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Corresponding author  
E-mail: [lkmtkd@hanmail.net](mailto:lkmtkd@hanmail.net)

Peer reviewer  
E-mail: [editor@j-institute.jp](mailto:editor@j-institute.jp)

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## Utilization of Sports Education to Prevent School Violence in KOREA

Jung Chan-soo<sup>1</sup>

*Daegu Arts University, Chilgok, Republic of Korea*

Lee Kang-mun<sup>2\*</sup>

*Daegu Arts University, Chilgok, Republic of Korea*

### Abstract

*In Korea, cultivation of humanity, which is traditionally the role of family, was transferred to the school as the transformation from complex family types to nuclear family type has progressed. As a result, schools have become a space for realizing institutionalized whole education, not a place for knowledge acquisition and training to achieve learning goals. However, as verbal abuse, violence, bullying, sexual assault, etc., among students in schools have emerged as social issues, schools can no longer be a protected area or a haven for students.*

*In Korea, the prevailing perception was that school violence cannot be present until the term 'school violence' began to be used widely in the society, and the response to school violence, such as physical violence, verbal abuse, bullying, etc., among students relied primarily on ethical guidance of teachers rather than dealing with school violence as crime. However, a series of suicides caused due to school violence have been reported through media, leading to an emphasis on the importance of preventing school violence, and eventually legislation has been made to prevent school violence.*

*The 「Act on the Prevention and Countermeasures against Violence in School」 was enacted in 2004 and institutional measures have been proposed. However, no significant results have been achieved as short-term and temporary responses were made, rather than systematic response based on precise diagnosis of causes. And the study intended to present the possibility of leveraging the sports activities and education based on sports such activities as one of educational techniques while emphasizing the importance of school violence preventive education on the basis of the recognition that approach from various perspectives is important for prevention of school violence. In addition, the study intend to present school violence prevention activities through sports education in Korea and discuss the impact that such school violence prevention activities would have on the society.*

*Therefore, it would be necessary to promote physical education in school, and at the same time, to recognize the importance for establishing moral values based on the influence of martial sports and martial art instructors as part of personality cultivation education for prevention of school violence, and furthermore, to provide institutional support. Moreover, it would be also necessary to cultivate fair-play spirit through martial sports and to increase the interest in fostering professional martial sports instructors to guide the students in the cultivation of personality.*

**[Keywords]** School Violence, Cyber Bullying, Personality Education, Sports, Martial Arts Education

### 1. Introduction

In Korea, cultivation of humanity, which is traditionally the role of family, was transferred to the school as the transformation from complex family types to nuclear family

type has progressed. As a result, schools have become a space for realizing institutionalized whole education, not a place for knowledge acquisition and training to achieve learning goals.

However, as verbal abuse, violence, bullying, sexual assault, etc., among students in schools have emerged as social issues, schools can no longer be a protected area or a haven for students.

The 「Act on the Prevention and Countermeasures against Violence in School」 was enacted in 2004 and institutional measures have been proposed. However, no significant results have been achieved as short-term and temporary responses were made, rather than systematic response based on precise diagnosis of causes[1].

Therefore, the study intended to present the possibility of leveraging the sports activities and education based on sports such activities as one of educational techniques while emphasizing the importance of school violence preventive education on the basis of the recognition that approach from various perspectives is important for prevention of school violence.

In addition, the study intend to present school violence prevention activities through sports education in Korea and discuss the impact that such school violence prevention activities would have on the society.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

### **2.1. Concept of school violence**

In Korea, the term ‘school violence’ was first used by the ‘School Violence Prevention Civic Group’.

As students' violence deteriorated, which resulted in an increase in suicides by students, in 1997, this term ‘school violence’ began to be officially used by government organizations and mass media[2].

However, scholars could not take a uniform approach to the establishment of concept of school violence.

That was because the term ‘violence’ itself could be defined differently, depending on the target, place, scope, extent, subject, etc.

In Korea, school violence is generally understood as deliberate harassment, bullying,

extortion/rip-off, verbal abuse, physical assault, or collective assault[3].

The 「Act on the Prevention and Countermeasures against Violence in School」, which was enacted in 2004 and amended as much as 20 times until 2017, set forth provisions pertaining to school violence more specifically. Article 2 of this Act stipulates that the term "school violence" means actions committed against students inside or outside of school premises resulting in a physical or mental injury, or damage to property through a battery, assault, confinement, threat, kidnapping, abduction, defamation, insult, extortion, coercion, forced errand, sexual violence, bullying, or cyber-bullying, or with obscene or violent information via an information and communications network[4].

### **2.2. Causes of school violence in school & current status in Korea**

#### **2.2.1. Causes of school violence**

The Korean government announced a five-year basic plan for prevention of and countermeasures against school violence in February 2004.

Here, school violence is considered to be manifested as a combination of complex factors such as personal, family, social, and cultural factors[5].

Among the causes of school violence, the general characteristics of adolescents are exhibited as personal factors.

In other words, adolescents slip into a vicious cycle of juvenile delinquency due to lack of adroitness in controlling their impulse and overcoming frustration, etc. This is further aggravated by broken emotional ties between parents and children in the face of family problems, leading to a lack of ability to empathize with other students and greater chances of encounter with delinquent peer groups.

Furthermore, such adolescents will have lower self-esteem due to social perception that poor performance in school signifies maladjustment to conventional school activi-

ties, and consequently, will be more likely to be exposed to delinquency as an escape.

### **2.2.2. Current status of school violence in Korea**

According to the National Police Agency in 2013, the number of persons arrested for school violence stood at around 25,000 each year from 2008 to 2010, but it decreased to 21,957 in 2011 before increasing to 23,877 in 2012. By type, 14,6737 persons were arrested on charges of violence, the highest proportion in 2012 while 5,912 persons and 509 persons were arrested on charges of extortion and sexual assault, respectively[6].

Meanwhile, the second survey in 2016 by the Ministry of Education on current status of school violence revealed that 28,000 respondents fell victim to school violence although school violence decreased in overall way and that elementary school students were victimized the most by school violence. By type, verbal abuse topped the list of school violence with 34.8%, followed by group bullying (16.9%), physical assault (12.2%), stalking (10.9%), cyber-bullying (10.0%), extortion (6.5%), sexual molestation and sexual assault (4.9%), and forced errand (3.9%). Moreover, most violence occurred in classrooms, and particularly, 42.0% of violence occurred during the short break[7].

### **2.3. Policies for prevention of school violence in Korea**

The School Violence Prevention Act, enacted in 2004, has been materially amended until 2017.

Specifically, the scope of school violence broadened, strengthening protection of victims and punishment against offenders. Additionally, discipline and incentives for teachers have been strengthened with an emphasis on leadership[8].

According to the current School Violence Prevention Act, the national and local governments should specify their respective responsibilities for prevention of school violence, and the Minister of Education is required to establish and implement a basic

plan for preventing and coping with school violence[9].

In addition, the School Violence Prevention Act amended in 2012 made the school violence prevention education mandatory.

According to this requirement, the heads of schools should provide education to students at least once a semester with respect to concept/current status of school violence and countermeasures in order to protect students physically and psychologically and prevent school violence. In addition, education is required to be provided to teaching staffs and parents more than once a semester in connection with prevention of and countermeasures against school violence[10].

## **3. School Violence and Sports Education**

### **3.1. Value and education of sports**

The limitation of school violence preventive education, which arises from entrance exam-centric education and absence of personality education, has been raised up as an issue. That is aggravated by diminished role or distortion of traditional family.

Therefore, school violence prevention based on personality education is emphasized, and measures devised from various viewpoints are discussed to realize that. Sports activity and education based on it are suggested as an alternative.

In 2011 physical education curriculum was designed to help cultivate personality through class of physical education and placed an emphasis on integrated teaching and learning. This suggests that the importance of physical education was reflected in the curriculum as a solution to the problem of school violence[11].

### **3.2. School violence prevention education through sports in Korea**

According to the comprehensive plan for eradication of school violence, which was announced by the government in 2012, a measure was proposed to increase the number of hours allocated for physical education

classes in schools in order to promote cultivation of personality. It included specific measures for eradication of school violence through increase in the number of hours allocated to physical education classes of middle school, expansion of placement of Saturday sports instructors, support for excellent sports clubs of schools, support for sports instructors, operation of middle school sports leagues, expansion of types of school sports clubs across the country, and promotion of sports education in schools[7].

In Korea, private martial arts gymnasiums, which teach Taekwondo, Judo, Hapkido, etc., have been active. Parents often send their children to those private martial arts gymnasiums to cultivate personality and controlled behavior of their children, as well as physical strength.

In the case of Korea, delinquent elements in students are neutralized by sports activities, such as martial art matches. The personality education by martial art instructors and process of learning true meaning of fair competition are supplementing the school violence prevention education within the system.

In addition, those private martial arts gymnasiums provide a variety of educational programs tailored to the needs of parents which they identify. Particularly, school violence prevention education is one such program.

#### 4. Conclusion

In Korea, the prevailing perception was that school violence cannot be present until the term 'school violence' began to be used widely in the society, and the response to school violence, such as physical violence, verbal abuse, bullying, etc., among students relied primarily on ethical guidance of teachers rather than dealing with school violence as crime.

However, a series of suicides caused due to school violence have been reported through media, leading to an emphasis on the importance of preventing school vio-

lence, and eventually legislation has been made to prevent school violence.

Such efforts at policy level have reduced the number of victims, but still many students are suffering from school violence, and offenders cannot be released from their ethical and legal responsibilities.

Therefore, it would be necessary to promote physical education in school, and at the same time, to recognize the importance for establishing moral values based on the influence of martial sports and martial art instructors as part of personality cultivation education for prevention of school violence, and furthermore, to provide institutional support.

Moreover, it would be also necessary to cultivate fair-play spirit through martial sports and to increase the interest in fostering professional martial sports instructors to guide the students in the cultivation of personality.

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### Lead Author

**Jung Chan-soo** / Daegu Arts University Associate Professor  
B.A. Yongin University  
M.A. Yongin University  
PH. D. Yeungnam University

#### Research field

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#### Major career

- 2006~present. Daegu Arts University, Professor.
- 2017~present. International Society for Criminal Study, Member.

### Corresponding Author

**Lee Kang-mun** / Daegu Arts University Assistant Professor  
B.A. Yongin University  
M.A. Yongin University  
Ph.D. Yongin University

#### Research field

- Korean Civil Guard engager's Military Arts Education Status and Development Method, The Journal of Korean Alliance of Martial Arts, 6(1) (2004).
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#### Major career

- 2006~present. Daegu Arts University, Professor.
- 2017~present. International Society for Martial Arts, Research Chairperson.