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Land Forces Academy Review
Vol. XXVIII, No 1(109), 2023

OPINIONS REGARDING THE IMPACT OF SELF-DEFENSE TECHNIQUES IN THE TRAINING OF THE LAND FORCES FIGHTER

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ABSTRACT

Throughout time, people have had to use their own body to defend themselves from an attack when weapons were not available, close combat being the oldest form of combat known to man. As the human being evolved, a series of accumulations took place in everyday life, the techniques and methods of struggle enriching their content and reaching near perfection. The paper presents a series of opinions regarding the contribution of close combat techniques in the training of the Land Forces soldiers because, through the particularly complex demands they exert on the human body, they lead to obtaining positive, multiple and unique effects, creating the conditions for a training exceptional for the purpose of adapting the fighter to the demands of the battlefield at the beginning of this century.

KEYWORDS: sports, technique, self-defense, conflict, success

1. Introduction

The notion of physical self-defense can be defined as an action of defense by one's own means that is based on defeating the aggressor, first of all, by repelling the attack, subsequently creating favorable conditions for carrying out the counterattack. It is considered that the first attempt to organize and develop the techniques of hand-to-hand combat originated in China as a means of unarmed defense against foreign invaders. Not much is known about further development; however, historians believe that similar fighting systems were developed by Buddhist monks around 1,000 AD as a defense against the many bandits of that time, judo and Jiu-Jitsu, boxing, karate or taekwondo being modern forms/versions of these ancient self-defense systems.

Most people think that hand-to-hand combat only involves punching and kicking the opponent. In reality, most hand-to-hand combat engagements occur at the catching / grabbing stage and involve manipulation, strangulation, immobilization, choking or pulling and striking techniques. The counter attack is absolutely necessary as it is meant to deal permanent bodily damage with each attack and should end in immobilizing or even eliminating the opponent. By self-defense we can also understand the confrontation between two or more people fighting with their bare hands or with hand weapons, such as: knives, sticks or projectile weapons that cannot be fired and other improvised means available nearby that soldiers can use for attack or defense.

Self-defense includes multiple fighting techniques and procedures belonging to several disciplines or sports that have a high applicative character: judo, karate, boxing, jiu-jitsu and aikido are some examples. From these sports, the most effective techniques and methods of attack and defense were selected in the army and

DOI: 10.2478/raft-2023-0004
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introduced into a training system that can adapt to the difficult situations existing on the battlefield or within the performance of missions in which the fire of the weapons cannot be used individually. Any discipline, practiced for a long time, up to automation, contributes to the acquisition of new knowledge and develops skill, strength, courage, forms fighting skills and abilities, adequate reactions and self-defense capabilities with which the military can eliminate possible critical situations in which he can be found, at a given moment, contributing to the development and improvement of his fighting potential.

2. Opinions regarding the Self-defense Techniques Used in Military Training

2.1. Characteristics of Close Combat Techniques

It can be appreciated that, today, self-defense is of paramount importance and, as such, is considered a vital part of combat training, because through the means and methods available it strengthens the human body, reasoning and spirit and helps to reduce the consequences of the negative effects of the battlefield; these coordinates can be achieved through intense training in which efforts are not spared, using methods and means of training that polish and obtain the type of fighter required by the modern battlefield. The physical training programs specific to the self-defense combat are aimed at improving the general physical condition, developing the ability to withstand stress, as well as at the acquisition of close combat aptitudes and skills, contributing substantially to increasing productivity, the state of mental alertness, promoting cohesion and the degree of survivability of the fighting capacity. In my opinion, this is how the main contributory elements of self-defense training schematically look like:

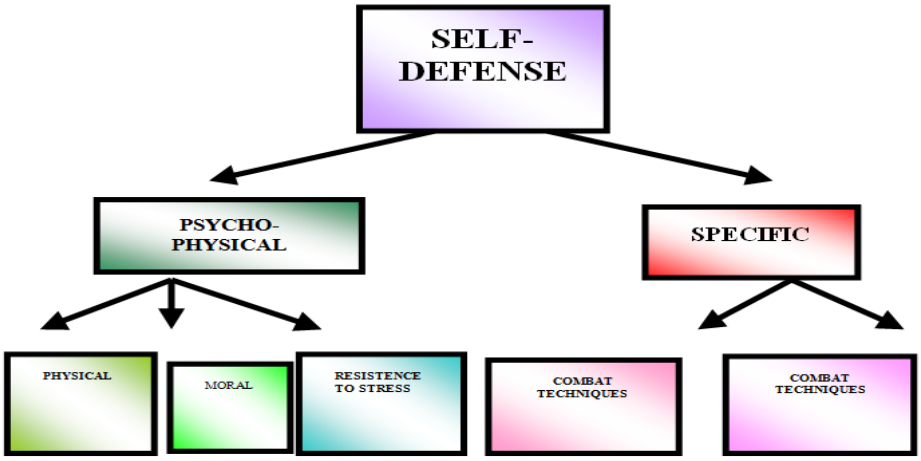


Figure no. 1: *Scheme of the contributory components of self-defense training*

One of the major objectives of military training is to develop and maintain the skills necessary to ensure maximum chances of survival and mission accomplishment. There are frequent situations when the military has to face the repeated attacks of the adversary, without having the right to counterattack or without being able to fight an adversary who is nervous and impulsive, whom he can dominate with calmness and lucidity (Iordache, 1990). It is not possible to exactly determine when self-defense came into being, nor its content due to the multitude of fighting styles that it combines, but self-defense includes, in its essence, any technique of attack and defense, belonging to all known combat

styles and sports. Since none of these covered the entire variety of techniques, this new form of complex combat was created, known by most as physical self-defense, which harmoniously combines the most efficient techniques and procedures from all close combat disciplines.

Considering the evolution of the means and forms of conducting operations in current confrontations, self-defense will always try to keep up with them. In conclusion, physical self-defense has a permanent innovative character, being continuously receptive in the assimilation of new techniques and combinations (Stănciulescu, 2017). Due to the environment with frequent climate changes, different from one situation to another and the multiple combat positions that can be adopted, self-defense techniques and procedures are characterized by variety and are used in various combinations. This involves training sessions from the simple to the complex, where every position is thought of in relation to the opponent's movements, and the change in techniques can be easily achieved, the ultimate goal being to defeat the enemy by using combined techniques and procedures taken from all combat styles.

Self-defense does not have a well-defined content, the most useful combat styles such as judo, karate, boxing, jiu-jitsu or the specific elements of any combat styles being found in the training process of the military. Any judo practitioner is firmly convinced that his techniques are sufficient to defeat any type of aggressor; however, if he fails to perform favorable grips, all the procedures lose their effectiveness. A karate practitioner believes that his techniques are irreplaceable, considering himself the ultimate fighter, especially due to the methods of combat used against several opponents, even if they are armed with certain objects (in particular, knife). To demonstrate the strength, power and accuracy of a kick, he performs smashes on various materials, such as bricks or tiles that have a major impact on a non-practitioner.

However, a karateka has a hard time dealing with a ground combat practitioner since he also has a low resistance to being hit in sensitive areas. A boxer is highly regarded for his simple but effective techniques with a high load of force, having the ability to neutralize the opponent with a single blow, especially in close combat. But he is vulnerable in the fight against a taekwondo practitioner who is very good at kicking, keeping him at a distance, so his punches are not able to be used with the same efficiency. All of these combat styles, analyzed individually, have advantages and disadvantages, more or less approaching an effective combat model in a real situation.

Nevertheless, each style lacks something in order to become optimal. For the correct execution of the techniques and procedures, it is certainly recommended to learn them by combat styles, and the combinations of techniques specific to each style should be performed only when each of these is practiced at a very high level of performance and the techniques can be executed with ease, speed and maximum efficiency. Due to these requirements and restrictions, in order to create a complete combat style in which the fighter is prepared for any situation, self-defense has taken over from judo, karate, boxing, jiu-jitsu, aikido, etc. the most effective elements, techniques and procedures, which are absolutely necessary to achieve the proposed psycho-physical, moral and utilitarian-applicative objectives in relation to the demands of the modern battlefield.

2.2. The Role of Physical Self-defense in the Missions Performed by the Land Forces Soldiers

The military's competence in hand-to-hand combat becomes one of the fundamental elements for the training of the fighter. Self-defense training includes demanding and

difficult physical training that is, at the same time, mentally demanding and combines with other military activities designed to prepare combatants for the difficult and unpredictable situations that may arise on the battlefield. Despite the advances in technology, hand-to-hand combat remains a persistent aspect of the contemporary operating environment, given the diversity of missions and unpredictability. Fighters are trained to use their skills to take the initiative to dominate, immobilize or kill an opponent in close combat, so that in order to achieve success, it is necessary to respect the following indications:

- *carrying out training in conditions as close as possible to those existing on the battlefield* (training must take place in conditions similar to the conduct of the battle, in which way the chances of success in a real situation increase significantly);
- *carrying out training against the background of unpredictability and the existence of the element of surprise* (the military must be constantly prepared, being able to go into action as soon as the opportunity arises);
- *carrying out training on the basis of prior mental training* (self-defense training must be carried out with a winner mentality because it increases the preparation for combat by developing personal courage, self-confidence, discipline and will).

The dynamics of a full-spectrum combat environment requires combatants to have the courage, confidence and competence to implement controlled aggression while being able to use the minimum amount of force to manage the situation adequately. It also improves individual and collective strength, flexibility, balance and cardio-respiratory activity, producing mission-ready fighters at all levels.

A successful training program will give the military the ability to overcome their fear and anger, developing the will to fight, enabling controlled actions and heightened situational awareness. The essence of self-defense is to train fighters to become more aggressive with their fighting skills and gives them the confidence to be lethal with their bare hands and not just their weapon, be it a rifle, pistol or bayonet. The American researcher Peter R. Jensen explains in detail the degree of use of self-defense among American soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan (Jensen, 2004-2008).

Thus, after analyzing the surveys, it turned out that hand-to-hand combat took place in a variety of tactical situations and that many missions required the use of close combat techniques in which blows of the arms, legs or head, as well as techniques with improvised means were used. Self-defense training should be simple and provide the fighter with the diversity of skills he needs to survive on the battlefield. The body's reaction would affect a fighter's ability to perform complicated movements, requiring the ability to think and reason clearly.

As such, fighters should possess motor skills, and be trained to create muscle memory. Military specialists should approach such volatile situations and train fighters in how to deal with multiple attackers coming from from multiple directions while having the ability to defeat them. Thus, creativity, adaptation and the freedom to innovate, according to the specifics of the existing situations on the battlefield, must represent benchmarks in the system of training fighters in order to achieve success.

3. Conclusions

The importance of self-defense combat also stems from the objectives of military physical education aimed at forming the model of the modern fighter, acquiring and developing close combat skills, complementing some mental and physical traits, being absolutely necessary in order to act on the modern battlefield, under conditions of demands beyond normal limits of human resistance. Therefore, it is unanimously accepted that

in the current conditions it is of vital importance that the fighters are able to adapt to the conditions existing in the modern battlefield, their action and survival being dependent on a complex of technical, mental and intellectual skills that are grafted on an impeccable physical condition. The fighter must be able to combine the combat skills acquired in the technical, tactical and specialized training with the skills of close combat in which the equipment cannot be used against one or more enemies. The well-learned, perfected and executed self-defense procedures have multiple effects on the combat capacity, contributing in a real way to the formation of a highly qualified human resource capable of effectively managing the military action.

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