

RELATIONSHIPS AMONG FUN, SELF-ESTEEM, AND HAPPINESS OF TENNIS PLAYERS

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We examined the relationships among the factors of fun, self-esteem, and happiness with a group of 249 players from tennis clubs located in the Seoul capital area, South Korea. Results of analysis showed that fitness and acknowledgment increased positive self-esteem and decreased negative self-esteem. Sociability increased positive self-esteem and both interest and fitness increased happiness. Negative self-perception reduced happiness, but the relationship with positive self-esteem was not statistically significant. Finally, fitness, acknowledgement, and sociability were important antecedent variables that increased happiness through the mediator of self-esteem. We have provided useful information for busy people on how to lead a healthy and meaningful life by having fun and consistently participating in physical activities.

Keywords: fun, self-esteem, happiness, tennis players.

In the postindustrial society of the 21st century, people often participate in physical activities to prevent various diseases (Reiner, Niermann, Jekauc, & Woll, 2013). In the case of South Korea, Kim, Choi, and Kim (2011) reported on the reasons for the rapid increase in participation in physical activities as follows: First, there is a growing interest in leisure activities and health as people's quality of life is increasing because of the economic development of the nation; second, people's fitness gradually declines in industrial societies as a result of mechanization; third, older adults are actively engaging in physical activities to maintain their health; fourth, with the expansion of the news and social media more information is available.

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Many people who begin participating in physical activities tend to drop out, and they often report that lack of fun is a decisive factor in discontinuing participation (Gould & Petlichoff, 1988). Similarly, Wininger and Pargman (2003) found that physical activities were considerably beneficial to physical health and psychological stability in a study of U.S. citizens, but the participants' engagement in physical activities was inconsistent or they stopped taking part in the activity after a time. In particular, approximately half of those who start to exercise have been shown to drop out within the first six months for various reasons (Annesi, 2003). Fun has proven to be an important factor that not only provides motivation to continue physical activities but also enhances quality of life through the development of positive emotions (Lazarus, 1991; Scanlan, Carpenter, Lobel, & Simons, 1993).

Fun is a general term used in various fields that varies in notion with differing subjective interpretations (Kim, 2012). Indeed, the similar terms, fun and enjoyment, are often used interchangeably not only in daily life but also in academia (Han, 2011). Podilchak (1991) stated that fun leads to wholehearted devotion without the need for compensation or reward when an individual is involved in a given activity. On the other hand, Podilchak pointed out that enjoyment encourages participation through the expectation of a reward and can be distinguished from fun, as pleasure and satisfaction are experienced. Conversely, there are many scholars who interpret fun and enjoyment as a single concept. *Fun* is seen as a personal positive emotional reaction to the immersion or concentration in a given activity and can be characterized by feelings such as enjoyment and appreciation (Scanlan & Simons, 1992). Although it is difficult to define fun from these contrasting opinions, both fun and enjoyment are, nonetheless, seen as significant factors that induce positive emotions.

Many researchers have suggested that physical activities help in the development of positive emotions as well as in the maintenance of one's health (Adamo, Rutherford, & Goldfield, 2010; Kilpatrick, Hebert, & Bartholomew, 2005; Young, Gittelsohn, Charleston, Felix-Aaron, & Appel, 2001). In particular, physical activities can raise one's self-esteem; this not only leads to decreased aggressive and hostile antisocial behavior but also helps to maintain happiness and emotional stability in an individual's life by promoting positive behavior (Omarsson, 2013).

Self-esteem is the perception of oneself as an important and invaluable being as well as having the confidence and belief that one can succeed and accomplish anything (Branden, 1992). Rosenberg (1965) and Coopersmith (1967) developed measurement tools to evaluate the degree of self-esteem. Further, self-esteem has been divided into positive and negative self-concepts depending on how one appraises oneself (Smith & Mackie, 2007). It has been reported that people with

strong positive self-esteem are more likely to feel relatively happy compared to those without (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003).

The increase in leisure activities in the midst of stress and psychological pressure is a universal phenomenon in the rapidly changing society of today. With the increase of leisure sports, people now engage in various physical activities but, as already described, many do not perceive them as fun and discontinue their participation (Gould & Petlichoff, 1988). We believed that it would be relevant to examine the factors of fun that help maintain or increase participation in physical activities and how they affect self-esteem and happiness. Therefore, in this study we focused on presenting the indicators for a healthy and meaningful life.

Theoretical Background

Fun in physical activities is significantly related to a participant's self-esteem. Pederson and Seidman (2004) reported that physical activities help in one's self-discovery, instill a sense of self-respect, and ultimately lead to high self-esteem. Specifically, participation that is voluntary because people are experiencing fun in physical activities is accompanied by a feeling of satisfaction (Wankel & Berger, 1990). In a study involving 327 middle-school students, in South Korea, Han (2010) found that having fun in sports activities after school led to students continuing their participation and, through their interaction with their peers, this not only aided the students to establish a sound sense of values but also led to high self-esteem because they were maintaining good relationships with others. Thus, Han claimed that fun fulfills an important role in the significant relationship between physical activities and self-esteem. Similarly, the fun in skill acquisition and performance improvement when participating in badminton was reported to increase players' positive self-esteem (Cho, Lee, & Kim, 2008). It can be assumed from this previous research that physical activities build self-esteem, and fun is an important antecedent variable that continually reinforces such activities. Thus, we focused on the formulation and testing of a research question on which factors of fun in physical activities significantly affect self-esteem.

Research Question 1: Do different factors of fun generated by participation in physical activities have an impact on self-esteem?

Physical activity is considered to be one of the most important factors in establishing a robust leisure culture for individuals in their management of a healthy life (Khan et al., 2012). McFall (2012) conducted a study with a group of people, of whom some were actively involved in physical activities and some were not. Results showed that the members of the active group were twice as likely as the members of the inactive group were to experience happiness. Some researchers have suggested that physical activities not only have considerable health benefits, such as delaying the decline of bodily functions and increasing

immunity against sicknesses, but are also effective in establishing a stable psychological state (Adamo et al., 2010; Young et al., 2001). The reason that fun in physical activities contributes to happiness has been explained in previous research as the following: Fun in a given activity in the midst of a monotonic life pattern is the driving force that leads to devotion to, and immersion in, the activity, thereby promoting personal development by supplying strong energy and motivation, as well as positively influencing happiness (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

In particular, fun in physical activities increases happiness by providing the feeling that one's life is worthwhile (Cho et al., 2008). Additionally, in a study conducted with people participating in the popular winter sport of snowboarding it was shown that fun in sports prolonged involvement in an activity via motivation, and such activities lead to happiness by increasing self-efficacy and decreasing stress levels (Yoon, Kim, & Shim, 2011). To summarize this previous research, it has been shown that fun is an important factor in promoting the continuation of physical activities and has a significant effect on fitness and emotional stability and, thus, on happiness. We formed the following research question in the context of these findings:

Research Question 2: Do different factors of fun generated by participation in physical activities have an impact on happiness?

Positive judgment or perception of oneself instills confidence and optimism, helping the individual to find peace of mind (Taylor & Brown, 1988). An individual's self-judgment or self-perception becomes positive during his or her immersion in a given activity, and such positive self-esteem is seen to contribute to increasing happiness in life (Wells, 1988). Specifically, Rosenberg (1979) found that, compared to other people, individuals with a high level of self-esteem were better at social adaptation through effective self-expression, a high level of self-confidence, and good interpersonal relationships. Conversely, those with low self-esteem displayed a negative emotional condition characterized by vulnerability and anxiety, and experienced elevated psychological isolation because of their passivity in interpersonal relationships.

Kim (2013) argued that, compared with a low level of self-esteem, a high level of self-esteem results in a strong tendency to respect oneself, perceive one's surroundings positively, and believe that one leads a worthwhile life. On the other hand, an individual without high self-respect has a negative outlook and lacks confidence, resulting in a decreased opportunity to experience happiness in life. In conclusion, the common understanding in academia is that self-esteem is associated with happiness (Baumeister et al., 2003; Brown, 2010). From these previous studies, we formed the following research question:

Research Question 3: Does whether an individual has positive or negative self-esteem have an impact on his/her happiness?

People with more positive experiences in happiness than other people, have a strong inclination to view any incident from an optimistic perspective and thus adjust to various circumstances, and live what they perceive to be a worthwhile and enjoyable life (Lyubomirsky, 2001). This exemplifies the importance of happiness in one's life. As physical activities have an especially significant effect on happiness, and the fun factor is of considerable importance in such activities, our purpose in this study was to provide useful information that could promote individuals' continued involvement in physical activities, and help them to lead a meaningful and healthy life, by examining the relationships among the fun experienced by participants in physical activities, their self-esteem, and their happiness.

Method

Participants

In order to answer our research questions, we conducted a survey in 2015 with a group of men and women over the age of 20 years who were members of tennis clubs located in Seoul and Gyeonggi Province in South Korea. A convenience, nonprobability sampling method was adopted to recruit 276 participants. After excluding 27 participants, whose survey responses were deemed to be either dishonest or incomplete, responses from 249 participants were incorporated in the final analysis. Of the participants, 159 (63.9%) were men and 90 (36.1%) were women. There were 98 participants aged between 40 and 49 years (39.4%), 82 aged 50 years and older (32.9%), 45 aged between 30 and 39 years (18.1%), and 24 aged between 20 and 29 years (9.6%). In terms of participation frequency, two times per week represented the largest group (88 participants making up 34.1% of the whole group); 70 people participated just once each week (28.1%); 44 participated three times weekly (17.7%); 39 people participated four times a week (15.7%); and the smallest group of participants (11 people = 4.4%) played more than five times per week.

Measures

The Sport Enjoyment Questionnaire developed by Kim and Sung (1997) was modified and used to measure the fun in tennis for this study. The measurement tool consists of 16 questions on factors of interest, fitness, acknowledgement, and sociability, with four questions for each factor that are rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Reliability coefficients in the current study were calculated to determine the internal consistency, yielding acceptable values of .750, .856, .828, and .773 for the interest, fitness, acknowledgement, and sociability subscales, respectively.

In order to measure self-esteem, we used the Self-Esteem Scale, which was developed by Rosenberg (1965) and translated by Jeon (1974) for application in Korea. The two subfactors of this scale consist of positive self-esteem and negative self-esteem, with five items on each and 10 items in total. The items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The reliability coefficients were .833 and .880 for the positive self-esteem and the negative self-esteem subscales, respectively.

To measure the level of happiness of the tennis players, we used a scale developed in Korea by Yang (1998) based on the Personality Expressive Activities Questionnaire by Waterman (1993) and the Scale of Psychological Well-being by Ryff (1989). The survey consists of six items on single factors, such as pleasure, satisfaction, vitality, joy, restfulness, and happiness. The items are rated from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) and a higher score denotes a higher level of happiness. Cronbach's α for this scale was .804, signaling relatively good reliability.

Procedure

A pilot study was conducted with a small group of tennis players at a club in Seoul who were demographically similar to those who took part in our study. These tennis players completed the pilot survey voluntarily. The objective was to review and supplement the validity and reliability of the measurement tool from the results of the completed surveys, and to assess the participants' feedback on the time taken for completion and to identify any sentences and expressions that the participants had trouble understanding. After completing the pilot study we visited the instructors and staff at tennis clubs in Seoul and Gyeonggi Province a month prior to the investigation to explain our purpose and request approval for cooperation.

We carried out the study over 3 weeks between May 2 and May 23, 2015 via convenience sampling and self-administration of the survey. On the day of the investigation, we visited the club to explain the study to the participants. The time for completion was between approximately 10 and 15 minutes and, to ensure confidentiality, no personal information was included in the survey. Completed survey forms were collected in an envelope and subsequently used as research material.

Data Analysis

We used SPSS 18.0 and AMOS 18.0 software to determine whether or not the tennis players' fun, self-esteem, and happiness were significantly related. First, analysis of frequency, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), reliability

analysis, and correlation analysis were performed. Furthermore, a structure equation model was constructed to find answers to the research questions, and the statistical significance was set at .05.

Results

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The research model was set on the theoretical basis of previous studies, and the unidimensionality of each measured variable in their concepts was verified. The CFA of the independent variable yielded the results set out in Table 1. The critical ratio (CR) of each measured variable in the regression weights denotes a significant variable at values over 1.96. All variables had an absolute value of over 1.96 and all were statistically significant ($p < .001$). In the goodness-of-fit test, the default model yielded the following results: $\chi^2 = 82.672$, $p = .162$, $\chi^2/df = 1.164$, goodness-of-fit index (GFI) = .955, adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) = .933, comparative fit index (CFI) = .991, root mean square residual (RMR) = .032, and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .026. Additionally, the results of the CFA on the mediating variable and the dependent variable are shown in Table 2. All variables yielded a CR value of over 1.96, which was statistically significant. The goodness-of-fit test yielded the following results: $\chi^2 = 71.119$, $p = .002$, $\chi^2/df = 1.735$, GFI = .951, AGFI = .922, CFI = .977, RMR = .048, and RMSEA = .054, indicating that this measurement model is an acceptable fit.

The validity of the measurement model was calculated through construct reliability and average variance extracted (AVE). Standardized regression weights and variances were referenced in order to derive the construct reliability value needed to verify convergent validity. In general, Anderson and Gerbing (1988) regarded values over 0.7 to be optimal and recommended a minimum value over 0.5. The values in this study were all above 0.7, and thus it can be deemed that convergent validity has been established. This implies that there is a relatively high correlation between items that measure the same concept. To verify the discriminant validity of the measurement model, squared values of the correlation coefficient and the value of AVE were calculated. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), the first of these values needs to be smaller than the latter. As this held true for the values in this study, the discriminant validity was deemed to be verified. This signifies that there was a relatively low correlation between factors measuring different concepts.

Table 1. *Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Fun Factors*

Variable	Estimate	SE	Critical Ratio	CR	AVE
Interest 3	1				
Interest 1	.972	.119	8.169	.794	.563
Interest 4	.931	.112	8.329		
Fitness 1	1				
Fitness 2	1.128	.095	11.895	.875	.636
Fitness 3	1.194	.095	12.542		
Fitness 4	1.148	.097	11.849		
Acknowledgment 4	1				
Acknowledgment 1	.814	.077	10.547	.872	.630
Acknowledgment 3	.963	.091	10.621		
Acknowledgment 2	1	.095	10.523		
Sociability 4	1				
Sociability 3	1.050	.124	8.487	.796	.566
Sociability 2	.988	.118	8.408		

Table 2. *Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Self-Esteem and Happiness*

Variable	Estimate	SE	Critical Ratio	CR	AVE
Positive self-esteem 3	1			.856	.600
Positive self-esteem 2	1.064	.082	12.956		
Positive self-esteem 4	.803	.075	10.709		
Positive self-esteem 1	.909	.081	11.164		
Negative self-esteem 5	1			.816	.529
Negative self-esteem 4	1.071	.062	17.182		
Negative self-esteem 1	.878	.058	15.081		
Negative self-esteem 3	.776	.066	11.715		
Happiness 4	1			.749	.502
Happiness 6	1.181	.132	8.941		
Happiness 3	1.045	.127	8.235		

Correlation Analysis

A correlation analysis was conducted to identify the relationships among the factors included in this study. The results from this analysis are shown in Table 3.

Structural Model

The model fit test yielded the following results: $\chi^2 = 321.655$, $p = .003$, $\chi^2/df = 1.266$, GFI = .910, AGFI = .885, CFI = .976, RMR = .042, and RMSEA = .033. The GFI and CFI values exceeded the standard of .90, and the RMR and the RMSEA value was below .05; thus, the model was generally an acceptable

Table 3. The Correlations Among Study Variables

Variable	Interest	Fitness	Acknowledgement	Sociability	Positive self-esteem	Negative self-esteem	Happiness
Interest	1						
Fitness	.410**	1					
Acknowledgement	.402**	.413**	1				
Sociability	.375**	.308**	.263**	1			
Positive self-esteem	.466**	.599**	.517**	.476**	1		
Negative self-esteem	-.310**	-.453**	-.504**	-.270**	-.434**	1	
Happiness	.500**	.541**	.413**	.404**	.557**	-.442**	1

Note. ** $p < .01$.

fit. The results of testing of the research question from this research model are shown as Table 4.

First, from Research Question 1 on whether or not different fun factors have a significant effect on self-esteem: Results showed that fitness and acknowledgement increased positive self-esteem and decreased negative self-esteem. Sociability increased positive self-esteem, but the effect of the other subfactors was not statistically significant.

Second, from Research Question 2 on whether or not fun factors have an impact on happiness: Results revealed that interest and fitness had a positive effect on happiness but acknowledgement and sociability did not.

Third, from Research Question 3 on whether having positive or negative self-esteem has an effect on happiness: The effect of positive self-esteem was not statistically significant, but negative self-esteem was shown to diminish happiness. Finally, in terms of indirect effects, fitness, acknowledgement, and sociability were determined to be important antecedent variables in self-esteem as a mediator to increase happiness (see Table 5).

Table 4. *The Results of Research Question Testing*

Research Question			Estimate	SE	CR	<i>p</i>
RQ 1	Positive esteem	← Interest	.094	.106	.883	.377
	Positive esteem	← Fitness	.488	.087	5.637	***
	Positive esteem	← Acknowledgment	.298	.077	3.851	***
	Positive esteem	← Sociality	.342	.087	3.940	***
	Negative esteem	← Interest	.004	.186	.024	.981
	Negative esteem	← Fitness	-.539	.145	-3.715	***
	Negative esteem	← Acknowledgment	-.652	.139	-4.684	***
RQ 2	Negative esteem	← Sociality	-.153	.144	-1.066	.286
	Happiness	← Interest	.385	.115	3.098	**
	Happiness	← Fitness	.230	.109	2.104	*
	Happiness	← Acknowledgment	-.041	.093	-.441	.659
RQ 3	Happiness	← Sociality	.098	.097	1.011	.312
	Happiness	← Positive esteem	.222	.120	1.844	.065
	Happiness	← Negative esteem	-.100	.048	-2.108	*

Note. * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01, *** *p* < .001.

Table 5. *Indirect Effects of Fun Factors on Happiness*

Indirect effects	Estimate	<i>p</i>
Happiness ← Interest	.018	616
Happiness ← Fitness	.155	**
Happiness ← Acknowledgment	.135	*
Happiness ← Sociality	.086	*

Note. * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01.

Discussion

Our focus was on the verification of direct and indirect relationships among the factors of fun, self-esteem, and happiness of tennis players. We found that fitness, and acknowledgement enhanced positive self-esteem and reduced negative self-esteem and that sociability had a positive effect on self-esteem. The effects of the other fun factors were not statistically significant. Our findings are in line with those of previous studies in which it has been found that, through providing mental stability, involvement in physical activities helps an individual to lead a healthy social life not only by strengthening the body but also by bolstering self-esteem and the will to live (Pederson & Seidman, 2004), and that the fun factor in physical activities has a significant effect on establishing positive self-esteem (Han, 2010).

In Duffy's (1988) study, it was shown that people's fitness contributes to the establishment of self-esteem. Furthermore, in a study conducted with older adults, it was found that fitness led to an increased involvement in physical activities through which these people could reduce their feelings of solitude or loneliness and enhance their self-esteem (Kim, Kim, & Jang, 2005). The results from these studies and our results in the current study show that emphasis on fitness enhances positive self-esteem and reduces negative self-esteem.

Brach et al. (2003) found that regular physical activities are related to better health, which reduces the incidence of emotional disorders such as depression, instills a positive way of thinking, and promotes a proactive attitude. An appropriate level of physical training makes an individual healthy as well as establishing emotional stability via providing various pleasures and increasing the individual's self-confidence in his/her physical appearance by reducing body fat and achieving a well-shaped body (Bucher & Wuest, 1987).

Further, in our study acknowledgement from others about one's exercising ability was shown to promote positive self-esteem and diminish negative self-esteem, and sociability with others was shown to increase positive self-esteem. On this aspect of self-esteem, Harter, Stocker, and Robinson (1996) showed that respect and acknowledgement from others is important for perceiving self-worth, which enhances positive self-esteem, and Coopersmith (1967) reported that criticism or the lack of acknowledgement is highly likely to reduce one's confidence and results in lower self-esteem. In conclusion, acknowledgement from one's peers has a significant effect on one's level of self-esteem. Additionally, close relationships not only aid in reducing stress from everyday life but also promote healthy self-esteem from the feeling of being loved (Rook, 1984). Fun in sports is regarded as a very important factor but cannot be explained in simple terms as it is composed of complex and multidimensional subfactors (Scanlan & Simons, 1992). Therefore, our findings are significant in that we have confirmed that fun

experienced in participation in sports—specifically, fitness, acknowledgement, and sociability—significantly influence self-esteem.

We also found that interest and fitness increased happiness. Physical activities not only improve one's health but also stabilize one's psychological condition (Adamo et al., 2010; Yoon et al., 2011). Because happiness is a subjective concept, it is possible that it is determined by what one experiences in life and how one emotionally reacts to those experiences (Diener, 1994). For example, an increase in income does not necessarily increase happiness. Conversely, frequently experiencing positive emotions such as joy, pleasure, and interest can improve life satisfaction and happiness even if material wealth is lacking.

How, then, can one find true happiness? Csikszentmihalyi (2006) described how, when an individual is immersed in a given activity, he or she continues to participate in the activity from a strong source of motivation. Happiness is felt in this state of immersion, and troubles and worries of daily life can be forgotten. Thus, pleasant experiences in which one feels immersed lead to considerable happiness. From this, it can be assumed that interest in physical activities induces immersion through continued involvement in the activity, which, in turn, results in happiness.

Ryff and Singer (2001) found that psychological well-being is increased by good physical health as well as emotional stability. It has been reported that maintaining fitness through regular exercise can enhance one's quality of life by preventing illnesses and increasing productivity in one's work (Blair, LaMonte, & Nichaman, 2004). The findings in these previous studies reinforce our findings. According to Corbin and Lindsey (1991), the maintenance of health provides many benefits in everyday life. Fitness has the effect of reducing emotional instability, and enhancement of one's physical ability raises self-confidence by instilling a sense of achievement. Moreover, Corbin and Lindsey argued that being fit boosts recovery rate from fatigue and improves quality of life by decreasing sleep disorders.

We found that positive self-esteem was not statistically significant in relation to happiness, but negative self-esteem was found to reduce happiness. Correlations between negative self-esteem and happiness have been shown in numerous previous studies, and a stronger negative self-concept was reported to lower an individual's experience of happiness (Choi, 2010; Lucas, Diener, & Suh, 1996). In other words, high self-esteem makes an individual interpret his or her situation in a positive and optimistic manner, but people with low self-esteem are known to view everything in a critical and skeptical manner (Kim, 2013).

According to Rosenberg (1979), a person with high self-esteem regards himself or herself as a valuable member of society, thus engaging in many activities and events and maintaining favorable relationships with others. This type of person can be seen to have a high level of happiness and satisfaction in life. In contrast,

Rosenberg noted that those with low self-esteem tend to suffer from an inferiority complex and to have a victim mentality, displaying emotional instability and aggressive behavior; this leads to feelings of loneliness and isolation as a result of being unable to form meaningful ties with others. All human beings have a desire to become happy and continually want to feel positive emotions in order to achieve this (Larsen, 2000). In this context, self-esteem is confirmed as a factor that significantly influences happiness.

Regarding the fun factors in physical activities, our results showed that fitness, acknowledgement, and sociability were indirect mediating factors in the effect of self-esteem on happiness. Therefore, the fitness of mind and body, active socialization with others, and the acknowledgement one receives from them are all assumed to be factors that increase self-esteem, which, ultimately, results in the feeling of happiness.

Summarizing the above discussion, the fun factors in physical activities motivated the continued involvement of our study participants, and this was shown not only to develop their self-esteem but also to lead to the maintenance of a healthy psychological state in life. Accordingly, each individual needs to discover the fun factors, find psychological security through exercise, and aspire to lead a happy life.

Practical Implications

Our results can be of practical use in real-life scenarios. According to Park (2011), the need for physical activity is increasing rapidly in contemporary society, and the continued increase in the participation thereof is explained as follows: It is true that the development of machinery and advancement of cutting-edge technology can replace human labor. Park notes that the drawback of these positive changes is that they limit bodily movement, which is seen as one of the factors that contribute to various adult diseases such as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and cardiac infarction, all of which have been highlighted as recent health and social issues. In our study, fun was determined to be an important factor in preventing people from not continuing with the activity (Gould & Petlichoff, 1988), in increasing participation in physical activities, and significantly affected an individual's development of self-esteem and happiness. Consequently, fitness instructors should create an environment where people can have fun while exercising, by finding means to heighten the elements of fun for the participants.

Companies in modern society undergo rapid changes in human resources as a result of their meritocratic approach to efficiently achieving financial goals. This environment of survival of the fittest promotes fierce competition among employees and results in considerable stress for them. In this respect, those who cannot receive recognition by society may be negatively impacted in terms of

self-esteem. However, we have shown that when people experience fun in sports, this influences their self-esteem. Our findings suggest that people must find a type of physical activity appropriate for their circumstances and they need to actively seek true meaning and value in life through regular involvement in their chosen activity.

Limitations

There are several limitations in this study. First, it was conducted at tennis clubs in the Seoul capital area of South Korea. In follow-up studies, the theoretical model constructed in this paper should be applied for an in-depth study with people from different countries who are involved in various activities. It would be important to verify the differences between groups in the study sample and to determine whether or not these findings can be generalized to different nations.

Second, we focused on quantifying objective data for statistical analysis as we used the responses to a survey. In a follow-up study different research methods need to be included that focus on qualitative approaches, such as in-depth interviews.

Last, as we recruited our participants via convenience sampling from players who were currently active in tennis clubs, our results are limited in their ability to be generalized, a problem inherent in nonprobability sampling methods. To account for this, a more detailed investigation needs to be conducted through using a variation in sampling method.

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