forms of corruption and wrongdoing, immoral crimes, juvenile misbehavior and delinquency, the importance and necessity of personality education at school has been raised many times.

The scope of personality education is wide the acquisition of basic etiquette and virtue, school violence problems, emotional disturbance, depression and prevention of suicide (Yun Yeong-don, 2010).

As such, the educational world has kept a close eye on the importance of personality education for quite a long time.

In accordance with social demands to emphasize a school environment stressing personality education and a respect for human rights, people are taking the initiative to produce various personality education programs through which students are able to learn the tenets of respect, consideration and community spirit (Baek Hong-gi, 2012).

The two following points describe the importance of sound teenage personality education,



First, personality education should be conducted to prevent the misconduct of students who cause problems at home, at school and in society as well as to guide them.

Personality education is emphasized as a method to address teenagers facing serious situations such as school violence, bullying, teenage suicide, drinking, smoking, and sexual crimes (Seoul Educational Research Center, 1997).

Second, personality education helps children grow into successful members of society by giving them have a sound way of thinking and good habits.

In particular, personality education gives them a sound way of thinking and habits which help them become mentally stronger, while strengthening their self-control and allowing for a better understanding of human relationships.

This is closely connected to the educational philosophy, role model aspirations and goals of education in Korea (Ministry of Education, 1997).

In relation to problematic behavior and teenager personalities, training centers for martial arts such as taekwondo are places for sound leisure activities for teenagers to work out and learn self-defense skills. They also help them become more active, confident and sociable.

In addition, if teenagers can pursue technological achievements as their specialty, they can lay the foundation for becoming a martial arts specialist.

Martial arts schools, including taekwondo schools where most of the trainees are teenagers, play a key role in making up for a lack of personality education at home and at school.

Through this, teenagers are able to better develop.

Teenage personality education aims not to emphasize factual knowledge and nurture selfish and narrow-minded human beings but to nurture socially constructive people based on a strong mental ability and moral nature.

### **III. The Correlation between Taekwondo and Teenage Personality Education**

#### **1. Taekwondo's Close Relation to Teenage Personality Education**

Taekwondo is a martial arts closely connected to personality education which changes the nature of human beings in a positive way.

This is because taekwondo is a practical martial art that helps develop fighting

skills and contains philosophical and educational elements of Asian thoughts, such as developing physical ability, enhancing toughness, cultivating character and enriching one's self.

"As a fighting skill, one characteristic of taekwondo is the possibility of hurting taekwondo trainees and other people as a violent tool," Kim Yeong-seon pointed out (2010).

Like a cook's knives, taekwondo trainees' negative behavior, such as uncontrolled impulses, self-conceit and threats to others, may lead to serious violence.

Lee defined the attitude of taekwondo trainees as securing the ability to prevent serious incidents by sticking to moral attitudes such as patience, etiquette, magnanimity, and spiritual training.

"It is almost impossible to reach this level," Shim Sang-kyu added (1998). "The ultimate goal of martial arts trainees is to become ideal human beings. Confucius called such people gunja (people of virtue). The image of gunja is closely connected to the ideal of martial arts trainees."

This is because martial arts trainees' principles of conduct for mental and physical training for the perfection of self are close to those of gunja.

"Taekwondo has many elements that can benefit human beings. But taekwondo can be misused as a violent tool," said Song Hyeong-seok and other scholars about the violent and educational nature of taekwondo.

In fact, taekwondo has a positive role because individuals can become healthier and more confident, while also gaining greater self-control and moderation during the training process. On the other hand, taekwondo can be negative in that it can be used as a violent tool.

Morality and personality education are emphasized in taekwondo as an educational and intentional measure to prevent such negative situations from taking place."

"Taekwondo is about building a stronger character and learning the art of self-defense against attacks from other people through mental and physical training. Thus, taekwondo trainees should receive education in advance," said Chung Chan-mo (1976).

"That's to say that exercises done through Taekwondo are not the goal of taekwondo. Taekwondo should be the education of people to nurture them to be constructive members of society," Chung emphasized.

"Taekwondo Education" is commonly used in connection with the educational characteristics and functions of taekwondo.

"Taekwondo education is a process to produce mentally, physically and socially sound human beings by correcting their beliefs, nature, attitudes, mental ability and habits through taekwondo," Lee Kyu-hyung said.

Asian martial arts like taekwondo contribute to the development of individuals and society. Such a contribution cannot be disregarded, as Asian martial arts are utilized as an excellent means for personality education through self-discipline.

There are various reasons why parents send their children to taekwondo schools and not to other private institutes.

Seo Won-seok (1998) said that many parents expect their kids to become healthy and competent mentally and socially and build good character through taekwondo training.

In addition, Ju Jin-man (1998) mentioned that what parents think to be important at taekwondo schools is personality education rather than taekwondo skill development and physical fitness.

From a consumer's point of view, personality-related elements such as patience, confidence, concentration, leadership, etiquettes and good interpersonal relationships accounted for 70 percent of what they expect from taekwondo.

Parents hope that their children will grow into valiant, admirable, confident and active boys and girls by sending them to taekwondo schools.

The number of taekwondo schools and kids practicing taekwondo is much higher than those of other sports. This fact speaks for such expectations (Lee Kyu-hyung, 2002).

In Korea, the number of taekwondo schools registered at the Korea Taekwondo Association stands at about 8,000. Including the 4,000 unregistered taekwondo schools, the figure rises to about 12,000.

On average, one taekwondo school has 100 students. About 80 percent of them are children and teenagers. Thus, the number of child and teenage ta trainees is about one million (Mookas, 2012).

If you add the number of children and teenagers who practice taekwondo during

physical education classes at elementary, middle and high schools and at school taekwondo clubs, the becomes 1, 2 million.

The number of specialized taekwondo and poomsae practitioners are as follows: 1,165 for taekwondo and 1,048 for poomsae at elementary schools, 2,567 for taekwondo and 764 for poomsae at middle schools, and 2,697 for taekwondo and 1,047 for poomsae at high schools. As a result, Korea has a total of 9,300 registered teenage taekwondo athletes (data from the Korea Taekwondo Association, 2012).

Considering the high number of teenager taekwondo athletes, taekwondo's importance and role in terms of personality education is huge.

## **2. The Meaning of Personality Education through Taekwondo**

The definition of taekwondo summarizes the concept of taekwondo, making it easily understood by people. The educational meaning of taekwondo is well expressed in various definitions of taekwondo. Definitions of taekwondo contain the technical characteristics and goals of taekwondo.

As seen in the underlined parts below, each leader or scholar who defined taekwondo emphasized the characteristics of taekwondo in terms of taekwondo.

Through the following definitions, we can learn that taekwondo is not only the art of self-defense and a martial arts sport but also an educational tool for mental and physical training.

- 1) Taekwondo is a physical expression of human survival awareness and physical activity to crystallize mental desire. All taekwondo motions are based on a basic instinct for self-defense and develop from passive motions to active forms due to the function of belief. Taekwondo is physical training with a philosophical element that ultimately has taekwondo trainees reach an 'absolute behavioral stage' and at the same time 'overcome themselves' and reach a point of their larger selves. (Lee Jong-woo, 1975).
- 2) Taekwondo is a sport through which people walk down a road as a human being (martial arts trainee) by learning skills such as running and kicking, dodging attacks from opponents, striking, pricking, hitting and defending with hands or fists and training mentally and physically without any weapons or protection (Jeong Chan-mo, 1975).
- 3) Taekwondo is a physical activity to produce people who undergo mental and physical training through physical activities. (Lee Gyu-seok, 1982).

- 4) Taekwondo is a dynamic martial art which strengthens the body by training major body parts and turning them into weapons, with the aim of reaching the goal of forming a sound character (Kim Cheol, 1986).
- 5) Taekwondo is a Korean martial art to practice specific skills and poomsae without the use of any weapons. Taekwondo is a philosophical way of life, instilling trust and courage which plant the seeds for greater morals and a higher sense of self-confidence and belief (Kim Dae-shik and Kim Gwan-seong, 1987).
- 6) Taekwondo is a Korean martial art in the form of a sport which involves physical combat without weapons and which aims to build sound character. In a wider sense, taekwondo is physical training with an educational meaning, a kicking-oriented martial art for self-defense and a martial art to build sound character (Kim Yeong-seon, 1995).
- 7) Taekwondo is a behavioral philosophy to make the mind and body strong through training and helping people feel an artistically esthetic appreciation by making a moral culture possible, while guiding people to a better way of life (Lee Gyeong-myeong, 2003).
- 8) Taekwondo is a Korean martial art and does not use any weapons. Taekwondo athletes fight without holding their opponents. The hitting is mostly kicking. Taekwondo is the art between human beings, techniques and self-discipline (Song Hyeong-seok et al, 2005).

Taekwondo's spiritual and mental meanings can be seen through the above-mentioned definitions.

### **3. The Taekwondo Spirit: A Foundation for Personality Education**

"The value of taekwondo is not technique but spirit," This saying highlights taekwondo's mental value rather than its technical value. If taekwondo is limited to the goal of practicing fighting skills, its value becomes limited to the art of self-defense.

If an educational idea for self-discipline and self-realization is added to taekwondo, the martial art becomes about mental and physical training methods for people and society.

Although taekwondo trainees technically learn fighting and self-defense skills, ultimately taekwondo is about self-change, making it a sound social sport.

The source of personality education in taekwondo comes from the "Taekwondo Spirit," which is essentially the mind of a person.

"The Taekwondo Spirit is an objective spiritual world such as the beliefs, value and cultural systems of taekwondo trainees that are exposed in their ordinary behavior as a result of long training," the official Taekwondo Dictionary says.

The Taekwondo Spirit is a metaphysical element which taekwondo pursues and a general term of encapsulating the essence, ideas and philosophies of its techniques.

The Taekwondo Spirit is a moral principle involving the virtue and justice which taekwondo athletes should possess at the highest spiritual level (Lee Gyeong-myeong, 2010).

Choi Hong-hee (1967), who played a leading role in the taekwondo world in the 1960s, defined etiquette, a sense of honor, patience, self-control and indomitability - the five spirits of taekwondo,

"The Taekwondo Spirit can be obtained as a result of long training. The spirit is a value symbolized by beliefs, self-control, cooperation, consideration, and the correct life attitude," Lee Gyeong-myeong (2009) wrote.

"Accordingly, " she went on, "the Taekwondo Spirit is a basic virtue for taekwondo athletes and the highest spiritual level. We can say that the heart of the Taekwondo Spirit is human achievement and co-prosperity."

According to the results of a study in 2006 by Lee Gyu-seok and Ahn Yong-gyu, the Taekwondo Spirit is a state where people uplift their mental and physical states through taekwondo training and a spiritual value that people want to obtain through the martial art.

The main spirit of taekwondo includes self-control, etiquette, peace and harmony.

"The Taekwondo Spirit is a basic purpose to taekwondo training, a fundamental and ideal human sense included in taekwondo training," wrote Kim Yeong-seon (2011), who studied the Taekwondo Spirit recently.

"The important elements cover the three moral doctrines devotion to the welfare of mankind, softness and hardness of the three core elements, and the agreement

of the mind and the arts and the five virtues-etiquette, patience, courage, impartiality and the development of a great spirit.”

Long before personality education, the taekwondo world was talking about spiritual education and moral education.

The meaning of each term can vary depending on the highlighted content, but in general there is no major difference.

"Spiritual education is education aimed at the enlightenment and cultivation of moral consciousness. In particular, it is aimed at training the mind and a moral nature" (Naver Korean Dictionary).

In terms of taekwondo education, spiritual education is related to everything except for physical development and technical training, which is to say it is about the development of strong and righteous behavior, as well as things such as etiquette, patience, courage and respect (Lee Gyu-hyeong, 1987).

For several decades, personality education has been used in the educational sector and at schools instead of "spiritual education" and "moral education," which seem to be terms a little more difficult to understand, as well as dualistic and abstract.

#### **4. The Role of Taekwondo Instructors for Personality Education**

The educational importance of masters in teaching taekwondo is more important than in other sports.

Teaching patterns, policies and the methods of masters have a direct impact on their students. They not only affect the attitude and character of students, but are closely connected to the creation of a sound environment and atmosphere in the taekwondo world.

Taekwondo masters who teach Taekwondo have a lot of pride as leaders. The behavior and attitude of a master and way of speaking have a big impact on the development of trainees.

Taekwondo leaders have a big responsibility on affecting the future of many teenagers.

Not all teachers can guarantee the personality development of their students. The effect of personality education depends on a leader's educational way of thinking, the educational system and what educational effects they can create.

As a result, personality education is easier said than done. It is most important for taekwondo instructors to become a role model by becoming aware of personality education, establishing their sense of values and practicing.

Taekwondo education is a process to help people become mentally, physically and socially sound human beings by changing the character, ability, attitude, habits and beliefs of trainees positively through a martial art called taekwondo.

Taekwondo instructors should provide technical education with personality education set forth as a premise in teaching their students. They should have a deep understanding of the content and teaching methods of personality education and the capabilities to put that into practice.

The value of taekwondo can grow when many competent leaders come about from the taekwondo education sector. The educational philosophy of taekwondo is based on three major pillars: martial arts, a sport and a physical training concept.

Martial arts ideas are based on spiritual training, seeing into human nature an the right behavior, Sporting ideas are based on sportsmanship whose virtues are etiquette, fair play, a fighting spirit and the Olympic Spirit of world peace, harmony and equality.

An all-round education through taekwondo training originated from physical training and became the educational and philosophical basis at taekwondo schools for children (Lee Gyu-hyeong, 2000).

I suggest the Ten Commandments for taekwondo instructors as self-resolutions for establishing educational philosophies and executing personality and educational behavior.

- ① Instructors should be sincere role models, using refined words and having a clean appearance with the belief that their words and behavior can have a huge impact on lives of their students.  
One practicing person is better than 100 people who only talk about personality education.
- ② Instructors should be nice to their students, speak and behave gently but practice their plans sincerely.
- ③ Instructors should help their students become better people for themselves, their families and society by reminding students of the five virtues of taekwondo - etiquette, patience, courage, impartiality and the development of a great spirit.
- ④ Instructors should put their utmost effort into teaching their students about



order, abiding by time and rules, good faith to keep promises, a sense of responsibility, respect, filial piety and patriotism through taekwondo training, matches and experiences.

- ⑤ Instructors should care about their students but their care should be limited.
- ⑥ Instructors should teach students about what is wrong and what is right by describing the difference between public matters from private matters.
- ⑦ Instructors should teach students to do their best rather than become the best.
- ⑧ When students face serious problems in their everyday lives at home, at school and in the training area, instructors should detect the problems and help them address the problems by starting a dialogue with them in a natural manner.
- ⑨ Instructors should teach students to turn meeting people into educational opportunities.
- ⑩ Instructors should manage physical strength and make steady attempts to expand their knowledge and wisdom in order to become competent leaders.

## IV. Taekwondo's Contribution to the Positive Personality Development of Teenagers

### 1. The Present State of Studies on the Value of Taekwondo in Terms of Personality Education

Over the past 20 years, the results of studies have proven that taekwondo has a positive impact on teenagers' personalities.

Roughly 150 papers say that taekwondo plays a key role in the desirable personality development of teenagers.

Scholars have noted the value and meaning of taekwondo in terms of personality education, giving more weight and importance to taekwondo in terms of personality education.

Fortunately, people have finally begun to see the clearer values of this martial art after years of looking at it abstractly.

The first paper on personality education in the taekwondo field was a 1985 one by Seon Byeong-gi entitled "Taekwondo Training's Impact on the Character Building of Children."

This paper was followed by ones from Lee Gyu-hyeong (1987), Song Hee-chung

(1995), Yun Gong-hwa (1996), Kim Jong-beom (1996), Kim Jong-deok (1997), Jin lung-eui (1998), Seo Won-shik (1998) and Kim Yu-don (1999).

Up until now, more than 150 papers have been published on this theme. Of these, nine are doctoral theses, seven of which were done in Korea by Yun Gong-hwa (1996), Lee Gyu-hyeong (2002), Park Min-won (2007), Lee Seung-ho (2008), Kim Yeong-deok (2009), Kim Su-jeong (2010) and Lee Cheol (2010), with two done overseas by Cho Hyunsuk (1999) and Kwon Hyukjung (2000).

## **2. Taekwondo Training: Forming a Solid Life Attitude for Teenagers**

In 1995, the basic direction of personality education was established just as the Educational Reform Committee suggested, which was strengthening practical personality education according to the March 21 Educational Reform Measure. At (the time, personality meant morality, sociability and emotions (Yun Yeong-don, 2010).

The Seventh Curriculum in 1997 looked at social values and national values and suggested major values and virtues emphasized by social values such as life attitudes (abiding by the law and consideration), justice and a community spirit (The Korean Society for Journalism and Communication Studies, 2005)

Many papers have shown that taekwondo contributes to the formation of good traits. In a comparative analysis on personality development and taekwondo training by Lee Gyu-hyeong (2002), children who practiced taekwondo for more than a year were better than children who did not in terms of seven personality elements: patience, concentration, composure, confidence, self-respect, leadership, respect and etiquette.

Statistically significant differences were found in terms of general personality which combined the seven elements. Therefore, taekwondo training was seen as having a positive impact on the building of a child's character.

I believe that such results show that those who practice Taekwondo have a higher personality development level compared to those who do not.

Lee Cheol (2010) classified attitudes into social attitudes, school attitudes, such as attitudes about teachers, friends and study attitudes, and home attitudes about family members and concluded that taekwondo training has a positive impact on school attitudes and home attitudes by making a positive change in social attitudes in a doctoral thesis entitled "Taekwondo Trainees' Social Attitude Impact on Home Attitudes, School Attitudes and Parental Satisfaction."

Those who practiced taekwondo for more than three years greatly improved their speech skills and showed stronger expressions of their intentions and more confident behavior. Kim Yeong-deok (2009) said about the study.

In addition, Kim Jong-dong (2000) conducted a study of 265 teenagers and 240 parents in Korea, the U.S. and Spain. Kim wrote that the results of the study found that taekwondo training highly contributed to teenage personality education, as the training not only significantly improved teenage emotions, sociability and attitude, but also increased parental satisfaction.

These study results are attributable to the characteristics of taekwondo, which values right etiquette and right behavior. In taekwondo, etiquette for other people and elders is emphasized. Etiquette is an expression of respect for another and is an important attitude of taekwondo trainees.

At taekwondo schools, students observe these traits with instructors and other students through correct language and behavior.

On the foundation of this, students are taught to maintain proper etiquette with their parents, teachers and elders (Lee Kyu-hyung, 1987).

One example of this is the Brazilian education sector, which recently recognized taekwondo's role in personality education.

In 2009, 5,000 elementary schools in Brazil adopted taekwondo as an elective, creating a taekwondo boom. Indeed, one-sixth of all elementary schools in Brazil selected taekwondo as an elective. Electives are art and physical education subjects that schools are free to choose. With financial support from the government, the number of taekwondo instructors exponentially increased.

5 The reason why 5,000 schools selected taekwondo was that people in Brazil recognized that this martial art is good for you. Etiquette, patience, confidence, filial piety and patriotism had a positive impact on Brazilian society (Mookas, 2010).

### **3. The Role of Taekwondo in Helping People Enhance Morality and Sociability**

Taekwondo training is conducted in groups. Such training groups are a kind of society in and of themselves, with common goals. When proper education is provided for groups, students can develop various virtues such as a sense of belonging, unity, cooperation, disciplines, independence, leadership and understanding (Lee Gyu-hyeong, 1987).

Morality means an internal nature or disposition to practice common morality on the basis of an individual's independent motives or their own free will (Song Hyeong-seok et al, 2005).

Sociability, on the other hand, means the degree of an individual's social adjustments or their relationship with others.

This is our ability to maintain relations with other people and our surrounding environment.

Human behavior to maintain amicable relationships with other human beings is called "social behavior" (Yu Hyo-sun, 1992).

It was found that students who practiced taekwondo for more than a year achieved remarkable achievements in terms of social development compared to those who did not according to "A Study on Taekwondo Training's Impact on the Development of Trainees' Sociability," which was conducted on 1,000 elementary school students by Kim Yun-pyo (1988).

Moreover, this fact has been supported by studies by Jeong Jae-seol (2010) Park Jong-gu (2008), Roh Hee-jeong (2006), Kim Byeong-gi (2006) and Kang Rae-hyeong (2006). Their studies found that teenagers at middle and high schools in Korea who practiced taekwondo could build good character, including positive sociability.

In addition, Jeon Ik-gi (1998) wrote that regular and steady taekwondo education positively affected social development of American teenagers, meaning taekwondo helped them grow physically and mentally, in a paper entitled "Regular Taekwondo Education's Effect on the Social Development of American Teenagers."

Lee Kyu-hyung (2010) carried out a study on students at public elementary schools in Massachusetts which adopted taekwondo as a regular subject and obtained the following results in relation to taekwondo training's effect on children's social development.

First, children at American elementary schools who practiced taekwondo had higher scores in terms of social skills, such as stability, self-control, sociability, activity and etiquette compared to children who did not. In particular, there were significant differences in terms of self-control, sociability and activity.

Second, the more children practice taekwondo, the higher the scores they obtained in terms of social skill such as stability, self-control, sociability, activity and etiquette. There were significant differences as well.

In addition, the harder they practice taekwondo, the higher their sociability and activity were. There were significant differences, too. The reason why taekwondo training can have a positive impact on the development of morality and sociability can be found in taekwondo lessons and event management systems.

Taekwondo classes are usually done in groups of 10 to 30 people. As a result, students are taught to move in perfect order and to adapt themselves to group training and to stand in line, exchanging greetings as they practice.

Instructors should make their students abide by rules and maintain order and establish an education system to promote unity among students for the purpose of carrying out external group activities, such as the right judgment, matches and outdoor events.

Taekwondo students are able to rise to higher levels only if they follow a taekwondo education and management system where they can develop their morality and sociability.

#### **4. Taekwondo's function in promoting the emotional and mental health of youth**

Many study results show that taekwondo training can have an impact on emotions and mental health.

Kim Yeong-hun (2008), Kim Hee-su (2004) and Kim Hak-woon (1998) found that taekwondo training had a significant impact on elements of mental health such as depression, hostility and anxiety as a result of their studies on the relation between taekwondo and trainees' mental health.

They found that taekwondo had a positive impact on trainees' self respect and mental health.

Kim Yeong-wook (2003) found in his study of 403 middle and high school students on taekwondo athletes on mental health that taekwondo training positively affected elements of mental health such as somatization, obsession, depression, anxiety, hostility and paranoia except for causes of interpersonal sensitivity.

In addition, the results of a study by Oh Gyeong-rok (2006) found that it is more effective for their mental health when teenager taekwondo athletes, in particular females, practice taekwondo for four or more days a week and three hours or longer a week.

Lee Kyu-hyung (2010) reached the following conclusion about differences in

mental health of American elementary school students depending on whether or not they practiced taekwondo.

There were statistical differences in interpersonal sensitivity and hostilities among elements of mental health.

The more a child practiced taekwondo, the lower his or her interpersonal sensitivity, depression, hostilities, anxiety and somatization disorder were. There were significant differences, too.

In addition, the harder they practiced taekwondo, the lower his or her interpersonal sensitivity, depression, hostilities, anxiety and somatization disorder were. There were significant differences, too.

These results can be attributable to a characteristic of taekwondo training whereby taekwondo trainees need to control their emotions, such as confidence, composure and patience.

Practicing taekwondo involves physical training and promotes blood circulation and metabolism, helping people enhance their health and lower stress.

In particular, practicing detailed skills such as kicking, poomsae, fights, smashing wooden boards and exhibitions expand a person's excitement and concentrating power.

Participation in taekwondo training helps people develop patience which enables them to overcome difficulties through magnanimity and tolerance by letting them experience basic emotions such as anger, excitement, anxiety, fear and frustration and plays a key role in their developing sociability to understand and respect other people by helping them escape from a self-centered way of thinking.

A stronger confidence through taekwondo training helps people make friends with other people as well.

People can achieve mental stability by removing negative emotions such as jealousy, hate, aggressiveness and anxiety and clearing their mind. When they overcome a difficult process, they can feel confident and have a real sense of accomplishment, achieving a positive self-image.

Looking at these results, teenagers' taekwondo training can be regarded as important physical and personality education activities with a big impact on personality development.

The reason why taekwondo can have a positive impact on the personality development of teenagers can be found in (1) physical activities and characteristics of taekwondo training; (2) established education and management systems of taekwondo schools for efficient group training; and (3) personality education methods of taekwondo and education methods of taekwondo instructors (Lee Gyu hyeong and Song Hyeong-seok, 2003).

#### **5. Taekwondo for Personality, Physical and Technical Education**

Numerous papers have concluded that taekwondo training offers trainees an opportunity to enjoy more stable daily lives by playing a positive role in the development of their personality, from their attitude and morality to their sociability and emotions.

Such studies have identified the positive nature of a trinity-based education, which includes the physical and mental development of trainees in addition to the technical aspect of taekwondo, self-defense martial arts and an Olympic event.

Most taekwondo schools function as places for all-round education that help teenagers grow physically and mentally.

Accordingly, Taekwondo instructors work hard to make their taekwondo schools solemn and serious.

Thanks to this, trainees salute the national flag and elders, while learning a solemn and reverential attitude when they enter taekwondo schools.

In particular, trainees may be hurt or suffer an accident if the atmosphere is distracting as taekwondo is a martial art.

Accordingly, during training time, students are asked not to be distracted and pay attention and maintain strict order.

Teenagers can practice concentration, order and command over themselves thanks to instructors methods to effectively control trainees. Moreover, education by taekwondo schools is usually conducted in groups.

Group education offers good conditions to develop adaptation and attitudes for group life such as maintaining a files-and-rank system, following rules, and obeying orders.

Personality education at taekwondo schools is generally divided into three kinds: a personality education program, the code of conduct for trainees and education for forming basic life habits.

The personality education program features saluting the national flag, taking an oath for the nation, exchanges of greetings between instructors and students, speeches, mental concentration and meditation, group activities with an emphasis on rules, and the recitation of the Taekwondo Spirit.

The code of conducts for trainees features keeping order and observing rules, forming good training atmospheres, refraining from being late or absent, speaking nicely and repeating orders, keeping order when using taekwondo school buses, not arguing with other students, and concentrating during training time while having the right posture.

The education for forming basic life habits includes respecting elders, practicing filial piety, allegiance to the nation, not brawling and bullying, safe ways to go home, education to prevent bad tricks, safety education, banning bad games on cell phones and computers, keeping traffic order and safe walkin training items properly.

In addition, taekwondo schools are making the following efforts to help teenagers build good personalities.

Instructors set an example in providing students with education on moral lives. They also tell them stories for personality development and help students develop good speech skills by holding speech events and help students become composed by offering time to meditate.

In addition, they develop methods to help teenagers build better personalities through time for self-reflection, proper punishments, praise and encouragement, counseling, posters and playing videos, letters to parents, questionnaires, outdoor events, discussions and role playing games (Lee Kyu-hyung, 2002).

The following case explains about the educational role of taekwondo as mental training.

President Porfirio Lobo Sosa of Honduras is now 65 years old. He has practiced taekwondo for 18 years. He has, in fact, obtained a third -dan belt.



"I remember learning discipline, courage and patience from my taekwondo trainer, which has allowed me to remain calm as a politician," President Sosa said during his summit with the Korean president when he visited Korea in 2010. "My taekwondo trainer is a very nice person, so I have a profound respect for Korea" (Yonhap News, 2010).

"I'm grateful to you for your interest in Korea, Taekwondo emphasizes the mind. We believe that taekwondo is an important part of a child's education." President Lee Myung-bak told President Sosa about taekwondo's value in terms of personality education, "As someone who practices taekwondo and became president, I hope this will allow for a stronger relationship between Honduras and Korea. It's my sincere wish that more Hondurans will learn and practice taekwondo" (The Blue House, 2010).

## V. Conclusion

Sometimes we hear how teenagers are the "treasure of a nation," or how they are the "leaders of the future," or how they are "our future hope." These statements all emphasize how teenagers are important members of society.

Teenagers are affected by their surrounding environment, whether in a positive or negative way.

Taekwondo instructors need to display an ability to fully help teenagers grow mentally and physically in addition to learning basic taekwondo skills.

In the 19th century, the U.K. was able to grow into a strong nation based partly on the personality education of teenagers through sports.

Sports such as rugby and rowing enabled teenagers to learn sportsmanship and a spirit of fair play that included leadership, discipline, setting an example, patience and loyalty by making them physically and mentally strong, while also having them compete fairly and honor the rules.

Sports helped the British cultivate strong people with intelligence and virtue, and develop citizenship on the basis of democracy (Jang Sun-gyun et al, 2000).

Taekwondo has also contributed to the nation as an educational tool for teenage personality development for quite a long time. Taekwondo will be a driving force behind creating a better future in the 21st century.

The role and importance of taekwondo's personality education cannot be overemphasized.

However, taekwondo's value and results in terms of personality education are not automatically obtained.

The quality of personality education can vary depending on philosophy, disposition, capability and the effort that instructors, as role models or mentors, become for teenagers.

Today, the role of personality education has become more important at a time when the thoughts and behavior of teenagers depend on more improvised and unstable feelings, with their thoughts and minds weakened with social environments rapidly changing for more convenience.

An all-round trinity-based education can only be realized when virtues such as etiquette and respect and desirable character traits such as patience, concentration and sociability are harmonized with useful skill training and high physical strength.

The sound growth of teenagers lays the foundation for realizing the success of their family, their society and the country as a whole.

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