

Full Length Research Paper

A comparative study on American and Turkish students' self esteem in terms of sport participation: A study on psychological health

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The present research was conducted in order to compare self-esteem of American students with Turkish students in terms of the sport participation at the universities. For this purpose, a total of 460 students ($M_{age}=19,61\pm 1,64$) voluntarily participated in the study from two universities. As data collection tool, Rosenberg (1965) Self-esteem Scale was used to determine scores of the self-esteem in relation to participants. There was a significant statistically difference in self-esteem between students doing sports and those not doing sports in both countries ($0,001, p<0.05$). There was a significant statistically difference between American and Turkish students in terms of the sport participation ($0,001, p>0.05$). These findings were evaluated and discussed in terms of the self-esteem of university students.

Key words: Self-esteem, sport participation, students.

INTRODUCTION

In today's society, psychological health of people have been getting worse owing to various changed habits with reference to daily life. The world has been changing year after year, as habits do. All people have been affected by this changing all over the world positively or negatively. One of the most influenced psychological aspects of people is self-esteem. The self-esteem has long been viewed as an integral component of psychological well-being (Kling et al., 1999). Maslow described in his hierarchy of needs whereas one of these needs is self-esteem contributing to psychological well-being. Without it, people are unable to grow and eventually reach the final stage self-actualization. He maintained that there are two

forms of esteem. There is the need for respect from others, and the need for self-respect, or inner self-esteem. Respect from others includes acceptance, status, appreciation and recognition. This self-esteem is more fragile and easily lost than inner self-esteem (Greenberg, 2008).

Positive self-esteem is an important trait that contributes to the positive development of adolescents (Bailey et al., 2009). People with high self-esteem have been characterized as possessing self-respect and self-worth, whereas those people with low self-esteem are thought not to respect themselves, feel unworthy, inadequate, or inefficient (Rosenberg, 1965). In this context, people with high self-esteem tend to be more active in their daily

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activities, have more optimistic attitude, and better psychosocial health (Bowker et al., 2003) as opposed to those with low self-esteem. Having positive self-esteem also enables an individual to have the confidence to meet new challenges, and may even lead to better grades in schools, increased motivation, and higher educational and occupational aspirations (Kleitman and Marsh, 2003). Along with the physical, sport participation have many benefits on psychological well-being. Therefore, self-esteem may be elevated by sports participation. For example, those who participate in sports are more likely to have healthy self-esteem and higher physical self-perception (Asci, 2004). Bailey et al., (2009) reported that adolescent sport participation is positively associated with higher levels of self-esteem. In line with these explanations, the present study aimed to compare self-esteem of American students with Turkish students in terms of the sport participation at the universities in developing (Turkey) and developed (America) countries, it was hypothesized that self-esteem level will differ with sport participation in both countries.

METHOD AND MATERIALS

Participants

The population sample of this study consisted of 460 university students from America and Turkey universities, who ($M_{age}=19,61\pm 1,64$) voluntarily participated in this study. The researcher sent the data collection tool to America with voluntary students who wants to contribute to the present study. Before answering, the students in America received a brief English presentation prepared by the researcher, and so data collection tool was performed in English and Turkish. Random sampling method was used in the selection process of the participants. 230 university students from each country were compared in self-esteem and sport participation.

Instrument

The Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES) score was used to calculate the data by first reverse coding the negatively worded items: 3, 5, 8, 9, 10 (Strongly Agree = 0, Agree = 1, Disagree = 2, and Strongly Disagree = 3), coding the positively worded items: 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 (Strongly Agree = 3, Agree = 2, Disagree = 1, and Strongly Disagree = 0), and then summing all the items 1 to 10 to obtain a total score. The RSES score ranges from 0 to 30 with higher scores indicating higher self-esteem. Scores between 15 and 25 are within normal range; scores below 15 suggesting low self-esteem and above 25 suggesting high self-esteem. A new variable Standard Error (SE) was created and RSES scores were categorized into ordinal data: 1 = low self-esteem or scores below 15, 2 = normal self-esteem or scores 15 - 25, and 3 = high self-esteem or scores above 25 (Murphy, 2012). The test-retest reliability was in the range of .85 to .88 and Cronbach's alpha was reported at .89 (Rosenberg, 1965; Williams and Galliher, 2006). The RSES was adapted to Turkish samples by Cuhadaroglu (Cuhadaroglu, 1986). Cuhadaroglu reported test-retest reliability coefficients of .71 during a 4-week period on the Turkish version (Coskun, 2009).

Procedure

A descriptive cross-sectional design was used in the present study.

Rosenberg self-esteem scale was administered to participants in a group in classroom setting. The researcher and other volunteer student provided a brief presentation on the present study in Turkey and America respectively. Participation in the study was voluntary and student responses to questionnaire regarding demographical variable (age), self-esteem scale have been kept anonymous. Before the psychological measurements in both countries, participants stated that they had agreed to participate in the study. Moreover, the participants were assured that all their records are kept confidential.

Data analysis

The data was analyzed by Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.0 Package Program. Descriptive statistics, independent sample t-test analysis were used to analyze the data. Level of significance was determined to be 0.05.

FINDINGS

As shown in Table 1, there was a significant statistically difference between doing sports and not doing sports students in self-esteem in America (0.001, $p<0.05$). there was a significant statistically difference between doing sports and not doing sports students in self-esteem in Turkey (0.001, $p<0.05$). As shown in Table 2 there was a significant statistically difference between American students doing sports and Turkish students doing sports in self-esteem (0.001, $p<0.05$). There was a significant statistically difference between American students not doing sports and Turkish students not doing sports in self-esteem (0.001, $p<0.05$).

DISCUSSION

The research was conducted in order to compare self-esteem of American students with Turkish students in terms of the sport participation. It was hypothesized that the self-esteem level will differ with sport participation in both countries. When the data of the present study was examined, the results of the present study supported the hypothesis that the self-esteem level will differ with sport participation in both countries. According to findings, there was a significant statistically difference between students doing sports and not doing sports in self-esteem in both countries (0,001, $p<0.05$). There was a significant statistically difference between American and Turkish students in terms of the sport participation (0,001, $p>0.05$). Some relevant studies in the literature supported the results of the present study while showing similar results. These similar results showed that sport participation have positive effects on self-esteem (Forrester and Beggs, 2005; Icten et al., 2006; Tekin et al., 2002; Aksaray, 2003; Bailey et al., 2009; Bowker, 2006; Asci, 2004; Bicer, 2013; Ryska, 2003; Sanford et al., 2008). As explained above, previous studies stated that sport participation have positive effects on self-esteem. In this context, the present study duplicated previous results regarding self-

Table 1. Differences between students doing sports and not doing sports in both countries.

	N	Self-esteem Mean & Std. Deviation
American students		
Students Doing Sports	122	24,40±3,18
Students Not Doing Sports	108	20,11±2,53
P		0.001 p<0.05
Turkish students		
Students Doing Sports	101	23,04±2,03
Students Not Doing Sports	129	18,87±1,52
P		0.001 p<0.05

Table 2. Differences between American and Turkish students' self-esteem.

	N	Self-esteem Mean & Std. Deviation
In Both Countries		
American Students Doing Sports	122	24,40±3,18
Turkish Students Doing Sports	101	23,04±2,03
P		0.001 p<0.05
In Both Countries		
American Students Not Doing Sports	108	20,11±2,53
Turkish Students Not Doing Sports	129	18,87±1,52
P		0.001 p<0.05

esteem and sport participation. Moreover, the present research aimed to determine the differences in self-esteem and sport participation between developing (Turkey) and developed (America) countries.

The present study, used cross-sectional design to determine self-esteem levels and compare two countries at one specific point in time. Researcher collected the all data at a defined time in both countries because in cross-sectional studies, data is collected to make inferences about a population of interest at one point in time. Statistical analysis were performed properly to record relationships and differences with respect to self-esteem and sport participation of university students, as were the case in the cross-sectional studies. In cross-sectional studies, after measurements have been completed, statistical analysis are used to determine the relationships between the variables in relation to participants. Also, cross-sectional model can bring forth new ideas for the future studies (Yigiter, 2013). These ideas may indicate the direction to the future studies. In this framework, it can be recommended for future studies that more similar scales with regard to psychological health can be applied to different countries on a greater number of

students to reach more trustable data than the present study. Limitation of the study can also be noted that this study used two university from two countries to compare the level of self-esteem on university students in terms of the sport participation. In spite of small sample size of the present study, the results provide preliminary evidence which will support further research regarding correlation between sport participation and psychological health.

CONCLUSIONS

In accordance with the explanations, the present study aimed to compare the level of self-esteem on students doing sports and not doing sports at the universities of each country. To sum up, based on the data, the present study revealed that students engaged in sports activities in both countries have high self-esteem contrary to others. Also, it should also be noted that the data of the present study supported and replicated previous findings in the literature regarding correlation between self-esteem and sport participation. In conclusion, it can be said that the sport participation is an impacting variable on the

self-esteem of university students in both countries.

Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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