



## Tennis players and their levels of self-esteem. A comparative study on psychology at an intercollegiate tennis tournament?

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Korkmaz YİĞİTER <sup>a,\*</sup> and Yunus ZENGİN <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Sport Sciences Faculty, Sport Management, Duzce University, Turkey.

<sup>b</sup> Sport Sciences Faculty, Duzce University, Turkey.

\*Corresponding Author Email: [korkmazvigiter@duzce.edu.tr](mailto:korkmazvigiter@duzce.edu.tr)

**Abstract:** The present research was conducted to investigate the relationship between tennis playing and self-esteem, and also, some variables at an intercollegiate tennis tournament. To this end, a total of 240 students ( $M_{age}:21,05\pm1,78$ ) from different universities voluntarily participated in the study. In the process, as a data collection tool, Coopersmith Self-esteem inventory by developed Coopersmith in 1967 was used in this study and it was used to determine the participants' scores of self-esteem. A comparing design was used in the present research. This design was chosen because differences between three and more parameters were investigated in the study group. Descriptive statistics and frequency analysis were calculated for determining demographic features and scores (M, SD etc.). Participants were compared using Mann-Whitney U & Kruskal-Wallis H Tests analysis. According to the results of the research, there was not a significant statistical difference in self-esteem between male and female students. There was not a significant statistical difference in self-esteem among different departments and universities. There was not a significant statistical difference in self-esteem between having a physical injury and not having a physical injury. On the other hand, there was a significant statistical difference in self-esteem between having a psychological disorder and not having a psychological disorder. This result shows that playing tennis can change the self-esteem level in a positive direction.

**Key Words:** Self-esteem, Psychology, Emotion, Mood, Playing tennis



**Dr. Korkmaz YİĞİTER** currently a Professor of School of Sport Sciences, Duzce University TURKEY. He has supervised for 4 master's degree theses. He has published 30 articles related to sports psychology, sports participation, recreation, etc. He

took part in the many sports congress, conference and symposium.



**Yunus ZENGİN** is a recent graduate of the Duzce University Physical Education and Sports Program. He is also a tennis coach. He went to USA through a work and travel company. He has been living and working in there. His

primary research interests are in sports psychology.

## 1. Introduction

Self-esteem is described as a person's overall sense of personal worth. Also, self-esteem has a powerful impact on your success, life and future. If you have a high self-esteem level, this makes you brave for taking some responsibilities in your daily life and so self-esteem can play a significant role in your motivation and happiness throughout your life. High self-esteem is related to many positive behaviors and skills. For example, problem solving skill is one of them and it is a universal skill which all people need for figuring encountered problems out on a daily basis. Having good problem skills can make people more versatile and successful and so overcoming the complex problems encountered is easy for people more than those have not. All over the world, by means of self-esteem improvement, people can acquire the some opportunities to have the real abilities such as problem solving skill, assertiveness etc., [1]. Brown (1998) stated that individuals happier with their lives have high self-esteem, and this results in fewer interpersonal problems and a higher consistency of achievements [2]. Individuals with high self-esteem are more capable of forming a satisfying love relationship and are less susceptible to social pressure (Brown, 1998). Individuals with high self-esteem generally have greater, and more accurate, self-knowledge than do individuals with low self-esteem [3]. High self-esteem is related to actively participating in daily exercises, sports participation, participation in recreational and physical activities, a more optimistic attitude, and better psychological health [4].

Aside from self-esteem, positive self-worth, self-perceptions, social support and self-efficacy are acknowledged indicators of psychosocial health and quality of life [5]. Participation in sports activities, exercises or physical activity has a positive impact on mental health and the general happiness rate of people. Sport participation helps individuals to have a healthy physical structure and confidence but also enhance psychologically which includes self-awareness and self-discipline leading to self-respect and courage. Additionally, it helps individuals to learn and develop one's skills, potential, leadership abilities and more. Development of competence or expertise in sporting skills can lead to a sense of

personal effectiveness and feelings of autonomy, and these increase the self-esteem levels of individuals [6]. Mathew et al., (2017), reported that athletes have significantly higher self-esteem compared to non-athletes [7]. Moreover, athletes participating in competitive have higher self-esteem than athletes participating in recreational activities [8]. Merkel (2013) pointed out in his study that sports and recreation should be a fundamental activities of children's lives. Participation in sport provides a medium for physical activity, developing friendships, and learning developmental skills across all domains. Organized youth sports, when focused on fundamentals, facilitate physical activity while providing enjoyment for the young athlete. Fostering a positive youth sports experience is the accumulation of multiple factors, ie, matching the child's readiness with the demands of the sport, positive behavior from coaches and parents, realistic goal setting, and appropriate methods in place for injury reduction and management. Reducing sports attrition is necessary for sustaining sports participation and facilitating physical activity into adulthood. It appears that an emphasis on having fun while establishing a balance between physical fitness, psychologic well-being, and lifelong lessons for a healthy and active lifestyle is paramount for success. Mausavi and Pour (2016), stated that regular exercises and physical activity as well as the use of exercise therapy, are effective to increase self-esteem and mental balance [9]. Therefore, exercise can be used effectively to create a positive attitude toward ourselves and our cognitive abilities. In general, university officials who have access to information about different aspects of students' personalities, should provide conditions that nurture their students' self-esteem and which encourage them to participate in sports activities and exercise programs as an effective strategy for ensuring their mental health and ultimately their personal growth.

Besides all of these, self-esteem is described as either a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward oneself and functions as effective evaluation of the self [10]. In all likelihood, physical activity, exercise and sport participation can a significant role in the development of physical and psychological health. Participating in physical activity affects the

development of positive habits, enhances healthy lifestyles. In line with the explanations above, the study aimed to investigate the self-esteem levels of the tennis players participating in an intercollegiate tennis tournament.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Participants

A comparing design was used in the present research. This design was chosen because differences between three and more parameters were investigated in the study group. The researcher submitted an oral presentation for the participants and all participants (240) participated in the study voluntarily. The participants consisted of active boys and girls tennis players in their life. It is important to note that, the students of both genders were randomly selected from different universities and their different departments. The sample that was chosen for the present study was only limited to an intercollegiate tennis tournament.

### 2.2 Data Collection Tool

Stanley Coopersmith (1967) developed Self-Esteem Inventory Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSI) [11]. It evaluates the attitudes of respondents towards themselves in different areas. Tufan and Turan (1987) made the language adaptations for Turkey. The reliability coefficient was found to be 0.76 ( $p < 0,005$ ) [12]. 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 ( $p < 0,005$ ). The adult version of the scale was used. The scale, which consists of 25 items, was scored between 0 and 1 and the maximum score for this questionnaire 100 and the minimum is 0. High point of CSI score determines a high level of

self-respect, whereas a low point score of CSI determines a low level of self-respect [13].

### 2.3 Data Analysis

In this study, data were collected during the intercollegiate tennis tournament that was performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. Descriptive statistics and frequency analysis were calculated for determining demographic features and scores (M, SD etc.). Participants were compared by means of Mann-Whitney U & Kruskal-Wallis H Tests analysis. Statistical significance in this study was set at  $p \leq 0,05$ . In the study, the distribution of the data collected from participants was not found normal ( $p < 0,05$ ). As a result of the normality test, non-parametric tests were used in this study.

## 3. Results

According to Table 1, the average age was found to be ( $M_{age}: 21,05 \pm 1,78$ ), an average of the self-esteem scores was found to be  $78,98 \pm 14,21$ . As can be seen in Table 2, there was not a significant statistical difference in self-esteem between male and female students ( $,315, p > 0,05$ ).

As can be seen in Table 3, there was not a significant statistical difference in self-esteem among different departments ( $,460, p > 0,05$ ).

As can be seen in Table 4, there was not a significant statistical difference in self-esteem between private and state universities ( $,391, p > 0,05$ ).

As can be seen in Table 5, there was not a significant statistical difference in self-esteem between having a physical injury and having not physical injury ( $,640, p > 0,05$ ). On the other hand, there was a significant statistical difference in self-esteem between having a psychological disorder and having not a psychological disorder ( $,000, p < 0,05$ ).

As can be seen in Table 6, there was not a significant statistical difference in self-esteem in terms of years of experience in sport ( $,552, p > 0,05$ ).

**Table.1** Frequencies and Descriptive Analysis

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Age	240	17	27	21,05	1,78
Self-esteem	240	40	100	78,98	14,21

**Table.2** Difference between female and male students

	Gender	N	M	SD	Z	Sig.	P
Self-esteem	Female	102	80,19	13,43	-1,005	,315	p>0,05
	Male	138	78,08	14,74			

**Table.3** Difference among departments

	Department	N	M	SD	Sig.	P
Self-esteem	PE and Sport	54	77,48	15,33	,460	p>0,05
	Coaching	58	81,83	12,36		
	Sport Management	24	79,58	13,39		
	Recreation	18	82	15,29		
	Others	86	78,09	14,35		

**Table.4** Difference between private and state universities

	Universities	N	M	SD	Z	Sig.	P
Self-esteem	Private	88	78,50	13,44	-,857	,391	p>0,05
	State	152	79,26	14,67			

**Table.5** Differences between having a physical injury-having psychological disorder and having a not physical injury-having psychological disorder

	Category	N	M	SD	Z	Sig.	P
Self-esteem	<b>Physical Injury</b>						
	Having physical injury	14	75,42	19,07	-,467	,640	p>0,05
	Having not physical injury	226	79,20	13,88			
	<b>Psychological Disorder</b>						
	Having psychological disorder	24	67,50	14,74	-3,931	,000	p<0,05
Having not psychological disorder	216	80,25	13,59				

**Table.6** Differences in terms of years of experience in the sport

	Years of experience in the sport	N	M	SD	Sig.	P
Self-esteem	1-3	80	77,10	15,02	,552	p>0,05
	3-5	53	79,77	13,59		
	5-8	42	79,71	14,28		
	8-12	65	80,18	13,71		

#### 4. Discussion

The present research was conducted to investigate the relationship between tennis playing and self-esteem, and also, some variables. We investigated some parameters in the study related to

self-esteem. The result of the data collected showed that there was not a significant statistical difference in self-esteem between male and female students. There was not a significant statistical difference in self-esteem among different departments and universities. There was not a significant statistical difference in self-esteem between having a physical injury and not having a physical injury. On the other hand, there was a significant statistical difference in self-esteem between having a psychological disorder and not having a psychological disorder.

Collins et al., (2018), in his study, investigated the relationship between self-esteem and happiness with participation in sports before college. Results of their study revealed that 514 college students who participated in sports before college reported higher self-esteem and happiness than non-sport participants [14]. Moreover, it was found in their study that a lifetime of sport participation beginning in youth and adolescence improved the physical and psychological well-being of individuals as they enter young adulthood. Omarsson (2013), pointed out in his study that sports participation positively influences self-esteem and body-image of adolescent youth [15]. The results of their study suggested that individuals participating in sports on a weekly basis have significantly higher self-esteem and body-image than individuals who do not participating in sport or physical activities. Also, participants who practice individual sports have higher self-esteem than participants in team-sports. Rasciute and Downward (2010) in their longitudinal study on individuals aged 16 and up, that investigated the relationship between sport participation and physical activity and health and well-being [16]. It was found that physical activity, sports participation or exercises had a significant positive impact on physical health and psychological happiness. Moreover, in another study, Downward and Rasciute (2011) conducted a longitudinal study to investigate the effect of participation in sport on the happiness [17]. The results of their study revealed that sports have a significant relationship with happiness. Also, the social interaction gained through participation in sports was found to increase one's happiness. They suggested that sports participation is important and

encouraged for the general population to improve not only health but increase happiness.

Given the literature related to self-esteem, Bowker (2006), investigated the relationship between sports participation and self-esteem, with a particular interest in the possible mediating role of physical self-esteem [18]. He pointed out that sports participation was related to all indices of self-esteem for equally boys and girls. Also, in her study, two distinct but related factors were identified as components of physical self-esteem which refer to physical appearance and physical competence, differentially associated with self-esteem for boys and girls. The results of the study supported a mediation model, with physical self-esteem mediating the relationship between sports participation and general self-esteem. Regarding specific indices of physical self-esteem, significant gender differences were noted in the study. Yiğiter (2014), investigated the effects of participation in regular exercise for 12 weeks on self-esteem and hopelessness of female students at a Turkish university [19]. Participants in the experiment group improved in level of self-esteem whereas there was no significant change in the level of self-esteem of the control group. Moreover, results showed a significant reduction in the hopelessness level of the participants in the experiment group but there was no significant change in the level of hopelessness with the control group. In his study, a regular exercise program was found to be an impacting variable in improving self-esteem and decreasing the hopelessness level of female university students in Turkey.

In the present study, some limitations were noted which should be reminded for future researchers and studies. For instance, we conducted this study on an intercollegiate tennis tournament in Turkey. Also, the second limitation is that the intercollegiate tennis tournament has a week program and the researcher did not reach all participants in this period. It should be recommended that two branches maybe can be compared with each other for determining the differences between tennis and other branches.

Consequently, self-esteem can influence many features related to psychology of the people, for instance, social adaptation of the people could be promoted by directly enhancing self-esteem and as the self-esteem rises, the rate of despair decreases whereas as the despair rises, the self-esteem decreases [1, 20]. Bum and Jeon (2018) examined the relationships among the factors of fun, self-esteem, and happiness with a group of 249 players from tennis clubs located in the Seoul capital area, South Korea [21]. The results of their analysis showed that self-esteem can be improved by participating in fitness and having acknowledgment, and negative self-esteem can be decreased in this way. Both interest and fitness increase happiness, and sociability influences positive self-esteem. If an individual has negative self-perception, this condition reduces the happiness level of him/her. Their result showed that fitness, acknowledgement, and sociability have an important in order to increase happiness through the mediator of self-esteem. All of them provide useful information for busy people on how to lead a healthy and meaningful life by having fun and consistently participating in physical activities.

## 5. Conclusion

Many studies above mentioned showed the same results regarding self-esteem and its positive effects on people's general mood. Participating in sport, exercises or any physical activities have a significant role in increasing the level of self-esteem of people. Regular physical activities, exercises or participating in sport or physical recreational activities have multiple benefits for physical, mental, and psychosocial health. Moreover, these activities can decrease anxiety and depression, and they contribute to improving mood positively and other aspects of well-being.

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## Conflict of interest

None of the authors have any conflicts of interest to declare.

## Informed consent

All participants gave written informed consent to participate in this study.

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