

Self-Esteem Among Students Participating in School Sports Activities at the Middle School Level: A Field Study at Kouhil Lakhdar Middle School, Constantine

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Abstract

Self-esteem is a multidimensional concept that exists to varying degrees among individuals. It is an important element within the broader concept of self and reflects the extent to which an individual feels valued and competent. When individuals have positive attitudes toward themselves, their self-esteem is high, whereas negative self-perceptions lead to low self-esteem. In other words, self-esteem is the overall evaluation of an individual's state as perceived by themselves. The concept of "self-esteem" holds significant importance in the educational process, as fostering positive self-perceptions among students helps unlock their potential and readiness across various fields. Students achieve better educational and social success when they have a realistic self-concept, a sense of self-worth, and confidence in their abilities.

The middle school stage is a critical phase in education, representing early adolescence. It is characterized by physiological, physical, and mental changes that transition the child into the world of adults, from dependency to independence in all areas, and from primary to secondary and then university education. Among the means that help enhance self-esteem is "engaging in physical and sports activities within the school environment." Numerous studies have indicated that high self-esteem is associated with physical health and happiness in life.

This study aims to shed light on the self-esteem of students participating in school sports activities (both those who practice and those who do not practice school sports) at Kouhil Lakhdar Middle School in the state of Constantine.

Keywords: Self-esteem; school sports activities; Middle School Level.

INTRODUCTION

The significant advancements and rapid development in science and technology in our modern world have made humans slaves to many of the very technologies they invented to perform their vital duties with ease and complete freedom. However, as technology evolves, their freedom becomes more superficial, and an imbalance emerges. They find themselves in an exhausting race between their desire to entertain and discipline themselves and the demanding pace of daily life.

This drives individuals to engage in physical and sports activities, which provide them with a healthy foundation that ensures proper balance and harmonious coexistence with their external environment. These activities stem from virtuous behaviors that offer them the opportunity for genuine integration. Moreover, physical and sports activities play a crucial and central role in building an individual's personality in all aspects—physical, moral, psychological, and social.

Physical education and sports hold a fundamental place in the lives of students within educational institutions. They provide students with an opportunity to showcase their abilities and skills while fulfilling some of their needs, whether social, such as friendship and love, or related to self-esteem, such as respect and status, or even self-actualization needs like growth. On this basis, school sports activities, with their variety of skills, movements, and games, are among the most beloved activities for students. They foster social interaction within the educational institution during practice and outside it through positive social relationships with the community. This contributes to affirming and enhancing self-esteem among those who participate in sports activities, boosting their self-confidence and achieving comprehensive growth for the learner in all aspects—physical, mental, emotional, and social.

The concept of an individual's self-perception and self-esteem is among the key factors that influence their personality and mental health, as it is a cognitive process that affects human behavior and learning. In this context, school sports activities serve as a platform for students to affirm their self-identity. They also enable students to recognize their own social standing and that of others through play and the roles their peers assume toward them, in addition to being influenced by and emulating prominent sports figures.

Based on the above, the current study highlights the impact of school sports activities on self-esteem, given that the influence of these activities is not limited to physical development alone. They also play a role in shaping the student's personality, values, and feelings toward themselves. When self-esteem is positive, it strengthens and reinforces their sense of dignity and self-respect, leading to a high degree of self-confidence and a sense of pride.

Study Hypotheses

There are statistically significant differences in self-esteem between students who participate in school sports activities and those who do not.

Sub-Hypotheses

- There are statistically significant differences in peer-related self-esteem between students who participate in school sports activities and those who do not.
- There are statistically significant differences in family-related self-esteem between students who participate in school sports activities and those who do not.
- There are statistically significant differences in school-related self-esteem between students who participate in school sports activities and those who do not.

Study Objectives

The study aims to examine the impact of school sports activities on the self-esteem of fourth-year middle school students.

Scope of the Study

- Human and Spatial Scope: A sample of middle school students (fourth-year middle school) at Kouhil lakhdar Middle School in the state of Constantine.
- Temporal Scope: The study was conducted during January 2024.

Operational Definitions

- Participants: Fourth-year middle school students who engage in school sports activities weekly.
- Non-Participants: Students who are unable to participate in school sports activities due to health reasons.
- Self-Esteem: The score obtained by the student on the Bruce R. Haire Self-Esteem Scale. If a student scores between (90-120), they have high self-esteem; if they score between (60-89), they have moderate self-esteem; and if they score between (30-59), they have low self-esteem.
- Peer-Related Self-Esteem: Refers to the extent to which a student values themselves based on their peers' behavior toward them.
- School-Related Self-Esteem: Refers to the extent to which a student values themselves based on their teachers' behavior toward them.
- Family-Related Self-Esteem: Refers to the extent to which a student values themselves based on their parents' behavior toward them.

1. Theoretical Framework of the Study

1.1 School Sports Activities

1.1.1 Concept of Physical Education and Sports

The field of physical education and sports encompasses various definitions and concepts. Physical and sports activities are defined as: "A set of motor behaviors related to play, which can be utilized in individual and group competitions. Their organized applications aim to develop, improve, or maintain physical and psychological attributes that contribute to an individual's growth and adaptation to their environment. Physical activity also seeks to shape a well-rounded individual" (Mouloud, 2008, p. 06).

Additionally, Vigare states that: "Physical education is an integral part of general education. It engages the motivational drives inherent in every person to foster development in physical, coordination, emotional, and cognitive aspects" (Ahmed, 2010, p. 32).

Robert Boban defines physical education and sports as: "Those physical activities selected to meet an individual's physical, mental, and psychomotor needs, aiming to achieve holistic development" (Polak Youth Center, 2010).

From this perspective, physical education and sports have evolved into a modern concept aligned with human nature. Alfandi describes it as: "A collection of experiences that enable an individual to comprehend new experiences more effectively" (Ahmed, 2010, p. 31).

Upon reviewing the aforementioned definitions, several common elements emerge:

- Sports activities are an educational process aimed at improving human behavior.
- They serve as a key educational method for acquiring physical, mental, social, and moral skills.
- The behavioral outcomes of physical activity programs do not only enhance physical aspects but also contribute to the comprehensive development of an individual's personality.
- Physical education is an essential means of channeling human energy and achieving psychological well-being.
- It plays a crucial role in academic achievement and learning motivation, fostering educational excellence.

1.1.2 Concept of School Sports Activities

School sports activities are defined as: "An educational activity that falls under the subject of physical education and sports, providing students with multiple opportunities to play an active and influential role by engaging in sports activities that enable them to utilize their physical skills and cognitive abilities positively" (Hamid, 2009, p. 23).

Additionally, school sports activities have been described as: "The activities practiced by students in physical education classes, as well as the cultural programs related to sports offered to them, whether individually or in groups, inside or outside the school, under organized supervision to achieve an educational objective."

Sallis and Taylor (2000) emphasize the necessity of engaging in sports during childhood and adolescence, stating that: "Sports participation during these developmental stages is essential for maintaining health, leading a balanced life, and fostering positive attitudes toward sports engagement" (Kanaan, 2010, p. 488).

In the present study, school sports activities are considered a means for self-esteem development and psychological well-being. They provide students with a structured social life, characterized by organized and guided interactions, contributing to social development and preparing them for successful social engagement. Furthermore, school sports activities enhance students' social and emotional growth, fostering a well-rounded personality.

From the above, it is evident that school sports have become an essential educational reality, with a well-defined concept, objectives, criteria, and organizational principles. Curriculum designers now regard school sports as a fundamental element of the modern school curriculum, functioning in coordination with other educational components to enrich the learning process.

School sports activities are classified into two main types (Zahra, 2011, pp. 17-18):

- Internal Activities: These are sports activities practiced within the school premises during the school day but outside the formal timetable. Participation is voluntary, allowing most students to engage in these activities based on their personal interests and preferences.

- External Activities: These activities take place outside the school premises and beyond the regular school hours. They include: Inter-school competitions; Friendly competitive activities conducted outside the school; Sports activities in clubs, where students participate through regular subscriptions under the supervision of a professional coach.

1.1.3 Values of Sports Activities and Physical Exercise in the School Environment

Practicing sports in the school environment has numerous benefits and values, which can be summarized as follows (Zahra, 2011, pp. 16-17):

- Physical Value: Purposeful and guided sports practice is essential for muscle development. Through it, individuals learn various skills, contributing to proper physical growth and enhancing the efficiency of vital body systems.

- Educational Value: School sports activities provide opportunities for individuals to learn various lessons through education and socialization. They also promote comprehensive and balanced development while instilling acceptable behaviors.

- Social Value: Through school sports, individuals learn how to build social relationships with others and interact successfully, thereby acquiring socially acceptable behavior within a group.

- Moral Value: Individuals learn concepts of right and wrong, along with moral principles such as fairness, honesty, integrity, self-discipline, patience, and sportsmanship.

- Creative Value: Sports allow individuals to express their creative potential by experimenting with new ideas and transforming them into innovative movements, enabling early identification of their talents and abilities and fostering their development.

- Personal Value: Through interactions with peers and self-comparison, individuals gain self-awareness regarding their skills and capabilities. They also learn how to handle their problems and face challenges effectively.

- Therapeutic Value: Sports activities help individuals achieve both physical and mental well-being while serving as an outlet for stress and anxiety relief.

1.2 Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is one of the essential concepts that shape an individual's personality. People's perceptions of themselves vary; some see themselves as inferior to others, while others recognize their true worth. Both perspectives influence their behaviors and actions either positively or negatively.

Rogers (Rogers) suggests that the primary human motivation is self-actualization (Hammam & Al-Huwaish, 2010, p. 81). Therefore, numerous scholars and researchers have provided different definitions of self-esteem.

- **Lawrence** defines self-esteem as "an individual's emotional evaluation of their mental and physical characteristics."

- **French et al.** view self-esteem as "the dimensions an individual sets, through which they perceive themselves and others. These dimensions are not equally important to the person but vary in their centrality" (Al-Natour, 2008, p. 20).

– **Walman (1973)** describes self-esteem as "the way an individual feels about themselves, including the degree to which they possess self-respect and self-acceptance. Self-esteem is a sense of worthiness and personal competence" (Hamman & Al-Huwaish, 2010, p. 81).

– **Cooper Smith** expands on this concept, defining it as "a set of attitudes and beliefs an individual recalls when interacting with their surroundings, including beliefs about expected success and failure and the level of effort exerted." He divides self-esteem expression into two aspects:

– Self-expression: How an individual perceives and describes themselves.

– Behavioral expression: The behavioral patterns that reveal an individual's self-esteem (Al-Natour, 2008, p. 20).

– **Al-Dreini (1983)** defines self-esteem as "an individual's evaluation of themselves, their confidence, distinction, success, and value in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. It reflects an attitude toward the self, which can be either positive (self-acceptance) or negative (lack of self-acceptance)" (Al-Natour, 2008, p. 20).

– **Brown, Dutton, and Cook** argue that an acceptable definition, agreed upon by many specialists, consists of three components (Tounisia, 2012, p. 77):

– The overall perception an individual has of themselves.

– The individual's evaluation of their abilities and personality.

– The individual's sense of personal worth.

From these definitions, it is evident that numerous scholars and researchers have studied self-esteem due to its significant positive and negative effects on individuals and society.

1.2.1 Stages of Self-Development

Just as physical growth follows a process of development, self-development also progresses through a series of sequential stages that remain consistent for everyone. Each stage builds upon the previous one and prepares for the next.

L'ecuyer divides self-development into several stages based on age groups as follows (Tounisia, 2012, pp. 70-74):

– Emergence and Recognition of Self (from birth to 2 years).

– Assertion of Self (from 2 to 5 years).

– Expansion and Diversification of Self (from 6 to 12 years).

– Differentiation of Self (from 12 to 18 years).

– Maturity and Adulthood (from 20 to 60 years).

– Late Adulthood (60 years and above).

From the above, we conclude that self-development evolves alongside an individual's growth and life stages. Through these stages, a person becomes increasingly aware of their uniqueness, distinguishing themselves from others based on personal experiences and various interactions.

1.2.2 Types of Self-Esteem

– **Acquired Self-Esteem:** This type of self-esteem is developed through personal achievements. A person gains satisfaction in proportion to their successes, meaning self-worth is built upon accomplishments.

– **Global Self-Esteem:** This refers to a general sense of self-pride, which is not necessarily based on specific skills or achievements. Individuals who may have experienced failures in their professional lives can still enjoy a sense of overall self-worth, even if they have been denied external validation.

The fundamental difference between global and acquired self-esteem lies in achievement and accomplishment. In global self-esteem, self-worth comes first, followed by achievements. In acquired self-esteem, accomplishments serve as the foundation for self-worth.

1.2.3 Characteristics of Self-Actualized and Non-Self-Actualized Individuals

Many scholars believe that self-esteem varies based on an individual's actions and reactions. Self-esteem has different levels, each with distinct characteristics. Among the classifications of self-esteem, Hamacheck categorizes it into:

– High self-esteem

– Low self-esteem

Additionally, Smith differentiates between two types of self-esteem:

– **Authentic Self-Esteem:** Found in individuals who genuinely feel they have value.

– **Defensive Self-Esteem:** Present in individuals who perceive themselves as lacking worth (Tounisia, 2012, pp. 83-85).

Furthermore, Diggory defines self-esteem as an individual's evaluation of themselves along a spectrum, ranging from a positive to a negative pole or somewhere in between (Al-Natour, 2008, p. 20).

1.2.4 High and Low Levels of Self-Esteem

A. High Self-Esteem

Joseph Mutin defines high self-esteem as "the positive image an individual forms about themselves" (Zoubida, 2007, p. 35).

Maslow studied a group of self-actualized individuals and identified distinguishing characteristics that set them apart from the general population, including:

- A realistic perspective.
- Acceptance of themselves, others, and the world as it is.
- A problem-centered rather than self-centered approach.
- Independence and autonomy from others.
- Creativity and innovation. (Faraj Abdelkader Taha, 2002, p. 326)

B. Low Self-Esteem

Rosenberg defines low self-esteem as "an individual's dissatisfaction with or rejection of themselves" (Zoubida, 2007, p. 36).

Rosenberg and Shutz note that individuals with low self-esteem tend to: Avoid social activities; Avoid leadership roles; Display submissive tendencies; Exhibit excessive shyness and sensitivity; Prefer isolation and solitude (Zoubida, 2007, p. 37).

Characteristics of Individuals with Low Self-Esteem including:

- Fear of failure.
- Guilt, even when they are not responsible for a mistake.
- Tendency to withdraw or modify opinions to avoid rejection or ridicule.
- Feeling disconnected from the world.
- Lack of independence and reliance on others.
- Shyness, withdrawal, and self-contempt.
- Seeking to please others and constantly apologizing for everything (Belkilani, 2008, p. 36).

1.2.5 The Impact of School Sports Activities on Self-Esteem and Mental Health

Scientifically and educationally structured school sports activities contribute to fulfilling individual needs, fostering self-esteem and confidence. They also serve as an effective means of emotional regulation, enhancing happiness, and improving mood. Engaging in group activities and social interaction through sports plays a crucial role in achieving social adjustment and overcoming introversion and isolation. Through participation, students become more receptive to social life and the ideas of others.

Additionally, school sports help reduce behavioral issues by emphasizing discipline and commitment. The rules and regulations inherent in sports cultivate psychological balance, self-control, and emotional regulation, while also mitigating aggressive behavior (Mona, 2009, p. 32).

Regular and well-structured physical activity promotes psychological adaptation and self-actualization among participants. It provides various situations that satisfy the needs for esteem, success, self-fulfillment, and security. Furthermore, sports induce happiness, alleviate stress and fatigue, and help individuals achieve a stable psychological state (Miada, 2008, p. 76).

2. Applied Framework of the Study

2.1 Field Study Procedures

2.1.1 Methodology

The current study relies on the causal-comparative method, a type of descriptive research, to compare self-esteem across its three dimensions between students who participate in school sports activities and those who do not.

2.1.2 Sample

The sample was selected purposively and comprised 40 students, including 23 students (57.5%) who participate in school sports activities and 17 students (42.5%) who do not. The participants are fourth-year middle school students at Kouhil Lakhdar Middle School in Constantine Province.

2.1.3 Data Collection Tools

Bruce R. Haire's Self-Esteem Scale; This scale consists of 30 statements, including 15 negative and 15 positive items. It assesses three dimensions of self-esteem: Peer-related self-esteem; Academic self-esteem; Family-related self-esteem.

2.1.4 Self-Esteem Scale Dimensions

Table (01): Shows the dimensions of the self-esteem scale

Dimensions	Statements Type	Statement Numbers
Family Self-Esteem	Positive Statements	11-13-15-17-19
	Negative Statements	12-14-16-18-20
School Self-Esteem	Positive Statements	21-22-24-26-28-30
	Negative Statements	23-25-27-29
Peer Self-Esteem	Positive Statements	1-5-7-8-9
	Negative Statements	2-3-4-6-10

Source: (Zahra Torsh, 2020, P 196)

2.1.5 Scoring Method for the Self-Esteem Scale

Table (02): Shows how to score the self-esteem scale

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Positive Statements	4	3	2	1
Negative Statements	1	2	3	4

Source: (Zahra Torsh, 2020, P 196)

2.1.6 Self-Esteem Scale Levels

Table (03): Shows the levels of the self-esteem scale

Self-Esteem Levels	Scores
Low Self-Esteem	30 – 59
Moderate Self-Esteem	60 – 89
High Self-Esteem	90 – 120

Source: (Zahra Torsh, 2020, P 196)

2.1.7 Statistical Methods

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for the statistical analysis of the study results. The following statistical methods were applied: percentages, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and T-Test.

2.2 Presentation and Interpretation of Results

2.2.1 Distribution of Sample Members by Age

Table (4): Distribution of sample members by age

Age	School Sports Activity Participants		Non-Participants in School Sports Activity	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
13-15	15	37.50%	8	20%
16-18	8	20%	9	22.50%
Total	23	57.50%	17	42.50%

Source: prepared by the researcher

From the table, it is observed that the number of students practicing school sports in the age group (13-15) exceeds the number of non-practicing students, with practitioners representing 37.5%, while non-practitioners account for 20%. This indicates that students enjoy engaging in school sports due to its health and psychological benefits. However, in the age group (16-18), non-practitioners slightly outnumber practitioners by 1.5%.

2.2.2 Distribution of Sample Members by Gender

Table (5): Distribution of sample members by gender

Gender	School Sports Activity Participants		Non-Participants in School Sports Activity	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
13-15	10	25.00%	10	25%
16-18	13	32.50%	7	17.50%
Total	23	57.50%	17	42.50%

Source: prepared by the researcher

From the table, it is observed that the percentage of male students who practice school sports is equal to that of non-practitioners, both at 25%. However, the percentage of female students practicing school sports surpasses non-practitioners by 15%.

These findings suggest that there are no significant differences between male and female students regarding participation in school sports. This could be explained by the fact that the programs offered by the institution, along with the school environment and the opportunities it provides for social interaction, have a balanced positive impact. These factors contribute to the development of a high level of self-esteem among all students, regardless of gender differences.

2.3 Response to the General Hypothesis

There are statistically significant differences in self-esteem between students who practice school sports and those who do not.

To achieve the study's objective and determine whether these differences are statistically significant, the T-Test for independent samples (T-test pour échantillons indépendants) was used to compare the mean scores of students in the two groups (practitioners and non-practitioners of school sports). The following table illustrates the results:

Table (6): Statistical significance of differences between school sports practitioners and non-practitioners in self-esteem

Self-Esteem	School Sports Activity Participants		Non-Participants in School Sports Activity		t-Value	Sig. Level
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation		
	149.52	12.81	112.29	16.04		

Source: prepared by the researcher

2.3.1 Statistical Interpretation of the Table

From Table (6), it is evident that the mean self-esteem score for school sports practitioners is 149.52, with a standard deviation of 12.81, whereas the mean score for non-practitioners is 112.29, with a standard deviation of 16.04. The calculated T-value (7.88) is statistically significant at 0.01, confirming the acceptance of the hypothesis.

2.3.2 Discussion of Results Supporting the Hypothesis

The findings indicate that the calculated T-value (7.88), comparing the means and standard deviations of both groups concerning self-esteem, exceeds the critical value at the 0.01 significance level. This confirms the existence of statistically significant differences between students who practice school sports and those who do not, with sports practitioners displaying higher self-esteem than their non-practicing counterparts.

According to Lelord and Andre, self-esteem is shaped by four main sources: family (parents), school (teachers), peers and friends. They identify five key factors that contribute to self-esteem development in this age group: physical appearance, academic success, athletic skills, social relationships, and acceptance by the surrounding environment (Belkilani, 2008, p. 34).

2.4 Response to the First Sub-Hypothesis

There are statistically significant differences in peer self-esteem between students who practice school sports and those who do not.

Table (7): Statistical significance of differences between school sports practitioners and non-practitioners in peer self-esteem

Peer self-esteem	School Sports Activity Participants		Non-Participants in School Sports Activity		t-Value	Sig. Level
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation		
	2.6	1.11	1.82	0.72		

Source: prepared by the researcher

2.4.1 Statistical Interpretation of the Table

From Table (7), it is evident that the mean peer self-esteem score for school sports practitioners is 2.60, with a standard deviation of 1.11, whereas the mean score for non-practitioners is 1.81, with a standard deviation of 0.72. The calculated T-value (2.52) is statistically significant at 0.01, confirming the acceptance of the first sub-hypothesis.

2.4.2 Discussion of Results Supporting the Hypothesis

The findings indicate the presence of statistically significant differences between school sports practitioners and non-practitioners regarding peer self-esteem, with sports practitioners demonstrating higher peer self-esteem compared to their non-practicing counterparts.

In this regard, Carol Woods emphasized that self-esteem develops through cooperation, interpersonal relationships, and individual achievements. Moreover, children's social skills improve in the presence of friends (Tounisia, 2012, p. 91).

2.5 Response to the Second Sub-Hypothesis

There are statistically significant differences in family self-esteem between students who practice school sports and those who do not.

Table (8): Statistical significance of differences between school sports practitioners and non-practitioners in family self-esteem

Family self-esteem	School Sports Activity Participants		Non-Participants in School Sports Activity		t-Value	Sig. Level
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation		
	31.78	4.69	22.29	5.25		

Source: prepared by the researcher

2.5.1 Statistical Interpretation of the Table

From Table (8), it is evident that the mean family self-esteem score for school sports practitioners is 31.78, with a standard deviation of 4.69, whereas the mean score for non-practitioners is 22.29, with a standard deviation of 5.25. The T-value (5.90) is statistically significant at 0.01, confirming the acceptance of the second sub-hypothesis.

2.5.2 Discussion of Results Supporting the Hypothesis

The T-Test results indicate statistically significant differences at the 0.01 level between school sports practitioners and non-practitioners regarding family self-esteem. Students who engage in school sports exhibit higher family self-esteem compared to those who do not.

The family plays a crucial role in encouraging children to participate in sports activities, as it is one of the primary institutions contributing to socialization. The family exerts a significant influence on individuals, serving as the first social institution in a child's life. Similarly, school-based sports activities further enhance students' family self-esteem, reinforcing their sense of belonging and familial support.

2.6 Response to the Third Sub-Hypothesis

There are statistically significant differences in school self-esteem between students who practice school sports and those who do not.

Table (9): Statistical significance of differences between school sports practitioners and non-practitioners in school self-esteem

School self-esteem	School Sports Activity Participants		Non-Participants in School Sports Activity		t-Value	Sig. Level
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation		
	28.3	4.57	21.27	5.56		

Source: prepared by the researcher

2.6.1 Statistical Interpretation of the Table

From Table (9), it is evident that the mean school self-esteem score for school sports practitioners is 28.30, with a standard deviation of 4.57, whereas the mean score for non-practitioners is 21.27, with a standard deviation of 4.13. The T-value (4.13) is statistically significant at 0.01, confirming the acceptance of the third sub-hypothesis.

2.6.2 Discussion of Results Supporting the Hypothesis

Based on these results, it can be concluded that students who participate in school sports exhibit higher school self-esteem compared to non-practitioners, as there are statistically significant differences between the two groups in this regard. Referring to the findings of this study, it was observed that students in the study sample generally demonstrated positive levels of self-esteem. This can be explained by the school environment, which provides opportunities for social interaction and personal experiences through sports activities, thereby contributing to an increase in school self-esteem levels.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, self-esteem represents a fundamental pillar in shaping an individual's personality and significantly influences both academic and social performance. Its importance increases during middle school education, as adolescents undergo significant physical and mental changes that affect their self-perception and interactions with their environment. This study confirmed the strong relationship between self-esteem and school sports activities, highlighting that participation in physical activities plays a crucial role in enhancing students' self-confidence and self-worth. Moreover, previous studies have shown that sports activities not only contribute to improving students' physical and health aspects but also positively impact their social and emotional development.

Enhancing self-esteem through school sports is one of the most effective approaches for fostering students' personal abilities and achieving better educational and social outcomes. Therefore, educational institutions should adopt strategies that encourage students to participate in sports activities, contributing to the creation of an academic community with individuals who have high self-esteem, enabling them to face challenges and succeed in various aspects of life.

Recommendations and Suggestions

Given that self-esteem is positively influenced by participation in school sports, the current study recommends the development of a dedicated curriculum related to physical education and sports. This curriculum should be designed to increase awareness of the importance of physical activities and exercises, while also helping students choose sports that align with their interests, personality, abilities, and skills.

Additionally, the study emphasizes the need for further research on this topic, particularly within the school environment. Establishing the connection between self-esteem and sports participation can encourage decision-makers in the Ministry of Education to provide greater attention and additional support for physical education classes across all educational stages.

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