

The Examining Self-Esteem and Preferences of Turkish University Students in Relation to Sport and Social Activity



Physical Education

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ABSTRACT

The purpose aimed to examine the self-esteem and preferences of university students in relation to sport and social activity. The research population comprised of the English preparatory program which includes 500 students from 13 different departments of the university and all students in this program participated in the study voluntarily. No sample method was used. As data collection tools, inquiry form and Coopersmith Self-Esteem scale were used in order to determine the demographic variables and scores of self-esteem in relation to participants respectively. The findings indicated that there was no a significant statistically different between male and female ($198, p>0.05$), but there was a significant statistically different between sport and social activity in preferences ($0.01, p<0.05$), also self-esteem differed with demographic variables. In conclusion, sports have positive effects on self-esteem of university students.

INTRODUCTION

Self-esteem has a large impact on the value of life (Flynn, 2005), and refers to psychological well-being because self-esteem is one of the basic determinants of self-respect, self-confidence, self-worth and various psychological variables (Güçray, 1989, Yiğiter, 2011). Self-esteem is comprised of three components: Perceptual, conceptual and attitudinal. The perceptual component refers to the way in which the individual perceives himself or herself. It includes the person's perception of personal worth, body image, and the individual's perception of how others view him or her. The conceptual component addresses the individual's conception of his abilities, limitations and characteristics. This component relies on the individual's thinking, perceiving, and acting in order to establish a cognitive understanding of one's self (Battle, 1982). The final component arises from the individual's feelings for him or herself. These feelings include beliefs, convictions, ideals, values and aspirations. If these components are viewed in a positive light, the individuals' view of self-worth is positive. However, a reverse correlation evolves if the views are negative, (Foster, et al., 1989; Hall, 2006). Self-esteem, or self worth, refers to an overall sense of well being. Positive self-esteem enables individuals to feel good about themselves, about who they are, and what they are capable of accomplishing. People may view parts of this self more or less positively, and therefore, self-esteem can be defined as a multi-dimensional construct. Domains include physical competence, body image, and academic ability (Richman & Shaffer, 2000).

As described above, self-esteem is associated with various psychological variables. In this context, there are many factors which can affect the psychological structure of people in new era. Because the new era brings business requirements, developing technology, population growth, urbanization, noise and other many variables. All of these factors severely affect the mental health of people (Yiğiter, 2013) and this situation negatively affects their self-confidence and their level of self-esteem fluctuates in relation to this situation. This is due to the fact that stress, anxiety and perception of one's self-confidence are some of the factors that affect self-esteem (Yiğiter, 2011). Following these definitions, how can people decline the negative effects of these factors on physical and mental health and how can people raise their self-esteem? One of the some things which can be done is the sports participation to decline the negative effects of negative factors and to raise the self-esteem. Because the sports have benefits as physical and psychological. In this context, self-esteem may be elevated by participating in sports activities. According to Asci (2004), those who participate in sports are more likely to have healthy self-esteem and higher physical self-perception.

In the light of the above description, the aim of present study was to examine the self-esteem and preferences of university students in relation to sport and social activity. For that purpose, it was hypothesized that the participants who prefer the sport, would have higher scores in self-esteem compared to participants who prefer social activity. Also, it was hypothesized

that the self-esteem would differ with gender, age, and demographic variables.

METHOD

Participants

University students ($M_{age}=19,11\pm14,68$) were voluntarily participated in this study. Students were selected from one of the universities in the Marmara region of Turkey. No sampling method was used, and all of the students in the English preparatory program in school of foreign languages were included in the research.

Instrument

Self-Esteem Scale

Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSI) was developed by Stanley Coopersmith (1975). It evaluates the attitudes of respondents towards themselves in different areas. The reliability coefficient was found to be 0.76 ($p<0.05$). For validity check of the scale, the relationship between the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory was assessed and the correlation was found to be 0.061 ($p<0.05$). The adult version of the scale was used. The scale, which consists of 25 items, was scored between 0 and 1 (Yiğiter, 2012).

Procedure

Self-esteem scale were administered to participants in a group at classroom setting. Researcher provided verbal information on how to respond to items. Participation in the study was voluntary and inquiry form, self-esteem scale responses were anonymous. Informed consent was signed by each participant before the psychological measurements. Research and Ethics Committee of University approved the research.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by SPSS 16.0 Package Program. Descriptive statistics, independent sample t-test, pearson correlation, one way anova analysis were used to analyze the data. Level of significance was determined to be 0.05.

RESULTS

TABLE - 1
ANOVA RESULTS REGARDING VARIABLES

Category	n	CSI	f	p
High school	297	71	1,99	,078
general	9	66		
science	90	73		
anatolia	5	76		
boarding	15	77		
teacher	84	72		
profession				
Department			,747	,388
numerical	351	71		
equally	149	72		

Income 500 TL	75	71	10,82	,000
501-1000 TL	49	68		
1001-1500TL	262	70		
1500 TL over	114	76		
<i>Mother's education</i> university			55,37	,000
high school	83	81		
primary	174	73		
illiterate	201	68		
	42	62		
<i>Father's education</i> university	166	69	12,24	,000
high school	196	71		
primary	73	75		
illiterate	65	76		
<i>Place of residence</i> provincial	300	71	5,06	,007
district	154	71		
village	46	76		

Note: CSI refers to mean scores of self-esteem.

ANOVA test revealed that there was a significant statistically different in income ($.000, p<0.05$), mother's education ($.000, p<0.05$) and father's education ($.000, p<0.05$). On the other hand, any significant statistically different was found in relation to high school type ($.078, p>0.05$), high school department ($.388, p>0.05$), and place of residence in last ten years ($.007, p>0.05$), (Table 1).

TABLE – 2
CORRELATION AMONG VARIABLES

Category	Correlation	CSI Scores	p
Age	r	,032	p>0.05
	p	,471	
Gender	r	,058	p>0.05
	p	,198	
High school	r	,073	p>0.05
	p	,104	
Department	r	,039	p>0.05
	p	,388	
Income	r	,158**	p<0.05
	p	,000	
Mother's education	r	-,497**	p<0.05
	p	,000	
Father's education	r	,257**	p<0.05
	p	,000	
Place of residence	r	,104*	p<0.05
	p	,020	
Total student number:500			

****Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

***Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

As can be seen Table 2, self-esteem was positively associated with income ($r=.158^{**}, p<0.05$), father's education ($r=.257^{**}, p<0.05$) and, place of residence ($r=.104^{*}, p<0.05$). However, self-esteem was negatively associated with mother's education level ($r=-.497^{**}, p<0.05$). Also, self-esteem was not associated with other variables ($p>0.05$).

TABLE – 3
DIFFERENCES IN RELATION TO GENDER AND PREFERENCES

Category	n	CSI	p
Gender			
male	238	72,78	,198
female	262	71,58	

Preferences				
sports	238	74,34	,001	$P<0.05$
social activity	262	71,11		

As shown in Table 3 there was not a significant statistically different between man and female students ($.198, p>0.05$). But also there was a significant statistically different between sport and social activity in preferences of students ($.001, p<0.05$).

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to examine the self-esteem and preferences of university students in relation to sport and social activity and also to determine gender differences and demographic variables, relationships in self-esteem and preferences of university students in relation to sport and social activity. The results of the present study supported the hypothesis of this study that the participants who prefer the sport, would have higher scores in self-esteem compared to those who prefer social activity, and self-esteem would have relationships in some demographic variables. However, self-esteem did not differ with gender and was not associated with age. From the results standpoint, high self-esteem is associated with sport activities. According to Bowker (2006), some sports activities may increase feelings of physical competence and body image, which will in turn increase general self-esteem (Bowker, 2006; Asci, 2004; Bicer, 2013; Yiğiter, 2011; Yiğiter, 2012; Ryska, 2003; Sanford et al., 2008). Accordingly, positive self-esteem may be related to a more positive body image. Body image can be defined as how a person views his or her physical appearance. Physical appearance has been found to be the single most important predictor of general self-esteem across the life span for both sexes (Bowker, 2006). Therefore, the students can improve body image and physical appearance by participating in sport activities. This situation results in high self-esteem on students. Another result of the present study showed that self-esteem did not differ with gender. Yiğiter, (2011) applied the recreational physical activities on university students and revealed that self-esteem did not differ with gender in before and after physical activities and also, Mullis et al., (1992) supported the present study result. However, this result did not consistent with some studies that revealed the self-esteem differs with gender (Brack, 1988; Zimmerman, 1997; Carly and Sandra, 2009). In addition to these results, two studies supports the initial hypothesis of this study that physical activity has a positive impact on self-perceptions in males and female (Stein et al., 2007; Yiğiter, 2011). According to Anova results of the present study, self-esteem differs with the demographic variables. In this respect, there was a significant statistically different in income ($.000, p<0.05$), mother's education ($.000, p<0.05$) and father's education ($.000, p<0.05$). On the other hand, any significant statistically different was found in relation to high school type ($.078, p>0.05$), high school department ($.388, p>0.05$), and place of residence in last ten years ($.007, p>0.05$). These results generally support the hypothesis of this study that the self-esteem would differ with demographic variables.

Limitation of this study should be noted for future studies. Firstly, the present study was conducted in English preparatory program in school of foreign languages, and was representative of only a small sample of university %9.33 (500 students). University which includes 9.335 students totally, have dispersed campuses, so the researcher failed to apply the scale more students within one week. Further research is needed to examine self-esteem on more students, and should be applied more scales in relation to psychological parameters.

Regarding methodological considerations, the present study used cross-sectional design. In cross-sectional studies, a study collects data to make inferences about a population of interest at one point in time. After measurements have been completed, statistical analysis are used to determine the relationships between the variables in relation to subjects. Also, cross-sectional model can come new ideas out for future studies. In this way, the informations of various fields can be found by future researchers. Also, future studies should attempt to a different way which is experimental method, to determine the differences between

the experimental and control groups.

CONCLUSIONS

In the light of the explanations, the present study aimed to examine the self-esteem and preferences of university students in relation to sport and social activity. In conclusion, based on the data, self-esteem was associated with income, mother's education and father's education. Self-esteem differed with some demographic variables but did not differ with gender. Also, self-esteem differed with preferences in relation to sport and social activity. As a result, it can be said that sports participation have positive effects on self-esteem of university students.

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