

Self-Esteem: A Systematic Comparison Between Teachers and Trainees in Physical Education and Sports

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ABSTRACT

Background: Self-esteem is considered a multidimensional strategy for coping with various complex situations. There are conflicting results regarding the effect of years of experience on dimensions of self-esteem among physical education teachers and trainees. Our study aims to examine the relationship between overall self-esteem in physical education teachers and trainees, and seniority at work. **Objectives:** In this study, we compared self-esteem between trainees and physical education teachers. **Methods:** Two hundred sixty individuals (140 young trainees, 120 qualified teachers) participated in this study. They were classified according to their years of experience (1-2 years and 2-5 years). All participants completed Rosenberg's global self-esteem questionnaire to assess parameters of self-esteem. **Results:** Physical education teachers had significantly higher values in all dimensions of global self-esteem (GSE) (all, $P < 0.001$). The comparison between years of experience revealed that as the number of years increases, overall self-esteem (GSE) also increases among physical education teachers. **Conclusions:** Based on the results from the current study, we conclude that seniority can be considered a key factor in developing levels of self-esteem among physical education teachers and contributes to a better perception of parameters related to global self-esteem (GSE).

Keywords: Self-Esteem, Tunisian Teachers, Trainee Students

INTRODUCTION

The designers of the various official texts have integrated "self-knowledge" of the teacher as one of the essential knowledges to be acquired through years of accumulated experiences. The vast majority of cognitivists (Bandura A. (1986), Harter (1986), James W (1963)) agree on defining self-knowledge, self-concept, or self-esteem differently in terms of perceptions, conceptions, representations or personal beliefs about oneself, reflecting varied but proven degrees of subjectivity. Epstein (1983) places the theory of self-concept at the preconscious and "experiential" level that is invested by emotions and moods. In the development framework for self-knowledge, efforts are made to enrich the relationship that the teacher has with their body and to promote the development of a positive self-image.

Strengthening self-esteem has become an essential component today and a cornerstone for a balanced and stable personality. According to Marcus (1980), an individual's self-knowledge is governed by an apparent tendency to distort information and events in order to verify or assert their views.

This growing body of research has shown that the concept of self-esteem is a vast subject and has been the subject of various studies. It can be subdivided into other concepts and categories in order to better grasp its complex and multifaceted nature. Self-esteem is defined as the value individuals attribute to themselves, whether they like or dislike themselves, approve or disapprove of themselves (Rosenberg, 1979). Among the essential components of self-esteem, we find feelings of confidence, self-awareness, a sense of belonging, and a sense of achievement (Duclos, 1997). Over the past decades, researchers such as James in 1890 have refined and expanded this concept by defining self-esteem as an awareness of one's own worth. This would be an intimate evaluation of oneself in relation to one's own values. James' perspective is intrinsic. Self-esteem depends on the individual's perception of themselves, their feeling important and unique. Self-esteem is a psychological component referring to each person's positive or negative perception of their own worth (Coopersmith, 1967; Rosenberg, 1979), which can also be assimilated with assertiveness in different areas including physical education teaching.

Self-esteem as a fundamental dimension influencing personality construction has gained ground within the scientific community. Various studies have been conducted on the influence of self-esteem on academic or athletic performance as well as on conditions for building strong self-esteem - including the determining role played by family and environment.

Huberman was a specialist in studying teachers' career cycles; he identified difficult beginnings followed by a stabilization phase and finally an experimentation phase within classrooms or schools. His report raised questions such as "are teachers more or less satisfied with their careers at specific times during their teaching life?" And "are there phases or stages in teaching?" Huberman's research results were generalizable to several European countries such as Switzerland, Spain, and Belgium.

This allows us to deduce potential specificity within Tunisian context; therefore, further study into Tunisian work context is necessary later on.

Age and years seniority are positively correlated with self esteem allowing us conclude that older teachers have higher levels of self esteem

OBJECTIVES

Given deep impact marked by teacher's self esteem, this study aims at achieving following objectives:

- Verify if seniority variable influences titular teacher's self esteems
- Compare if this level varies between titulars and interns PE teachers using Rosenberg questionnaire (1979)

METHODS

Participants

The recruited participants numbered 260 (140 young interns ,120 titular's) representing respectively 53% and 46% of total sample. Participants were prospectively classified into two groups: interns (n=140) representing 53% of sample; they were student interns from Higher Institute of Sport and Physical Education Ksar Saïd) and physical education teachers (n=120) representing 46 % of sample; they were PE Teachers from some institutions around Tunis. Stratifying according to experience years (1-2 years and 2-5 years), 60 (50%) teachers had experience ranging from 1 to 2 years while another 60 (50%) had experience ranging from 2 to 5 years.

Procedure

Participants attended two sessions separated by week. The first (control session helped them familiarize with psychometric tool without collecting any data. During second session participants filled out questionnaires under supervision member available for queries. Twenty-three minutes granted for completion.

The questionnaires in a comfortable environment. Participants were thoroughly advised of their rights during the study, ensuring anonymity of results. No details about the objectives of the study were provided to the participants until after they completed the protocol, which had been reviewed and approved by the Ethic Committee of the National Centre of Medicine and Science in Sports of Tunisia, Tunis, before the beginning of the assessments. Each subject provided a signed informed, written consent before participating in the study.

Measures

Self-Esteem:

Overall self-esteem was assessed using the Rosenberg questionnaire (1979). The items are ordered sequentially. This scale remains the most widely used test in psychological research to measure overall self-esteem levels. Half of the items are phrased in reverse. Participants respond to the 10 items expressing feelings about themselves using a Likert scale with four levels (from "completely disagree" to "completely agree"). The measurement tool was designed to evaluate parameters of overall self-esteem.

Statistical Analyse

Data Analysis:

Descriptive statistics were performed, expressing the main results as mean $\pm$ standard deviation and presented in Table 1. Normality assumption was checked by conducting the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Unpaired t-tests were used to compare observations between groups.

The reliability and validity of the questionnaire were calculated by computing Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

A three-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare different groups in terms of teacher status and years of experience.

Pearson correlations were conducted to determine the relationship between dimensions of overall self-esteem.

All statistical analyses were performed using the commercial software "Statistical Package for Social Sciences" (SPSS version 13.0, for Windows, IBM Inc., Chicago, IL, USA), and a significance level set at $p \leq 0.05$.

RESULTS

Validity and Internal Consistency of Study Items

Regarding internal consistency related to dimensions within the self-esteem questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha showed excellent reliability (unadjusted $\alpha = 0.930$, adjusted $\alpha = 0.928$). For each subscale, Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.515 to 0.711.

Correlation Between All Dimensions of Self-Esteem

Pearson correlation revealed significant correlations among all dimensions with a p-value < 0.001 . Coefficients ranged from 0.160 to 0.962.

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha for Each Subscale and Domain

Sub-scale	Cronbach's Alpha
Question 1	0.538
Question 2	0.682
Question 3	0.621
Question 4	0.638
Question 5	0.711
Question 6	0.685
Question 7	0.494
Question 8	0.587
Question 9	0.515
Question 10	0.553
Global	0.930

Self-Esteem Between Teachers and Trainees, and Years of Experience

The results indicated that overall self-esteem (EGS) was more developed in teachers than in trainees across the sample (All $P < 0.001$).

Teacher status was statistically very significant for each component ($P < 0.001$), and the effect of years of experience was statistically significant ($P < 0.001$).

The results show that physical education teachers are significantly better than trainees in terms of various questions evaluating self-esteem. The results showed that self-esteem was higher in teachers than in trainees.

DISCUSSION

To our knowledge, this is the first survey systematically comparing self-esteem, assessed using the Rosenberg questionnaire (1979), between physical education and sports teachers and trainees. It is also the first to examine differences in years of experience among teachers.

Finally, this study was unprecedented in examining a Tunisian sample. The main results of this survey showed a statistically significant difference between PE teachers and trainees.

Self-esteem between PE Teachers and Trainees

Table 1: Mean values $\pm$ Standard deviations (SD) of questions related to Self-Esteem

Questions	Groupes	Nombre	Moyenne $\pm$ SD	(signification)
Question 1	Stagiaires	140	3,15 $\pm$ 0,92	*
	Enseignants	120	3,35 $\pm$ 0,67	
Question 2	Stagiaires	140	3,40 $\pm$ 0,67	**
	Enseignants	120	3,85 $\pm$ 0,37	
Question 3	Stagiaires	140	3,40 $\pm$ 0,84	**
	Enseignants	120	3,90 $\pm$ 0,45	
Question 4	Stagiaires	140	3,03 $\pm$ 0,77	**
	Enseignants	120	3,85 $\pm$ 0,67	
Question 5	Stagiaires	140	2,60 $\pm$ 0,96	**
	Enseignants	120	4,00 $\pm$ 0,00	
Question 6	Stagiaires	140	3,03 $\pm$ 0,77	**
	Enseignants	120	3,95 $\pm$ 0,22	
Question 7	Stagiaires	140	3,15 $\pm$ 0,80	**
	Enseignants	120	3,90 $\pm$ 0,31	
Question 8	Stagiaires	140	2,18 $\pm$ 0,81	**
	Enseignants	120	4,00 $\pm$ 0,00	
Question 9	Stagiaires	140	2,75 $\pm$ 1,06	**
	Enseignants	120	3,90 $\pm$ 0,31	
Question 10	Stagiaires	140	3,38 $\pm$ 0,74	**
	Enseignants	120	4,00 $\pm$ 0,00	
SCORE	Stagiaires	140	30,05 $\pm$ 3,77	**
	Enseignants	120	38,70 $\pm$ 1,84	

* Significant difference at $p < 0.05$; ** Significant difference at $p < 0.01$.

Significant differences were found between PE teachers and trainees in certain alternative components of self-esteem, such as feelings of pride, self-respect, satisfaction, and self-confidence.

According to Reyes (1990), teachers who are highly committed to their work demonstrate strong positive self-esteem and remain committed to the organization, colleagues, and students. It should be noted that studies on teacher's self-esteem are rare if not nonexistent. Most studies have been conducted on athletes regarding the influence of their self-esteem on performance. A study conducted in 2010 by Patricia Gambert and Jacques Bonneau on a population of 900 PE teachers reported that 84% of PE teachers are satisfied with their professional experience (notably due to their autonomy marginally confined within a classroom setting).

PE teachers point out a lack of consideration for their discipline from students, parents as well as social prestige "This lack of consideration represents one of the main negative points perceived by PE professors" (Gambert & Bonneau, 2010).

In line with a context where there is a sense that teaching conditions are deteriorating overall (Gambert & Bonneau, 2009), this dissatisfaction is also the result of a history that has long marginalized the status of PE teachers.

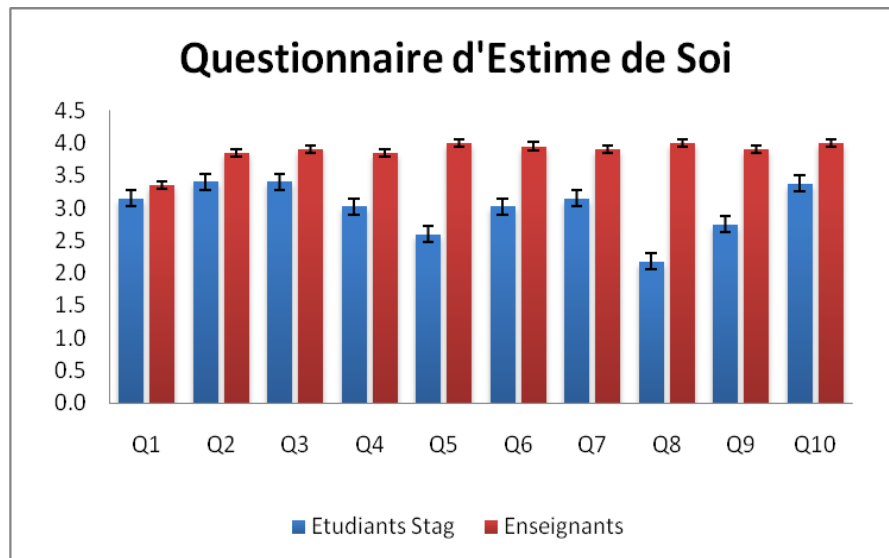


Figure: Mean values of self-esteem recorded among interns and teachers

The mean values show that intern students have very little considered self-esteem while others estimate themselves much more. The years off acquired experience improve confidence level and provide better perception parameters for global self-esteem (EGS).

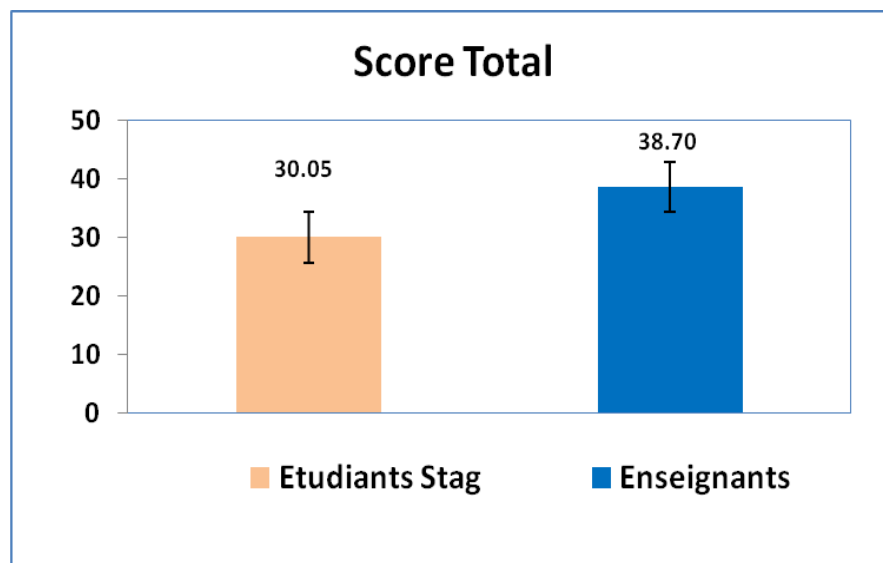


Figure: Total self-esteem score recorded among student interns and teachers.

Comparing between the two samples, we notice a very significant difference. An overview allows us to identify a remarkable difference between the teachers (38.70) and the interns (30.05) on both diagrams. Accordingly, we can suggest that interns feel less respected where self-esteem is low.

Self-esteem According to Years of Seniority

The results of the current survey show significant differences related to the number of years of seniority of permanent teachers. Years of experience have a positive effect on teachers who consider themselves quite competent after 2 to 5 years of work. Seniority is positively correlated with self-esteem.

It can be believed that over time and with seniority, teachers have an increasingly higher level of self-esteem.

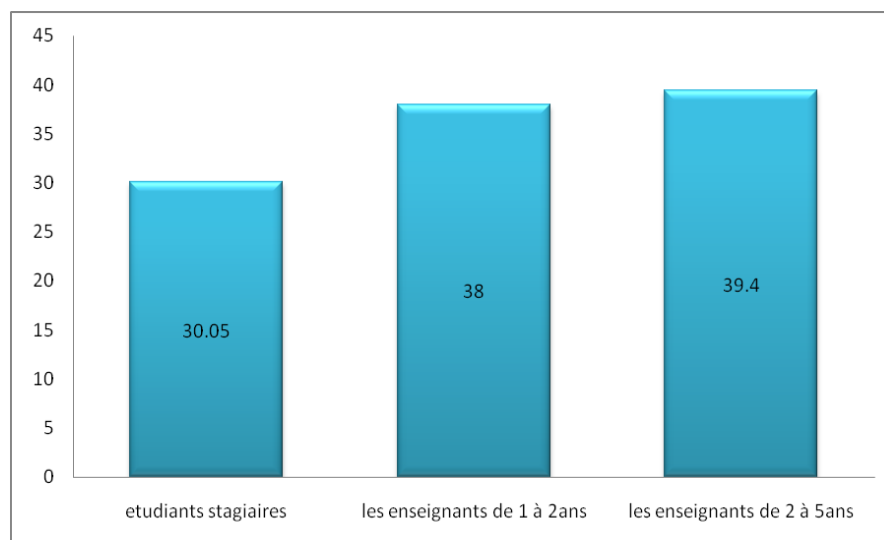


Figure: Total self-esteem score recorded among interns, teachers with 1-2 years' seniority, and teachers with 2-5 years' seniority.

Conclusions

This study has shown that, in a Tunisian sample, self-esteem differed according to teaching status and years of seniority. The on-going study also confirmed that years of experience improve the level of confidence and contribute to a better perception of the parameters of overall self-esteem (EGS).

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