

Original Article

The Relationship between Narcissism and Self-esteem among Football Players in the West Bank, Palestine

Awad Bdir¹, Nidhal Jebabli², Mohanad Omar¹, Amal Salhi², Iyad Yosuf³, Rasha Musamih¹, Omar Muhasana⁴

¹Department of Physical Education, Palestine Technical University, Kadoorie, Tulkarm, Palestine, ²Higher Institute of Sport and Physical Education of Ksar Said, Tunis, Tunisia, ³Department of Physical Education, Birzeit University, Ramallah, Palestine, ⁴Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Tubas, Palestine

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of the study was to identify the levels of narcissism and self-esteem and their potential relationship among soccer players in the West Bank, Palestine. **Methods:** A total of 210 soccer players (aged 05-20 years) from three teams (professional and first- and second-division) in the West Bank were participated in this study. Data level of narcissism, and self-esteem, and their relationship with the potential of soccer players were collected via Emmons' four Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) dimensions (1984) and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965). **Results:** Seventy-five percent of the players were evaluated as having a high level of narcissism more than self-esteem (62.1%). Also, result showed a positive relationship between narcissism and self - esteem among the players of the Palestinian football league, which is reflected in their level of performance. Moreover, variables of experience, playing position, and league level have no impact on players' self-esteem. However, forwards demonstrate more narcissistic than midfielders.

Keywords: Narcissism, game position, experience, league level

INTRODUCTION

The recent development of football in some countries in terms of high intensity of competition and their levels calls for focus on all aspects of the training processes. Psychological aspects play a vital role in the training. In a given competition between two teams of the same skills, physical abilities, and planning, and as these three elements are closely similar between the pair, it is the psychological factor that appears decisive in the outcome of the game.

The present study draws upon the relationship between narcissism and self-esteem among footballers in the West Bank, Palestine. Numerous studies have examined the relationship between the two in other fields, and the findings of the studies carried out by Sara et al. (2009), Virgil et al. (2008), and Rhodewalt et al. (1998) among others indicate that there is a positive correlation between positive narcissism and self-esteem. It is possible to predict narcissism through the study of self-esteem among individuals, but no study has so far found a relationship between them in sports in general and football in particular, which underlines the importance of the current study. The concept of narcissism comes from Narcissus, who falls in love with himself and sees his reflection in the water and lives his life loving the beloved who cannot be reached (Tazegül, 2018). Narcissism is a personal trait characterized by an excessive need for recognition and self-importance (Krizan & Herlache, 2018; Miller

Access this article online



Website:
<http://sjsr.se/>

ISSN:
2001-9211

Address for correspondence:

Awad Bdir, Department of Physical Education, Palestine Technical University, Kadoorie, Tulkarm, Palestine.
E-mail: Budaier_1981@hotmail.com

et al. (2017)). Defined it as very high self-esteem. To Raskin & Terry, (1988) it is one's exaggerated love for themselves, and Domono, (1994) states that it as an infatuation with one's body, selfishness, or self-love. As Solomon, (1985) puts it, narcissism is more common among artists, painters, professional athletes, and poets. For example, Cox, (1998) noted a positive relationship between narcissism and self-confidence, and that self-confidence and narcissism are stronger among athletes than non-athletes. Elsewhere, Carroll, (1989) reached similar results by comparing narcissism between bodybuilders and non-athletes, only to find that narcissism in bodybuilders was more prevalent than non-athletes.

The importance of moderate and positive narcissism is rooted in its association with psychological and mental traits such as self-esteem, creativity, self-confidence, academic achievement, and optimism. Narcissism and creativity are described as being positively related in the results of studies of Domono, (1994), Solomon, (1982), Raskin, (1980), and Kathleen, (1999), whose findings indicated a positive relationship between narcissism and creativity. Lisa et al. (1998) found a positive relationship between moderate narcissism and optimism. However, regarding exaggeration in narcissism, it must be noted that it leads to poor adaptation, isolation, impulse, and several other complications (Joshua et al. 2009).

The self-esteem defined by Qaddoumi & Abdel Haq, (2000) quoted Musa Jibril as the general assessment of the individual's self in its entirety and its mental, social, emotional, moral, and physical characteristics. And his expectations of them how it seems in different positions of his life.

Self-esteem is an important aspect of the self-concept and almost all results of the previous studies unanimously agree that participation in sports programs improves the self-concept and self-esteem: self-esteem (Jackson et al. (2001); Gaudreau et al. (2010)).

METHODS

Subjects

The study was conducted on a sample of 210 players from the professional clubs and the first and second league football clubs in Palestine in the 2013-2014 seasons. The sample was selected in a stratified-random manner, representing 28% of the study population

(Table 1). The study was approved according to the Declaration of Helsinki and the protocol was fully approved by the Ethic Committee of the University before the commencement of the assessments.

Procedures

All subjects underwent a personal evaluation of narcissism and self-esteem level using the Emmons scale (1984).

Narcissism Measuring Instrument

In order to measure narcissism, the Emmons (1984) scale was used which consists of 37 items divided into four areas (Table 2):

The responses to the narcissism items were distributed according to the Likert method of five responses (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree), thus having the highest response rate 5 and the lowest response 1.

Statistical Analysis

All analyses were carried out using SPSS 16 for Windows (SPSS, version 16 for Windows. Inc., Chicago, IL, USA).

Table 1: Distribution of the study sample according to the independent study variables (210 participants)

Independent variables	Level of variable	Number	Percentage
League level	Professional	59	28.10
	First	44	21.0
	Second	107	51
Playing experience	5 years or less	95	45.2
	6-10 years	76	36.2
	11-15 years	30	14.3
	More than 15 years	9	4.3
Position	Defender	83	39.5
	Midfielder	77	36.7
	Forward	50	23.8

Table 2: Distribution of the number and items of the narcissism scale to different sub-areas

Sub-area	Number of items	Item
Leadership and power	8	
Self-admiration	10	9-18
Superiority and vanity	11	19-29
Neuroticism	8	30-37
Total	37	1-37

Values were computed as mean and standard deviation (SD). Normality of all dependent variables was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The data were classified by percent. The level of narcissism and self-esteem were determined using the following criteria: high level (70-79.9%); moderate level (60-69.9%); and low level (50-59.9%). The difference and the relationship between narcissism and self-esteem were evaluated using the paired Student's T-test and the correlation of Pearson. One-Way Anova was used to compare between narcissism or self-esteem and players skills variables. Scheffe's post-hoc test was used to locate differences when anova revealed significant. The level of significance was set at $p \leq 0.05$.

RESULTS

Narcissism Level

Arithmetic means and percentages were used for each item, each field, to classify the degree of narcissism. Table 3 showed the results of the narcissism level.

Table 3 showed the overall level of narcissism among football players in the West Bank was high, with a response

rate of 74%. The results also proved that the level was high in all fields except the field of superiority and vanity.

Self-esteem

Table 4 represented the arithmetic means and percentages of self-esteem among football players in the West Bank. It is clear that the level of self-esteem among football players in the West Bank was average for items 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 10, where the percentage of response to them was respectively 58.10% and 58%. The level was very low for item (8), where the percentage of response (41.33%). In terms of the overall level of self-esteem, it was average, with a response rate of 62.10%.

Relationship between Narcissism and Self-esteem

Table 5 represent the relationship between narcissism and self-esteem among football players in the West Bank. Table 4 showed a significant positive correlation at the level of significance ($p \leq 0.05$) between narcissism and self-esteem among football players in the West Bank, where the correlation coefficient was high and reached (0.78).

Table 3: Ranking, arithmetic means, and percentages of the narcissism level of football players in the West Bank for fields and total score

Rank	Field	Average response rate	Percentage	Level of narcissism
1	Neuroticism	3.84	76.80	High
2	Self-admiration	3.78	75.59	High
3	Leadership and Power	3.73	74.65	High
4	Superiority and vanity	3.45	68.94	Moderate
	Overall narcissism rate	3.70	74.00	High

Table 4: Arithmetic means and percentages of self-esteem among football players in the West Bank (210 participants)

Rank	Item	Average response rate	Percentage	Level of self-esteem
1	I feel that I have value as other people	3.48	69.62	Moderate
2	I feel that I have a number of good qualities	3.42	68.38	Moderate
3	I often have the feeling that I am a failed human being	3.11	62.29	Moderate
4	I have the ability to get things done properly like the majority of people	3.28	65.52	Moderate
5	I have nothing to be proud of	2.90	58.10	Low
6	My idea of myself is generally positive	3.33	66.57	Moderate
7	I feel good about myself	3.42	68.38	Moderate
8	I hope to have greater self-respect	2.07	41.33	Very low
9	I feel I can't do anything right	2.98	59.62	Low
10	I feel less appreciated than others	3.06	61.24	Moderate
	Total self-esteem level	3.11	62.10	Moderate

Narcissism Level and Players Skills

Arithmetic means for the level of narcissism among football players in the West Bank based on the league level, experience, and position variables (Table 5).

Results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences at ($p > 0.05$) in the level of narcissism among footballers in the West Bank in terms league level, experience. However significant difference between the level of narcissism and position variables.

Table 6 showed a difference signification between defenders vs forwards, and midfielders' vs forward ($p < 0.05$).

Self-esteem and Players Skills Variables

Table 7 presented the arithmetic mean for the level of self-esteem of football players in the West Bank for the above variables. No significant change between self-esteem and players skills variables.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to identify the levels of narcissism and self-esteem and their potential relationship among soccer players in the West Bank, Palestine. The main finding of this investigation was that Seventy-five percent of the players were evaluated as having a high level of narcissism more than self-esteem

Table 5: Results of Pearson correlation coefficient for the relationship between narcissism and self-esteem among football players in the West Bank (210 participants)

Narcissism (mean±SD)	Self-esteem (mean±SD)	Pearson correlation	Significance
3.69±0.44	3.10±0.39	0.78*	0.0001*

*Statistically significant ($p \leq 0.05$).

Table 6: Arithmetic means of the narcissism level of football players in the West Bank based on the variable of league level, playing experience and position

	League level			Experience				Position		
	Professional	First	Second	< 5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	> 15 years	Defender	Midfielder	Forward
Leadership and power	3.73	3.63	3.77	3.65	3.77	3.85	3.84	3.67*	3.67	3.92*
Self-admiration	3.75	3.85	3.75	3.74	3.84	3.75	3.68	3.71*	3.73	3.95*
Superiority and vanity	3.40	3.47	3.45	3.38	3.49	3.51	3.40	3.34*	3.42	3.66*
Neuroticism	3.79	3.89	3.84	3.80	3.92	3.75	3.73	3.75*	3.85	3.95*
Overall narcissism rate	3.67	3.71	3.70	3.64	3.75	3.71	3.66	3.62*	3.67	3.87*

*Significantly different between forward and defender ($p < 0.05$); * significantly different between forward and midfielder ($p < 0.05$).

(62.1%). Also, result showed a positive relationship between narcissism and self-esteem among the players of the Palestinian football league, which was reflected in their level of performance. Moreover, variables of experience, playing position, and league level have no impact on players' self-esteem. However, forwards demonstrate more narcissistic than midfielders.

First, The researcher attributes the high level of narcissism among the players in different levels to the fact that players in different leagues have no alternative, which in turn contributes to high self-admiration. Also, management plays an important role in narcissism through the high value of contracts signed with some prominent players. This finding is consistent with Goks et al. (2013), Maples et al. (2010), Miller & Campell (2008), Lee and Ashton (2005). However, the present finding discord with that, Lootens (2010), Kwan et al. (2009), and Ames et al. (2006).

Second, results showed that the self-concept of the players came to a medium degree and this is due to the fact that the players have the ambition and capabilities to achieve the desired goal, but they have not yet reached the degree of awareness of their importance as players, and they often look for money without looking to achieve themselves. Findings of the present study were consistent with that of Blanc et al. (2011), and Mansour (2007). This study differed with the study of Khasawna (2011) and Khoja (2011). The reason for this difference may be due to the difference in the study sample between the current and previous studies.

Moreover, the results of the present study are consistent with those of Sara et al. (2009, Virgil et al (2008), and Rhodewalt et al. (1998). Their results showed a positive correlation between positive narcissism and self-esteem, and indicate that narcissism can be predicted

Table 7: Arithmetic mean for the level of self-esteem of football players in the West Bank for the above variables

Independent variables	Level of variable	Arithmetic mean
League level	Professional	3.06
	First	3.03
	Second	3.15
Playing experience	5 years or less	3.04
	6-10 years	3.18
	11-15 years	3.07
	More than 15 years	3.27
Position	Defender	3.06
	Midfielder	3.11
	Forward	3.16

by studying self-esteem in individuals. It means that the higher the level of narcissism, the higher the self-esteem of the players. The researcher attributes this to the fact that the player who reaches the stage of self-esteem and achieves his goals, especially with regards to financial matters and is sometimes selected to represent Palestine in international forums (men, Olympics, youth) all have an increased degree of narcissism.

For the first and second professional leagues, narcissism does not change with the club's league level because even in non-professional clubs, there is a concealed professionalism involved, and often such players move from one club to another between and from one league to another between seasons, because most players seek to make money regardless of the league of the club they target.

In the other context, the present study showed that the high level of narcissism coordinates with the studies of Kubarych et al. (2004), who affirmed that all soccer players level experience (<5 years to > 15 years) have more levels of narcissism than other players. However, others studies showed the opposite results (Goks et al. (2013), Lootens (2010) and Qaddoumi (2005)).

In the present study, results (Table 7) showed no statistically significant differences at ($p > 0.05$) in the level of self-esteem of football players in the West Bank due for the three variables. The reason is that all players are in possession of physical, psychological, skill, and planning abilities and competence, and this is reflected in their self-concept, and therefore whatever the experience and position of the player. Likewise,

the self-concept is influenced by the outcome of the game (winning and losing) and personal performance of the player. And therefore, the better the level of performance of the player the better it is reflected in the self-concept. This is in argument with others studies (Hindawi, (2012); Khasawna, (2011); Khoja, (2011); Al-Zu'bi et al. (2006).

CONCLUSIONS

In light of these study findings, the level of narcissism among the players of the Palestinian football league was high than self-esteem specially the forwards. Also, a positive relationship between narcissism and self-esteem were detected among the players of the Palestinian football league, which is reflected in their level of performance. Moreover, Variables of experience, playing position, and league level have no impact on players' self-esteem.

REFERENCES

- Al-Basoul, Magdolin (2008). A Comparative Study of the Effect of Gymnastics and Swimming Courses on the Development of Self-Concept among Students of the Faculty of Physical Education in the Jordanian Universities. Unpublished Master Thesis, Yarmouk University, Jordan.
- Alfermann, D., & Stool, (2000) effect of physical exercise on self-concept and well-being. *International Journal of sport Psychology*
- Al-Rousan, Abdullah. (2010). "Social Adaptation and Self-Concept of the Racket Players in the Directorates of Education in Northern Jordan". PhD thesis, University of Jordan.
- Al-Zu'bi, Zuhair, Al-Kilani, Ghazi, and Tayfour, Akef, (2006), "Self-Concept of "National Teams in Jordan". *Journal of Educational Sciences*. Master Thesis. University of Jordan, Jordan, Vol. 36
- Ames, R., Rose, P. & Anderson, C. (2006). The NPI-16 as a short measure of narcissism *Journal of Research in Personality*, 40, 4; 440-450 20.
- Blanc, Johana, Monthuy, Maiano Christophe, Morin Alexandre, Carroll, L, (1989), A comparative study of narcissism, gender, and sex-role orientation among bodybuilders, athletes, and psychology students, *Psychological Reports*, 64, pp 999-1006.
- Cox, R, C, (1998), *Sport Psychology: Concepts and Applications*, 4th ed, Boston, WCB McGraw Hill.
- depletion on physical exercise routines of athletes. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, (13).
- Derek & David A& Emily.(2012). Investigating the effects of ego
- Domono, G, (1994), Assessment of creativity with the ACL: An empirical comparison of four scales, *Creativity Research Journal*, 7(1), pp 21-33.
- Ekeland. E. Heian. F. & Hagen. K. B. (2005). Can exercise improve self esteem in children and young people? A systematic review of randomised controlled trials. *British journal of sports medicine*. 39(11). 792-798.
- Elman, W, & Stuart, M, (2003), Narcissism in football players: stereotype or reality?, *Journal of Sport Psychology*, Vol (5), No (1), pp 1-9.
- Emmons, R, A, (1984), Factor analysis and construct validity of the narcissistic personality, *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 48(3), pp 291-300.

- Gaudreau, P. Nicholls, A. & Levy, A. R. (2010). The ups and downs of coping and sport achievement: An episodic process analysis of within-person associations. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 32(3), 298-311.
- Hachaichi, Abdul Wahab and Yacoub, Al-Eyd. (2010). "Self-esteem and participation in activities of physical education and sports class for secondary school students in Algeria" *Journal of Educational and Psychological Studies* (College of Education - Sultan Qaboos University), Volume (4), Issue (2), 1-18.
- Hindawi, Nashwa, (2012) "The relationship between the self-concept and the motivation of sports achievement among the male and female players of school teams in the Directorate of Jenin." Master Thesis. An - Najah National University, Nablus.
- Joshua D. Miller, W. Keith Campbell, Diana L. Young, Chad E. Lakey, Dennis E. Reidy Amos Zeichner, and Adam S. Goodie. (2009) Examining the Relations Among Narcissism, Impulsivity, and Self-Defeating Behaviors. *Journal of Personality*, Vol 77, Issue 3, pages 761–794.
- Kathleen, A, F, (1999), Adaptive and maladaptive narcissism and creativity: how are they related in professional male and female actors?, unpublished doctoral dissertation, California School of Professional Psychology, Los Angeles Campus.
- Khasawna, Ghada. (2011). "Studying the level of self-esteem among students enrolled in the gymnastics course at the Faculty of Physical Education" *Yarmouk Research (Humanities and Social Sciences Series)*, Vol. 27, No. 4, 2259-2272.
- Khoja, Adel. (2011). "The effect of a proposed sports program on improving the body image and the concept of self-esteem among the special needs group" *Journal of Success Research (Humanities)*, Volume 25 (5), 1283-1336.
- Krizan, Z., & Herlache, A. D. (2018). The Narcissism Spectrum Model: A Synthetic View of Narcissistic Personality. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 22, 3–31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868316685018>
- Kubarych, T., Elizabeth, D. & Austin, J. (2004). The Narcissistic Personality Inventory: factor structure in a non - clinical sample. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 36, 4; 857 _ 872.
- Kwan, V, Kuang, L. & Hui, N. (2009). Identifying the Sources of Self-esteem: The Mixed. *Self and Identity*, 8, 2&3; 176-195
- Lee, K. & Ashton, M. (2005). Psychopathy, Machiavellianism, and Narcissism in the Five-Factor Model and the HEXACO model of personality structure. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 38,7; 1571-1582
- Lisa A. Fast & David C. Funder (1998). Gender Differences in the Correlates of Self-Referent Word Use: Authority, Entitlement, and Depressive Symptoms. *Journal of Personality*. Vol 78, Issue 1, 313–338.
- Lootens, C. (2010). An Examination of the Relationships among Personality Traits, Perceived Parenting Styles, and Narcissism. Unpublished PhD Diss. University of North Carolina at Greensboro.
- Lootens, C. (2010). An Examination of the Relationships among Personality Traits, Perceived Parenting Styles, and Narcissism. Unpublished PhD Diss. University of North Carolina at Greensboro
- Mansour, Mohammad Khalaf, (2007) "The Self-concept and its relation to the achievements of athletes of the national teams and players of Racket Sports". Unpublished MA thesis. Yarmouk University. Irbid, Jordan.
- Maples, J., Joshua, B., Miller, J., Fischer, S. & Seibert, A. (2010). Differences between grandiose and vulnerable narcissism and bulimic symptoms in young women. *Eating Behaviors*, 12, 1; 83-85
- Miller, J. & Campbell, K. (2008). Comparing Clinical and Social- Personality Conceptualizations of Narcissism. *Journal of Personality*, 76, 3; 450-476
- Miller, J. D., Lynam, D. R., Hyatt, C. S., & Campbell, W. K. (2017). Controversies in Narcissism. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 13, annurev-clinpsy-032816-045244. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-032816-045244>
- Qaddoumi, Abdul Nasser, (2005). "Narcissism among volleyball players in Palestine" *Journal of Educational and Psychological Sciences* (College of Education), University of Bahrain, Volume (6), No. (2), pp. 179-207.
- Rasken, R, N, (1980), Narcissism and creativity: are they related, *Psychological Report*, 46, p590.
- Raskin, R, & Terry, H, (1980), A principal –components analysis of narcissistic personality inventory and further evidence of its construct validity, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54, pp 890-902.
- Raskin, R, & Terry, H, (1988), A principal –components analysis of narcissistic personality inventory and further evidence of its construct validity, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54, pp 890-902.
- Rhodewalt, F, Madrian, J, & Cheney, S, (1998), Narcissism self-knowledge organization, and emotional reactivity: the effect of daily experience on self-esteem and affect, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 24, pp 75-87.
- Rhodewalt, F, & Morf, C, (1995), Self and interpersonal correlates of narcissistic personality inventory: A review and new findings, *Journal of Research in Personality*, 29, pp 1-23.
- Sara Konrath, Brad J. Bushman, & Tyler Grove (2009). Seeing My World in a Million Little Pieces: Narcissism, Self-Construal, and Cognitive-Perceptual Style. *Journal of Personality*, Vol 77, Issue 4, 1197–1228.
- Solomon, R, S, (1985), Creativity and normal narcissism, *Journal of Creative Behavior*, 19 (1), pp 47-55.
- Stephan, Yannick (2011) Physical self-concept and disturbed eating attitudes and behaviors in French athlete and non-athlete adolescent girls: Direct and indirect relation. *Journal homepage*.
- Tazegül, Ü., & Özdemir, A. (2018). Comparison of the Narcissism Levels of the Students in the School of Physical
- Virgil Zeigler-Hill, Brendan Clark, & Jessica D. Pickard. (2008). Narcissistic Subtypes and Contingent Self-Esteem: Do All Narcissists Base Their Self-Esteem on the Same Domains?. *Journal of Personality*. Vol 76, Issue 4, 753–774.