TAEKWONDO INSTRUCTORS' EXPERIENCE OF COUNSELING THEIR STUDENTS: A SURVEY OF DOJANGS IN THE UNITED STATES

by

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SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE APPROVAL

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This thesis has been read by each member of the following supervisory committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.
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I have read the thesis of Clark Slagle in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographic style are consistent and acceptable; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the supervisory committee and is ready for submission to The Graduate School.

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Anecdotal evidence from within the Taekwondo community supports the idea that Taekwondo instructors often interact with their students on topics of intra- and interpersonal concern. These interactions can be construed as informal counseling or informal helping. This study examines the frequency and content of these informal interactions and measures the degree to which instructors' counseling self-efficacy is related to these interactions. Data were obtained from Taekwondo instructors through a self-report questionnaire designed to conceptualize the nature of this psychomartial interaction. The relationship of demographic factors such as education, age, gender, years of teaching Taekwondo, and counseling self-efficacy were examined as predictors of number of helping strategies used and number of helping topics identified by instructors.

Results indicate that all of the instructors reported providing informal counseling. Further, across this sample of instructors, the full range of counseling topic areas were discussed. Significant correlations were found between instructor counseling self-efficacy and years of education, number of students counseled per week, and number of topics discussed. The results of this research suggest that Taekwondo instructors not only engage in informal counseling, but they employ a wide range of counseling strategies. Additionally, the research provides information to guide future research and instructor education designed to promote counseling skill training in Taekwondo instructors.
This research is dedicated to my grandmother Wilma Elizabeth Buckingham Peckman who encouraged my curiosity with her gentle love and wisdom, and to my Taekwondo students who were my teachers.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................ iv

LIST OF TABLES ............................................................................................ viii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .................................................................................. ix

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................... 1

- Taekwondo ........................................................................................................ 1
- Instructors ......................................................................................................... 6
- Beneficial Outcomes of Taekwondo Training ................................................ 10
- Beneficial Processes Associated with Taekwondo Processes ....................... 11
- Counseling/Informal Helping ....................................................................... 12
- Self-Efficacy and Counseling .................................................................... 15
- Hypotheses ...................................................................................................... 17

II. METHODS .................................................................................................. 19

- Research Design ........................................................................................... 19
- Instrument ...................................................................................................... 19
- Procedure ...................................................................................................... 21
- Descriptive Statistics .................................................................................... 22

III. RESULTS .................................................................................................. 25

- Results Related to Hypotheses .................................................................. 25
- Additional Analysis ......................................................................................... 29

IV. DISCUSSION .............................................................................................. 34

- Hypotheses .................................................................................................... 34
- Implications .................................................................................................... 40
- Limitations ...................................................................................................... 42
- Areas for Future Research .......................................................................... 43
Appendices

A. RECRUITMENT LETTER ................................................................. 45
B. SURVEY ................................................................. 47
REFERENCES ............................................................................. 57
LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Taekwondo research articles</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Session management self-efficacy items</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Descriptive statistics</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Descriptive data for self-efficacy items</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Topics of informal helping</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Correlation matrix</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Results of regression analysis for SET and number of topics addressed controlling for age and gender</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Comment topics and frequency</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Taekwondo

Taekwondo is a Korean martial art that emphasizes dynamic, powerful kicks and incorporates a variety of hand techniques for the purpose of attack or self-defense. The phrase “the way of the empty hand and foot” is often used when translating the art and practice of Taekwondo to English. Taekwondo as a martial art has a complex history and many ancient traditions persist. For example, a Korean tomb mural dated between 3 A.D. and 427 A.D. highlights specific techniques central to the modern practice of Taekwondo (Kim, 1998). As a means of self-defense and an offensive military tool, practitioners of Taekwondo have promoted the teaching of this martial art as a way to preserve Korean society and to resist outside influences. Martial arts in Korea were outlawed by the Japanese during World War II, so although instructors continued to train and teach, their participation in Taekwondo was kept secret. After the war, Korean instructors began to unify their styles and organizations. In 1965, Tang Soo Do, Tae Soo Do, Soo Bak Do, and other Korean national and family arts were unified under the name Taekwondo (Kim). Since that time, Taekwondo has grown into one of the most recognized and frequently practiced martial arts in the world. Taekwondo’s popularity has spread to over
70 million participants worldwide (Uhm, 2006). The Olympics now includes Taekwondo as a quadrennial medal sport, and martial arts continue to be incorporated into popular culture (e.g., the Internet Movie Database lists 48 movies released in 2006 under the heading of martial arts). As more people participate in Taekwondo, the number of training halls and instructors continues to increase. This uptrend in participation suggests that the intersection of martial arts with the Western world may become progressively more important for understanding how to effectively prepare instructors to teach the art, as well as to understand the impact of instruction in Taekwondo on lifestyle and personal change.

Contemporary training in Taekwondo is for the most part indigenous; that is, it takes place in a local Dojang, or training hall, and this space is considered “other” or sacred compared to the outside community. Rules exist in the Dojang which may or may not extend beyond its walls. Transcending this space and taking the peace, tenets, and philosophy of the Dojang into the outside world is often a difficult and long process. Students frequently are looking for a way-of-being when they initiate Taekwondo training. Along with the physical art, the perceived mysticism of the accompanying philosophy can appear to outsiders as a repository for existential answers to an individual’s personal life dilemmas. Although mysticism is inherent in Taekwondo, the training constructs can be deconstructed into a concrete pedagogy with operationalized methods and goals to achieve skill competency.

Taekwondo training and teaching can be described as five domains: 1) Basic technique, 2) Poomse, 3) Self-Defense strategies, 4) Sparring, and 5) Spirituality/Meditation. Basic techniques and skills training create the foundation for
students to progress from beginner to expert in the practice of Taekwondo. A white belt (beginner) must learn basic kicks, blocks, and punches before learning other aspects of the art. A “front kick” exemplifies a basic technique, and most people can easily learn this simple kick and begin to develop balance, strength, and a sense of body spatialism.

Students learn poomse or forms after developing their basic skills. Promotion to higher belt ranks requires relative mastery of the poomse for the previous rank. Each poomse consists of techniques learned at that particular level of training, and those techniques are known universally as well as taught and choreographed consistently at each Dojang based on a uniform rubric. For example, a student presenting Poomse Taegeuk II Jahn (Yellow belt form or 1st form) in Mexico would look the same as a student presenting the same form in Ivory Coast or in Korea. Most poomse consist of approximately 20 movements, and they become more complex and difficult as one moves upward through the ranks.

While poomse can be considered a means of practicing self-defense, most instructors teach additional self-defense techniques. Students often seek out Taekwondo as a way to physically protect themselves. The variety of self-defense strategies taught at schools is as varied as instructors. For example, a prominent instructor in North Carolina promoted the eye gouge as the most effective protective technique and also the easiest to learn. Other instructors may prefer more complex self-defense techniques. However, a majority of instructors start with the premise that running away from your attacker is the best self-defense, and then teach specialized techniques to use when this escape strategy is not an option.
Sparring can also be seen as a way to practice self-defense. A variety of sparring styles exist depending on the affiliation of the instructor with a particular governing body. Currently, the most common sparring style is called Olympic-style sparring. In competition, participants use full contact kicking and punching to score points or knock out their opponent. Sparring within a Dojang requires control and trust between training partners to avoid injury. Most students choose not to compete in sparring competitions. They are likely to participate within the Dojang to practice more realistic use of techniques in defending themselves. Sparring also models psychological and physiological responses to threat. Thus, by engaging in this practice, students become more prepared and less anxious about encountering threats outside of the Dojang.

Finally, Taekwondo involves both sitting and moving meditation. A large variance exists among Dojangs on the emphasis placed on meditation, especially in the United States. Sitting meditation is often done as a pre- and postlude to training. Students clear their minds prior to physically engaging in training as well as upon completion of training as they prepare to leave the Dojang. Additionally, training itself can be a form of moving meditation as the practitioner becomes highly focused on the present. In this instance, the mind becomes empty and clear.

Taekwondo epistemology is as varied as instructors. Generally, however, teaching is student-centered and student-modeled. Typically, students line up by level of expertise with white belts in the back rows progressing up through the ranks with black belts in the front row. This arrangement allows less experienced students to observe and model more experienced students. Instructors teach specific techniques and curriculum, and students learn through action. Students learn by doing because some knowledge must be gained
kinesthetically. Therefore, it is generally believed that Taekwondo technique mastery is not possible through listening alone. More concretely, reading a book on Taekwondo techniques is not sufficient to become a Taekwondoist, although a book may provide some understanding of the art.

As students learn and master Taekwondo domains, they advance through the ranks. Traditionally, it is believed a student’s white belt becomes darker with dirt and blood the longer that training continues until a belt is black with experience. Contemporary students are given belts of different colored material based on their learning, testing, and experience. A common sequence of belts in Dojangs would move through the white belt, yellow belt, high yellow belt, green belt, high green belt, blue belt, high blue belt, red belt, high red belt, and black belt. Thus, as the student practitioner progresses, her belt becomes darker and darker.

Belt rank provides a framework for the operation of a Dojang. Advanced students, black belts, are expected to take on greater responsibility and have more privileges. For instance, black belts likely have teaching responsibilities as well as access to advanced training seminars. This pyramid, with the head or master instructor at the top, promotes overt and covert respect towards those at more advanced ranks. Respect is greater with each level of rank, ending with a large power differential between master instructor and students (this differential can be widened or attenuated by the instructor depending on her or his personal philosophy). The next section of this paper summarizes the impact of instructors on student learning.
Instructors

Taekwondo instructors, within the larger context of martial arts teachers, are considered a trustworthy class of individuals and are perceived by their students to have valuable knowledge and life experience beyond the narrow confines of the instructional context. Because of their position as respected leaders and teachers, Taekwondo instructors report that they are sought out for personal help by their students as an alternative to receiving professional counseling. However, instructors do not necessarily possess the formal training associated with professional counselors. No formal education in counseling is required to become a Taekwondo instructor and, for the most part, formal counseling training would not be a normal part of an instructor’s educational background. Thus, it is probable that if a Taekwondo instructor provided some informal counseling to students, the skills employed by the instructor would be intuitive or self-taught.

Within the hierarchical structure of Taekwondo, instructors can have great influence over their students’ lives and choices. Obviously, instructors are highly influential on the training mat, and this includes overt philosophical commentary during training. For example, an instructor might describe running away from an attacker as saving two lives, because the attacker would not be hurt and the practitioner’s life course would not be altered by the effects of taking the attacker’s life. The impacts of instructor-student interactions off the mat or outside the instructional setting are less obvious. Instructors are the experts in the physical aspects of their art, and they serve as a student’s spiritual guide within the Dojang hierarchy. Students typically enter their training as beginners and develop trust in their instructors across time. In this context, the term “psychomartial alliance” will be employed to describe the psychological and martial art
alliance developed between teachers and students who engage in informal helping. The psychomartial alliance is enhanced through modeling as new students learn from more experienced students who model appropriate and respectful interactions with instructors. Additionally, new students may hear other students describe how their instructor may have helped them (or talked with them) about a particular problem. The culture of the Dojang is developed through modeled behavior and specific instruction. This places instructors in a position such that some students expect to find clear, explicit answers from their instructor for whatever psychological, family, or other personal problems a student might encounter. It is unclear how instructors prepare themselves for these relational tasks with their students. This preparation may have important implications, as Lantz (2002) found participants had different experiences with instructors depending on an instructor’s interpersonal style.

A small, but circumspect research literature on Taekwondo instruction exists and this literature has focused for the most part in two areas: 1) psychological outcomes associated with adult training in Taekwondo and 2) correlates that may influence the effectiveness of Taekwondo training. These issues can be more simply stated as outcome and process topics in Taekwondo and are summarized in Table 1.
Table 1. Taekwondo research articles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Areas of Focus</th>
<th>Major Finding</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Cerin</td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>How personality and proximity affect Taekwondo competitors</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Lantz</td>
<td>Family development</td>
<td>How martial arts (including Taekwondo) impact family development</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Toskovic</td>
<td>Mood changes following instruction</td>
<td>Measurable changes on tension, depression, anger, fatigue, confusion, and vigor following Taekwondo training</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Chapman et al.</td>
<td>Correlation of anxiety and self-confidence to competition results</td>
<td>63% of competitors who won showed less anxiety and more self-confidence prior to a Taekwondo match</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Iso-Ahola, Park</td>
<td>Social support as protective factor for depression</td>
<td>Leisure friendship and companionship resulting from membership in a Dojang offer significant protective benefits for depression</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Kurian et al.</td>
<td>How anxiety, independence, and leadership relate to time in training</td>
<td>Students with more years of training scored lower on the anxiety measure and higher on independence measure</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Areas of Focus</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Finkenberg</td>
<td>Effect of Taekwondo on self-concept of women</td>
<td>Taekwondo has a significant positive effect on women’s self-concept</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Seitz et al.</td>
<td>Ki</td>
<td>How internal energy, martial arts, and mental health are interrelated</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Beneficial Outcomes of Taekwondo Training

With respect to the first area, psychological outcomes, a number of studies have examined the evidence for psychological benefits associated with Taekwondo training. For example, Toskovic (2001) explored how a single session of Taekwondo positively affected mood as measured by the Profile of Mood States (POMS) scale. This study consisted of 40 participants, ages 18-21, who participated in a Taekwondo class or a lecture class, which was used as a control group. Participants were instructed to fill out the POMS prior to the instruction and immediately following instruction. POMS has a 5-point Likert scale and measures Tension-Anxiety, Depression-Dejection, Anger-Hostility, Vigour-Activity, Fatigue-Inertia, and Confusion-Bewilderment (Cheung & Lam, 2005). Toskovic found that Taekwondo training was associated with lowered levels of negative mood and increased positive mood. The study also reported significant changes in depression, anger, and tension after a Taekwondo session. It is important to note that this study examined the effects of only a single session of Taekwondo training and was limited to novice students. High skill levels are not needed to obtain psychological benefits, but it is unclear how long-term training would affect mood.

Finkenberg (1990) examined the effect of an 18-week Taekwondo class on women’s self-concept using a general health class population as a control. The Tennessee Self-concept Scale was used to measure self-criticism and perceptions of physical self, moral-ethical self, personal self, family self, social self, identity, and self-satisfaction. The researchers assessed 100 participants before and after 18 weeks of Taekwondo training employing a pre- and posttest design. The results indicated positive gains for the Taekwondo participants over the control group on all measures and significant gains on
the following five domains: physical well-being, personal contentment, social engagement, identity, and satisfaction with life.

Together, Finkenberg (1990) and Toskovic’s (2001) findings suggest that there may be positive psychological benefits that result from even brief exposure to Taekwondo training. The next section describes the processes which may undergird the psychological benefits of the Taekwondo process.

**Beneficial Processes Associated with Taekwondo Processes**

In addition to studying Taekwondo outcomes, researchers (Clemens, 2005; Iso-Ahola & Park, 1996) have also explored the various processes (or components of training) that may help facilitate positive outcomes. Taekwondo and the social support from training in a community (Dojang) have been found to reduce stress (Iso-Ahola & Park). Iso-Ahola and Park reported a strong, positive correlation between leisure companionship and leisure friendship and reduced depressive symptoms when participants who were part of a Dojang encountered increased life stress. In their study, 252 Taekwondo students at ten different schools were recruited in order to assess social support as a buffer against stress. In this study, leisure friendship was defined as “perceived friendly feelings or attitudes” towards others, whereas companionship included activities such as visits, meetings, and dinner. Both had significant impact as moderating factors against depression. However, students who were rated high on leisure companionship showed no change in mood when life stressors went from low to high, whereas students rated low on leisure companionship showed significant increases in depressive symptoms when life stressors increased. The researchers also found no
difference between novice, intermediate, or advanced students in how they viewed the “protectiveness” of leisure companionship and leisure friendship in the Dojang. One limitation of this study was that students were only assessed at a single point in time; therefore, longitudinal change could not be assessed. Despite this limitation, the data suggest that Taekwondo training may provide a buffer against depression through social support.

Clemens (2005) asserted that the incorporation of mindfulness and exercise within the practice of Taekwondo could make Taekwondo training an even more effective treatment for depression. Although Clemens operationalized an intervention, he did not implement and measure its effectiveness. Even so, a conceptual literature exists supporting the effectiveness of mindfulness (Kenny & Williams, 2007) and exercise training (Toneatto & Nguyen, 2007) on depression, but the role of Taekwondo as a treatment for depression has not been systematically examined. Another area of Taekwondo research which has not been studied is informal helping by instructors. Even though this literature does not exist, it may be possible to find support for the benefits of Taekwondo training as a source of informal helping from other life domains where this relationship has been examined. The next section will review literature that describes informal helpers.

Counseling/Informal Helping

A few studies have described the relationship between other professions that have been involved in informal helping. These studies have included professions that have stereotypically been associated with informal, nonconfidential interactions between the
provider and a client. Hairdressers, for example, were frequently studied as providers of informal helping (Cowen, 1982; Wisenfeld & Weis, 1979). Cowen also assessed bartenders, divorce lawyers, and work supervisors as informal helpers. These relationships may be linked to a counseling relationship because they are one-on-one interactions involving traits usually recognized as necessary for counseling, including empathy, genuineness, and positive regard.

Cowen (1982) consistently reported that numerous types of problems were addressed by these informal helpers. Issues found in the studies ranged from intrapersonal concerns such as depression to problems in family systems. The frequency of problems encountered and specific response strategies employed by these informal helpers were also variable, although the provision of advice was a common intervention approach. Cowen found that these four helping groups were actively providing informal mental health care on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis to their “clients.” Different problems were encountered by the various groups based on the nature of the informal “therapeutic alliance.” For example, bartenders were found to perform more crisis intervention, whereas hairdressers typically developed longer lasting and more trusting relationships akin to what may be considered longer term therapy relationships. The study also found that some of these informal helpers enjoyed their helping role as much as they enjoyed engaging in their professional activity (e.g., cutting hair). Overall, participants from the four groups reported desiring formal training in counseling skills to be better equipped to deal with this aspect of their profession.

In an unpublished dissertation study, Gioia (2006) surveyed pastors’ wives about the informal counseling they provide to members of their pastor husband’s congregations.
In this study, Southern Baptist ministers' wives in the Southwest United States were selected as the target population. One hundred fifty-four potential participants were contacted by mail and 23 participated in the study. Gioia (2006) found that 100% of pastors' wives surveyed had provided individual counseling to parishners, and the following topics were addressed in their roles as counselors: depression, bereavement, divorce, conflict, domestic violence, sexual abuse, and finances. Gioia found that these wives, although untrained, were frequently relied upon to provide not only emotional support, but also specific interventions to address most concerns. Gioia assessed how much and what kind of counseling these wives were providing and the degree to which "receiving adequate training and support for their ministries" (p. 50) would enhance their effectiveness. Several significant correlations were found in Gioia's survey results, including a correlation between level of education and involvement in counseling activities. Whether this correlation was due to increased self-efficacy from education or from some other factor is not known.

Due to the similarity of these trusted positions and Taekwondo instructors, it is likely that a high frequency and range of topics of informal helping exists among Taekwondo instructors. Therefore, examining individual counseling by Taekwondo instructors is an important research area because instructors are often highly respected and considered powerful and knowledgeable by their students. It is anticipated that some of the same constructs influencing counselor confidence in formal counselor training programs will impact Taekwondo instructors, including the construct of self-efficacy.
Self-Efficacy and Counseling

Bandura (1977) describes self-efficacy as an aspect of social learning theory:

An outcome expectancy is defined here as a person’s estimate that a given behavior will lead to certain outcomes. An efficacy expectation is the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the outcomes. Outcome and efficacy expectations are differentiated because individuals can come to believe that a particular course of action will produce certain outcomes, but question whether they can perform those actions. (pp. 79-80)

This quote suggests that self-efficacy for a particular action or behavior may differ from an individual’s belief about the effectiveness of an action or behavior generally. With respect to counseling processes, a practicum counselor may believe in the positive effect of therapy but doubt whether she or he can provide therapy in a way that will produce this positive effect (outcome expectancy). Stated another way, one can believe in a process or behavior without having confidence in one’s own ability to facilitate that process or adequately perform that behavior.

Bandura (1977) also describes how self-efficacy may impact a person confronted with a demanding task where outcome expectancy is uncertain:

The strength of people’s convictions in their own effectiveness determines whether they will even try to cope with difficult situations. People fear and avoid threatening situations they believe themselves unable to handle, whereas they behave affirmatively when they judge themselves capable of handling successfully situations that would otherwise intimidate them. (p. 80)

This statement suggests that self-efficacy provides grounding to engage in difficult tasks. For example, a practicum counselor with high counseling self-efficacy may be more willing to engage in helping behaviors when a client presents challenging issues than a counselor with low self-efficacy. Additionally, a counselor with high self-efficacy may enjoy the helping process rather than experience increased anxiety or fear.
by engaging in it. This would likely also be true for Taekwondo instructors engaged in informal counseling; those with high counseling self-efficacy will likely be more willing to participate in the counseling process.

Self-efficacy has been studied and measured extensively in a number of domains including counseling (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005; Larson & Daniels, 1998; Lent, Hill, & Hoffman, 2003; Murdock, Wendler, & Nilsson, 2005; O’Brien, Heppner, Flores, and Bikos, 1997; Sheu & Lent, 2007). Counseling process researchers have studied and measured self-efficacy as it relates to the act of engaging in counseling behaviors in challenging contexts, including the following areas: multicultural competence (Sheu & Lent, 2007), career issues (O’Brien et al., 1997), school concerns (Bodenhorn & Skaggs, 2005), and addictive behavior (Murdock et al., 2005).

Lent et al. (2003) studied the self-efficacy of 345 students at five universities in graduate and undergraduate counseling courses using the Counselor Activity Self-Efficacy Scales (CASES). CASES was developed specifically to measure self-efficacy in beginning counselors with little formal training. This instrument has been found to be a reliable, valid measure for this purpose (Lent et al.). CASES is divided into three domains: (1) helping skills self-efficacy, (2) session management self-efficacy, and (3) counseling challenges self-efficacy. These domains measure perceived skills, including insight, exploration, and action; session management or the process of working together with a client; and challenges such as relationship conflict that includes managing feelings experienced by the client, counselor, or both and addressing client distress, including past and current emotional reactions.

This examination of Taekwondo instructors’ use of informal counseling strategies
is exploratory. Taekwondo instructors’ self-efficacy will be assessed using CASES. In addition, self-reported counseling behaviors will be examined. The following six hypotheses were generated to guide this exploration.

**Hypotheses**

The purpose of this study is to investigate and describe the informal counseling or helping behaviors Taekwondo instructors use to assist their students. More specifically, this study examined the frequency of helping interactions, interventions used, and the topical areas of informal helping among Taekwondo instructors and their students. This study also assessed the relationship between instructor formal, general education, Taekwondo training and instructors’ life experience and how these characteristics correlate with variables such as perceived counseling self-efficacy, the frequency of counseling (students per week), and the kinds of topical areas addressed in counseling.

**Hypothesis 1**

The majority of Taekwondo instructors in this sample will indicate that they engage in informal helping.

**Hypothesis 2**

Of those instructors who report informal helping, help extended to students will include the full range of issues and topics provided in the questionnaire.
Hypothesis 3

Instructor demographics including age and years of education will be positively correlated with helping self-efficacy. Helping self-efficacy is defined by specific questions measured in this survey.

Hypothesis 4

Number of years as an instructor will positively correlate with helping self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 5

Number of students counseled per week will positively correlate with helping self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 6

After controlling for instructor demographics (age and sex), instructor helping self-efficacy will predict number of helping strategies employed and number of topics discussed with students.
CHAPTER II

METHODS

Research Design

A self-report survey conducted through the Internet was the format for data collection. The target population was Taekwondo instructors in the United States. An email directory of member schools from USA Taekwondo, the governing body of the World Taekwondo Federation in the United States, was used to recruit instructors. Additionally, instructors were recruited from other website listings as needed in order to approximate as well as possible the population demographics in the United States. The number of Dojangs sampled by state was based on the percentages of population taken from the 2000 United States Census.

Specifically, 227 Taekwondo instructors in the United States were contacted by email. A response rate of 28.2% was obtained resulting in 64 responses. Eight responses were not used because all questions were not answered. The final sample consisted of 56 Taekwondo instructors or a response rate of 24.7%.

Instrument

The questionnaire consisted of self-reported descriptions of instructors’ demographics, level of experience teaching Taekwondo, types of issues discussed with
students, informal helping self-efficacy, rankings of most frequent topical areas of
informal helping, and helping strategies used (see Appendix B).

The researcher adapted a questionnaire (see Appendix B) based on the informal
helping research literature previously noted (Cowen, 1984) as well as a published article
based on survey research of high school and middle school counselors (Burrow-Sanchez
et al., 2008). This formal survey literature combined with the experiential knowledge of
the researcher was used to construct the Taekwondo self-report instrument with the goal
of developing a series of questions to gauge the depth and breadth of counseling or
informal helping by Taekwondo instructors in Dojangs. The instrument was piloted by
administering it to 3 experienced Taekwondo instructors who provided feedback on both
the clarity of the questions and the time to complete the instrument.

In order to measure informal counseling self-efficacy, seven survey questions
were adapted from the CASES Session Management Self-Efficacy Items. The CASES
fits well with this study due to the limited nature of counseling training that was expected
among Tae Kwon Do instructors. Additionally, the measure has already been determined
to be reliable and valid.

Due to the limited time anticipated that instructors would devote to this survey,
the entire CASES was not deemed feasible as a measure; therefore, only a modification
of the Session Management subscale was used. This subscale was chosen because it fit
the study population best and could be reworded without substantial interpretation or
meaning loss. For example, item 1 (see Table 2) could be altered to say student rather
than client while leaving the rest of the item unchanged. Items 8 and 9 were determined
to be difficult to interpret for Taekwondo instructors and were left out. Although item 10
Table 2. Session management self-efficacy items and factor loadings from CASES (Lent, p. 102)

1. Help your client to understand his or her thoughts, feelings, and actions. .84
2. Know what to do or say next after your client talks. .83
3. Help your client to talk about his or her concerns at a deep level. .82
4. Build a clear conceptualization of your client and his or her counseling issues. .80
5. Help your client to explore his or her thoughts, feelings, and actions. .79
6. Respond with the best helping skill, depending on what your client needs at a given moment. .78
7. Help your client to set realistic counseling goals. .78
8. Keep sessions on track and focused. .75
9. Remain aware of your intentions (i.e., the purposes of your interventions) during sessions. .74
10. Help your client to decide what actions to take regarding his or her problems. .73

would likely make sense in this study, it was also left out because items 8 and 9 were absent and it was thought best to keep the items with the highest factor loadings. A Self-Efficacy Total, labeled as SET, was used to measure overall informal counseling self-efficacy. This variable totaled instructors’ responses to the seven previously described CASES items.

Procedure

The procedure for administration of the research questionnaire involved the following steps:

1) As described above, email addresses were obtained to develop an appropriate sample of Dojang instructors.
2) The questionnaire was uploaded to Surveymonkey.com.
3) An email letter (see Appendix A) with a link to Surveymonkey.com was sent to the potential Dojang instructors, who were solicited to volunteer as participants.

4) A reminder email was sent to recipients several days after the initial letter was emailed. After the second email, no further reminders were sent.

5) The second email also acted as a general thank you for those instructors’ who responded.

6) Responses to the questionnaires were entered into SPSS. Each subject received a unique identification number and the following data fields were created: demographics, Taekwondo experience, informal helping topic areas, informal helping style preferences, and SET.

### Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics including means and standard deviations were computed for the following demographic variables: age, years of education, belt rank (ranks were measured by the numeric value of the instructor’s black belt, e.g., 4th degree black belt = 4), years as an instructor, years training in Taekwondo, years as a member of USA Taekwondo (or other professional Taekwondo organization), total number of students enrolled in school, total number of topics discussed with their students, and the number of persons that an instructor reported engaging in counseling. These are reported in Table 3.

As Table 1 indicates, participants ranged in age from 21 years old to 65 years old with a mean of 40.14 years. Respondents were predominantly male accounting for 73.7% of participants whereas 26.3% were female. Reported ethnicity was primarily European
Table 3. Descriptive statistics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>40.14</td>
<td>10.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Education</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16.25</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belt Rank</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years Instructing</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15.11</td>
<td>9.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years Training</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>21.32</td>
<td>10.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in Prof. Org.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10.68</td>
<td>9.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Students</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>187.74</td>
<td>390.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Topics</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.40</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students Couns./wk.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>8.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

American (67.7%), followed by Asian American (12.3%), Korean (10.8%), Latino (10.8%), Black/African American (3.1%), Other (3.1%), and Multiracial (1.5%).

As noted previously, the SET score was computed as the sum of seven items (see Appendix B, Q23-Q29) that were adapted from CASES (Lent, 2003). The total score was used to measure instructor counseling self-efficacy. The mean scores for the self-efficacy variables that comprised SET are reported in Table 4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thoughts</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>.845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>.834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>.842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>.787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>.797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>.841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SET</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>25.28</td>
<td>4.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Descriptive statistics were used to address the first two research hypotheses. To address hypotheses 3, 4 and 5, a correlation table was computed with the following variables: gender, age, years of education, years of instructing Taekwondo, rank, topics total, counseling training, self-efficacy total (SET), skills total. Finally, for hypothesis 6, a regression was employed to control for age and sex. The hypotheses are restated below, followed by the relevant results.

Research Hypothesis 1

The majority of Taekwondo instructors in this sample will indicate that they engage in informal helping.

This was assessed by examining the number of instructors who engaged in informal helping divided by the total number of survey respondents. Not surprisingly, 100% of the respondents reported providing some form of informal helping.
Research Hypothesis 2

Of those instructors who report informal helping, help extended to students will include the full range of issues and topics provided in the questionnaire.

This was assessed by computing the frequency reported of each topic area that Taekwondo instructors endorsed. The percentage of instructors reporting particular topics ranged from 45.6% for Substance Abuse to 100.0% for Taekwondo Training/Testing Issues. Approximately, 24.6% of the sample reported counseling students on “other issues” in addition to the specific issues surveyed. Table 5 lists the number and percentage of instructors who engaged in informal helping by topics listed in the survey.

Table 5. Topics of informal helping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taekwondo Training/Testing Issues</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>93.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diet and nutrition/weight</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>91.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taekwondo Competition Issues</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>89.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>84.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and children issues</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>80.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships (marital, dating)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>75.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nervousness/Anxiety</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>70.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work/Career planning</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>64.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggression</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>63.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Issues</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical, Sexual, or Emotional Abuse</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>45.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One instructor made the following comment about the wide variety of topics he or she had encountered: "In the years I've taught, I've helped students dealing with bullies, with conflicts with their parents, with the pressures of schoolwork and getting into college, and with more volatile situations: one student assaulted by his father, another being cheated on by her husband, another trying to cope with the trials of having an autistic child, and another being beaten by her husband."

Research Hypothesis 3

*Instructor demographics including age and years of education will be positively correlated with helping self-efficacy.*

Helping self-efficacy was defined by SET. The correlation matrix (Table 6) highlights the relationships among study variables. Hypothesis 3 was assessed by computing a correlation between SET and age as well as SET and years of education. For SET and age, there was not a statistically significant correlation ($r=-.127, p=.351$). Although there was a slight negative correlation ($r=-.185, p=.171$) between SET and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Gndr</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Yrs.E</th>
<th>Yrs.I</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>CT</th>
<th>SET</th>
<th>SKLT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.390**</td>
<td>.498**</td>
<td>.188</td>
<td>-.127</td>
<td>-.037</td>
<td>.176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.345**</td>
<td>.651**</td>
<td>.585**</td>
<td>.425**</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>.127</td>
<td>.153</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years Ed.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.211</td>
<td>-.114</td>
<td>-.117</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>-.185</td>
<td>-.192</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years Inst.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.835**</td>
<td>.355**</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>.271*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.381**</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>.174</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top. Tot.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.253</td>
<td>.319*</td>
<td>.244</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coun Train</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.401**</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-E Tot.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills Tot.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
years of education, it was not significant. It is interesting to note that although there is a negative correlation between years of education and SET, there was a significant positive correlation between SET and prior counselor training ($r = .401, p<.01$).

Research Hypothesis 4

*Number of years as an instructor will positively correlate with helping self-efficacy.*

This was assessed by examining the correlation matrix in Table 6 and noting the correlation between years as an instructor and SET. No significant relationship was found ($r=.148, p=.275$).

Research Hypothesis 5

*Helping self-efficacy will positively correlate with the number of students counseled per week.*

There was a strong correlation between SET and the number of students reported being seen by Taekwondo instructors for counseling per week ($r=.445, p<.01$).

Research Hypothesis 6

*After controlling for instructor demographics (age and sex), instructor helping self-efficacy (SET) will predict number of helping strategies employed and number of topics discussed with students.*

This question requires employing two regression analyses. In the first analysis, the dependent variable is the number of helping strategies employed. The predictor variables in this model were entered in blocks in the following order: Block one--
age/sex; Block two--SET. With regard to helping strategies because there was no zero-order correlation between SET and helping strategies ($r=.070$, $p=.608$), it was not necessary to perform the first regression.

Because the zero-order correlation between SET and number of helping topics was significant ($r=.319$, $p<.05$), a regression was used to address the second part of hypothesis 6 (see Table 7). In this regression, the dependent variable in the analysis was number of topics discussed. The predictor variables were entered in blocks in the following order: Block one--age/sex; Block two--SET. This analysis revealed that helping continued to predict the number of topics addressed in counseling even after controlling for the two demographic variables; that is the $R^2$ for SET was .227, even after controlling for the effects of age and gender.

**Additional Analysis**

The final section of the questionnaire included a request for additional comments by the participants. These comments were organized around themes that emerged from

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.366</td>
<td>3.004</td>
<td>.004**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>1.092</td>
<td>.277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SET</td>
<td>.278</td>
<td>2.320</td>
<td>.024**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $R^2$ (adjusted)=0.239. **$p<.01$, $p<.05$* $R^2$ (change)=.076, $p<.05$
this question and were grouped and presented in a summary table format (see Table 8). Excerpt summaries organized by these themes that provide a qualitative view of these responses follows below.

Life Experience

"Although I do not have a background in counseling, I much experience with it, as an adult child of an alcoholic and a survivor of mental and verbal abuse. I've suffered from severe self-esteem issues and TKD has helped navigate myself to a healthier path, although I did not seek TKD as a way to heal myself. As someone who is not a natural athlete, but someone who's worked hard to overcome obstacles, I'm happy to help those who struggle with their bodies and themselves in a gentle and encouraging manner, without falling into a cheerleader role."

Friendship

"Whenever I have a non-tkd discussion with a student I ALWAYS clarify that, though I will share my time, I am NOT a counselor, preacher, or professional that specializes in work of this nature. I am merely a friend."

Table 8. Comment topics and frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use life experience to help</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reach out to students</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use scripture</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural to seek counseling from instructor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role switch from instructor to therapist</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Refer

"It is important that a martial arts teacher not only center their training on techniques and sport but on other things. To have a productive student, the instructor must be poractive[sic] in providing assistance, even though the instructor has to direct the individual to a subject matter expert in other things."

Reach Out

"My approach is to helping students is let them know I am available to them; to be aware of who my students are, what their tendencies[sic] are like, know how they respond to variety of issues/situations, and just being available to them as needed. On occasion I reach out to them, other times I wait for them to seek me out. Each situation is different and requires a different level of involvement and handling."

Scripture

"As the leader of a Christ-centered martial arts program, I feel that using scripture and related life lessons gives depth to my assistance to students."

Natural to Seek Counseling from Instructor

"There's[sic] a fine line between helping and enabling the student. If the teacher has too close a confident relationship or becomes dependent on the instructor, the student can lose interest in their training or put less effort into their techniques and more effort into discussion. The magic of Taekwondo is that the Process of training brings newness and change to the student. That in itself is far more important than the counseling, as
counselors can become addictions, whereas warriors ruthlessly train the apprentice to let go of old baggage or risk greater suffering in the future."

Role Switch

“There have been many times students have opened up to me; tonight, for example, one of my highest ranked adults asked to speak with me after sparring class tonight. In the years I’ve taught, I’ve helped students dealing with bullies, with conflicts with their parents, with the pressures of schoolwork and getting into college, and with more volatile situations: one student assaulted by his father, another being cheated on by her husband, another trying to cope with the trials of having an autistic child, and another being beaten by her husband. In one way, I would prefer not to become involved. The moment I give advice, I become an involved party to whatever situation is brewing and am liable for any negative consequences that result from the advice I’ve given. However, the fact that my students have such trust in me and hold me in such high regard that they would come to me for advice. It’s difficult to balance -- the ‘I’m your instructor only; I don’t get involved’ with the ‘My student is troubled and suffering, how can I help?’”

Other

“There are several women whose relationships/marriages have fallen apart after training in TKD for about a year. In each case, the women have confided in me that they have found their voice, and boyfriends/husbands are feeling challenged by their new found strength. Most of these talks take place in the women's locker room after class, and
after others have left. Older men tend to talk with me about specific questions about training/testing; their children; and occasionally their relationships. This usually happens after class but is more casual and not as private."

"As instructors, we are role models to our students, and should live our lives as example of what we want to teach" [sic].
CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the role that Taekwondo instructors play in providing informal counseling for their students. Anecdotal evidence is available indicating that counseling is a function that many instructors engage in. No empirical research has previously attempted to examine this informal counseling process. As noted earlier, prior research analyzing psychology process models and Taekwondo training has mainly looked at the effects and process of participating in the art of Taekwondo and has not attempted to describe the informal counseling relationship between teacher and student.

Hypotheses

Research Hypothesis 1

$H_1$: The majority of Taekwondo instructors in this sample will indicate that they engage in informal helping.

This hypothesis was explored by asking participants which topics they have helped students address through informal counseling. In this sample, all participants indicated that they provide informal counseling to their students. This is an important
finding, because if generalized to the greater population of Taekwondo instructors, it implies that all or many are providing some form of informal counseling to their students.

Another survey question asked instructors how many students they counseled per week. All instructors who participated in the research reported providing informal helping, and they averaged approximately 5 (m=4.84, SD=8.72) “clients” per week. These data indicates that informal helping may be viewed as a normative component of an instructor’s duties. However, only 16 of the 56 instructors (28.6%) reported any previous formal counseling training.

Although all participants in this research were providing informal counseling, only a small number had any training for this task. This discrepancy between counseling service provision and formal training may indicate an area for continuing education for Taekwondo instructors.

It is unclear due to the limited nature of this research if Taekwondo instructors are more prone to providing counseling than other martial arts instructors. There may be cultural factors influencing various martial arts and informal counseling and this would be an interesting area for future research.

Research Hypothesis 2

H₂: Of those instructors who report informal helping, help extended to students will include the full range of issues and topics provided in the questionnaire.
As predicted and noted in Table 5, instructors reported providing counseling across the full range of issues. This finding is important because it indicates that instructors are confronted with a broad range of difficult issues.

For example, the three most frequently reported topics were Taekwondo training/testing (100%), self-esteem (93.0%), and diet and nutrition/weight (91.2%). The least reported topics were physical, sexual, or emotional abuse (49.1%), depression (49.1%), and substance abuse (45.6%); however, it should be noted that these were endorsed by nearly half the sample. After further examination, an interesting result was found when comparing the correlations of SET and Taekwondo training/testing issues and SET and abuse.

There was a significant correlation ($r=.287, p<.05$) between SET and instructors who had talked with students about abuse. A correlation could not be computed between SET and Taekwondo Training/testing issues due to the 100% response rate to this topic. However, a correlation between SET and Taekwondo competition issues was computed ($r=.008, p=.952$). This lack of correlation could indicate that high counseling SET may not be necessary to discuss Taekwondo issues, but SET may be very important for a more difficult emotional issue like physical, sexual, emotional abuse.

Research Hypothesis 3

$H_3$: Instructor demographics including age and years of education will be positively correlated with helping self-efficacy. Helping self-efficacy is defined by specific questions measured in this survey.
This hypothesis was tested by examining correlations between SET and age, as well as between SET and years of education. As Table 6 indicates, there is no correlation between age and SET. This finding is of interest for several reasons. First, age is not a significant factor in determining instructor SET. Second, a student may perceive an older instructor to be better able to help them with their problem; however, these data from the instructor’s point of view suggest that age does not relate to a higher SET. Older is not necessarily better. Third, young instructors may have a high self-efficacy for counseling and feel comfortable with this role, possibly due to a cohort effect. In other words, instructors from a later generation may be more comfortable engaging with students around informal counseling as a result of cohort comfort and acceptability when it comes to talking about personal problems and emotions.

There was also not a significant correlation between SET and years of education ($r = -0.185$, $p = 0.171$). It is unclear why this relationship was negative, and may be worth further exploration. A significant correlation was found between SET and previous counseling training ($r = 0.401$, $p < 0.01$). This may indicate that the amount of education is not important for SET but the kind of education is critical. A post hoc correlation between years of education and counseling training ($r = 0.103$, $p = 0.444$) seems to support this assertion. In other words, years of education was not correlated with counseling training.

Bandura (1977) iterates that self-efficacy is domain-specific. By way of an analogy, advanced training in cellular biology may provide high self-efficacy for working in a microscopic environment, whereas providing little self-efficacy for providing informal counseling for Taekwondo students.
Research Hypothesis 4

H₄: Number of years as an instructor will positively correlate with helping self-efficacy.

This hypothesis was investigated by determining a correlation between years as an instructor and SET ($r = .148$, $p = .275$). Like age and SET, this correlation was found to not be significant. A possible explanation for this, which may warrant further research, is that if years as an instructor coincides with teaching self-efficacy, it may not be related to counseling SET per se. Again, this would coincide with the domain specificity of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977).

Research Hypothesis 5

H₅: Number of students counseled per week will positively correlate with helping self-efficacy.

A correlation between SET and students counseled per week was calculated to assess this hypothesis. A significant correlation ($r = .445$, $p < .01$) was found to exist. Intuitively, this finding makes sense as those instructors who feel self-efficacious about counseling are more likely to embrace this role (Bandura, 1977). Additionally, a significant correlation exists between SET and instructors indication of whether they enjoy the counseling role ($r = .473$, $p < .01$).
Research Hypothesis 6

H₆: After controlling for instructor demographics (age and sex), instructor helping self-efficacy will predict number of helping strategies employed and number of topics discussed with students.

No significant correlation was found for SET and number of helping strategies employed ($r=.070, p=.608$). Instructors may try numerous helping strategies regardless of their perceived counseling self-efficacy. They may also use different strategies for different situations and eventually accumulate a large set of informal counseling skills.

The relationship between SET and number of topics discussed was significantly correlated ($r=.319, p<.05$). Regression analysis was performed and after controlling for age and gender, a significant relationship was still found between SET and number of topics discussed ($R^2 =.227, p<.01$).

The relationship between SET and number of topics discussed makes similar intuitive sense as hypothesis 5. A high SET may account for instructors engaging in more difficult topics, for example abuse. It is likely that high SET instructors will be willing to talk to more students about more topics, or at least this data indicates that conclusion. The regression suggests that SET is a strong predictor of topics addressed in counseling irrespective of age and gender of instructor. Even young instructors with a high SET are as likely to engage in informal counseling as older instructors.
Implications

There are several implications derived from this study. First, informal counseling is prevalent among Taekwondo instructors across a wide range of issues. Instructors may not realize that this is a part of their function as an instructor when entering the profession. They may not be prepared for this role and, as some instructors indicated, they may not like this particular function of being an instructor. Instructors reported limited or no training in this area. If this is a function that instructors are likely to continue across their career, and it seems likely they will, then providing appropriate training to instructors seems an important goal.

Second, self-efficacy was found to positively correlate with helping across number of topics and self-efficacy positively correlated with counselor training. This seems to imply that instructors with any counseling training were willing to help students with more issues. These findings also seem to indicate that increased counseling training would be valuable for instructors engaging in informal counseling.

Third, a higher SET score correlated with helping more students. It isn’t clear if there is a causal relationship, whether a high SET means instructors feel more comfortable engaging in counseling, or whether seeing many students raises an instructor’s self-efficacy. This may be another area for future research.

Finally, the most common topic in the comment section of the survey was life experience. Many instructors indicated this trait as an important asset in counseling. In post hoc analysis, SET was found to significantly correlate with the question—*I feel that I have the life experience to counsel my Taekwondo students on a wide variety of topics* ($r=.494, p<.01$). Interestingly, the question—*I feel that I have the life experience to*
counsel my Taekwondo students on a wide variety of topics—did not significantly correlate with age (r=.056, p=.677).

Overall, the findings in this research can be best understood by returning to self-efficacy theory. Bandura (1978) describes reciprocal determinism as the interaction between cognition, behavior, and environmental conditions. Taekwondo instructors' SET was highly correlated to previous counseling training, frequency of informal helping, and number of topics discussed during informal counseling. In other words, instructors' behavior of providing informal counseling correlated with their cognition of counselor self-efficacy and environmental factors such as access to counselor education and students desiring counseling.

Reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1978) may impact the informal counseling relationship between Taekwondo instructors and their students in several ways. For instance, instructors who do not have a high SET see fewer students for informal counseling and this is understood either implicitly or explicitly in their Dojang, so students seek informal counseling from some other source. Another possibility is that instructors who have training and higher SET are more willing to work with students on personal issues and through practice develop stronger self-efficacy around informal helping. These instructors may seek out additional training as they embrace this additional role as an informal helper, potentially further raising their SET.

Due to the interplay of environment, cognition, and behavior (or action), it is not surprising that this research found strong correlations between SET, counseling training, number of helping topics, and frequency of counseling. This research further supports the ideas of self-efficacy and reciprocal determinism, and underscores the importance of
increasing counseling self-efficacy for Taekwondo instructors if they decide to engage in informal helping.

Limitations

This research was a first attempt to understand the informal counseling relationship between Taekwondo instructors and their students. The primary purpose was to gather enough data to develop a snapshot of this relationship. The survey data acquired provides an overall picture but it does not assess significant counseling nuances more deeply. Qualitative research and additional survey data would help broaden and deepen the understanding of this topic.

Another limitation was that the initial response of 64 participants provides only a small sample of instructors. A larger sample may provide more detailed and generalizable data for a clearer understanding. Additionally, instructors willing to respond to this survey may have particular biases.

The particular questions asked in this survey were an initial foray into discovering important information about instructors and informal counseling. Future research may ask different questions or focus on more specific subject areas. For example, having explicit information about outcomes of Taekwondo instructors' informal counseling could be helpful.

Surveying only Dojangs in the United States, although practical, limits cultural implications and understanding within this research. The idea of informal counseling may be conceptualized differently in cultures without a strong emphasis on Western psychology.
Another related limitation is that the survey was written in English. It is likely that some instructors’ first language is not English. This may have affected both response rate to and understanding of the survey.

This research only solicited information from instructors. Gathering data from students would be helpful in learning more about this important relationship, especially in terms of outcome. Without student input, only half of this relationship can be examined.

Finally, the researcher has particular biases as a White, male, doctoral student. These biases may appear in the research and survey in ways that are difficult to detect. As a former Taekwondo instructor, the researcher is certainly biased in a positive way towards the art. The researcher’s biases influenced the survey questions asked and the interpretation of the resultant data.

Areas for Future Research

This research points the way in numerous directions for future research. Due to the limited scope of this paper, the following four areas will be briefly discussed: how would counseling training impact instructors (and students), what outcome are instructors having, how do Taekwondo instructors compare with counseling students, and how would this survey differ in a country where Western psychology is not prevalent.

This research suggests that Taekwondo instructors are regularly providing counseling across a wide variety of topics. As a result, it may be important for instructors to seek out continuing education for improving counseling skills and for learning about counseling topics. A study could work with two samples of instructors providing
counseling education for one sample and some control topic for the other. SET could be measured pre- and post intervention to see if SET increased after the training.

Research could be designed to measure the outcome of Taekwondo instructors' interventions. Knowing what skills and interventions were helping students could guide Taekwondo instructors to focus on particular skills. Outcome research would also help understand student perspectives of this informal counseling relationship.

Data from this research could be compared to data from research looking at self-efficacy and helping skills among other informal helpers or counseling students. By comparing these groups, a greater understanding of the informal counseling process could be gained.

This same survey, or a survey that is more culturally appropriate, could be given in another country where Taekwondo is taught but Western psychology is not well known. Korea would be an optimal country for this research as Taekwondo is an integral part of the culture, and mental health care is still highly stigmatized (Yoo, 2005). Understanding if informal helping takes place and how that model differs from the current study would add greatly to the cross-cultural understanding of this dynamic.

Another area for multicultural research would be surveying across martial arts. This would help identify differences within the martial arts possibly based on the country of origin of the art or the homogeneity of students in some way attracted to a particular martial art and the role instructors assume or do not assume as informal counselors.
APPENDIX A

RECRUITMENT LETTER
Dear Master/Ms./Mr. [Name]

I am a PhD student in the Counseling Psychology program at the University of Utah, a Third Dan in Taekwondo, and a former school owner and instructor. I’m writing to you hoping you will participate in the attached survey on Taekwondo instructors’ experiences with providing informal helping to their adult students. I feel this research is important because of my own experiences providing informal helping to students regarding a variety of difficult subjects. I hope to understand how prevalent my experience is among Taekwondo instructors, and what information would be helpful to instructors in providing this valuable component of Taekwondo teaching.

The survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete, and I think you may find it an interesting and enjoyable process. I am grateful to you for considering completing this survey and will be happy to send you the results if you are interested. If interested, please send an email indicating you would like the results when you return your survey.

All responses will be detached from any identifying information, e.g., email addresses or names, and kept confidential. Not even the researcher will know where the information came from. Returning the completed survey will be consent to participate in this study.

Thank you for your time, energy, and assistance with this project.

Sincerely,

Clark Slagle
Graduate Student
Counseling Psychology
University of Utah
APPENDIX B

SURVEY
Survey

Taekwondo Instructors’ Experience of Counseling Their Students: A Survey of Dojangs in the United States

Clark Slagle, Third Dan, B.S.
Department of Educational Psychology
University of Utah
Q-1 What is your gender (Circle one number)?

1 Female
2 Male

Q-2 What is your age? __________ (Write age)

Q-3 Which of the following best describes your racial or ethnic identification (Circle all numbers that apply):

1 Korean
2 White/Caucasian
3 Latino/a (Please specify): ______________________
4 Asian American (Please specify): ______________________
5 Black/African American
6 American Indian (Please specify): ______________________
7 Multi-racial (Please specify): ______________________
8 Other (Please specify): ______________________

Q-4 I have completed the following degrees (Circle all that apply):

NO YES
0 1 High School Diploma
0 1 Bachelor’s Degree in ______________________
0 1 Master’s Degree in ______________________
0 1 Doctorate Degree in ______________________

Q-5 I teach Taekwondo at:

1 My instructor’s Do Jang
2 My own Do Jang
3 Other ______________________

Q-6 Experience working as a Taekwondo instructor (Write number of years on line)

_____________ Number of years as an instructor

Q-7 I have obtained the following highest rank (Circle one choice indicating current rank):

1st Degree Black Belt
2nd Degree Black Belt
3rd Degree Black Belt
4th Degree Black Belt
5th Degree Black Belt
6th Degree Black Belt
7th Degree Black Belt
8th Degree Black Belt
9th Degree Black Belt

Q-8 Please indicate the number of years you have trained in Taekwondo:

____________________ number of years training.

Q-9 Number of students, who currently train in Taekwondo, at the Do Jang where you teach:

____________________ Number of students

Q-10 Which of the following describes your school (Circle one number):

1 Urban
2 Suburban
3 Rural

Q-11 Are you an active member of USA Taekwondo?

NO YES

Q-12 How many years have you been a member of USA Taekwondo (or USTU or WTF)?

____________________ Number of Years

Topics of Informal Helping

Q-13 Please indicate what topics you have talked about with any of your students (Circle one number for each topic).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Relationships (marital, dating)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Family and children issues</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Substance abuse</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Work/Career planning</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Diet and nutrition/weight</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nervousness/Anxiety</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taekwondo competition issues</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taekwondo training/testing issues</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial issues</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical, sexual, or emotional abuse</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggression</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q-14 Of the topics you have circled “1” in the question above, rank-order the Top 3 topics that students ask for help with.

1. [Blank] Most common topic
2. [Blank] Second most common topic
3. [Blank] Third most common topic

Q-15 How many students per week would you estimate you help (one on one) with their personal problems?

______ (insert number) students per week

Q-16 Please briefly indicate any counseling training that you have received (For example: I attended the survivor advocacy training at my local rape crisis center or I have a bachelor’s degree in psychology or I took a class in listening skills.):

__________________________________________________________

Q-17 I feel that I have the life experience to counsel my Taekwondo students on a wide variety of topics (Circle one number):

1 Strongly Disagree
2 Disagree
3 Neutral
4 Agree
5 Strongly Agree

Q-18 I enjoy helping my students with personal problems.
Q-19 I think my role as an instructor helps me provide good counseling to my students.

1 Strongly Disagree
2 Disagree
3 Neutral
4 Agree
5 Strongly Agree

Q-20 Other instructors are better at helping students solve personal problems than I am.

1 Strongly Disagree
2 Disagree
3 Neutral
4 Agree
5 Strongly Agree

Q-21 I feel that I have the necessary counseling training/education to help my Taekwondo students on a wide variety of topics (Circle one number):

1 Strongly Disagree
2 Disagree
3 Neutral
4 Agree
5 Strongly Agree

Q-22 If I had the opportunity to attend counseling training, I would:

1 Strongly Disagree
2 Disagree
3 Neutral
4 Agree
5 Strongly Agree

For the next set of questions below (Q-23 to Q-29), imagine that you are sitting down “one-on-one” with a student who needs assistance with a personal problem and expects your help. Think about your confidence level to perform the following tasks. Mark each question based on your level of confidence to perform each of these tasks.
Q-23 Help my student to understand his or her thoughts, feelings, and actions. (Mark one answer):

- I have no confidence
- I have a little confidence
- I have some confidence
- I have a lot of confidence
- I am completely confident

Q-24 Know what to do or say next after my student talks. (Mark one answer):

- I have no confidence
- I have a little confidence
- I have some confidence
- I have a lot of confidence
- I am completely confident

Q-25 Help my student to talk about his or her concerns at a deep level. (Mark one answer):

- I have no confidence
- I have a little confidence
- I have some confidence
- I have a lot of confidence
- I am completely confident

Q-26 Build a clear understanding of my student and his/her problems. (Mark one answer):

- I have no confidence
- I have a little confidence
- I have some confidence
- I have a lot of confidence
- I am completely confident

Q-27 Help your client to explore his or her thoughts, feelings, and actions. (Mark one answer):

- I have no confidence
- I have a little confidence
- I have some confidence
- I have a lot of confidence
- I am completely confident
Q-28  Respond with the best help possible, depending on what my student needs at a given moment. (Mark one answer):

[ ] I have no confidence
[ ] I have a little confidence
[ ] I have some confidence
[ ] I have a lot of confidence
[ ] I am completely confident

Q-29  Help my student set realistic goals for how I can help them. (Mark one answer):

[ ] I have no confidence
[ ] I have a little confidence
[ ] I have some confidence
[ ] I have a lot of confidence
[ ] I am completely confident

Helping Strategies

Q-30  How often do you use the following helping strategies? (Circle one number for each strategy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Offer support and sympathy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Try to be lighthearted</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Just listen</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Present alternatives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tell student to count blessings</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Share personal experiences</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Try not to get involved</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Give advice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ask questions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Encourage student to seek counseling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Try to change topic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Point out consequences of bad ideas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Help clarify feelings</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Suggest reading</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Get student to come up with alternatives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Say that &quot;I'm not right person to talk with.&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q-31 Of the topics you have circled in the question above, rank-order the Top 3 most common helping strategies you have used.

1 ____________ Most common strategy
2 ____________ Second most common strategy
3 ____________ Third most common strategy
REFERENCES


