

Publication state: Japan
ISSN: 2189-7603

Publisher: J-INSTITUTE
Website: <http://www.j-institute.jp>

Corresponding author
E-mail: byong3@hanmail.net

Peer reviewer
E-mail: editor@j-institute.jp

<http://dx.doi.org/10.22471/crisis.2017.2.3.01>

© 2017 J-INSTITUTE

Character Education for Military Cadets of KOREA Army as Leaders of National SAFETY

Jung Byong-sam^{1*}

Korea Army Academy at Yeongchoen, Yeongcheon, Republic of Korea

Choi Jae-ho²

Korea Army Academy at Yeongchoen, Yeongcheon, Republic of Korea

Abstract

The Korea Army educational institutions like military academies conduct extensive training on their core values beginning with the Initial Entry Training (commonly referred to as basic training) in order to shape military personnel's behavior and decision making in combat and non-combat situations. This paper addresses the theoretical and practical processes of military cadets' character education. This paper employed a qualitative analysis of various kinds of articles including policy research on character education of military cadets to accomplish the research purpose. Character education programs were administered to the cadets from beginning of freshmen military cadets' Initial Entry Training to facilitate changes in cadets' value system toward country and ethical moral judgment. Military academies need character development strategies to better integrate and synchronize the scattered programs to the direction of cadet character. Furthermore, the programs require an assessment plan to ensure that they are fulfilling the objectives. The military academies must ensure that their cadets and graduates keep the moral codes and military regulations in any circumstances. Character and honorable living are essentials of cadet education and strong character demonstrated by honorable living strengthens the Army Profession by enabling the leaders to build trust, which is relying on the integrity of another professional. The military academies must ensure that their cadets and graduates keep the moral codes and military regulations and align their efforts by implementing a commonly understood and approved model of cadet and character development. Building leadership by moral development, which establishes the framework for military academies' Leader Development System (LDS), provides a detailed Cadet Developmental Model. The Cadet Developmental Model consists of five components for developing individual character. This study provides feedback to disciplinary officers and senior cadets that can be used to design effective moral and character education and thereby prepare cadets for decision-making and morally consistent behavior in educational courses and drill situations. A military academy authority is responsible for assessing character development of military cadets and the assessment includes both direct and indirect measures for individual cadets and organizational culture. Especially disciplinary officers coordinate with cadet leaders to collect and analyze data from several sources to include the Corps of Cadets and external experts. This strategy provides the ends, ways, and means for ensuring education programs and activities are integrated and synchronized in support of military academies' mission to provide the nation with commissioned leaders of character.

[Keywords] *Character Education, Military Cadets, Moral Education, Leaders, National Safety*

1. Introduction

The Korea Army, as a values-based organization, expects its members' behavior and

decisions to reflect its moral code[1]. The Army's moral standard is outlined in the Army Creed and the Cadets' Creed. Although the

Army's moral code is publicized and taught extensively throughout the Military Academy education and discipline system, there should be well-designed character education program[2].

The Korea military academies educate, train, and inspire leaders of self-sacrificing character as the Korea Army and the nation deserve and demand the graduates of the military academies committed to the ethics of Country, Honor, and Loyalty & Courage. This study explores the strategies that both develop character and modify behavior over the course of 2~4 years of cadet education. The desired end state for graduating cadets is to equip with the character, competence, and commitment to build and lead ethical combat units that thrive in complex security environments[3]. Cadets and all staff members are working together and directly contribute to the military institutions' mission in the meanings of educating morally-equipped leaders. It is important all members of the military academies commit to show good examples for the military cadets to focus on the moral values[4]. The purpose of this strategy is to create common framework that inspires, empowers, and holds everyone accountable for their individual actions and those in their charge. This includes both military cadets and acting officers in general. Korea military academies could provide enough sources of means and ways to cultivate cadets' ethical character.

The Korea Army Academy at Yeong-choen (KAAY) Character Development Strategy describes how, at all levels and across programs for developing leaders of character who internalize the ideals of Country, Honor, Courage & Loyalty and the Army Ethic. The strategy supports KAAY for accomplishing Strategic Goal 1 (Developing the Korea Army Corps of Cadets) and KAAY Strategic Goal 2 (Living honorably and build trust). After understanding this strategy, all cadets should understand their responsibility for taking ownership of their character development and should understand their role and the intended Academy outcomes for character development[5].

KAAY is dedicated to train the cadets that each graduate is a commissioned leader of

character committed to the values of Country, Honor, and Courage & Loyalty for preparing the career of professional excellence and service to the nation as an officer in the Korea Army. KAAY mission statement clearly identifies its requirement to produce individuals who are certified in the character (Honor), competence (Courage & Loyalty), and commitment (Country) of a commissioned officer in the Army Profession[6]. Every educational department of academic board and Corps of Cadet has an overarching responsibility to build character or facilitate character development in each individual throughout the course of the 2 years of cadet experience. Character development can either be the primary goal or an ancillary goal, but every staff of the KAAY should involve in the character education for the military cadets directly or indirectly.

The word character is derived from the word charakter, which was the permanent mark placed on a coin that determined the coin's worth. Similarly, a person's character is "marked" by the set of beliefs and values that serve as guideposts for how that person behaves, decides, and acts. In the military academy, every cadet is expected to promote the army officer's character and the Army Ethic[7]. When a cadet graduates from a military academy and is commissioned as a second lieutenant, the Academy has certified that he/she has internalized the values of the military academy and will behave based on those values[8]. If a graduate act according to the value code proves the the character education system is effective. That means a graduate's daily commitment to internal moral judgment and upholding the values inherent in the KAAY motto 'Country, Honor, and Courage & Loyalty.' The graduate is supposed to strive for excellence, and to develop character, competence, and commitment in his personal and unit mission[9].

Character and honorable living are essential of cadet education and strong character demonstrated by honorable living strengthens the Korea Army by enabling the leaders to build trust and to yield voluntary obedience from their subordinates[10]. Trust is the "vital organizing principle that establishes the

conditions necessary for effective and ethical mission command and a profession that continues to earn the trust of the Korean people and unit subordinates." Trust derived from strong character is a mission essential requirement and it allows the Army to maintain a professional status with the civil community[11]. Leaders with trust can build strong commitment with their unit members and can operate with strong belief in the combat and non-combat missions. In contrast, weak character causes mistrust, weakens cohesion, and damages military success. Even worse, weak character can lead to moral cowardice and corruption that result in mission failure and unnecessary loss of life[12].

The trust built through strong character and honorable living also brings perceptible benefits for the leaders because they can save their effort to oversee and control the subordinates. They will enjoy professional autonomy and the respect from their colleagues and subordinates if they have the character and their units operate more efficiently under the mission command philosophy without the close management required in a unit plagued with mistrust. Finally, the nation benefits from having an Army that provides security in an honorable way, knowing that all members in the army will fulfill that responsibility without abusing his/her authority[13].

2. Character Development Goals

There are three overarching goals for this Character Development Strategy[14]:

(a) Military cadets acknowledge that change of their character runs from behaviors extrinsically motivated by attention and compliance with the Cadet Honor Code and regulations to intrinsic behaviors that demonstrate internalization of the ideals of Country, Honor, and Loyalty & Courage.

(b) Military academies establish a thoughtful character development model that describes what actions are necessary and periodically assesses their strategies' effectiveness in the scope of intra-and-interpersonal evaluation.

(c) Military academies set the conditions for integrating, synchronizing, and assessing individual and collective efforts at the unit level. At the individual level, the goal is to develop these five facets of character in each graduate[15]:

① Moral awareness: Internalization of the cadet values that result in the knowledge, integrity, and awareness to assess the moral-ethical aspects of every situation and the personal courage to take appropriate action regardless of consequences.

② Performance of ethical judgment: The sense of duty, resilience, and grit necessary to accomplish the mission and get results. It is assumed that the cadets and officers with higher level of character will accomplish their missions better.

③ Respect toward colleagues, seniors, and subordinates: The understanding, faithfulness, respect, and modesty that enable an individual to treat others with dignity and display self-sacrifice. The true respect, however, does not violate the honor system even in the conflict situation between cadet honor report and peer-evaluation.

④ Leadership toward themselves and others: The ability to inspire and develop others while establishing a safe, positive command climate where everyone thrives while achieving tangible results. In the aspect of character education, true leadership must accompany with moral maturity and capacity. Self-leadership ensuring themselves to keep the moral codes inside and outside the military environment.

⑤ Social compliance and humanity: The ability to act with the proper professional decorum in all professional, social, and even online environments and to show general humanity in any circumstances. In some cases, social compliance could mean compromise with peer pressure of violating honor code in the regard of academic, sports, and social activity. Moral and character education, however, will prevent the cadets to fall into the temptation of compromise.

At the group level within companies, teams, and clubs, military academies are inspiring

excellence and developing individual cadet character by demonstrating the following:

- Setting positive command climate: The importance of treating people with dignity and respect while ensuring a safe and positive environment where everyone can thrive. Character education will yield a junior cadet obey faithfully to senior cadets while senior ones will lead the juniors with respect and care.

- Warrior culture: Character education pursues excellence and winning spirit in a manner consistent with Cadet Values and strong sportsmanship[16]. The ethical leadership will produce winning spirit by getting voluntary involvement of subordinates in the military organizations. The Leadership and Social facets of character were motivated by broader description of character more appropriate for KAAY's mission and the expectations of commissioned services.

2.1. Character development guiding principles and model

KAAY character development starts with Cadet Basic Training and continues through graduation. All cadets enter KAAY with their own set of personal values shaped by their family, friends, communities, school, athletic teams, etc. Those personal values may continue to early period of first-year with variations depending on personal orientation.

However, the KAAY Character Development Strategies begin to integrate the personal variations toward Army moral codes to close any values gaps that might exist between what a cadet candidate brings to KAAY and the internalization of Army Values by graduation[17]. The process begins with education so that they understand what is expected of them as cadets and officers. This establishes their "left and right" limits for acceptable behavior as a member of the Army Profession. They will then experience several challenges that require them to exercise various facets of character. After the experience, which should make them uncomfortable, military academies must provide them time for structured reflection and introspection so the cadets understand where they are and where they need further development. This iterative,

continuous process does not happen in a single event. Every year, KAAY disciplinary officers begin character development for many new cadets and continue developing all cadets of different level of internalization[18].

2.2. Guiding principles

There is no perfect development model for character building because military cadets are coping with moral situations where they have to use their best judgment to the extent of ethical code. In the absence of specific guidance, these guiding principles can help faculty and disciplinary officers decide how to lead and maximize the cadet character development experience[19].

(a) The goal is internalization, not simply compliance. Leaders of character are intrinsically motivated to live honorably because there is inherent value in virtue. They are not extrinsically motivated simply to avoid punishment or gain reward. Therefore, it is essential faculty and disciplinary officers explain to cadets why both mission accomplishment and trust keeping is equally important even in urgent missions. The military academy graduates, in the end, are expected to exercise their best discretion to protect their subordinates and civilians in combat and non-combat missions.

(b) Character development is an iterative, continuous process. Character development is unique for each cadet and requires multiple, iterative experiences under the mentorship of staff, faculty, and disciplinary officers who educate, train, and inspire individual cadets. Educators of military academies should continually remind cadets that development and mentorship are not limited to formal instruction and counseling but also including spontaneous, informal, and short duration events that happen throughout the normal routine of a typical cadet day. As people tend to forget or negotiate their values with selfish desires, the character and honor education need to be implemented repeatedly to the extent of genuine internalization at the personal level[20].

(c) Character development at KAAY is a mutual responsibility. Once each cadet takes ownership of his/her own development,

every member of the KAAV must also teach, support, mentor, and inspire cadets as they navigate the iterative process of character development. Failure of character ownership like intentional and unintentional violation must be pointed out and be punished depending on the degrees of seriousness even to criminal punishment. Most of the cases of the violation, however, stop at the self-report and self-discipline like punitive double-pace, reflective journaling, and probation[21].

(d) Character development must be deliberate. The Academic, Military, Physical, and Character Programs must clearly define and assess their character outcome goals for the appropriate facets of character. All program leaders must ensure their activities and policies support the overall character development strategy without undermining or impeding the goals of another program. Great outcomes may have some spontaneity, but permanent change comes from deliberate effort. Finally, mentors and instructors must explain to cadets how and why the activity facilitates character development.

(e) Leaders develop leaders. The best way to provide purpose, motivation, and direction for a cadet's character development is to be a moral exemplar and mentor. Staff, faculty and disciplinary officers must all display the appropriate attitudes and behaviors that inspire cadets to live honorably and build trust. They must invest time, effort, and attention not only to educate and train, but also to inspire and challenge each cadet. Senior cadets, especially, have greater influences than other leaders on the junior cadets' character development and they have much more responsibilities for the character education in the real cadet life.

2.3. Character development model

Military academies align their efforts by implementing a commonly understood and approved model of cadet and character development. Building Capacity to Lead, which establishes the framework for military academies' Leader Development System (LDS), provides a detailed Cadet Developmental Model. The Cadet Developmental Model consists of

five components for developing individual character[22]:

(a) Personal readiness for development: Cadets must be open and ready to learn from their experiences. The staff and faculty have a responsibility to remind cadets how various experiences contribute to their character development and prepare them for service. Cadets need to internalize and organize their value system throughout their experiences to prepare future career in the army profession.

(b) Developmental experiences: The Academy must provide cadets developmental experiences that are challenging, assessed, and supported. These experiences can be planned or spontaneous. Each experience helps cadets understand themselves and others in a new way.

(c) Reflective journaling: The Academy must afford cadets opportunities for structured reflection so they understand the gaps in their development. Two of the most powerful reflective methods are journaling and meeting with mentors who have high expectations for them. The journaling let cadets to find their identity and moral status in their own perspective every day. Cadets may evaluate their progresses in the journaling process and set better goals and behavioral guidelines aligning the moral codes.

(d) Knowledge-based ethical development: The combination of developmental experiences, classroom education, and structured reflection produces new perspectives, understanding, and skills. New technologies may cause confusions in the leaders' decision in combat and non-combat situations. Intelligence technologies (IT), for example, require the leaders to increase their knowledge in technical areas like cyber-crimes, identification theft, and cyber-espionage.

(e) Time investment: Development requires a significant investment of time for cadets, staff, faculty, and disciplinary officers. Each part of this model requires time allocated for preparation, structured reflection, and assessment. Inadequate time allocation reduces the impact of the experiences and handicaps the developmental process. This model and the guiding principles are the ways

each person, program, department, and directorate will approach character development. The character development is a life-long process demanding personal and institutional effort because cadets must overcome selfish desires. Military leaders must sacrifice their own life in some dangerous mission and that kind of sacrifice could be educated through long-time personal and institutional efforts.

2.4. Character development assessment

A military academy authority is responsible for assessing character development of military cadets and the assessment includes both direct and indirect measures for individual cadets and organizational culture. Especially disciplinary officers coordinate with cadet leaders to collect and analyze data from several sources to include the Corps of Cadets and external experts. This effort augments character assessment in other programs such as academic key experiences and course grades, the Character in Sports Index, military key experience, military development grades, and periodic review. The review process is the only individual assessment of character outside the other four programs. Peer-evaluation is also a very important assessment method of a cadet's character development. It is a multi-faceted assessment of cadet behaviors: Loyalty, Courage, Respect, Honor, and Responsibility. The peer-evaluation is conducted each semester and is used to assess individual character traits to develop individual cadets. One additional annual assessment tool is Character Development Survey that is an indirect assessment of cadet attitudes and behaviors, which enable disciplinary officers objectively, evaluate their cadets' attitudes and behavior that is not aligned with the military academies' ethical codes.

3. The Character Development Strategy

Military academies need a character development strategy to better integrate and synchronize the scattered programs to the direction of cadet character. Furthermore, the

programs require an assessment plan to ensure that they are fulfilling the objectives. The military academies must ensure that their cadets and graduates keep the moral codes and military regulations even in dangerous situations. The character development strategies are deliberately designed program regulating wide scope daily activities.

Additionally, recent assessment indicates trends that trust, honor, and toleration are areas that the instructors and disciplinary officers should focus on. For example, surveys indicate that most of the cadets have internalized the spirit of the Honor Code by the time that they graduate. Extensive focus group interviews with cadets indicate six policy measures are ensuring the Corps of Cadets to internalize the codes:

(a) Strict application: Cadets believe that the punishment for violating the Honor Code is sometimes severe but necessary. Cadets make a distinction between personal sympathy toward the honor-violators and objective obligation as prospective military leaders.

(b) Personal reminding: Cadets are required to keep a reflective journal for daily consideration of what is good or bad in the aspect of honor code. The personal reminding process spurs them to strengthen their acuteness toward the honor and morality.

(c) Strong trust in the honor system: Cadets believe the Honor System is working right to regulate their everyday autonomous cadet life. They believe that if a colleague does something wrong they must warn him or her first to file the self-report and self-discipline process, however, if the offender does not follow the self-discipline process, they should report the misbehavior to defend the honor-system.

(d) Effective honor system: Cadets demand the honor authority to abbreviate the honor procedures to expedite ruling system. If it takes too much time and effort to conduct a Cadet Advisory Board (CAB) or Honor Investigation Hearing (HIH), the time consumption exhausts the whistle-blower. Therefore, cadets insist that the CAB must protect the whistle-blower rule the case out as fast as

possible to reduce potential bystanders indifferent fearing the honor system would sacrifice personal time and energy.

(e) Principle of no-toleration: Some cadets and officers could believe that they can adjudicate "minor" Honor violations at their level through counseling or corrective training. Cadets see this poor example and follow suit that would lead to failure of the system. Therefore harder and strict system is required to keep the honor system and character-building education. Cadet honor investigative team is to make action on each case until they reach to a decision of punishment or release.

Only the Superintendent has the authority to grant discretion while all other cadets and officers must keep the principle of no-toleration to the honor violation. A suspect of Honor must be handed over to the Cadet Honor Committee (CHC) as long as the CHC decide he or she is not guilty.

(f) Removing potential competing loyalties: From the start of their military academy experience, cadets are reminded continuously about the importance of relationships and the concept of friendship with peers. They have peer-evaluation system in the aspect of their social acceptance, which is referring to "popularity" sometimes. Strict honor-keepers, sometimes, in the system of peer-evaluation get the stigma of outliers and get driven out of the Corps of Cadet in the worst case. The military academy must relieve the portion of peer-evaluation to reduce the possible individual cadet's value-conflict between the peer-evaluation and honor system. If a cadet overestimates the peer evaluation system, he or she would contribute to the perception that turning in a fellow cadet; especially a classmate or teammate is the equivalent of disloyalty or betrayal.

4. Conclusion

This strategy provides the ends, ways, and means for ensuring KAAY programs and activities are integrated and synchronized in support of KAAY's mission to provide the Nation with commissioned leaders of character. This

strategy is a call to action for every member of the KAAY team to understand his/her role in character development and to take the necessary steps to ensure that each graduate is certified in character, competence, and commitment before commissioning.

ROKA personnel's crime rate is going upward annually and that trend worries the Army leadership to the extent that commanding generals have several meeting to solve the problems. They demand newly commissioned officers set good examples to recreate the army organizational culture. Effective moral and character education is necessary for that purpose especially for military cadets who will lead their subordinates in the front line of the battlefield.

This article articulates that the ROKA's military academy should clarify their process of character education. Based on the previous research, leaders played the key role in influencing soldiers' moral and character development.

5. References

5.1. Journal articles

- [2] Doty J & Joiner C. How the US Military Academy Develops Leaders of Character. *Army Communicator*, 34(1), 7-8 (2009).
- [3] Soeters JL. Value Orientations in Military Academies A Thirteen Country Study. *Armed Forces & Society*, 24(1), 7-32 (1997).
- [4] Stevens G & Gardner S & Rosa FM. Military Academies as Instruments of Value Change. *Armed Forces & Society*, 20(3), 473-484 (1994).
- [5] Priest RF & Beach J. Value Changes in Four Cohorts at the U.S. Military Academy. *Armed Forces & Society*, 25(1), 81-102 (1998).
- [7] Tollefson J. Treading the Way of Ignorance. *Military Review*, 97(2), 89-95 (2017).
- [8] Zvereva I. The Contents of Value Orientations of Students in the Conditions of Military Education. *Psychological Science & Education*, 7(2), 59-71 (2015).
- [10] Matthews MD & Eid J & Kelly D. Character Strengths and Virtues of Developing Military

Leaders. *Military Psychology*, 18(1), 57-68 (2006).

- [11] Sones E. Trust the DNA of Leadership U.S. *Army Medical Department Journal*, 33-35 (2013).
- [12] Samuels RJ. When Leadership Failed. *American Sociologist*, 34(1), 33-44 (2003).
- [13] Fallesen JJ & Keller-Glaze H & Curnow CK. A Selective Review of Leadership Studies in the Army. *Military Psychology*, 23(5), 462-478 (2011).
- [14] Kerr J. Career-long Development PDC's Vision Melds Character Growth with Military Education. *Officer*, 87(2), 14-15 (2011).
- [15] Cushen DB & Doty JP & Toffler PA. Developing Trustworthy Commissioned Officers. *Military Review*, 94(2), 14-22 (2014).
- [17] Choi MD. Character Education Program for the Military Cadets of Korea Army Academy at Yeongchoen. *Journal of Korea Army Academy at Yeongchoeon*, 49(2), 223-278 (1999).
- [19] Simpson A & Laham SM & Fiske AP. Wrongness in Different Relationships Relational Context Effects on Moral Judgment. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 156(6), 594-609 (2016).
- [20] Doty J & Joiner C. How the Military Academy Develops Leaders of Character. *Army Communicator*, 34(1), 7-8 (2009).
- [21] Sharp K. Building Character: Discovering and Developing Character Traits. *Journal of School Health*, 72(7), 303-304 (2002).
- [22] Michelson BM. Character Development of the US Army Leaders. *Military Review*, 30-39 (2013).

5.2. Thesis degree

- [9] Choi SH. A Study on the Leadership Development of Military Cadets of Korea Army Academy at Yeongchon. Dongkuk University, Master's Thesis (2007).
- [18] Shin HK. A Study on the Leadership Development for Disciplinary Officers of Korea Army Academy at Yeongchon. Dongkuk University, Master's Thesis (2006).

5.3. Books

- [16] Cameraon K. Positive Leadership Strategy for Extraordinary Performance. Barret-Koehler (2008).

5.4. Additional references

- [1] Lee MS & Lee GH & Lim YS. A Study on the Inter-relationships among Mission Goals Roles and Vision of the Korean Army and Their Contents Validity. Research Report Submitted to Hwarangdae Research Institute (2010).
- [6] Choi MD & Song EM. Value Education at the Korea Army Academy at Yeongchoen. Research Report Submitted to Choongsungdae Research Institute (2007).

Lead Author

Jung Byong-sam / Korea Army Academy at Yeongchoen Professor
B.A. Korea Army Academy at Yeongchoen
M.A. Yonsei University
Ph.D. University of Virginia

Research field

- Factors Affecting the Korea Army Soldier's Perception of Combat Readiness: Multi-level Analysis, International Journal of Military Affairs, 1(1) (2016).
- Effects of Multiculturalism Education for Korean Military Cadets, International Journal of Terrorism & National Security, 1(2) (2016).

Major career

- 2010~present. Korea Army Academy at Yeongchoen, Professor of Education.
- 2016~present. International Society for Military Affairs, Editor in Administrator.

Corresponding Author

Choi Jae-ho / Korea Army Academy at Yeongchoen Professor
B.A. Daegu University
M.A. Kyungpook National University
Ph.D. Kyungpook National University

Research field

- The Effect of Military Academy's Writing Course for Military Cadets Writing Proficiency, International Journal of Military Affairs, 2(1) (2017).
- Character Education for Military Cadets of Korea Army as Leaders of National Safety, International Journal of Crisis & Safety, 2(3) (2017)

Major career

- 2007~present. Kyungpook National University, Research Institute of Humanity, Research Fellow.
- 2010~present. Korea Army Academy at Yeongchoen, Professor of Korean Language & Literature.