

STUDYING THE EFFECTS OF SPORTING HABITS ON THE SELF-ESTEEM OF DISABLED INDIVIDUALS¹

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ABSTRACT

It is considered that whether disabled individuals have low or high self-esteem affects their interactions with the other individuals and how they cope with the challenges they come across in a society. Therefore, it is great significance to study the factors that are effective in boosting the self-esteem of such individuals.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of sporting habits and different variables on the self-esteem level of disabled individuals. Total of 371 disabled individuals, 136 female and 235 male aged 13-18, who reside in different cities in Turkey, participated in this study. Self Esteem Scale, developed by Kuzgun (2005), was used in order to gather data. T test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were employed in the analysis.

Based on the evaluation of the survey results, no difference among disabled individuals was observed in terms of average self-esteem levels with respect to gender, whereas, a significant difference was observed with respect to whether or not he or she is involved in a sporting activity, types of sports, how much and how often he or she does, the kind of disability, age and education level. The analysis shows that disabled individuals who exercise regularly tend to have higher self-esteem than those who don't. Moreover, the analysis also indicates that there is a positive correlation between the duration of the sporting activity participated and the level of self-esteem. In conclusion, it is imperative to study the various effects and determine ways to increase the self-esteem of the disabled individuals who actively or passively interact with the society they live in, and to make them more active in social life by encouraging them to participate in more sporting activities.

Key words: Self-esteem, Individuality, Sporting Habits, Disabled Individuals

SPOR YAPMANIN ENGELLİ BİREYLERDEKİ ÖZSAYGIYA ETKİSİNİN İNCELENMESİ ÖZET

Engelli bireylerin öz saygısının düşük veya yüksek olmasının toplum içinde diğer bireylere karşı tutumunu ve yaşam sürecindeki zorluklarla mücadele etmesini aynı paralellikte etkileyeceği düşünülmektedir. Bu durumda, engelli bireylerin öz saygısını artırmada etkili olan unsurların belirlenmesi önem teşkil etmektedir.

Bu çalışmanın amacı, engelli bireylerde spor ve farklı değişkenlerin özsaygı düzeyine etkisini incelemektir. Araştırmaya Türkiye'de farklı illerde ikamet eden 13-18 yaş arası 136 kadın ve 235 erkek olmak üzere toplam 371 engelli birey katılmıştır. Veri toplamak amacı ile Kuzgun (2005) tarafından geliştirilen "Öz Saygı Ölçeği" kullanılmıştır [1]. Verilerin analizinde t testi varyans analizi tekniklerinden yararlanılmıştır. Grupların görüşleri arasındaki fark P 0.05 anlamlılık düzeyi dikkate alınarak yorumlanmıştır.

Elde edilen bulgulara göre cinsiyet ile öz saygı ortalamaları arasında farklılık olmadığı ortaya çıkmıştır. Buna karşın; spor yapma durumu, spor türü, haftalık spor yapma süresi, engel türü, yaş ve öğrenim durumu açısından incelendiğinde, öz saygı ortalamaları arasında anlamlı farklılık olduğu bulunmuştur. Spor yapan engelli bireylerin öz saygısının spor yapmayan bireylerden yüksek olduğu ve haftalık spor yapma süresi arttıkça öz saygısında aynı paralellikte arttığı gözlenmiştir. Öneri olarak toplumla sürekli etkileşim içinde aktif ve pasif olarak bulunan engelli bireylerin daha etkin olabilmeleri ve özsaygılarının yüksek olması için spor yapmaya teşvik edilerek, öz saygısını artırmada etkili olabilecek unsurların belirlenmesinin önemi üzerinde çalışmalar yapılmalıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öz saygı, Benlik, Spor Yapma, Engelli Bireyler.

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INTRODUCTION

Self-esteem is related to one's understanding of himself/herself. The person who starts getting to know and understand himself/herself and is aware of his or her potentials also starts realizing his potentials and trusting his judgment. The person who has self-esteem is the one who is self-confident, aware of his or her weaknesses and strengths and who considers himself or herself important all things considered. Self-respect and self-importance are result of one's being respectful and found of himself or herself. The person with self-esteem not only can meet ends but also believes that he or she can handle the challenges faced. Feeling of valuable and sufficient is fundamental to self-esteem. People with such character traits tend to reach higher social status in the society they live in. On the other hand, people with opposite of such traits tend not to enjoy life, lose confidence in their capabilities, and their behaviors towards themselves and their environment change in a negative way.

It is imperative to distinguish two concepts that are found confusing: society's perception of a person shapes self-esteem with experiences whereas the person's own assessment of himself or herself determines self-respect. That is to say self-respect is formed as a result of an inner communication. Self-respects also results in not only respecting one's self but also respecting his or her environment and life in general. People with no self-respect are not expected to have self-esteem either.

Disabled individuals are those who have physical, mental, behavioral incompetency and partial or complete malfunctions in sense-related organs [2]. Due to such conditions, in their daily lives as well as in work lives, disabled individuals face numerous challenges. To alleviate such challenges, special educational programs must be developed. In addition, it is aimed at

increasing the impact of disabled individuals in the society. Despite the number of programs exercised, individual's self-confidence greatly affects the progress.

In our country, disabled individuals constitute 14% of the population. This percentage is 20% among population at school age [3]. The ratio of disabled individual's population to the country's overall population shows how influential they can be on a country's socio-economic conditions. Therefore, in order for disabled individuals to take important roles in the society, it is essential to improve their self-confidence and make them believe that society is in need to them and that they are an important part of society.

The mission of Turkish Federation of Sportsmen with Special Needs; as the Turkey's one and only institution with the authority to determine, organize and inspect all national and international activities; is creating and maintaining an achieve of sportsmen with special needs and promoting their recognition, representation and integration with the society in collaboration with schools, libraries, written and visual media, individuals and institutions [4].

It is considered that sport has positive impact on individuals and societies. Its impact manifests itself as the ability to like, enjoy, seek rights, not violate other's right, share, comply with the competition's rules, accept success as well as failure, socialize and expand social network [5]. Societal acceptances bring with self-esteem. Self-respect improves with inner peace and self-esteem. Thanks to sporting activities, individuals with not only physical but also spiritual discipline realize their potentials, accept their differences, embrace their weaknesses and strengths, respect and like themselves. Self-esteem grows on individuals with self-satisfaction, self-respect and self-acceptance. According to Rosenberg, Baldwin and Hoffmann,

self-respect is assessing a personality in either a positive or a negative way. Self-respect is not a stationary but dynamic entity [6].

Self-esteem is influenced by various physiological features as it influences them as well. For example, the level of self-esteem of an individual helps such individual to be involved more the positive social interactions, to be academically more successful, to have better cognitive skills, to be less likely of getting into depression and to be more happy [8, 10, 11, 12].

Maslow claims that for an individual to be actually productive and successful, a healthy dose of self-esteem is a must. According to Maslow, there are two sources of self-esteem: the first is the love, respect and acceptance one gets from people who are dear to the individual, the second is the feeling of success and satisfaction [13].

Disabled individuals must exercise and do sports regularly in order to preserve physical and mental health, to obtain an effective role in the society and to build self-confidence, thus, they can not only be resilient and withstand the challenges but also build a healthy physiological and physical endurance.

As a result of the information provided above, one can conclude that sport can be very effective in boosting disabled individuals' self-esteem due to the fact that it has a positive impact on their mental, spirituals and physical health.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is a descriptive study conducted in order to identify self-esteem status of disabled persons in terms of gender, age, family structure, education, disability type, sport participation and duration of performing sports.

Total of 371 disabled individuals, 136 female and 235 male aged 13-18, who reside in different cities in Turkey, participated in this study. 53,9 percent of

participants are physically handicapped, 30,7 percent of them are hearing impaired and 15,4 percent of them are visually impaired. Self Esteem Scale, developed by Kuzgun (2005), was used in order to gather data.

Self-esteem scale consists of 20 items that are 5 point Likert-type scale. While 15 items are scored positively, 5 items (3,4,6,7,12) are scored negatively. While positive item with "always" response gets 5 points and "No Time" response gets 1 point, negative item with "always" response gets 1 point and " No Time "response gets 5 points. Low points obtained from the scale indicate low self-esteem, and high points indicate high self-esteem point [13].

The internal consistency of self-esteem is found by calculating Cronbach Alpha coefficient. The coefficient is determined as 0,81 with the calculation. This result indicates that the scale has relatively high value of internal consistency [1]. In the analysis of research data independent sample t test and One-way ANOVA analysis was used.

FINDINGS

This section contains research findings and interpretation of the findings. Table 1 presents demographic characteristics of disabled individuals, Table 2 presents disability status and Table 3 presents the frequency distributions related to sport participation. In this study, independent sample t test is used to compare the values obtained from self-esteem scale with the variables of gender and sport participation and statistical results are given in Tables 4 and 5. One way ANOVA analysis test is used to compare the values obtained from self-esteem scale with the variables of disability type, age, education, sports type and weekly time to perform sports and the statistical results are given in Table 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics

		Number (N)	Percent %
Gender	Woman	136	36,7
	Men	235	63,3
	Total	371	100,0
Age	14 years and under	126	34,0
	Between the ages of 15-20	175	47,2
	Between the ages of 21-26	25	6,7
	27 years and over	45	12,1
	Total	371	100,0
Family Structure	Nuclear family	281	75,7
	Extended family	71	19,1
	Broken families	19	5,1
	Total	371	100,0
Education	Elementary School	209	56,3
	High school	140	37,7
	Junior college /University	22	5,9
	Total	371	100,0

Table 2: Status of Disabled

		Number (N)	Percent %
Difficulty Type	Hearing	114	30,7
	Seeing	57	15,4
	Physical	200	53,9
	Total	371	100,0
Cause of Disability	Congenitally	288	77,6
	After birth	83	22,4
	Total	371	100,0
You blocked for several years	16 years and under	162	43,7
	Between the ages of 17-22	165	44,5
	Between the ages of 23-28	23	6,2
	29 years and over	21	5,7
	Total	371	100,0

Table 3: Sedentary Conditions

		Number (N)	Percent %
Performing sports? (Sporting status)	Yes	246	66,3
	No	125	33,7
	Total	371	100,0
Sports Type	Individual sports	139	37,5
	Team sports	107	28,8
	No sports	125	33,7
	Total	371	100,0
Weekly hours to perform sports	No sports	125	33,7
	Less than or equal to 2 hours	80	21,6
	Between 3 and 4 hours	90	24,3
	Between 5 and 6 hours	67	18,1
	Greater than or equal to 7 hours	9	2,4
	Total	371	100,0
Must disabled individuals do sports?	Yes	336	90,6
	No	35	9,4
	Total	371	100,0

Table 4: Comparison of self-esteem from the perspective of gender variable rate

Gender	N	\bar{x}	Ss	t	p
Female	136	63,83	11,73	-,645	
Male	235	64,64	11,56	-,643	,519

Analyzing Table 4, it is seen that there is not a significant difference at the level of P.0.05 between the averages of the

scores obtained from the self-esteem scale by female and male disabled individuals.

Table 5: Comparison of self-esteem from the perspective of sporting status variable rate

Sporting status	N	\bar{x}	Ss	t	P
Yes	246	66,26	10,86	4,559	,000
No	125	60,59	12,17	4,392	

Analyzing Table 5, it is seen that there is a significant difference at the level of P.0.05 that the average of the scores obtained from the self-esteem scale by

disabled individuals performing sports is higher than the average score of disabled individuals not performing sports.

Table 6: Comparison of self-esteem from the perspective of difficulty type variable rate

Difficulty type	N	\bar{x}	Ss	F	P
Hearing	114	59,40	11,07		
Seeing	57	66,78	9,96	16,158	,000 1-2,3
Physical	200	66,47	11,53		
Total	371	64,35	11,61		

Analyzing Table 6, it is seen that there is a significant difference for hearing impaired individuals with respect to visually impaired and physically disabled individuals when the average of the scores obtained from the self-esteem scale by hearing, visually, and

physically disabled individuals are compared.(P <0.05).

As a result of this difference; scores of hearing impaired individuals were found to be lower than scores of visually impaired and physically disabled individuals.

Table 7: Comparison of self-esteem from the perspective of age variable rate

Age	N	\bar{x}	Ss	F	P
At the age of 14 or below	126	67,65	10,89		
At 15-20 age group	175	61,20	11,61		
At 21-26 age group	25	68,36	11,28	9,329	,000 2-1,3,4
At the age of 27 or above	45	65,13	10,72		
Total	371	64,35	11,61		

Analyzing Table 7, it is seen that there is a significant difference for disabled

individuals that are at 15-20 age group with respect to those that are at the age

of 14 or below, at 21-26 age group and at the age of 27 or above when the average of the scores obtained from the self-esteem scale by disabled individuals from different age groups are

compared.(P <0.05).

As a result of this difference; scores of disabled individuals that are at 15-20 age group were found to be lower than others' scores.

Table 8: Comparison of self-esteem from the perspective of education status variable rate

Education status	N	\bar{x}	Ss	F	P
Elementary school	209	66,14	11,63	7,619	,001
High school	140	61,37	11,22		
Junior college/University	22	66,18	10,46		
Total	371	64,35	11,61		2-1,3

Analyzing Table 8, it is seen that there is a significant difference for disabled individuals with high school education with respect to those with elementary school education and junior college/university education when the average of the scores obtained from the self-esteem scale by disabled

individuals from different education status are compared.(P <0.05).

As a result of this difference; scores of disabled individuals with high school education were found to be lower than scores of disabled individuals with elementary school education and junior college/university education.

Table 9: Comparison of self-esteem from the perspective of sports type variable rate

Sports type	N	\bar{x}	Ss	F	P
Individual sports	139	67,06	11,42	11,218	,000
Team sports	107	65,21	10,03		
No sports	125	60,59	12,17		
Total	371	64,35	11,61		3-1,2

Analyzing Table 9, it is seen that there is a significant difference for disabled individuals with no sporting habits with respect to those performing individual or team sports when the average of the scores obtained from the self-esteem scale by disabled individuals from

different sports type status are compared.(P <0.05).

As a result of this difference; scores of disabled individuals with no sporting habits were found to be lower than scores of disabled individuals performing individual and team sports.

Table 10: Comparison of self-esteem from the perspective of duration of performing sports variable rate.

Duration of performing sports	N	\bar{x}	Ss	F	P
No sports	125	60,59	12,17	7,083	,000
2 hours or less	80	64,73	10,44		
3-4 hours	90	65,20	11,91		
5-6 hours	67	68,94	9,93		
7 hours or more	9	70,44	5,02		
Total	371	64,35	11,61		1-2,3,4,5

Analyzing Table 10, it is seen that there is a significant difference for disabled

individuals that with no sporting habits with respect to those performing sports for 2 hours or less and for 3-4 hours and

for 5-6 hours and for 7 hours or more when the average of the scores obtained from the self-esteem scale by disabled individuals from different duration of performing sports status are compared. ($P < 0.05$).

As a result of this difference; scores of disabled individuals with no sporting habits were found to be lower than others' scores.

DISCUSSION

In this research, the state of self-esteem and the sporting habits and their relations with respect to different variables have been studied.

As a result of the analyses, among men and women who participated in this study, it is determined that no significant statistical difference was observed between genders with respect to the average score obtained from self-esteem scale, the standard deviation and the t values of the differences of averages. However, as shown in table 4, it is determined that male disabled individuals' average self-esteem score is ($\bar{x} = 64.64$) whereas that of female disabled individuals is ($\bar{x} = 63.83$). According to these results, it can be stated that male disabled individuals' self-esteem tends to be higher than female disabled individuals. In his study, Erman (2004) indicated that female individuals have higher self-esteem than male individuals though no significant statistical difference was observed [16].

Based on the average score obtained from the self-esteem score, the standard deviation and the t values of the differences of averages, a significant difference was observed with respect to sporting habits and self-esteem average scores. As shown in table 5, a significant difference was noted between disabled individuals with sporting habits ($\bar{x} = 66.26$) and those with no sporting habits ($\bar{x} = 60.59$) with respect to average self-esteem scores, hence one can conclude

that sporting habits affect the level of self-esteem. In his study about adults, Gun indicates that adults with sporting habits tend to have higher self-esteem [17]. Our findings are in agreement with Gun's. Weinberg, in his study on high school students, found no significant difference between sporting status and self-esteem [18].

A significant difference was observed among average self-esteem scores and standard deviations of individuals with hearing, sight and physical impediments with respect to the kind of disability the individual has. As the average scores shown in table 6 indicate, disabled individuals with hearing impediments have self-esteem score of ($\bar{x} = 59.40$), those with sight impediments have ($\bar{x} = 66.78$) and those with physical impediments have ($\bar{x} = 66.47$). According to these scores, disabled individuals with hearing impediments tend to have a lower self-esteem than those with sight and physical impediments. In conclusion, the sense of hearing and sight as the most effective means of communication are considered to cause disabled individuals with such impediments to have a lower self-esteem than those with no such impediment.

A significant difference was noted between age groups and self-esteem with respect to the average of self-esteem scores, their standard deviations among disabled individuals at various age groups. According to the average self-esteem scores shown in Table 7, disabled individuals at the age of 15-20 with an average score of ($\bar{x} = 61.20$) have lower average self-esteem score than those at the age of 14 or below with ($\bar{x} = 67.65$), those at 21-26 age group with ($\bar{x} = 68.36$) and those at the age of 27 or above with ($\bar{x} = 65.13$). As a result of these findings, one can state that disabled individuals at the 15-20 age group tend to have a lower self-esteem than those at the other age groups. It can be deduced from such findings that self-

esteem is lower during adolescence. According to Harter, adolescence is a critical period for the development of individuals' self-conscious since during this time they experience emotional, physical, mental and social changes. During adolescence, whether the self-esteem is low or high affects individuals in a positive or negative way from mental, physical, cognitive and emotional aspects [19]. According to Deniz's study, though when various development fields are analyzed individually, they have impact on each other. A negative development feature in one field may affect other fields as well [21].

A significant difference was observed between educational status and self-esteem with respect to the average of self-esteem scores, their standard deviations among disabled individuals with various educational backgrounds. According to the average self-esteem scores shown in Table 8, disabled individuals with high school education ($\bar{x} = 61.37$) have lower average self-esteem score than those with elementary school education ($\bar{x} = 66.14$) and those with higher education ($\bar{x} = 66.18$). As a result of these findings, one can state that disabled individuals with high school education tend to have a lower self-esteem than those with elementary and higher educational backgrounds. Based on the findings, self-esteem gets lower during times with intense emotional, physical, mental and social changes. According to Emda and Batia, an individual's better comprehension of his or her differences with other individuals plays an important role in development of self-esteem. As the education level increases, so does the cognitive skills of comprehending oneself and people around [22]. For individuals involved in

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

As a suggestion, due to the fact that high self-esteem cause individuals to be trustworthy towards themselves and

the study, it is determined that comprehension of differences has a negative impact on self-esteem.

A significant difference was noted between sporting habits and self-esteem with respect to the average of self-esteem scores, their standard deviations among disabled individuals with no sporting habits and those with either individual or team sports. According to the average self-esteem scores shown in Table 9, disabled individuals with no sporting habits ($\bar{x} = 60.59$) have lower average self-esteem score than those with individual ($\bar{x} = 67.06$) and those with team sporting habits ($\bar{x} = 65.21$). As a result of these findings, one can state that disabled individuals with no sporting habits tend to have a lower self-esteem than those with individuals and team sporting habits. According to a study by Korkmaz with 46 students at the age of 8-12, sporting habits and sense of belonging to a group boost self-esteem and self-confidence [23]. Our study is in agreement with Kuzgun's.

A significant difference was observed between duration of sports performed and self-esteem with respect to the average of self-esteem scores and their standard deviations. According to the average self-esteem scores shown in Table 10, disabled individuals with no sporting habits ($\bar{x} = 60.59$) have lower average self-esteem score than those who perform sport for 2 hours or less ($\bar{x} = 64.23$) and those who perform sport for 3-4 hours ($\bar{x} = 65.20$), those who perform sport for 5-6 hours ($\bar{x} = 68.94$) and those who perform sport for 7 hours or more ($\bar{x} = 70.44$). It was observed that the longer duration of sport the more self-esteem the individual has.

people around them and to be compatible and satisfying in their relationships, it is imperative for disabled individuals to have a high self-esteem and be more involved in the

society. According to the studies by Weinberg and Gould (1995), sporting habits must be promoted by providing necessary means for those who are in various age groups and those in 15-20 age bracket and have the lowest self-esteem in order to boost their self-esteem. It is expected of local officials to provide the means and facilities for

disabled individuals to be more involved in sporting habits. One can conclude as the suggestion of this study to increase the number of studies on determining the factors that can be effective in boosting disabled individuals' self-esteem and to help with increasing the self-esteem level of such individuals in their societal and personal live.

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