

# EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' SELF-ESTEEM

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## Abstract

The aim of this research was to find out the effect of 12-weeks recreational activities on university students' self-esteem. For this purpose, 40 students from Health Service High-School of Düzce University participated to the study. Experimental group consisted of 20 students and another 20 students were in the control group. Cooper Smith Self-esteem Inventory which was developed by Stanley Coopersmith (1967) was used in the study. Data analysis was made by SPSS 16.0. Descriptive statistics, independent sample t-test, paired sample t-test and Pearson's correlation analysis were used to analyze the data. Level of significance was 0.05. After pre-test, experimental group joined 12-weeks recreational activities which was one day in a week and lasted 2 hours. Recreational activities consisted of salon football, volleyball, swimming and various educational games. Post-test application was made after 12 weeks in the end of the program. While there was no significant difference between pre-test and post test self-esteem points for control group ( $p>0,05$ ), pre-test and post test scores of experimental group significantly differed ( $p<0,05$ ). Furthermore, although there was not a significant difference between control groups' and experimental group's pre-test self-esteem points ( $p>0,05$ ), a significant difference appeared between post-test self-esteem points of experimental group and control group ( $p<0,05$ ). Also, there was not a significant relationship between age and self-esteem. ( $p>0,05$ ). As a result, recreational activities positively affected self-esteem of university students. That is why it could be suggested that university students should be encouraged to participate in recreational activities and campus areas could be made to suitable to recreational activities.

**Key words:** *Recreative activities, recreation, self-esteem, university student*

## INTRODUCTION

Young people are future and promise of all societies. Education and maturation process of young people are the concern of many people including teachers, sports coaches and families who are closely around them. Recreation is the best conducive element of this process, because recreational activities help people to excellently develop in the process of education and maturation (Luetkens, 2004). Therefore, it is useful to spend spare time with entertaining and relaxing recreational activities in order to obtain an optimum development and education period. This is due to the fact that recreation enhances mental and physical health, individual skills and creativity (Karaküçük, 1999). Recreation could be defined as the pleasant activities that are done in spare times without obligation, with or without group, indoor or outdoor, with or without a tool, in a city or out of a city, with an organization or without an organization (Karaküçük, 2005; Tolukan, 2010). Recreational activities has the features of feasibility and variety to do them anywhere at any time and this helps people to economically use time. Relevant literature shows that recreational activities positively affected many psychological and physiological variables. For instance, recreational activities positively contributed to making friendship, adventure and new experiences, sense of success, pleasure of creativity, physical endurance, sense of mission, mental capacities, emotional experience and mental rest. Moreover, recreational sportive

activities enable people to discover their sportive abilities and to have fun. Participating sportive activities increases young people's interest to sports and makes them get the habit of regular exercises for the rest of their life. Besides all these mentioned above, recreational activities facilitates self-actualization of individuals. People feel accomplishment by having responsibilities and duties, and accomplishing them in sportive recreational activities. In this way, besides the happiness which results from the sense of accomplishment, individuals get respected among people who they spent time in recreational activities with. This results in increased self-esteem of individuals.

Self-esteem is one of the basic determinants of self-respect, self-confidence, self-worth and various psychological variables (Güçray, 1989). Self-concept is expressing oneself as "I". Self-concept consists of opinions and attitudes that people have over time about themselves. (Rosenberg, 1989; Verkuyten, 1989; Kulaksızoğlu, 2001; Aytan, 2010). Literature confirms various factors that affect self-esteem and every experience adds something to self-concept (Baymur, 1990; Coopersmith, 1967). Moreover, physical features such as being disabled, tall, short, thin, fat or blond affects development of self-concept (Köknel, 1997). Therefore, participating in recreational programs that positively affect physical and mental health, and that contribute personal development of individuals could positively affect

self-esteem. People with high self-worth and self-esteem are more tolerant in their interpersonal relationships. They are healthier and better students. Moreover, their anxiety and depression levels are lower than others. They can also act independently, interact confidently with others and perceive their lives to be more meaningful. In contrast, people with low self-esteem could be more aggressive or asocial due to the fact that they do not actually trust themselves (Temel and Aksoy, 2001; Yavuzer, 1994).

## METHOD

### Participants

Participants of this study consisted of 40 students, who are in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year, from the Department of Nursing, Health Service High-School of Düzce University ( $\bar{X}$  age = 20.02±0.80). 20 students constitutes experimental group and the other 20 made up the control group.

### Data Collection

## RESULTS

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics regarding Age and Pre-test and Post-test Self-esteem Scores of Experimental Group

	N	Minimum	Maximum	$\bar{X}$	SD
Age	20	19	21	19.95	0.686
Self-esteem Pre-test	20	60	64	61	1.77
Self-esteem Post-test	20	80	92	86.20	3.77

Students'  $\bar{X}$  age was 19.5±0.686,  $\bar{X}$  Self-esteem Pre-test appeared to be 61±1.77 and  $\bar{X}$  Self-esteem Post-test was found to be 86.20±3.77.

**Table 2.** Descriptive Statistics regarding Age, Pre-test and Post-test of Self-esteem Scores of Control Group

	N	Minimum	Maximum	$\bar{X}$	SD
Age	20	19	22	20.10	.911
Self-esteem Pre-test	20	52	64	59	2.86
Self-esteem Post-test	20	56	64	61.60	3.01

Students'  $\bar{X}$  age was 20.10±0.911,  $\bar{X}$  Self-esteem Pre-test appeared to be 59±2.86 and  $\bar{X}$  Self-esteem Post-test was found to be 61.60±3.01.

**Table 3.** Correlation of Age with Pre-test and Post-test Scores for Experimental Group.

	N		Age
Self-esteem Pre-test	20	r	0.043
		p	0.857
Self-esteem Post-test	20	r	-0.118
		p	0.621

Correlation analysis showed that age was not correlated with pre-test and post-test scores of self-esteem.

First section of the questionnaire had the questions which determine the demographic characteristics of the participants. Second section had Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory which measures self-esteem. Cooper Smith Self-esteem Inventory; was developed by Stanley Coopersmith (1967). It measures answerers' attitudes towards various areas regarding themselves. Language adaptation of this scale was made by Tufan (1988). Reliability coefficient of this scale was reported to be  $r=0.76$  ( $p<0.05$ ). Validity of the scale was measured by correlating the scores of this scale with Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale and the correlation was found to be ( $r=0.61$  ( $p<0.05$ )). The scale has 25 items and scored as 0 or 1 (Tufan, 1988).

### Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by SPSS 16.0 Package Program. Descriptive statistics, independent sample t-test, Pearson's correlation analysis and paired sample t-test were used to analyze the data. Level of significance was determined to be 0.05.

**Table 4.** The Difference between Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores of Self-Esteem for Experimental Group According to Gender

Gender	N	%	$\bar{X} \pm SD$		P
			Pre-test	Post-test	
Female	11	% 55	61.45±2.01	88±3,57	P<0,05
Male	9	% 45	60.44±1.33	84±2,82	
p			p>0,05	p>0,05	

There was not a significant difference between females'  $\bar{X}$  Pre-test score (61.45±2.01) and males'  $\bar{X}$  Pre-test score (60.44±1.33) ( $p>0.05$ ). There was not a significant difference between females'  $\bar{X}$  Post-test score (88±3.57) and males'  $\bar{X}$  Post-test score (84±2.82) ( $p>0.05$ ). There was a significant

difference between females'  $\bar{X}$  Pre-test score (61.45±2.01) and males'  $\bar{X}$  Pre-test score (60.44±1.33) ( $p>0.05$ ). There was not a significant difference between females'  $\bar{X}$  Post-test score (88±3.57) and males'  $\bar{X}$  Post-test score (84±2.82) ( $p>0.05$ ). There was a significant difference between females'  $\bar{X}$  Post-test score (88±3.57) and males'  $\bar{X}$  Post-test score (84±2.82) ( $p<0.05$ ).

**Table 5.** The Difference between Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores of Self-Esteem for Control Group According to Gender

Gender	N	%	$\bar{X} \pm SD$		p
			Pre-test	Post-test	
Female	14	% 70	59.42±3.08	61,42±2,97	p>0,05
Male	6	% 30	58±2.19	62±3,34	
p			p>0,05	p>0,05	

There was not a significant difference between females'  $\bar{X}$  Pre-test score (59.42±3.08) and males'  $\bar{X}$  Pre-test score (58±2.19) ( $p>0.05$ ). There was not a significant difference between females'  $\bar{X}$  Post-test

score (61.42±2.97) and males'  $\bar{X}$  Post-test score (62±3.34) ( $p>0.05$ ).  $\bar{X}$  Pre-test score and  $\bar{X}$  Post-test score were not significantly different for both males and females ( $p>0.05$ ).

**Table 6.** The Difference between Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores for Experimental and Control Groups.

	Control Group $\bar{X} \pm SD$		Experimental Group $\bar{X} \pm SD$		p
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test	
Self-esteem	59±2.86	61.60±3.01	61±1.77	86.20±3.77	p>0.05
					p<0.05
p		p>0.05	p<0.05		

$\bar{X}$  Pre-test score of control group (59±2.86) and  $\bar{X}$  Pre-test score of experimental group (61±1.77) were found to be significantly different ( $p>0.05$ ). There was a significant difference between  $\bar{X}$  Post-test score of control group (61.60±3.01) and  $\bar{X}$  Post-test score of experimental group (86.20±3.77)

( $p<0.05$ ). There was not a significant difference between  $\bar{X}$  Pre-test score and  $\bar{X}$  Post-test score of control group ( $p>0.05$ ). However, There was a significant difference between  $\bar{X}$  Pre-test score and  $\bar{X}$  Post-test score of experimental group ( $p<0.05$ ).

## DISCUSSION

Many studies have showed that young people's anxiety regarding their future increased and their level of stress and anxiety are at high levels. 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. Physical and mental states of people could positively or negatively affect self-confidence. Therefore, we proposed that participation to recreational activities will result in an improvement in physical and mental states of our participants and this will enhance their self-esteem levels. Self-esteem is related to many

factors including age, gender, physical capacity and mental state.

Our results showed that there is not a significant relationship between age and self-esteem ( $p>0.05$ ). Relevant literature also suggested that there is not a relationship between these two variables (Akyüz, 2010; Yıldız, 2006; Kimter, 2008; Pınar, 2002). However, Hogborg (1987), Aytan (2010), Yapıcı (2007) and Eşer (2005) found that there is a positive significant relationship between age and self-esteem.

In addition, analyses showed that while pre-test and post-test scores of control group was not

significantly different ( $p>0.05$ ), there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores of experimental group ( $p<0.05$ ). Moreover, although there was not a significant difference between control groups' and experimental group's pre-test self-esteem points a significant difference was found between post-test self-esteem points of experimental group and control group. It could be proposed that this is due to the recreational activities experimental group had participated in. There are also some studies, similar to our study, examining the relationship between sportive recreational activities and self-esteem. Gürhan (1986), Gill (1986), Block (1999), Tiggeman and Williamson (2000), Bowker et al. (2003) and Tiryaki and Moral (2000) suggested that sportive activities could positively affect self-esteem of participants.

Many researches showed that self-esteem is related to various factors in daily life. Recreational activities could affect many features of individuals and thus, could change self-esteem levels of people. Aşğ et al. (1993) compared athletes and non-athletes and found that there is a significant difference between these two groups of people regarding their athletic

competency, social acceptance and physical appearance. In addition, it was found in a study, conducted with 30.000 people (which consisted of people doing sports and not doing sports) by Women's Sports Foundation (1998), that women who do sports are better regarding their academic performance and are more social, they also feel more popular and their rate of graduation from high school is three times more than the others.

## CONCLUSION

Results of this study, which are supported by the relevant literature show that recreational activities could enhance self-esteem of individuals. It could also be suggested that students' participation to recreational activities could positively affect other psychological and physical parameters, which will eventually result in an increased quality of their lives. Therefore, universities should consider recreational activities and try to integrate recreational activities into educational curriculums as an educational activity. Moreover, universities' campus areas should also be redesigned in order to enable recreational activities.

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## İSTRAŽIVANJE EFEKATA REKREATIVNOG VJEŽBANJA NA NIVO SAMOPOŠTOVANJA KOD STUDENATA

### Sažetak

Cilj ovog istraživanja je da se sazna utjecaj 12-sedmične rekreacijske aktivnosti na samopoštovanje kod studenata. U tu svrhu je 40 studenata Health Service High-School of Düzce Univerziteteta učestvovalo u studiji. Eksperimentalna grupa se sastojala od 20 studenata, a preostalih 20 studenata je bilo u kontrolnoj grupi. Upitnik samopoštovanja Cooper Smith kojeg je razvio Stanley Coopersmith (1967) je korišćen u studiji. Analiza podataka je vršena pomoću SPSS 16.0. Deskriptivna statistika, t-test za nezavisne uzorke, t-test za zavisne uzorke i Pearsonova korelativna analiza su korišćene za analizu podataka. Vrijednost značajnosti je bio 0,05. Nakon predtestiranja, eksperimentalna grupa je pristupila 12-sedmičnim rekreacijskim aktivnostima koje su bile jednom sedmično i trajale su 2 sata. Rekreacijske aktivnosti su se sastojale od dvoranskog fudbala, odbojke, plivanja i različitih edukacijskih igara. Posttestovi su vršeni nakon 12 sedmica na kraju programa. Dok nije bilo značajne promjene indeksa samopoštovanja prije i nakon testa kod kontrolne grupe ( $p > 0,05$ ), rezultati prije i nakon testa eksperimentalne grupe su se značajno razlikovali ( $p < 0,05$ ). Dalje, iako nije bilo značajne razlike indeksa samopoštovanja prije testa između kontrolne i eksperimentalne grupe ( $p > 0,05$ ) značajna razlika se pojavila nakon testa u indeksu samopoštovanja između kontrolne i eksperimentalne grupe ( $p < 0,05$ ). Također nije bilo značajnog odnosa starosne dobi i samopoštovanja ( $p > 0,05$ ). Rezultati ukazuju da su rekreacijske aktivnosti pozitivno utjecale na samopoštovanje kod studenata. Iz tog razloga treba predložiti da se studenti ohrabruju da učestvuju u rekreacijskim aktivnostima da se prostor kampusa prilagodi da odgovara rekreacijskim aktivnostima.

**Ključne riječi:** rekreacijske aktivnosti, rekreacija, samopoštovanje, student.

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