.Cooperative games as a pathway to develop the self-esteem of adolescents experiencing school dropout

الألعاب التعاونية كوسيلة لتنمية الثقة بالنفس لدى المراهقين المتسربين من المدرسة

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Abstract:

This research aimed to examine the effect of cooperative games on the self-esteem of a group of adolescents in school dropout situations, aged between 13 and 18. An initial sample included 24 participants, of which only 15 adolescents from the "Bab El Khadhra" second chance school in Tunisia were selected to participate in the study. For this research activity, a group of students from the Higher Institute of Childhood Executives was engaged serving as teammates and observing participants. The study employed a mixed method, using the Self Perception Profile for Adolescents questionnaire (SPPA) and the Focus Groups. Results indicated a positive correlation between overall self-esteem and participation in social sports meetings based on cooperative games, with improvements in social acceptance, close friendships, humour, creativity, and athletic skills, but slight decreases in

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appearance and academic skills.

Keywords: social sports, cooperative games, self-esteem, school dropout, social inclusion.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has raised concerns about an increase in dropout rates among children and adolescents in primary and secondary education. In 2020, the last school year before the pandemic, it was estimated that 259 million children were out of school (UNESCO, 2022). In Tunisia alone, "around 110,000 school-age children were not in the educational system each year, with another 100,000 at risk of dropping out" (UNICEF, 2020). Dropout has a major impact on any individual's life especially if it takes place during adolescence. Along with long-term inactivity and a lack of purpose, school dropout can lead to a loss of hope, low self-esteem, a lack of competence, frustration, and a deterioration of physical and mental health, and in the long run, can lead to social exclusion, abuse, and exploitation.

To support this community, the "Sport for Development" approach is proposed as a tool to achieve social inclusion. The UN officially recognizes sport as a tool for sustainable development and social inclusion. In 2015, the UNA released an official document about the SDGs that states that "Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognize its growing contribution to development and peace through the tolerance

and respect it promotes; to the empowerment of women and young people, of individuals and communities; and to the achievement of health, education, and social inclusion goals" (UNOSDP, 2014). Furthermore, S4D prioritizes development goals such as education, gender equality, health, inclusion, social cohesion, reducing inequalities, peace and economy. It's also seen as a pedagogy, through which the sports coach aims to develop life, social and professional skills.

The current importance of working on multi-actor, collaborative initiatives to address school dropout is emphasized. Researchers Gilles Potvin and Tieche Christinat argue that "it is not only a matter of collaborating to carry out the project of rescuing a student in a dropout situation, but of mobilizing communities of actors and networks concerned by the situation" (Gilles et al., 2012).The goal is to plan actions and practices that aim for preventing and mitigating school dropout from a collaborative perspective between the school and extracurricular world, such as families, civil society organizations and the private sector. These goals are reached by working on the correlation between educational and social structures that share the same objective of accompaniment as well as social and professional inclusion for adolescents.

This research proposes an analysis of social sports meetings of the project (enhancing the capability of the Tunisian civil society to protect civil and political rights and foster social unity, in or- der to facilitate the handling of the COVID-19 situation, support the nation's political transformation and maintain regional stability), which is a multi-actor

intervention coordinated by the International Institute for Nonviolent Action and implemented in partnership with the Solidarity Foundation of the University of Barcelona and the University of Carthage (through the Institute of Advanced Tourism Studies and the Higher Institute of Childhood Executives), as well as several associations like "Cata- lanes Superaccio", "La Rotllana Associació" and "ADO + Association". The goal of the social sports meetings is to use sport as a way to promote integration, cohesion, life skills development, and self- esteem among a group of 14 to 18 years old adolescents from a "second chance" school, primarily from disadvantaged backgrounds and in school dropout situations.

This research analyzes and summarizes a participatory action research process. The report is divided into three parts: the first section describes the social sports meetings and their goals, which include increasing self-esteem and developing transferable skills among this group of adolescents in order to improve their social integration. The second part of the report provides a comprehensive overview of the research methodology. The third part details the results of the participatory action research that was carried out. Finally, the report concludes by providing some perspectives and lessons learned from the research process that can be used to provide further insight on this topic for future research.

1. Subject Scope

1.1. Research Theme

This project is the result of a collaboration between local and international partners from scientific and civil society backgrounds, aiming to provide a long-term social sportive program to support adolescents in school dropout situations and promote their social inclusion. The project is structured around four main objectives:

- To design a weekly methodology of safe and secure social sportive activities based on cooperative games that promote teamwork and diversity among participants from different backgrounds.

- To promote equal chances by creating pairs that bring together students from the Higher Institute of Childhood Executives and adolescents from the second chance school, with the support of the Ado + association.

- To evaluate the impact of social sportive activities on adolescents in school dropout situations by measuring changes in self-esteem and acquisition of life skills.

- To publish an action research that can be used as inspiration for other communities to develop similar strategies on their own scale.

1.2. The research question

School dropout is a matter of concern for parents, educators, and the public at large, as it is seen as a complex phenomenon that has an impact on the situation of childhood and the future of society. Researchers from multiple disciplines in the humanities and social sciences have studied this issue. Experts in the sociology of sport argue that sporting

activities should be considered as a social activity and "an effective means of participating in society" (Baillet, 2001). Additionally, social sports was originally intended for audiences in need of integration, such as disadvantaged youth, youth in exclusion (Gasparini & Marchiset, 2008), or under-socialized youth (Chantelat et al., 1998). Therefore, to fight against social exclusions and strengthen social cohesion, this research aims to investigate how the self-evaluation of personal skills and self-image of adolescents in school dropout situations change after they participate in social sportive meetings.

1.3. The hypothesis

In line with the research question, we have proposed the following hypothesis: By participating in social sportive activities in a safe and favorable environment, with leadership roles, continuous support from peers (the students), and trustworthy adults (animators, guides...), adolescents can feel safe, resilient, worthy, connected, respected and capable of hope for a better future. This increased well-being and resilience can help establish a constructive experience leading to a more positive self-image for all participants.

2. Overview of social sports meetings

This section of the report describes the specific design of the social sportive meetings. The ultimate goal of these meetings is to develop life skills and self-esteem among adolescents in school dropout situations. For the first edition of the project, the youth

from the second chance school engage in sharing their cooperative motor game practices with students from the University of Carthage's Higher Institute of Childhood Executives (children's education specialty).

2.1. Outline of the social sports meetings curriculum

This structure is designed to outline the activities, outcomes, and logical progression of social sportive meetings to maintain a consistent development of skills and self-esteem. It also uses the theory of change to explain how the activities are intended to contribute to the ultimate impacts.

At this stage, we propose 6 interrelated elements to enhance the self-esteem and cross-skills of adolescents, which can be broken down into the following steps: Fostering an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect → Introducing cooperative challenges → Promoting communication → Managing emotions → Enhancing creative thinking → Taking responsibility.

2.1.1. Fostering an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect

The importance of building trust and mutual respect among group members is crucial for the success of the social sportive meetings program. This involves creating a comfortable environment and familiarizing participants with the activities. Trust is also crucial in the context of cooperative motor games as tasks are shared among members and every participant must take part in them.

By promoting trust, the group enhances its communication skills and becomes more open to discussing conflicts. The group adopts norms collectively that will be adhered to by all members, which will assist in effective collaboration, strengthen group unity and enhance motivation to succeed together. Subsequently, the implementation of this step is not only essential for the successful formation of the group, but it also results in a sense of personal and collective effectiveness, a sense of worth, respect, and hope, as individuals take ownership of themselves and the group.

2.1.2. Introducing cooperative games

Working together efficiently requires a team that is united and driven by a common goal. This allows the group to discover innovative solutions to meet a shared need that one individual cannot fulfil alone. The cooperative games in the suggested curriculum should be viewed as group challenges to overcome. The most effective approach is to simply provide the basic rules and then allow the participants ample opportunity, time, and resources to explore different methods for resolving the challenges.

Moreover, the establishment of cooperative scenarios has been noted to improve peer relationships and boost social skills, conflict resolution abilities, and the integration of isolated young people. Furthermore, students who have faced serious behavioural issues and served as mediators or peer helpers for a school year have demonstrated a significant improvement in self-esteem and behavioural self-control.

Programs that involve group cooperative activities can lead to the formation of strong and effective collaboration among participants. This is achieved by promoting the development of communication, creativity, emotional management, and a sense of responsibility within the group.

2.1.3. Promoting communication

Clear and effective communication is a crucial aspect of the program's success, as it enables the participants to build positive relationships with their team members and facilitators, fostering a sense of connection, safety, dignity, and respect. In this context, all participants are expected to use their leadership and communication skills to work together towards overcoming the challenges presented in the cooperative games. To achieve this, it is important for everyone to adopt a clear and concise communication style with their peers, focusing on exchanges that are beneficial for achieving the group's shared goal.

2.1.4. Managing emotions

Emotions are a combination of psychological and physical responses to certain situations. They man- ifest internally and are expressed externally. If not properly managed, emotions can lead to negative consequences. The program focuses on helping young people process events, experiences, and emo- tions in a healthy way, to prevent

harm and equip them with the skills to handle difficult situations, particularly those related to safety, risk management, and discomfort.

2.1.5. Enhancing creative thinking

Creative thinking is crucial in generating a variety of options and solutions to overcome the cooperative challenges presented in the program. This includes approaching tasks in a new and unique way, and considering non-traditional perspectives to find new solutions. Additionally, fostering creative thinking in the program helps participants to come up with new and unique ideas, which can lead to improved problem-solving, decision-making and overall success in achieving the group's goals. It enables them to think outside the box and approach challenges in a different way, promoting personal and collective effectiveness.

2.1.6. Taking responsibility

Empowering participants by recognizing their role, responsibility, and importance in the program can boost their self-worth and sense of purpose, which in turn strengthens their resilience. This enables them to recover and learn more effectively.

Empowering participants to take on responsibilities and make decisions within the group allows them to develop their motivation, awareness, and ability to act independently in their lives. This includes taking responsibility for their own protection and that of their peers. The program can facilitate this by assigning roles such as

managing time, materials, and ensuring rules are followed, as well as providing opportunities for decision-making and leading activities.

2.2. Sessions layout

The program includes 12 weekly sessions of social sportive meetings, each lasting three hours. The structure of each session includes a welcome and lunch, a warm-up and introduction, the main activity, and finally a cool-down and closure. Throughout the introduction, active and passive rest, cool-down, and difficult situations, facilitators take the opportunity to ask questions about each participant's experiences and how they relate to their lives. The goal is to identify situations that align with the program's objectives and to facilitate timely reflections. The sessions are structured as follows:

2.2.1. Welcome and lunch

The first step of the proposed sessions is the Welcome and Lunch, which typically lasts 45 minutes. This stage is considered important as it allows for all participants (adolescents, students, facilitators...) to engage in social interactions and improve their communication skills during a relaxed mealtime.

2.2.2. Warm-up and introduction

The introduction stage, or warm-up, typically lasts between 15-20 minutes.

- The facilitator or one of the participants will review the principles of the social sportive meetings, main points and key takeaways from the previous session.

- The facilitator will introduce the different parts of the session and encourage participation in all activities.

- An interactive game will be played to prepare the group for the session's objective, which serves as the warm-up.

2.2.3. The cooperative motor games during the main activity session

During the main part of the session, the program focuses on cooperative motor games. This step lasts between 50 minutes and one hour. The aim is to:

- Carry out at least 3 cooperative motor games.

- Encourage participants to think critically about the tasks they are completing throughout the training.

- Incorporate active and passive rest breaks between games, taking into account the intensity of the previous game and the overall session.

- Allow enough time for the group to form and build trust at the beginning of each new game.

- Emphasize the reinforcement and use of previously acquired skills.

2.2.4. Return to calm

This step takes between 15 and 30 minutes.

- Use techniques of relaxation and breathing to bring the group back to a calm
  state.

- Reflect on what was most enjoyable, what went well and what could be
  improved.

- Discuss the highlights of the session, including the warm-up, main activities, and
  any noteworthy events.

- Assess the participation of all group members and choose leaders for the next
  session if necessary.

- Close the session and send the adolescents back to school.

- Conduct evaluations solely with the students and the project team, focusing on
  the progress of activities, the interaction between participants, the development
  of adolescent behaviour, any problems identified, the review, and suggestions
  for future sessions.

2.3. Evaluation and tracking of the program

Evaluating the program is important to ensure that the activities are being implemented
correctly, that participants are satisfied, and that there are no issues. It also helps identify
areas for improvement and prevents unintended negative outcomes.

In-depth evaluations are conducted to assess the quality of the intervention and its
effects, by responding to the following questions: What steps can we take to guarantee

that our activities produce the desired results? How can we ensure that the program, curriculum, and methodology are fully relevant in the long term and yield positive, sustainable outcomes? Through monitoring and evaluation, we aim to measure progress in terms of skills, self-esteem, methodology, and session content.

Throughout the program, the evaluation process takes place at regular intervals during the intervention, specifically at the conclusion of each session, the completion of the project, or midway through. The facilitators are responsible for evaluating while considering the feedback provided by participants through questionnaires and group discussions.

Additionally, this presents an opportunity to course-correct in terms of the quality of activities, adherence to timelines, and reporting. Upon completion of the intervention, a comprehensive final evaluation should be carried out to assess the achievements of both individuals and the group as a whole. The results of this final evaluation will offer insights into areas for improvement and the necessary changes to be made to the methodology, approaches, curriculum, and tools for future interventions.

3. Research methodology

2.1 Method selection

To evaluate the impact of the social sportive meetings on the development of the participant's self- esteem and competency, we employed a mixed-methods approach.

This approach combines both qualitative and quantitative techniques to address the research questions and hypotheses. In this study, the dependent variable is the "adolescents sense of competency" and the independent variable is "participation in social sportive meetings." To address our research question, we opted to carry out two rounds of questionnaires and multiple Focus Group sessions with the participants during the social sportive events. This was done to gauge and observe any possible changes that might have arisen from the social sportive activities.

2.2. Target population of the study

Since Tunisia gained independence, the expansion of education has been a key priority for successive governments. As a result, reforms to the Tunisian education system since 1958 have established compulsory, unified, and free education for students aged 6 to 16. The Law of Orientation No. 2002-80, passed on July 23, 2002, regarding education and school teaching, states that education is an absolute national priority and that teaching is a fundamental right for all Tunisians, without discrimination based on gender, social background, skin color, or religion.

The educational system experiences a considerable number of students who drop out before turning 16. A recent report on the situation of children in Tunisia reveals that "approximately 110,000 school- aged children do not attend school every year, and close to 100,000 students are at risk of dropping out" (UNICEF, 2020). While a small

proportion of dropouts opt for vocational training, the majority do not receive any social-educational support. This issue is mainly limited to primary education and particularly affects middle school students from the seventh year of basic education (Ministère de l'éducation, 2020), highlighting the challenge of transitioning between the two cycles. The amplification of this multidimensional social-economic phenomenon is due to several factors that vary according to the specificities of the regions.

To address the issue of school dropout, various educational strategies and methods have been implemented to support students who are struggling academically. These include alternative school practices (Jacquet-Francillon, 2016), healing pedagogies (Ponsard, 2012), specialized structures for dropouts (Longhi & Guibert, 2003), and innovative professional and educational programs developed by teachers and educators to identify and assist at-risk students. In addition, many of these students enroll in vocational training, private schools, specialized institutions under the Ministry of Social Affairs, or even the Second Chance School, which aims to provide support, guidance, super- vision, and education for children aged 12 to 18 who have left school. This is mainly based on two components:

- A preventive component: It monitors students who are at high risk of dropping out and academic failure.

- A therapeutic component: It is designed for students who have already dropped out and are between the ages of 12 and 18.

This study's population is drawn from the Bab El Khadra Second Chance Center, which was established through a partnership between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Affairs. It is also supported by the British government and UNICEF. This organization seeks to address academic failure and school dropout, develop children's skills, and provide a second chance for those who have left school and are without training or employment.

2.3. Research sample

The present study included 7 girls and 8 boys aged between 13 and 18 years, who have dropped out of school and reside in urban areas. The participants were selected arbitrarily by their educators from a second chance school. The sample size may be considered limited, but the research remains meaningful without being generalized. In addition to the adolescents from the second chance school, the project also included a group of students throughout its implementation and members of the community were invited to act as teammates for the adolescents and to observe the project's progress.

Table 1. Research sample description.

Gender		%	Age		%
Male	8	54.0	13	2	13.0
Female	7	46.0	14	1	06.0
			16	1	06.0
			17	5	33.0
Total	15	100.0	18	6	40.0
Total				15	100.00

2.4. Means of investigation

2.4.1. The "Self Perception Profile for Adolescents" (SPPA) questionnaire

The "Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents" (SPPA) questionnaire, developed by Susan Harter in 1988, is utilized in this research. The SPPA evaluates the adolescent's perception of their abilities or competence in eight different areas, as well as their overall sense of self-worth. This instrument has been validated in the United States, with exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses on data from multiple adolescent samples supporting its internal structure each area being defined by its independent factor. Additionally, the internal consistency of the various subscales has been validated through satisfactory Cronbach's alpha coefficients.

The SPPA is a suitable choice for this research due to several factors:

- It offers information on self-evaluation of self-esteem and feelings of competence.

- Its multi-dimensional nature can yield valuable insights into the areas of life (in school and out of school) in which adolescents feel most and least competent.

- The format of the questionnaire is designed to minimize the inclination to provide socially desirable responses by contrasting two parts of the same sentence.

2.4.2. The focus group

To gather qualitative data for our research, we employed the focus group technique as a means of evaluating a program for adolescents and their co-workers in the "Child Education" specialization at the end of each session and during the closing session of the program. The focus group was utilized to assess the quality of the activities, the deadlines, the relationships between the participants, and the accomplishments of the adolescents individually and as a group by fostering discussions about encountered problems and significant issues and brainstorming potential solutions. The final evaluation provided insight into the changes experienced on an individual and group level and identified needs for future interventions. The focus group sessions were recorded and transcribed.

2.5. Procedure

In this research, we administered the "Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents" (SPPA) questionnaire to adolescents in a group setting under the supervision of the research team and educators from the Second Chance School. The adolescents were given clear instructions on how to complete the questionnaire, stressing that it is not a test and that there are no right

or wrong answers. It was explained that for each item, only one checkmark should be made on one side or the other of the sentence. It is not necessary to check both sides. That is why the research team made sure to assist some adolescents to ensure that the response mode was well understood/assimilated by the respondents.

Instructions given to adolescents

"This questionnaire is designed to help us understand your personality and character traits. It is not an exam or a test, and there are no right or wrong answers. Because everyone is unique, your answers may differ from others. (PLEASE COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE). Please write your name, date of birth, and gender at the top of the page. (WAIT)

I will begin by explaining how to answer the questions. Please listen carefully before answering. The first question marked with the letter (a) is an example. I will read it aloud, and you just need to follow along (READ THE QUESTION). This question presents two types of young people. We want to know which of these types you identify with the most.

A. So, the initial step I would like you to take is to determine whether you are more similar to the young person on the left, who enjoys…, or if you are more similar to the young person on the right, who. For the moment, don't write anything, just pick the type of young person that you most closely identify with.

B. Now, the next step I would like you to do is to determine the degree to which the chosen young person resembles you. If you feel that the young person is very similar to you, mark an X in the box labelled "Very true for me". If you feel that the young person is somewhat similar to you, mark an X in the box labelled "Quite true for me".

C. You should check only one box for each sentence, either on the left or on the right. Make sure to only check one box, on the side that you feel represents you the most. Let's begin by choosing the young person from the example who resembles you the most, and then deciding how much they resemble you.

D. Alright. We now have 54 sentences. I will read and explain them one by one. Please respond after I finish reading the sentence. Remember to only mark one box, on the side that best describes you."

As an additional note, a "Focus group" instrument was used to gather feedback from adolescents and students at the end of each social sportive day session and during the closing session of the project as an evaluation tool.
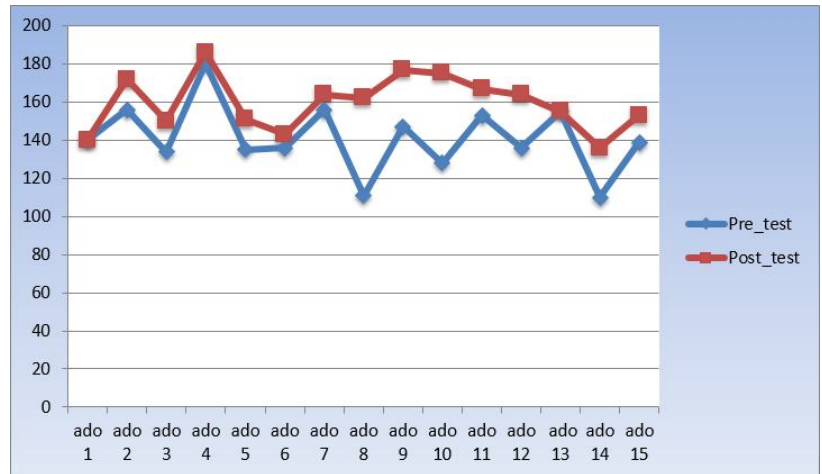
3.   Data collection and Analysis

This section presents the findings of an evaluation study on the implementation of the WAHD social sportive project. The results will be presented in relation with the hypothesis put forth. The figures included will show the results for the various indicators.

3.1. Findings and interpretation of the "Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents" (SPPA) questionnaire

To quantify the impact of the program on various aspects of self-esteem for both individuals and the group as a whole, we utilized the "Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents" (SPPA) questionnaire. The results for each adolescent were obtained through the coding system proposed by the instrument's author. The participants were required to rate themselves on a 4-point Likert scale, where 4 represents the most favourable evaluation and 1 represents the least favourable evaluation. To mitigate the desirability bias among the participants, the items in each subscale were balanced. Some items had the most positive judgments on the right, while others had them on the left. The average score of each subscale was calculated by adding the scores of the participants for each subscale. In total, nine averages were calculated. These calculations were performed using SPSS software and will be further refined and consolidated based on the feedback collected during the Focus Group sessions.

3.1.1. Development of overall self-worth

This subscale measures an adolescent's self-worth and overall satisfaction with themselves as a person, including their happiness with their life and how they perceive themselves. It assesses an individual's sense of self-worth, not just their proficiency or adequacy in specific areas.

Figure 1. Result of the subscale "Global self-worth".

Figure 1 compares the results of self-evaluation of "overall self-worth" between pre-tests and post- tests. At this level, the scores have been separated into three categories based on the following ranges:

- Category 1: Participants with scores between 54 and 107 points, indicating low overall self- esteem.

- Category 2: Participants with scores between 108 and 161 points, indicating moderate self- esteem.

- Category 3: Participants with scores between 162 and 216 points, indicating high self-esteem."

The results from the pre-tests showed that none of the participants fell into the category of weak overall self-esteem. The majority of participants, 93%, fell into the category of having more or less positive self-esteem towards themselves, while a smaller percentage, 7%, had very positive self-esteem towards themselves.

The analysis of the post-test data showed a positive correlation between the overall self-esteem and participation in social sportive meetings. The results, depicted in Figure 2, demonstrate that the majority of participants (60%) had an improvement in self-evaluation. It was observed that the overall self-esteem of 86% of the sample improved, while 14% remained unchanged and none regressed. The final results indicate that 53% of the participants had positive overall self-esteem and 47% had very positive overall self-esteem.

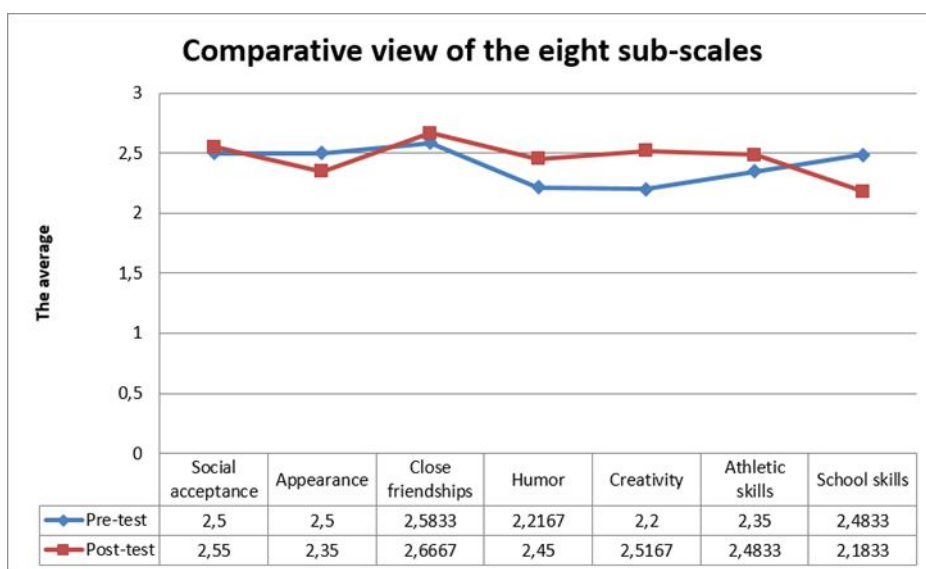### 3.1.2. Enhancement of the distinct areas of self-esteem

Previous studies have evaluated overall self-esteem without taking into account other dimensions, whereas considering the different domains of the self can reveal variations in participants' perceptions between domains and provide a more accurate representation of self-esteem. These domains, or facets, are multidimensionally designed within the structure of overall self-esteem.

The multidimensional approach required a shift from considering self-esteem as a global entity that ignores the context to viewing it as a self-perception of various domains of

competence. These domains include academic and athletic competence, social acceptance, appearance, close friendships, humour, and creativity.

To identify positive or negative self-esteem, it was determined that the range between 2.5 and 3 corresponds to "good self-esteem." Scores below 2.5 indicate low self-esteem, while scores above 3 indicate a self-esteem that is "too high" (Bariaud, 2006).

Comparative view of the eight sub-scales

	Social acceptance	Appearance	Close friendships	Humor	Creativity	Athletic skills	School skills
Pre-test	2,5	2,5	2,5833	2,2167	2,2	2,35	2,4833
Post-test	2,55	2,35	2,6667	2,45	2,5167	2,4833	2,1833

Figure 2. Evolution of the means obtained in the different domains of self-esteem between pre-tests and post-tests

Figure 2 presents an overview of the changes in the mean scores obtained in the different domains of self-esteem between pre-tests and post-tests. Some domains showed an improvement, such as social acceptance, close friendships, humour, creativity, and athletic competence. The most significant changes between the two

tests were observed in the creativity domain with a variation of 0.3, followed by the humour domain with a variation of 0.24. Only the appearance and academic skills subscales showed a slight decrease. Notably, the academic skills subscale showed the most significant decrease, with a variation of 0.3.

3.2. Results and analysis of the Focus group

The results obtained from the "Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents" (SPPA) questionnaire are com- pared with the data gathered from the Focus Groups. The analysis specifically concentrates on the questions that relate to academic domains, physical appearance, and the overall life of the student.

3.2.1. Inquiries about the academic field

The results obtained regarding self-esteem in the academic domain do not show a positive variation between the pre-test and the post-test and are below the "good self-esteem" zone. One participant explains that she considers herself weak in school, especially in mathematics. When asked "What do you think about your academic skills?", another participant responds, "Actually, when I want to, I can, but when I do not feel like it, I cannot." Then he adds: "Actually, when I want to, I can do it, but when I do not like something or something does not appeal to me, I do not do it."

The responses indicate that the participants' motivation for schoolwork depends on how they perceive their competence, which is reflected in the results. Two other participants also stated that they believe they are weak in school, but believe they could perform better if they

wanted to. Some participants also expressed that they prefer to be perceived as "lazy" rather than showing any potential incompetence in the school domain. Additionally, some participants mentioned that the social sportive days and other artistic activities offered at the second chance school have allowed them to excel in areas other than academics.

3.2.2. Inquiries about appearance

The results for physical appearance did not improve in the post-test and remained significantly below the "good self-esteem" zone. During the Focus Group, one adolescent participant expressed that her physical appearance is "far from the ideal image she wants to achieve because of her tendency to gain weight and fat". She referred to some Tunisian Instagram influencers and humorously noted that she "falls short of their beauty standards". Another participant shared her experience of being constantly subjected to mocking remarks about her height and weight for several years. She often felt alienated from her friends due to her excess weight. While she claimed that such comments from strangers did not affect her too much, she felt hurt when they came from close friends. She emphasized the significance of the gaze and words of significant others in her life, admitting that she has grown accustomed to disliking it when others watch her during an activity as it distracts her.

The lower result can be attributed to the fact that some participants have been subjected to negative remarks about their physical appearance for a long time. Although some have stated that they feel more comfortable in their bodies when participating in social sportive

games, they do not engage in any physical activity after dropping out of school. Others have explained that social sportive activity days are "special occasions," as described by one participant, where they wake up early, pay attention to their clothing choices, take better care of themselves, and style their hair.

3.2.3. Inquiries about social acceptance

The results for the social acceptance subscale have shown a slight improvement. This can be partly attributed to the fact that the adolescents felt welcomed within the university environment. One participant expressed positive feedback, mentioning that they enjoyed the location, the surrounding nature, and the delicious meals prepared by the chef. Furthermore, the adolescents demonstrated a great ability to establish friendly relationships with the university students. One adolescent stated: "I no longer make a distinction between us and the students... in fact, we have become friends in real life and even on Facebook. I will share with Molka (student) the game that I will propose at the next session, and if she wants, we can present it together."

The structure of the social sportive days is designed to promote collaboration between adolescents and students in developing and executing games, leading to improved social acceptance. Cooperative games have played a vital role in fostering this acceptance. One participant said: "I found it strange that there were no winners or losers, but every group worked together to find alternatives and strategies to improve. No one was eliminated or

rejected by the group." Another adolescent felt a strong sense of duty to contribute to the team's success, and they gave it their all when they heard their team's encouragement.

3.2.4. Inquiries about close friendships

The results of self-esteem related to close friendships have improved to some extent. This can be attributed, in part, to the nature of cooperative games which promote positive interactions among the different participants. One adolescent remarked, "I do not want to miss the session because I made plans with my friends on Facebook to hang out and have fun." Cooperative games also foster a sense of positive interdependence as group members work towards a shared goal and rely on each other to achieve it. A participant shares: "I spent the entire week with my two friends searching for the best games to propose for this session… We exchanged information, advice, and made collective decisions regarding the game rules." This, indicates that cooperative abilities are fostered through tasks per- formed with friends.

It is reasonable to assume that adolescents could form friendships in such a context. However, we believe that the duration of the project session is too short for close and long-lasting friendships to develop.

3.2.5. Inquiries about humour

The findings pertaining to self-esteem in the domain of humour have shown improvement. In fact, re- moving the enjoyment from game activities would compromise its fundamental

nature. Therefore, the social sportive meetings were conducted in a cheerful atmosphere, consisting of cooperative challenges that were appreciated by the participants. As one participant put it, "No losers, no winners. Only players! It is a chance to let go of the competitive spirit, grades... to make new friends, have a good laugh, and showcase other qualities such as patience, humour, and entertainment."

Another participant shared: "I enjoyed the name game, it was great fun despite my memory lapse". Indeed, memory lapses or mistakes are often transformed into humourous and joyful opportunities among all group members, rather than remaining as embarrassing situations.

3.2.6. Inquiries about creativity

The self-esteem results related to creativity have shown significant improvement. According to one participant, "The rules of cooperative games compel me to think about how we can play together and overcome challenges without the need to eliminate or defeat an enemy".

Several aspects have enabled participants to assimilate and practice creativity effectively. Specifically, participants had the opportunity to create and propose cooperative games while adhering to specific rules or constraints. Additionally, cooperative games and sports, in general, foster spontaneity and creativity among participants. Sometimes, it involves disrupting an organized game by modifying equipment and rules, without erasing the challenge. At this point, participants realize the importance of the game structure in actualizing pleasure, mutual aid, and maximum participation. Regarding this, one participant

tells us that "Group collaboration stimulates my creativity, it requires exchanging points of view, creating new ideas together, compensating for weaknesses, and complementing each other's abilities...being a strategist to do things right." Thus, the cooperative game becomes a moment that fosters creativity.

3.2.7. Inquiries about athletic performance

The results related to self-esteem in the field of athletic performance have improved significantly. This subscale mainly refers to a person's ability to participate in sports and physical activities, including outdoor games. Some members of the group have expressed that they do not engage in intense physical activity on a daily basis. One participant said, "I have not played any sports since I left school". The social sportive meetings presented an opportunity for the sample members to resume playing outdoor games. In addition, the different cooperative games allowed the participants to be challenged with individual performances such as running at high speed, jumping far/high, and adapting movements to different types of environments.

4. Findings and limitations

The objective of this study was to examine the effects of social sportive sessions that utilize cooperative games on the self-esteem of a group of adolescents who have dropped out of school. The findings indicated that participation in cooperative games had a positive impact on the overall self-esteem of 86% of the sample, 14% remained unchanged and no

regression was observed among the group. Furthermore, the cooperative games particularly improved self-esteem in certain areas, such as social acceptance, close friendships, humour, creativity, and athletic ability. However, the subscales of physical appearance and academic performance showed a slight decrease. These results reveal significant variations in adolescent self-esteem and support the original hypothesis of the study.

However, it should be noted that measuring self-esteem is challenging due to its subjective nature, which is why we chose to use a mixed-method approach. Furthermore, adolescence is a period of physical, identity, and social upheaval that can make evaluating self-esteem even more unstable. A larger-scale study with a control group would have been more reliable and generalizable. Nonetheless, we obtained interesting and useful results that shed light on the evolution of global and specific self- esteem in the study sample. Finally, it is worth considering that the sample was entirely composed of adolescents from a low social-economic background, so the results may not apply to adolescents from different educational backgrounds or social-economic statuses.

Taking into account the findings and limitations of the study, potential avenues for future research can be identified. It is suggested that a 6-week experiment may not have been long enough for certain subscales, such as close friendships, to show positive changes. Thus, conducting a longer experiment in future research would be valuable in determining if new subscales can improve.

Conclusion

The practice of social sporting based on cooperative games served as an entry point for us to gain a closer understanding of adolescents experiencing school dropout. As such, our research, despite its limitations, sheds light on potential areas for further study. While the study revealed the development of global and specific self-esteem across different domains, only a longitudinal study would provide a more accurate and dependable portrayal of how these perceptions evolve among the participants.

In addition, this research could be extended by including a larger number of participants (both experimental and control groups) to compare the development of global and specific self-esteem based on various sports, cultural, and artistic activities. Such studies would assist in identifying necessary interventions to obtain the benefits associated with participating in these activities.

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