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Full Length Research Paper

Investigation about self-esteem levels of athletes who have been educated in different sports branches according to some variables: A study on physically handicapped individuals

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the self-esteem of those who did sports in physically disabled individuals by some variables. Based on this aim, the study was designed quantitatively. In this descriptive research, the general survey model that is coherent with the main purpose was used. The study group of the research consisted of 140 individuals aged 18 and over who had physical disabilities and actively engage in sports. Purposeful sampling approaches and easily accessible sampling methods were used in the selection of the study group. The scale form was used to collect research data. The scale form consisted of two parts. In the first part of this form, there was a personal information form containing information about the participants and in the second part, there was the "Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale" developed by Rosenberg (1965) and adapted into Turkish by Çuhadaroğlu (1986). This form was applied to the participants on a voluntary basis, on the internet between 13.05.2020 and 03.06.2020. Necessary explanations were made to the participants while filling the form and they were provided to answer correctly. In this study, the self-esteem of physically disabled athletes was examined according to some variables. The research group consisted of 140 participants; 42 (30.0%) of them were female and 98 (70.0%) of them were male and the number of male participants was approximate twice the number of female participants. It was found that 18 (12.9%) participants were graduated from elementary and secondary schools, 59 (42.1%) from high school, and 63 (45%) from college, and the number of the participants belonging to the group consisted of graduates from high school and college were approximately four times more than the participants from the elementary and secondary school graduate group. It was determined that 9 (13.6%) of the participants had low, 105 (75%) had medium and 16 (11.4%) had a high level of income. It was observed that 83 (59.3%) of the participants were congenitally disabled and 57 (40.7%) of the participants disabled after birth and the number of congenitally disabled participants approximately 1.5 times more than the number of participants with disabilities after birth. It was determined that the number of participants who were national athletes was approximately 2.5 times those who were not. Among the variables examined, it was seen that there was only a statistically positive and low-level significant relationship between the sports age variable and the self-esteem mean score of the participants ($r = .147$; $p < 0.05$). In this context, as the age of the participants increased, the self-esteem of the participants also increased. As a result, it was determined that there was a positive correlation between the age of starting sports and self-esteem in physically disabled individuals, and individuals who started sports at an early age had a higher rate than other individuals.

Keywords: Self-esteem, sport, physically disabled individual.

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INTRODUCTION

Self-esteem, which is at the centre of our psychological functions (Crocker and Majör, 1989), is defined as an important factor in the integration of personality, motivation of behaviour, and formation of mental health

according to Burns (1982). Rosenberg (1979) defines self-esteem as a positive or negative attitude towards self, and Coopersmith (1967) defines self-esteem as the level of perception of the individual himself/herself as a talented, important, successful, and valuable individual.

The self is a very important factor that affects a person's life in general. Self can be defined as all the evaluations about the individual himself/herself (Kulaksızoğlu, 2000). In other words, self-concept includes the individual's perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs about himself; the formation of the self continues throughout life and develops. Knowing yourself indicates the individual's relationship with himself, his feelings and thoughts, and has an understanding of this in the emotional and intellectual processes that occur in the individual. At the beginning of this process, self-concept describes all feelings, attitudes, and behaviours that make a person an individual and differentiate them from others. In short, the concept of self is how people see and evaluate themselves as their understanding and understanding of the self (Cüceloğlu, 1993; Yavuzer, 2000).

The formation of the self is a process that continues throughout a person's life, and this process continues on the path to self-awareness. Self-esteem, on the other hand, can be said that it consists of the feelings of love, respect, and trust that the person feels for himself as a result of the fact that he/she recognizes himself/herself and that he/she accepts his/her talents and powers as they are (Çuhadaroglu, 1986).

Self-respect is the ability to direct an individual's behaviour by affecting all aspects of his life, which is accepted as an important part of the personality. Considering the perceptions, feelings, and thoughts that have an important place in personality development and are important for the individual as a whole, it is seen that self-esteem plays an important role in the socialization level of the individual (Arıcak, 1999).

People have high or low self-esteem as they realize their ideal self. There are many factors affecting high or low self-esteem in individuals. These are environmental factors, social status, acceptance by society, family and friends. Those with high self-esteem have self-confidence, desire to succeed, optimism, and coping with difficulties. They consider themselves respectable, important, and useful. Also, they are open to innovations, have no problems in communication, active, relaxed, enterprising, social, and creative. Individuals with low self-esteem experience trust problems with other people, insecure and hopeless towards life, end of harmony in society, and constantly experience feelings of guilt and shame (Cevher and Buluş, 2007).

Self-esteem, which is at the centre of our psychological functions, has an important place in the integration of personality, motivation of our behaviour, and formation of mental health (Muslu, 2001). Self-esteem and harmony with the environment are directly proportional. Self-esteem varies in the degree of personal satisfaction or frustration experienced by the individual. Low self-esteem is the result of being exposed to situations that reduce self-worth. High levels of anxiety, psychosomatic, and depression symptoms begin to appear in an individual with low self-esteem. Also, low self-esteem leads to acceptance rather than a realistic perception of one's own situation and taking action to change what needs to be changed (Kaner, 2000). A person with low self-esteem has very poor self-confidence. These people are dependent on others, shy, uncreative, asocial, and more authoritative. Those with high self-esteem are more satisfied with themselves and they trust their strengths, abilities, and positive qualities than those with low self-esteem (Baumeister, 1985; Uyanık Balat, and Akman, 2004). The level of self-esteem affects the person's state of being fun, vitality, success, and abilities in school and business life, the development of fellowship, friendship and social relations, and coping with stress. Individuals with high self-esteem are self-confident. People who have structured themselves with low self-esteem are people who have low energy, see as if they are in a situation to be ashamed, in despair, lack of utmost importance, who are not successful, have no skills, lost their vitality, have no self-confidence (Özkan, 1994).

It is strongly emphasized by many educators, psychologists, therapists, social workers, and disabled sports specialist and achievement contribute significantly to the development of the self-concept (Gallahue and Ozmun, 1995).

According to Alpaslan, he stated that it has a therapeutic effect on children who have emotional difficulties while doing sports and who have fragile self-perception, and emphasized that sports have a characteristic that facilitates the self-confidence of individuals and enables them to reveal their abilities (Alpaslan, 2012).

Self-esteem can be affected by many situations. For example, the social role of the individual in society is just one of them. This is seen as an inadequate of disabled individuals in society affects them in terms of their self-esteem. The definition of disability is made as "the deficiency or limitation in performing normal activities expected from the person or the body as a whole" and "restriction or failure to fulfil the roles expected of the person due to an inability or disability depending on age, gender, social and cultural factors" by World Health Organization (WHO) (WHO, 2011).

There are also studies in which a positive correlation was found between the emotional states and body perceptions of disabled adolescents or that disabled individuals did not differ from non-disabled individuals (Kaner 2000). In his research, in which he studied self-esteem and body perception with 55 orthopedically disabled and 123 healthy adolescents, he found that physically disabled male individuals had more positive body perceptions than non-disabled male individuals (Younesi, 1997).

Although many researchers have examined behaviours

that have an impact on self-esteem and thought that physical activity constitutes a positive component in self-assessment, the relationship between self-esteem and physical activity is still unclear (Fox, 1997, 2000; McAuley and Rudolph, 1995; Laferrier et al., 2015). Since self-esteem is an important psychological concept for mental health, it is important to examine the effects of sports and exercise on physically disabled people (Crocker and Park, 2004).

It is known that all sports activities and exercise activities related to the disabled are carried out for reintegration and rehabilitation of the individual (Keller, 1983). Sports activities for the disabled are aimed at increasing the quality of life of the disabled. The biggest goal of the sports of the disabled is to make important contributions to the business and social life of the disabled by positively affecting their personality (Brettschneider and Rheker, 1996; Kosel and Froböse, 1999). The barriers that physically disabled individuals face in their lives are presented to them by society. In this context, the difficulties that disabled individuals face throughout their lives cause a lack of self-confidence. This difficult period they go through causes individuals to lose self-esteem. However, as individuals who participate in sports or exercise activities experience a sense of individual achievement, there is an increase in their self-confidence and therefore self-esteem. In this study, the self-esteem of sports activities in physically disabled individuals is evaluated in terms of some variables.

METHOD

In this part of the research, the research model, study group, data collection tools and data analysis were explained under separate headings.

Research model

The research was designed quantitatively. In this descriptive research, the general survey model consistent with the main purpose was used.

Study group

The study group of the research consisted of 140 individuals aged 18 and over who had physical disabilities and actively engage in sports. In the selection of the study group, purposeful sampling approaches and easily accessible sampling method were used.

Data collection tools

The scale form was used to collect research data. The scale form consisted of two parts, the first part of this form included a personal information form containing information about the participants, and the second part of the "Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale" developed by Rosenberg (1965) and adapted into Turkish by Çuhadaroğlu (1986). This form was applied to the participants on a voluntary basis, on the internet between 13.05.2020 and 03.06.2020. At the stage of filling the form, the necessary explanations were made to the participants and they were provided to answer correctly.

Personal information form

In the Personal Information Form, there were expressions including the variables of gender, age, sports age, education level, income level, time of disability and nationality.

Rosenberg self-esteem scale

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) was one of the scales widely used to evaluate the self-esteem of individuals (Duy and Yıldız, 2019). RSES was developed by Rosenberg (1965) to measure the self-esteem level. RSES actually had ten sub-dimensions. The first sub-dimension was used to measure self-esteem. High scores showed the high self-esteem of the person. Adaptation of RSES to Turkish was done by Çuhadaroğlu (1986) and the scale was a 4-Likert type. In this context, Cronbach's alpha was estimated as .71 and test-retest reliability was calculated as .75 (Çuhadaroğlu, 1986). Within the scope of this research, the Cronbach alpha value was re-evaluated and this value was calculated as .783.

Analysis of data

IBM SPSS 23.0 version was used to analyse the data. In this context, descriptive statistics as well as percentages and frequencies of the data obtained within the scope of the research were determined. Moreover, considering the characteristics of the variables in the scale form, t-test, One-Way ANOVA and Pearson Correlation Analysis were used. Significance level was accepted as 0.05 in the evaluation of the analyses.

RESULTS

In this part of the study, the results obtained from the analysis of the data were tabulated and interpreted.

In Table 1, the self-esteem of physically disabled athletes was examined according to some variables. The research group consisted of 140 participants; 42 (30.0%) of them were female and 98 (70.0%) of them were male

Table 1. Percentage and frequencies of gender, educational status, income rate, time of disability and nationality.

Variable	Group	f.	%
Gender	Woman	42	30.0
	Man	98	70.0
Educational status	Elementary + Secondary	18	12.9
	High school	59	42.1
	College	63	45.0
Income rate	Low	19	13.6
	Medium	105	75.0
	High	16	11.4
Time of disability	Congenital	83	59.3
	After Birth	57	40.7
Nationality	Yes	100	71.4
	No	40	28.6
Total		140	100.0

and the number of male participants was approximate twice the number of the female participants. It was found that 18 (12.9%) participants had graduated from elementary and secondary schools, 59 (42.1%) from high school, and 63 (45%) from college, and the number of the participants belonging to the group consisting of graduates from high school and college were approximately four times more than the participants from the elementary and secondary school graduates' group. It was determined that 9 (13.6%) of the participants had low, 105 (75%) had medium and 16 (11.4%) had a high level of income. It was observed that 83 (59.3%) of the participants were congenitally disabled and 57 (40.7%) of the participants disabled after birth and the number of congenitally disabled participants approximately 1.5 times more than the number of participants with disabilities after birth. It was determined that the number of participants who were national athletes was approximately 2.5 times those who were not.

When Table 2 was examined, the mean age of the participants was 27.979 and the standard deviation was 6.6327; the mean sports age variable was 8.70 and the standard deviation was 4.850.

Descriptive statistics for the Self-Esteem Scale were shown in Table 3. In this context, when the skewness and kurtosis values were examined, it was accepted that the data set had a normal distribution (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013).

According to Table 4, there was not any statistically significant difference was found between the self-esteem score mean of the participants for the gender variable [$t_{(138)} = -.287$, $p > 0.05$].

Table 2. Descriptive statistics on age and sports age variables.

Variable	Mean	Median	S.D.	Minimum	Maximum
Age	27.979	27.000	6.6327	18.0	53.0
Sport age	8.70	7.00	4.850	1	22

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of self-esteem scale.

Scale	Mean	Median	S.D.	Minimum	Maximum	Skewness	Kurtosis
Self-esteem	3.3450	3.3000	.37748	2.30	4.00	-.108	-.350

When Table 5 was examined, it was seen that there was no statistically significant difference between the self-esteem score mean of the participants regarding the educational status variable [$F_{(2\text{-}137)} = .276$, $p > 0.05$].

In Table 6, it was seen that there was no statistically significant difference between the self-esteem score

Table 4. T-test results for the gender variable.

Scale	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t.	p.
Self-esteem	Woman	42	3.3310	138	-.287	.774
	Man	98	3.3510			

Table 5. ANOVA results regarding educational status variable.

Scale	Source of Variance	Sum of Square	S.D.	Mean of Square	F.	p.
Self-esteem	Between groups	.079	2	.040	.276	.759
	Within groups	19.727	137	.144		
	Total	19.807	139			

Table 6. ANOVA results regarding the income level variable.

Scale	Source of Variance	Sum of Square	S.D.	Mean of Square	F.	p.
Self-esteem	Between Groups	.247	2	.123	.864	.424
	Within Groups	19.560	137	.143		
	Total	19.806	139			

mean of the participants' income level [$F_{(2-137)}$= .864, p > 0.05].

When Table 7 was examined, there was no statistically significant difference was found between the self-esteem score means of the participants according to the variable of the disability onset date [$t_{(138)}$ = .621, p > 0.05].

When Table 8 was examined, there was no statistically significant difference was found between the self-esteem score means of the participants according to the variable nationality [$t_{(138)}$= .296, p > 0.05].

According to Table 9, there was no statistically significant relationship was found between the age variable of the participants, and their self-esteem mean scores (p > 0.05).

When Table 10 was examined, it was seen that there was a statistically positive and low-level significant relationship between the participants' sports age variable and their self-esteem mean scores (r = .147; p < 0.05). In this context, as the age of the participants increased, the self-esteem of the participants also increased.

Table 7. T-test results regarding the disability onset date variable.

Scale	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t.	p.
Self-esteem	Congenital	83	3.3614	138	.621	.536
	After Birth	57	3.3211			

Table 8. T-test results regarding the nationality status variable.

Scale	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t.	p.
Self-esteem	Yes	100	3.3510	138	.296	.767
	No	40	3.3300			

Table 9. Correlation analysis results between age variable and self-esteem.

Variable		Self esteem
Age	r	.002
	p	.986
	n	140

Table 10. Correlation analysis results between sports age variable and self-esteem.

Variable		Self-esteem
Sport age	r	.147*
	p	.041
	n	140

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, the self-esteem of physically disabled individuals who did sport was examined according to some variables. The research group consisted of 140 participants; 42 (30.0%) of them were female and 98 (70.0%) of them were male and the number of male participants was approximate twice the number of female participants. It was found that 18 (12.9%) participants were graduated from elementary and secondary schools, 59 (42.1%) from high school and 63 (45%) from college, and the number of the participants belonging to the group consisting of graduates from high school and college were approximately four times more than the participants from the elementary and secondary school graduates group. It was determined that 9 (13.6%) of the participants had low, 105 (75%) had medium and 16 (11.4%) had a high level of income. It was observed that 83 (59.3%) of the participants were congenitally disabled and 57 (40.7%) of the participants disabled after birth and the number of congenitally disabled participants approximately 1.5 times more than the number of participants with disabilities after birth. It was determined that the number of participants who were national athletes was approximately 2.5 times those who were not.

It was concluded the mean age of the participants was 27.979 and the standard deviation was 6.6327; the mean sports age variable was 8.70 and the standard deviation was 4.850. When the descriptive statistics regarding the Self-Esteem Scale were examined, it was accepted that the data set showed normal distribution in the values of skewness and kurtosis (Tabachnik and Fidell, 2013).

When the self-esteem mean scores of the participants regarding the gender variable were examined, it was reached that there was no statistically significant difference between these two values [$t_{(138)}$= -.287, p > 0.05]. In a study conducted with university students, it was stated that there was no significant difference between self-esteem according to gender (Arıcak, 1995). In another study examining the relationship between depression and self-esteem in adolescents, it was reported that no gender differences were observed in terms of self-esteem in adolescents (Çuhadaroğlu, 1986). Aksoy (1992) found that gender was not a factor in self-esteem in her research on some variables that affect self-esteem and focus of control of senior high school students. Mullis et al. (1992) reported that gender does not change self-esteem, similar to the results of this study. It was concluded that there was no statistically significant difference between the self-esteem score mean of the participants regarding the educational status variable [$F_{(2-137)}$ = .276, p > 0.05]. It was observed that there was no statistically significant difference between the self-esteem score mean of the participants regarding the level of income variable [$F_{(2-137)}$ = .864, p > 0.05]. There was no statically significant difference found between the self-esteem score mean of the participants and the time of disability variable [$t_{(138)}$ = .621, p > 0.05]. It was seen that there was no statistically significant difference between the self-esteem score mean of the participants and the national athlete variable [$t_{(138)}$ = .296, p > 0.05]. There was no statically significant relationship was found between the self-esteem mean score and the age variable of the participants (p > 0.05). When the literature was examined, Mullis et al. (1992) stated that self-esteem increases with age. In the study conducted by Tamer et al. (2011) on visually impaired elite weightlifters, it was found that the self-esteem levels changed depending on the age variable and the self-esteem level increased as the age got older. Özkan (1992) reported that there was no significant relationship between self-esteem and age among university students. In the literature, contradictory results were reported in studies examining the difference in self-esteem according to the age variable. Participants of this study were mostly in late adolescence and later brought to mind that self-esteem was reinforced in these individuals (Dinçer et al., 2015).

It was seen that there was a statistically positive and low-level significant relationship between the participants' sports age variable and their self-esteem mean scores (r = .147; p < 0.05). In this context, it was concluded that the higher the sports age of the participants, the higher their self-esteem levels. When the literature was examined, there were not any study that includes the age of starting sports and self-esteem. In conclusion, in this study, which examined the self-esteem levels of physically disabled individuals who do sports according to some variables and a positive difference was found between the sports age and self-esteem of the individuals. It was thought that this difference found was related to the experience of individuals in sports. It was concluded that individuals with physical disabilities who started sports at an early age and did sports for many years had higher self-esteem than individuals who just started sports. In this context, it was emphasized that sports were psychologically very important for disabled individuals as well as its physical and sociological dimensions, and the importance of starting sports at an early age and continuing systematically for disabled individuals to express themselves by the society.

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