

BODY SATISFACTION AND COMMITMENT TO EXERCISE IN ADOLESCENTS THAT ATTEND FITNESS CENTERS

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In western societies body image perception is strongly influenced by an ideal of thinness and fitness, imposed by cultural factors. The media, in particular, strikes with thousands of proposals for fast body transformation, through physical exercises or even radical plastic surgeries, so that “perfect” appearance (Maldonado, 2006). This pattern results general desire for a leaner body, or for a fit and athletic appearance. The discrepancy between the actual and desired weight shape can lead to a state of dissatisfaction with his/her own image (Vieira, Amorim, Vieira, Amorim & Rocha, 2009). This ideal of beauty ideal exerts strong influence on the population, especially among adolescents, who experience a greater concern about their physical appearance and size, as in general, due to their characteristics of contestation they are especially vulnerably to presumes from fashions. In search of an idealized body, the adolescent can make use of inadequate techniques of body reduction, weight control and/or modeling, one of whicg can be the excessive practice of physical exercises. Currently there is a growing demand by adolescents, of activities offered in gyms, such as fitness

classes and weight training. In such places, they frequently receive offers of supplements and anabolic steroids by professional not qualified to do so (Junior, Araújo & Pereira, 2006). Adolescents who attend fitness centers often practice exercises exhaustively seeking a perfect body or looking for a way of improving any bodily imperfection, spending hours at the gym and can become obsessive and perfectionists for physical beauty, accompanied by anxiety, depression, and compulsive and repetitive actions (such as constant “looking” in the mirror) (Baptista & Pandini, 2005). Furthermore, body dissatisfaction is related to eating disorders and low self-esteem (Triches & Giugliani, 2007). Physical activity promotes health benefits, and when it starts in childhood or adolescence, it becomes stable in adulthood. However, the practice of physical exercise during adolescence, if done improperly, can lead to health problems (Tassitano, Bezerra, Tenório, Colares & Barros, 2007). Whether in search of thinness or an athletic and defined body, the main preoccupation with body image is often the stimulus that prompts many adolescents to seek, through excessive physical exercise the “ideal body” (Branco, Hilário & Cintra, 2006). The target of the study was to evaluate the relationship between body image satisfaction and psychological commitment to the habit of exercise in adolescents that attend fitness centers in Ribeirão Preto. We analyzed 100 non-athletes adolescents (52 boys and 48 girls), 16.2 years old in average (± 1.02), randomly chosen in nine fitness centers. Anthropometry was performed by Body Mass Index (BMI), which expresses the ratio of weight divided by height squared (kg/m^2) and nutritional status was defined by the age- and sex-specific percentile based on World Health Organization (1995). Body image dissatisfaction was assessed by the Figure Rating Scale developed and validated for Brazilian adolescents by Kakeshita, Silva, Zanatta and Almeida (2009). This scale assesses satisfaction with appearance, considered one of the components that form the attitudinal dimension of body image (Campana & Tavares, 2009). The instrument consists of 15 individual cards, ranging in BMI from 12.5 to 47.5 kg/m^2 , with constant difference of 2.5 kg/m^2 . The scale is presented in ascending order and the participant must choose the figure which best represents his/her current body and the figure representing the body that he/she would like to have and

dissatisfaction is measured by the discrepancy between these measures. To assess physical activity pattern, was applied the Commitment to Exercise Scale (CES), developed and validated by Davis, Brewer e Ratusny (1993), and translated for Portuguese by Assunção, Cordás and Araújo (2002). This is an eight-item questionnaire designed to assess an individual's psychological commitment to the activity of exercising and assesses the degree to which feelings of well-being are influenced by exercising, the degree to which adherence to exercise is maintained in the presence of various adverse conditions, and the extent to which one's exercise regimen interferes with social commitments. Below each item there is a horizontal line (155 mm) with appropriate bipolar adjectives placed at each end (e.g., "never", "always"), and subjects were asked to mark the point which best described their position on the continuum. The distance from the beginning of the line to the point marked constitutes the score for each item. This project was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee (Process UNAERP No 114/07). Data collection was carried out in rooms provided by the fitness centers and comprised the application of Figure Rating Scale, weight and height measures and self-administration of the CES. We used descriptive statistics (percentages and mean \pm Standard Error of Mean), the *Student t* test and the *Pearson* Correlation test (significance level $p < .05$). Regarding the data for BMI, it was found that the majority of subjects (74%) were classified as normal weight. The FRS demonstrated that girls and boys choose, on average an Actual BMI of 28.33 kg/m² (\pm 0.71) and 23.02 kg/m² (\pm 0.60) and a Desire BMI of 23.02 kg/m² (\pm 0.60) and 24.95 kg/m² (\pm 0.56). Thus, dissatisfaction with own image was approximately -5.36 kg/m² (± 0.87) for girls and $+0.34$ kg/m² (± 0.87) for boys, and this difference was considered statistically significant ($p < .001$). Only 16.7% of the girls and 25.0% of the boys reported to be satisfied with their body weight. Among females, one girl (2.1%) reported that she would like to weigh more while the others (81.3%) would like to weigh less. Among boys, 25% reported to be satisfied with their weight, and among the dissatisfied, 38.5% would like to weigh less and 36.5% would like to weigh more. The results of this study are consistent with data reported in the literature (Branco et al., 2006; Triches & Giugliani, 2007; Kakeshita et al., 2009).

Regarding the commitment level with the habit of exercise, obtained through the analysis of the CES, it was score observed that mean score was 83.8 cm (± 3.67) for girls and 74.3 cm (± 3.61) for boys and this difference was not considered statistically significant ($p > .05$). The analysis comparing the CES scores between adolescents satisfied and dissatisfied with their own image showed no difference in the degree of commitment to exercise ($p > .05$) and the Pearson correlation test didn't show a significant result between CES and body image dissatisfaction in both sexes ($r = - .13$, $p > .05$). Although the literature indicates that body image dissatisfaction can lead people to engage in a physical activity program (Damasceno, Lima, Vianna, Vianna & Novaes, 2005), this relationship was not observed in this study. In general, girls are more dissatisfied than boys, and the individual's psychological commitment to the activity of exercising was not related to body image dissatisfaction in both boys and girls.

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