

Comparison of Life Satisfaction, Happiness and Self-Esteem of Female Athletes and Non-Athletes

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Abstract: The present study seeks to compare life satisfaction, happiness and self-esteem of female athletes and non-athletes aged 20 to 65 years in Tabriz. The present study is a causal-comparative study. The statistical population of the present study was all female athletes and non-athletes in the age range of 20-65 years in Tabriz. From this statistical population, 349 female athletes and 135 non-athletes were selected as a sample using Morgan Table and cluster random sampling method. Cooper-Smith standard self-esteem, Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) and Oxford Happiness (OHI) questionnaires were used in this study. The results of independent t-test, one-way analysis of variance and Friedman test showed that women athletes have higher life satisfaction, happiness and self-esteem than non-athletes. Also, with increasing duration of sports activities, women's rate of happiness is also on the rise, and the first five years of exercise have had the greatest impact on women's self-esteem.

Keywords: self-esteem; happiness; life satisfaction; athlete; non-athlete.

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1. Introduction

Exercise is a tool to prevent disease, improve health and feel good, whose positive mental and physical effects have always played a valuable role in the management of mental illness (Falkter, 2006; Palshka 2000). People who are physically fit experience fewer physiological and psychological changes when exercising and dealing with anxious and exciting events. They also reduce the incidence of mental illnesses such as stress, anxiety and depression and improve mood. Mental health is associated with increased self-esteem, self-reliance, self-worth, self-confidence and strength of mind (Kalagan, Gascoaga, Catchtell, 2007).

Self-esteem is one of the components of mental health and according to William James, it is the desire and values that a people have for themselves and make personal judgments about their abilities and have less anxiety, helplessness and psychological symptoms and show less sensitivity against failures, and as well as a sense of inner security, self-confidence and a sense of worthiness, and show more adaptation, and can move towards the highest need, i.e. realization and self-fulfillment, and can have beneficial relationships, and they use opportunities better than other people and have a clearer view of life (Epdniker, 2009; Nourbakhsh, Hosseinpour, 2011). Self-esteem allows people to feel good about themselves but does not motivate them to do anything. So, it is possible that people who achieve positive results and success in many areas of life and gain skills will make them feel good about themselves and value themselves, and as a result, their self-esteem will increase. For example, athletes may do sports for several years and become proficient in that field and achieve success, and as a result, one of its consequences may be an increase in self-esteem. In fact, self-esteem is like happiness, being happy does not lead to success, but happiness is the result of victories and successes. (Diener and Bizwarre, 2008). Various studies show that athletes have higher self-esteem than non-athletes (McClarr et al., 2010; Booker, 2006; Hosseini et al., 2021; Fendiari et al., 2020). It should be noted that most people feel good by having healthy relationships with each other, having life skills, including sports ability, and the result is to increase the self-esteem. (Emp et al., 2008; Tovong and Campbell, 2001).

Happiness is another positive result of exercise and physical activity. This component has three basic components: positive emotion, life satisfaction and

the absence of negative emotions. Happy people tend to process information for optimism and happiness; that is, they process and interpret information in a way that leads to their happiness (Diener, 2002; Dieter, 2004). The study of Goswami (2016) was conducted to investigate the effect of different sports (team, water, martial arts) on the happiness of student athletes and it was concluded that the happiness of team athletes is significantly higher than water and martial arts and the findings of that research showed that team exercise led to increase the life satisfaction, self-esteem and mental and physical health, and it increased the feelings of calm and happiness, as well as reduced depression and low mood. The study of Fery et al. (2021) shows that the effect of exercise on happiness is four times greater than the effect of happiness on exercise.

Life satisfaction is another mental health related variable that varies between athletes and non-athletes. Life satisfaction is a judging process in which people evaluate their quality of life based on their unique criteria or perceived satisfaction. Therefore, it is the perception and mentality of individuals (not the realities of their lives) that have the greatest impact on their lives (Pico et al., 2010). Life satisfaction is significantly associated with sports identity (Wilson, 2016). In this regard, studies have shown that student-athletes are more satisfied with life than non-athlete students (Mehrsafar et al., 2021; Ahmadi et al., 2021; Enoncho et al., 2019). The Kochr's study (2018) showed that sports participation and doing it continuously increases physical health, psychosocial growth, academic achievement and self-esteem, and there is a significant difference between athletes and non-athletes in terms of self-esteem and life satisfaction. Lucanus (2020) also suggests that exercise and regular exercise increase mental health and self-esteem. Of course, this relationship also applies to people who have regular physical activity (doing exercise almost every day).

Given that in Iran a study has not examined these three variables on athletes, so the present study is recent and sought to answer the questions of whether there is a difference between self-esteem, happiness and life satisfaction of female athletes and non-athletes. Is there a significant difference between self-esteem, happiness and life satisfaction of the two groups in terms of exercise duration?

2. Materials and Methods



The method of this research is descriptive-analytical. The statistical population of female athletes in Tabriz in 1401 was 3803 people, 349 female athletes and 235 non-female athletes were included in the study by Morgan method for comparison. It should be noted that cluster random sampling method was used to select female athletes. The method of implementation was that most of the questionnaires were distributed one by one to athletes and non-athletes and athletes' questionnaires were distributed in clubs, Equestrian tracks and mountaineering camps. Coopersmith (1967) Self-Esteem Inventory, Oxford Happiness Inventory and Satisfaction with Life Scale of Daniro et al. (SWLS) (1985) were used in the current study.

Coppersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI): This questionnaire was developed by Coppersmith in 1967. This questionnaire consists of five topics which are educational assignments, social relations, family and future and has 14 subscales. General self-esteem, social self-esteem (peers), family self-esteem (parents), academic self-esteem (educational). This questionnaire has 58 two-choice questions with options (yes and no) that each person chooses one of the options according to their situation. Boroumand (2001) has standardized the Coppersmith Self-Esteem Inventory on high school and pre-university students in Islamshahr. The validity coefficient was calculated using Cronbach's alpha of 0.89. To evaluate the validity, the correlation of the scores obtained from the Eysenck questionnaire was calculated and the correlation coefficient of 0.814 indicates the validity of an acceptable criterion for the Coppersmith inventory.

Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI): This questionnaire was developed in 1989 by Argyle, Martin and Crossland. It was constructed in such a way that the researchers, in consultation with Aaron T. Beck, reversed Beck Depression Scale sentences to 21 points. Then 11 items were added to these 21 items, and finally, with the final examinations, the 29-item scale of the Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI) emerged. Also in the following years, this questionnaire was changed and published under the acronym (OHA). This questionnaire consists of 29 four-choice expressions that the scoring options of each expression are (0,1,2,3). Thus, the highest score that the respondent can obtain on this scale is 87, which indicates the highest level of happiness, and the lowest score on this scale is zero, which indicates that the subject is dissatisfied with his life and

depression. The normal score for this test is 40 to 42. Validity and reliability of the Oxford Happiness Inventory, Argil et al. (1989) reported that the reliability of this questionnaire was 90% by Cronbach's alpha method and the reliability of its retest after seven weeks was 78%. Also, Alipour and Nourbala (1999) reported its validity coefficient using Cronbach's alpha on 132 Iranian samples equals 93% and its reliability 92%. Ebrahimi's research (2013) has obtained the reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 82%. Using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the researcher obtained 84% reliability of the questionnaire.

Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS): This questionnaire was developed and used by Diener et al. (1989) to measure the components of well-being, psychological and life satisfaction. This questionnaire has five items that are designed to measure a person's cognitive and overall judgment of life. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) is scored on a 7-point Likert scale with a score of 1 equals to strongly disagree, a score 2 equals to strongly opposed, a score 3 equals to almost disagree, a score 4 equals to neither disagree nor agree, score 5 equals agree, score 6 equals agree, score 7 equals totally agree. The total score of this questionnaire is calculated by summing the answers and its range is between 5 and 30. A higher score is an indicator of higher levels of life satisfaction. Bayani, Kouchaki, Ashour and Goodarzi (2007) in assessing the validity and reliability of the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), the validity of the Satisfaction with Life Scale was 0.83 using the Cronbach's alpha method and 0.69 using the retest method. The construct validity of the Satisfaction with Life Scale was assessed through convergent validity using the Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI) (Argil, 2001) and the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) (Beck et al., 1961). This scale showed a positive correlation with the Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI) and a negative correlation with the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI). According to the results of this study, the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) is a useful scale in Iranian psychological research.

3. Results

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS software version 23 and by descriptive and inferential statistical test methods (Correlation, Pearson, Regression) and analyzed



according to the levels of research variables levels. Participants of this study participated voluntarily and with a minimum of diploma education and in the age range of 20 to 65 years, as well as performing sports activities for more than one year continuously and professionally and championship, and dissatisfaction of the participants for participating in the study was having psychological disorders such as obsessive-compulsive disorder and depression, and being overweight. The study of the age variable of the respondents shows that the highest number of female respondents is in the age group of 20 to 30 years (42.9%) and the lowest rate is in the age group of 61 years and above (1%). Also, the study of the respondents' education shows that the highest number of participants has a diploma and the lowest number of participants has a bachelor degree.

In order to evaluate the significant difference between the mean of happiness, satisfaction and self-esteem variables by respondents' sports activity, t-test was used for independent groups. The results show that the mean of happiness, satisfaction and self-esteem of athlete respondents is higher than the average obtained for non-athlete respondents (Tables 2 and 3). Also, the results show that the level of significance obtained for the studying variables (happiness, satisfaction and self-esteem) equals to (Sig = 0.00) and less than the desired level of significance (Sig = 0.05). This means that the sports activity of the respondents and their athleticism are effective on their level of happiness, their level of life satisfaction and as a result, their high self-esteem. While in non-athlete respondents, these components have been reported at a low level.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (n = 478)

| Characteristics | Groups | Number (Percent) |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Age | 20 to 30 | 205(42/9) |
| | 31 to 40 | 149(31/2) |
| | 41 to 50 | 84(17/6) |
| | 51 to 60 | 35(7/3) |
| | Upper than 60 | 5(1/0) |
| Education | Under diploma | 31(6/5) |
| | Diploma | 196(41) |
| | Article of Art | 47(9/8) |
| | Bachelor | 144(30/1) |
| | Master | 50(10/5) |
| | Upper than PhD | 5(1/0) |
| | Without sport activity | 149(31/2) |
| Duration of sports activities | 1 to 5 years | 181(37/9) |
| | 6 to 10 years | 64(13/4) |
| | 11 to 15 years | 39(8/2) |
| | 16 to 20 years | 26(5/4) |
| | Upper than 21 years | 19(4/0) |

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Variables of Happiness, Satisfaction and Self-Esteem by Sport Activity

| | Group | Number | Mean | Standard Deviation | Mean Standard Error |
|------------------------|-------------|--------|-------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Happiness | Athlete | 307 | 80/95 | 13/41 | 0/76 |
| | Non-athlete | 116 | 76/23 | 13/38 | 1/24 |
| Satisfaction with life | Athlete | 340 | 19/87 | 6/77 | 0/36 |
| | Non-athlete | 128 | 17/83 | 6/51 | 0/57 |
| Self-esteem | Athlete | 274 | 92/26 | 5/61 | 0/33 |
| | Non-athlete | 110 | 90/37 | 4/49 | 0/42 |



Table 3: Test Results for the Difference between the Mean of Happiness, Satisfaction and Self-Esteem Variables according to Sports Activity

| | Group | Leven Quantity | | T-Test | Fd | Sig. |
|------------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------|--------|-----|------|
| | | Leven Test | Leven Significant | | | |
| Happiness | Athlete | 0/53 | 0/46 | 3/23 | 421 | 0/00 |
| | Non-athlete | | | | | |
| Satisfaction with life | Athlete | 0/43 | 0/51 | 2/93 | 466 | 0/00 |
| | Non-athlete | | | | | |
| Self-esteem | Athlete | 3/96 | 0/04 | 3/15 | 382 | 0/00 |
| | Non-athlete | | | | | |

After examining the default of normal distribution with Kolmogorov test, one-way analysis of variance was used to evaluate the significant difference between the mean variables of happiness, satisfaction and self-esteem in the athlete group according to the level of duration of their sports activity. The results obtained in Tables 4 and 5 show

that the mean of respondents' self-esteem variable is higher than the average reported for happiness and satisfaction variables. Since the level of significance obtained (Sig = 0.00) is less than the desired level of significance (Sig = 0.05), it shows that the average variables of happiness, satisfaction and self-esteem

differ from respondents to sports duration.

Table 4: Mean of Happiness, Satisfaction and Self-Esteem Variables by Duration of Athletes' Sports Activity

| Duration of sport activity | Variable | Mean | Standard deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------|--------------------|---------|---------|
| 1 to 5 years | Happiness | 79/01 | 13/39 | 46 | 108 |
| | Satisfaction | 41/78 | 6/78 | 4 | 30 |
| | Self-Esteem | 91/51 | 4/53 | 80 | 104 |
| 6 to 10 years | Happiness | 82/66 | 13/00 | 52 | 113 |
| | Satisfaction | 18/84 | 7/20 | 5 | 29 |
| | Self-Esteem | 92/33 | 5/41 | 81 | 105 |
| 11 to 15 years | Happiness | 82/18 | 13/07 | 53 | 108 |
| | Satisfaction | 21/31 | 6/64 | 6 | 30 |
| | Self-Esteem | 93/38 | 7/38 | 77 | 107 |
| 16 to 20 years | Happiness | 87/90 | 12/70 | 52 | 112 |
| | Satisfaction | 22/19 | 6/65 | 9 | 30 |
| | Self-Esteem | 95/85 | 7/09 | 85 | 111 |
| More than 21 years | Happiness | 84/47 | 11/91 | 53 | 99 |
| | Satisfaction | 20/88 | 6/56 | 8 | 30 |
| | Self-Esteem | 92/61 | 7/65 | 75 | 105 |

Table 5: Results of One-Way Analysis of Variance of Happiness, Satisfaction and Self-Esteem Variables according to the Duration of Sports Activity of the Respondents

| | Changes' Reference | sum of squares | Fd | Mean of Squares | F test | F sig. |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------|--------|--------|
| Happiness | Inter group | 4097/06 | 5 | 819/52 | 4/61 | 0/00 |
| | Intra group | 73453/36 | 417 | 176/14 | | |
| Satisfaction with Life | Inter group | 827/19 | 5 | 165/43 | 3/72 | 0/00 |
| | Intra group | 20506/36 | 462 | 44/38 | | |
| Self-Esteem | Inter group | 710/41 | 5 | 142/08 | 5/17 | 0/00 |

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|-----|-------|
| Intra group | 10370/33 | 378 | 27/43 |
|-------------|----------|-----|-------|

Friedman test was used to investigate the difference between the mean duration of exercise and its effect on happiness, life satisfaction and happiness. The results show a significant difference between the means. In other words, considering that the significant value obtained for all time periods is less than the desired significance level of 0.05, so it can be said that between the duration of exercise and the variables of happiness, satisfaction and happiness in terms of significance, there is a significant difference. In examining the median value of each of the studied time periods, it was also determined that it had been done based on the ranking, exercise

activity with a period of 21 years and above with a value of 2.42 has the greatest impact on the happiness of respondents. This means that with increasing the duration of sports and sports activities, the level of happiness of the respondents also increases. Findings also show that a period of 1 to 5 years with a value of 2.83 had the greatest impact on the self-esteem of respondents. It can be said that sports activities affect the self-esteem of respondents from the very beginning. It should be noted that the importance of time periods in life satisfaction of respondents has been reported equally (Tables 6 and 7).

Table 6: Friedman Test Output for Ranking Happiness, Life Satisfaction and Self-Esteem based on Exercise Duration

| Duration of sport activity | Variable | Ranking |
|----------------------------|--------------|---------|
| 1 to 5 years | Happiness | 2/17 |
| | Satisfaction | 1 |
| | Self-Esteem | 2/83 |
| 6 to 10 years | Happiness | 2/23 |
| | Satisfaction | 1 |
| | Self-Esteem | 2/77 |
| 11 to 15 years | Happiness | 2/25 |
| | Satisfaction | 1 |
| | Self-Esteem | 2/75 |
| 16 to 20 years | Happiness | 2/36 |
| | Satisfaction | 1 |
| | Self-Esteem | 2/64 |
| Upper than 21 | Happiness | 2/42 |
| | Satisfaction | 1 |
| | Self-Esteem | 2/58 |

Figure 7: Friedman Test Output to Rank Happiness, Life Satisfaction and Self-Esteem by Type of Exercise

| Duration of sport activity | Tests | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|--------|
| 1 to 5 years | Number of Samples | 124 |
| | Chi Square | 214/84 |
| | Fd | 2 |
| | Significance | 0/00 |
| 6 to 10 years | Number of Samples | 48 |
| | Chi Square | 79/04 |
| | Fd | 2 |
| | Significance | 0/00 |



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| | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------|
| 11 to 15 years | Number of Samples | 32 |
| | Chi Square | 52 |
| | Fd | 2 |
| | Significance | 0/00 |
| 16 to 20 years | Number of Samples | 18 |
| | Chi Square | 28/08 |
| | Fd | 2 |
| | Significance | 0/00 |
| Upper than 21 years | Number of Samples | 12 |
| | Chi Square | 18/67 |
| | Fd | 2 |
| | Significance | 0/00 |

4. Discussion

The findings of the present study showed that there is a significant difference between self-esteem, happiness and life satisfaction of female athletes and non-athletes. And this finding is consistent with the studies of Gasswami (2016), Hosseini et al. (2021); Fendiari, Ghorbani et al. (2020), Kalak et al. (2007); Ahmadi et al. (2021). Exercise and sports activities affect the individual by affecting some psychological components such as self-esteem, happiness and life satisfaction, and people who have high physical activity and physical fitness, when dealing with anxious and exciting events, experience less physiological and psychological changes, and reduce the incidence of diseases such as stress, anxiety and depression, and improve mood and mental health, as well as increase life satisfaction (Kalagan, Guszowska, Kechtlre 2007; Ahmadi et al., 2021). Less distress in athletes (Alen et al., 2014; Stoyana et al., 2016) may also explain their higher satisfaction in several areas of life and happiness, because satisfaction with life and happiness have negative correlation with Neuroticism. Sports activities can affect life satisfaction and self-esteem by affecting self-efficacy because athletes consider themselves more efficient in performing many activities than others (Gholizadeh et al., 2009). Regarding the limitations of the research, it can be said that this research, considering that only the questionnaire was used to obtain the results, may be ambiguous for some people, and also through answering, people did not do them with patience and accuracy, so it is better to use interviews in future research along with the questionnaire. Also, this research is related to women athletes and non-athletes in Tabriz, and it is better to do similar research in other cities as well.

5. Conclusions

In the end, it should be said that women athletes have higher life satisfaction, happiness and self-esteem than non-athletes.

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مقایسه ی رضایت از زندگی، شادکامی و عزت نفس زنان ورزشکار و غیر ورزشکار

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چکیده: پژوهش حاضر به دنبال مقایسه رضایت از زندگی، شادکامی و عزت نفس زنان ورزشکار و غیر ورزشکار ۲۰ تا ۶۵ سال شهر تبریز می باشد. تحقیق حاضر از نوع علی - مقایسه ای است. جامعه آماری پژوهش حاضر کلیه زنان ورزشکار و غیر ورزشکار در بازه سنی ۲۰-۶۵ سال شهر تبریز بودند که از این جامعه آماری ۳۴۹ نفر زن ورزشکار و ۱۳۵ نفر غیر ورزشکار زن به عنوان نمونه با استفاده از جدول مورگان و روش نمونه گیری تصادفی خوشه ای انتخاب شدند. در این پژوهش از پرسشنامه استاندارد عزت نفس کوپر اسمیت، رضایت از زندگی (swls) و شادکامی اکسفورد (OHI) استفاده شد. نتایج بدست آمده از آزمون های T مستقل، آنالیز واریانس یک طرفه و آزمون فریدمن نشان داد که زنان ورزشکار رضایت از زندگی، شادکامی و عزت نفس بالاتری نسبت به زنان غیر ورزشکار دارند همچنین با افزایش مدت زمان فعالیت های ورزشی، میزان شادکامی زنان نیز افزایش می یابد و پنج سال اول فعالیت ورزشی بیشترین تاثیر را بر عزت نفس زنان داشته است.

واژه های کلیدی: عزت نفس، شادکامی، رضایت از زندگی، ورزشکار، غیر ورزشکار

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این نماد به معنای مجوز استفاده از اثر با دو شرط است یکی استاد به نویسنده و دیگری استفاده برای مقاصد غیر تجاری.