



PODIUM

PODIUM. Journal of Science and Technology in Physical Culture

Volume 16 Issue 1; 2021

University of Pinar del Río "Hermanos Saíz Montes de Oca". Scientific
Publications Department.

E-MAIL: podium@upr.edu.cu. | Director: Fernando Emilio Valladares Fuente
Email: fernando.valladares@upr.edu.cu

Translated from the original in spanish

Original article

Origins of Taekwondo: an ethnographic analysis of its expansion in Ecuador

Orígenes del taekwondo: un análisis etnográfico de su expansión en Ecuador

Origens do Taekwondo: uma análise etnográfica da sua expansão no Equador

Darwin Fernando Guapi Morocho^{1*}  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6235-394X>

¹Central University of Ecuador. Ecuador.

*Corresponding author: dfguapi@uce.edu.ec

Received: 22/09/2020.

Approved: 31/10/2020.

How to cite item: Guapi Morocho, D. (2021). Orígenes del taekwondo: un análisis etnográfico de su expansión en Ecuador. *PODIUM - Revista de Ciencia y Tecnología en la Cultura Física*, 16(1). Recuperado de <http://podium.upr.edu.cu/index.php/podium/article/view/1001>

ABSTRACT

Taekwondo in Ecuador has been practiced for decades, obtaining countless sport results through the years, without knowing for sure what is its birth and chronology, so the objective of this research is to provide relevant information about its origin, development and expansion in which facts and circumstances of various actors will be described. The qualitative-descriptive method was applied through the techniques of documentary review and interview, which instrument was validated by the judgment of seven experts. The interview was applied in the second quarter of 2020, to 15 black belt coaches with ranks above the sixth dan, granted by the WTF from different provinces of the country, about the origin of Ecuadorian taekwondo, its evolution, anecdotes and sports experiences. This work will contribute to perfect the work of future taekwondo athletes, coaches and researchers, as well as to understand the complexity of the origins and development it has had through the years, which will guarantee the acquisition of a sense of martial and sporting belonging, as well as a national identity for the participation in international competitions.



Keywords: Sport; Taekwondo history.

RESUMEN

El taekwondo en el Ecuador ha sido practicado por décadas, obteniendo un sinnúmero de resultados deportivos a través de los años, sin saber a ciencia cierta cuál es su nacimiento y cronología, por lo que el objetivo de esta investigación es proporcionar información relevante acerca de su origen, desarrollo y expansión en la que se describirán hechos y circunstancias de varios actores. Se aplicó el método cualitativo-descriptivo a través de las técnicas de revisión documental y la entrevista, cuyo instrumento fue validado por el juicio de siete expertos. La entrevista se aplicó en el segundo trimestre del 2020, a 15 entrenadores cinturones negros con rangos superiores al sexto dan, otorgado por la WTF de diferentes provincias del país, sobre el origen del taekwondo ecuatoriano, su evolución, anécdotas y experiencias deportivas. Este trabajo contribuirá a perfeccionar la labor de los futuros deportistas, entrenadores e investigadores del taekwondo, así como comprender la complejidad de los orígenes y el desarrollo que ha tenido a través de los años, lo que garantizará la adquisición de un sentido de pertenencia marcial y deportiva, como también de identidad nacional para la participación en competencias internacionales.

Palabras clave: Deporte; Historia del taekwondo.

RESUMO

O Taekwondo no Equador tem sido praticado durante décadas, obtendo inúmeros resultados desportivos ao longo dos anos, sem saber ao certo qual é o seu nascimento e cronologia (Federação Equatoriana do Taekwondo, 2020); portanto, o objetivo desta investigação é providenciar informação relevante sobre a sua origem, desenvolvimento e expansão, na qual os factos e circunstâncias de vários agentes serão descritos. O método qualitativo-descritivo foi aplicado através das técnicas de revisão documental e entrevista, cujo instrumento foi validado pelo julgamento de sete peritos. A entrevista foi aplicada no segundo trimestre de 2020, a 15 treinadores de faixa preta com classificações acima do sexto dan, concedida pela WTF de diferentes províncias do país, sobre a origem do taekwondo equatoriano, a sua evolução, anedotas e experiências desportivas. Este trabalho contribuirá para aperfeiçoar a obra dos futuros atletas, treinadores e investigadores de taekwondo, bem como para compreender a complexidade das origens e desenvolvimento que teve ao longo dos anos, o que garantirá a aquisição de um sentido de pertença marcial e desportiva, bem como uma identidade nacional para a participação em competições internacionais.

Palavras-chave: Desporto; História do Taekwondo.



INTRODUCTION

Taekwondo in Ecuador is a discipline and a sport practiced throughout its territory; it has a hundred academies and thousands of sportsmen; but, without a doubt, its origin and its precursors are unknown (Ecuadorian Taekwondo Federation, 2020). In this sense, Katedra Romanistiky (2019) mentions that it is urgent and necessary to know the origins and history of the sports disciplines in the countries, because it would undoubtedly generate a sense of identity, belonging and participation, which would aim to have a base of social change for its massification.

In order to know the origin of a sport in a country, first of all, one must know the history and origin of that sport. From this same idea, Martínez Guirao (2011) mentions that Taekwondo has two marked moments in its history: the ancient history that goes from the very origins of martial arts in the former territory of the current South Korea [Kingdom of Koguryo] to the end of the Japanese invasion and division of Korea and the *Modern History* that goes from the origin of the term taekwondo to the present.

Meanwhile, Abad (2012) mentions a more specific chronology, detailed by years of relevance. The most important ones are mentioned below, such as the foundation of the World Taekwondo Headquarters [Kukkiwon] in 1972, which is the South Korean institution in charge of all research on taekwondo; in 1973, the World Taekwondo Federation [WTF] is founded, the highest body that dictates the sports policies of taekwondo worldwide; In 1980, the WTF is recognized as a sport by the International Olympic Committee; in 1988, it is considered an exhibition sport at the Seoul Olympic Games and in 1994, taekwondo, after many years, obtains acceptance as an Olympic sport at the Sydney 2000 Games.

Despite this historical recognition that taekwondo has worldwide, in Ecuador the information is insubstantial about its history, because there are only sketches as raised by Delgado Delgado and Pérez Hernández (2018) which claim that taekwondo came to Ecuador in the late sixties, without clearly specifying the year.

Of the evolutionary development of taekwondo in Ecuador, there is only brief information about outstanding moments; for example, Carvajal Núñez (2020) mentions that the WTF, due to a theme of massification in the American countries, in 1982, organized a world championship in the city of Guayaquil in which the Ecuadorians José Cedeño Barre and Duván Cangá obtained for the first time in its history, the gold and silver medals respectively, in addition, the country was placed in second place by teams.

Therefore, this study is based on the objective of providing information related to the origin, development and expansion of taekwondo in Ecuador. The most representative facts and circumstances are described from a chronological evolution, which will allow the future practitioners to have a solid formation of the historical aspects so that they have an empowerment of their sport practice, with a vision of identity and autonomy as Posso Pacheco, Barba Miranda, Rodríguez Torres, Núñez Sotomayor, Ávila Quinga and Rendón Morales (2020) propose. The sportsmen must understand their corporeality from the practice itself, discovering, adapting, modifying or carrying out physical exercises that will take them to be autonomous, understanding as autonomy, in all the senses of the sport practice.



MATERIAL AND METHODS

In this research, it was applied the qualitative-descriptive method, proposed by [Quecedo and Castaño \(2002\)](#) "qualitative methodology as research that produces descriptive data: the own words, spoken or written, and the observable behavior" allowed to interpret texts about the history of taekwondo in Ecuador, through the technique of documentary revision, in addition, to have the testimonies of 15 coaches, black belts, with ranks superior to the sixth dan, granted by the WTF and that belong to different provinces of Ecuador and it was possible to make the interview to them in the second trimester of the 2020 on the origin of the Ecuadorian taekwondo, its evolution, anecdotes and sport experiences.

The interview instrument was validated by seven experts in the area of sports training, four in contact sports and three sports researchers, all university professors with at least five indexed publications and willing to participate in the validation. The criteria proposed by [Skjong and Wentworht \(2001\)](#).

This questionnaire was validated through the Delphi technique, which made it possible to approve the information through a reliable consensus by means of expert opinion on a specific topic ([Bravo and Arrieta, 2005](#)). In this process, each question was analyzed and four criteria were used: Relevance, Relevance, Utility and Writing. Circulation was made because the criteria of coincidence, by the experts, was the majority, which determined balance in the collection instrument, specifying that the instrument is valid and allows to collect fundamental information on the origins of Taekwondo, development and expansion of it in Ecuador, in addition, describe the facts and circumstances more representative from a chronological evolution (Table 1).

Table 1. - Experts validation

Dimension	Indicators	Yes	No	Mean	Deviation
Content relevance	Logic in the structure	7	0	1	0
	Design Question	7	0	1	0
	Coherence of the question	7	0	1	0
	Relationship among contents	7	0	1	0
	Relevance	7	0	1	0
	I would include questions	0	7	2	0
	I would modify questions	0	7	2	0
Content unity	Suitable for data collection	7	0	1	0
	It acquires extensive information	7	0	1	0
	It addresses the objective	7	0	1	0
Writing the instrument	Neutral Formulation	7	0	1	0
	It avoids negative questions	7	0	1	0
	It address information	7	0	1	0

To the information obtained from the ten interviews, a qualitative analysis of data was made through a computer program Atlas.ti, with which it was possible to obtain an exhaustive analysis of the origins, development and expansion of taekwondo in Ecuador and a writing of the results through the review and reduction by the researcher.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interviews to coaches

According to the narratives on the history of Ecuadorian Taekwondo, its origins date back to 1969, with the arrival of two Korean Masters who entered Ecuador for commercial purposes and began teaching this martial art. In Guayaquil, Master Bum Jae Lee was in charge of expanding the Jidokwan style among his students. We can mention the Ecuadorian Masters Ivan Cedeño and Javier Romero, while in Quito, Master Chul Woong Jang arrived and expanded the Chundokwan style, and among the precursors of this style, in Pichincha, the Ecuadorian Masters Medardo Salazar and Fernando Jaramillo are mentioned. Little by little the expansion of Taekwondo was given in the regions Coast and Mountain and that embraced several provinces of the Ecuador.

The people interviewed do not have an exact memory of where the first provincial tournament was held in Ecuador, however, some of them agree that the first provincial tournament was held in Guayaquil and then the championships alternated in Portoviejo and Pichincha. The first Ecuadorian national taekwondo championship was also held in Guayaquil, later the national team attended international competitions where Ecuador had an outstanding participation. Thus, in 1977, the Ecuadorian team participated in the World Championship in Chicago, where the technique of the sportsman and today Master Javier Romero and the sportsman Jorge Ramírez, each in his own category, stands out.

In 1979, the Ecuadorian team won South American champions. The Ecuadorian taekwondo had its greatest peak in 1982, when the team had José Cedeño Barre as its champion. He won the first official gold medal for Ecuador and Duván Cangá was the vice-champion of the world. In 1986, Ecuador was the Pan American Taekwondo Vice-Champion and in 1992, it was again Vice-Champion. With respect to who is the best Ecuadorian taekwondo sportsman, it should be mentioned that over the course of time there have been several, since in the various categories there have been excellent taekwondoines, such as Javier Romero, Fernando Jaramillo, José Cedeño, Duván Cangá, Garcia and Macías who obtained decorations as best sportsmen; some of them are still active in taekwondo. It is necessary to point out that the coach Héctor Párraga also obtained decoration and that Manabí became a powerhouse in this sport.

Within the history, it must be emphasized that the roots of Ecuadorian Taekwondo have caused an impact on current Taekwondo; this impact has been both positive and negative. On the positive side, the formation of values that has caused a social impact should be highlighted and on the negative side, it should be mentioned that, currently, there is a scarce development of Ecuadorian Taekwondo compared to the years 1970 to 1990.

It can be observed that the scarce economic support from the country's sports authorities has had an impact on Ecuadorian taekwondo and has played a fundamental role in the preparation of athletes in international events. However, with a small budget, it was possible to maintain the sport activity. In addition, different provincial and national events were held and there was the possibility that the Ecuadorian Taekwondo team could travel to other countries for Bolivarian and South American competitions, Pan-American and world championships, without forgetting, in each one of these participations, outstanding combats of the taekwondoines, as it is the case of the world championships of Chicago 1977, South American of 1979 and world of 1982, where they



obtained the first medals and stellar positions by teams. The national team has also won awards at the 1986 and 1992 Pan American Championships.

As can be seen, the development of Taekwondo has been upward, without the economic factor having much influence on its evolution. All this has led to a social impact, both positive and negative; on the positive side, we must emphasize the formation of national identity and attachment to the values of this sport that have generated this wave of sporting success in its early decades, while among the negative experiences are the conflicts that have arisen year after year between managers, which has caused that at present there is little development of this sport.

From the participants' narration of the anecdotes and experiences of the Ecuadorian taekwondo sportsmen, they state that some of them were initiated in the practice of taekwondo with Korean masters, while others did it with the Ecuadorian masters, successors of the first ones who arrived to the country and who are the pioneers of taekwondo; they recognize that taekwondo has influenced their personal life in one way or another.

Master Javier Romero is considered one of the best sportsmen of the years 1970 to 1985 and is not only an icon of Taekwondo, but he is still active in the practice of Taekwondo and is directly linked to it since he is the owner and trainer of a gym located in Guayaquil. Duván Cangá comments with satisfaction that he was Vice Champion in a World Championship, held in 1982, and he still keeps a close relationship since he is a taekwondo technician. Fernando Jaramillo, among his many sporting successes, emphasizes the Bolivarian Games held in Cuenca and the Olympics in Seoul-Korea in 1988. Currently, he is a member of the Pichincha Taekwondo Association and part of the Pichincha Sporting Concentration. Francisco Fiallos states that he maintains his bond with taekwondo since he has contributed to the formation of great talents in this sport and is still a Pan-American referee. Others of the interviewees state that their bond is maintained thanks to their profession as teachers, coaches or for owning gyms.

All those interviewed said that their main anecdotes have been winning in international championships, as well as having contributed to the country's taekwondo, with their knowledge as coaches, referees and sports leaders. They also point out that Ecuadorian taekwondo has had positive impacts such as the development of values and also negative impacts such as having to experience conflicts between coaches and directors over spaces of power, where political interests have been stronger than sports interests. This has prevented that the current taekwondo is like the taekwondo of the first decades, from its origin, which has slowed down the development and the possibilities of success at international level, without even having an athlete qualified for the Olympics.

They also agree that currently the teaching of values in Taekwondo is not strengthened since many coaches do not see Taekwondo as a martial art, but only as a sport that brings them economic credits; that is, having sports successes ensures that their clubs have greater recognition and, therefore, more students, so teaching the martiality of the sport to their students, they see it as an unnecessary action for their purposes. This has made Taekwondo a simple competitive sport where disrespect towards athletes and other coaches is visible in the championships.

Opinions of those interviewed about the participation of the Ecuadorian Taekwondo team in official competitions indicate that the team had an outstanding participation in the various competitions they attended; but they have not been able to find the formula to emulate and repeat those participations and successes of yesteryear. Surely, the change



of rules that taekwondo has undergone in the last two decades has generated more exhibition taekwondo, where points are obtained more for control than for the same action. This can be evidenced by the continuous efforts made by the WTF to return strong emotions to taekwondo, but without leaving the rules of least impact that oblige the policies of participation in the sport, in the Olympic Games.

CONCLUSIONS

In a conclusive way, it is stated that in this research it was possible to have relevant information about the origin, development and expansion of Taekwondo in Ecuador, besides, there is a description of the anecdotes as sportsmen, trainers and leaders of the Ecuadorian Taekwondo personalities, which compares a taekwondo of the first decades, from its birth in the country, full of successes and glories at individual and team level, with a taekwondo of the last two decades in which we see little sports results and a complete formation of martial arts in the practitioners.

Without a doubt, the origins of Taekwondo in Ecuador are due to Korean masters who, in the first instance, came to the country for purely commercial reasons, and that several Ecuadorians had a sporting approach to them and knew how to extract their knowledge, becoming trainers of trainers, today called pioneers of Ecuadorian Taekwondo. It can be said that this acquisition of direct knowledge, added to the martial arts that went hand in hand with the practice of sports, made the country have the greatest results in its history, regardless of the scarce economic support that until then the sports authorities gave to this new sport.

Finally, it can be said that this research provides a great contribution to future taekwondo athletes and coaches, as well as to future researchers who will take it as a basis to understand the complexity of the origins and development of taekwondo, vital for generations and with a sense of martial and sporting belonging, as well as national identity for participation in international competitions, which can lead to a sporting change, with a martial environment that will be the basis for future generations of taekwondo practitioners.

REFERENCES

- Abad, F. (2012). *Taekwondo la fuerza de la mente el poder del cuerpo*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Ediciones LEA S.A.
<https://www.iberlibro.com/9789876342766/Taekwondo-Power-Fernando-Abad-9876342762/plp>
- Carvajal Núñez, R. (2020). *La práctica de los fundamentos básicos del taekwondo como un agente en el desarrollo psicomotriz en los estudiantes decuarto de básica en la asignatura de educación física*. EmásF Revista Digital de Educación Física, 11(65), 1-20.
https://emasf.webcindario.com/La_practica_de_los_fundamentos_basicos_del_taekwondo.pdf
- Delgado, J. A. D.-, & Hernández, E. J. P.-. (2018). *ESBOZO HISTÓRICO DEL TAEKWONDO EN LA PROVINCIA DE MANABÍ (PARTE I)*. Revista científica especializada en Cultura Física y Deportes, 15(35), 149-168.
<https://deporvida.uho.edu.cu/index.php/deporvida/article/view/436>



- Esparza, D. (2019). *Historia y deporte: La necesidad de investigar génesis de deportes concretos*. [History and Sport: The necessity of studying the genesis of sports]. RICYDE. Revista Internacional de Ciencias del Deporte. doi:10.5232/ricyde, 15(56), 119-122. <https://www.cafyd.com/REVISTA/ojs/index.php/ricyde/article/view/1730>
- Estévez, M. de L. B., & Gallastegui, J. J. A. (2005). *El método Delphi. Su implementación en una estrategia didáctica para la enseñanza de las demostraciones geométricas*. Revista Iberoamericana de Educación, 36(7), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.35362/rie3672962>
- Guirao, J. E. M. (2011). *Una etnografía de las artes marciales: Procesos de cambio y adaptación cultural en el taekwondo*. Editores: San Vicente [del Raspeig] Alicante: Club Universitario, D.L ISBN: 978-84-9948-456-3. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/libro?codigo=612947>
- Posso-Pacheco, R. J., Barba-Miranda, L. C., Rodríguez-Torres, Á. F., Núñez-Sotomayor, L. F. X., Ávila-Quinga, C. E., & Rendón-Morales, P. A. (2020). *Modelo de aprendizaje microcurricular activo: Una guía de planificación áulica para Educación Física*. Revista Electrónica Educare, 24(3), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.15359/ree.24-3.14>
- Quecedo, R., & Castaño, C. (2002). *Introducción a la metodología de investigación cualitativa*. Revista de Psicodidáctica, (14), 5-39. <https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=17501402>
- Skjong, R., & Wentworth, B. (2001). *Expert Judgement and risk perception*. 537-544. Det Norske VeritasN-1322 Hovik, Norway. <http://research.dnv.com/skj/Papers/SkjWen.pdf>

Conflict of interests:

The authors declare not to have any interest conflicts.

Authors' contribution:

Darwin Fernando Guapi Morocho: Conception of the idea, literature search and review, instrument application, literature search and review, general advice on the topic addressed, statistic analysis, preparation of tables, graphs and images, database preparation, general advice on the topic addressed, drafting of the original (first version), review and final version of the article, article correction, general advice on the topic addressed, translation of terms or information obtained, review of the application of the applied bibliographic standard.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International license

Copyright (c) 2020 Darwin Fernando Guapi Morocho

