



Prevention programme for eating disturbances in adolescents. Is their effect on body image maintained at 30 months later?

Paola Espinoza^a, Eva Penelo^b, Rosa M. Raich^{a,*}

^a Departament de Psicologia Clínica i de la Salut, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Facultat de Psicologia, Edifici B (Campus Bellaterra UAB), 08193 Bellaterra (BCN), Spain

^b Laboratori d'Estadística Aplicada, Departament de Psicobiologia i Metodologia de les Ciències de la Salut, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Facultat de Psicologia, Edifici B (Campus Bellaterra UAB), 08193 Bellaterra (BCN), Spain

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 23 December 2011

Received in revised form 5 November 2012

Accepted 26 November 2012

Keywords:

Adolescents
Body image problems
Body satisfaction
Eating disturbances
Media literacy
Prevention

ABSTRACT

We assessed changes in the body image of Spanish adolescents who participated in a programme aimed at preventing disordered eating, with a 30-month follow-up. 254 girls and 189 boys aged 12–14 were assigned to a control group ($n=201$) or one of two possible experimental conditions: media literacy programme (ML, $n=143$) and media literacy plus nutrition awareness programme (ML+NUT, $n=99$). Body image was assessed with the *Body Image Questionnaire (Qüestionari d'Imatge Corporal; QÜIC)*. Pre-test, post-test, 7- and 30-month follow-up measurements were taken. Linear model analyses were carried out with a $2 \times 3 \times 3$ ANOVA (sex \times group \times phase), adjusted by the baseline level. At 30-month follow-up, ML and ML+NUT participants showed fewer body problems and more body satisfaction than the control group. There is a need for prevention programmes addressing eating and body image disturbances that involve both boys and girls.

© 2012 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Introduction

Body dissatisfaction constitutes an important factor in the risk and maintenance of eating pathologies (Stice, 2002) and it has been included in different sociocultural models of eating disturbances (e.g., Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999). In such models, sociocultural influences (most notably the media, family, and peers) contribute to the development of body dissatisfaction, and consequently increase the probability of developing eating disorders. The internalisation of social standards and the tendency to compare one's appearance to those standards act as mediators between sociocultural influences and body dissatisfaction. The findings from the meta-analysis by Cafri, Yamamiya, Brannick, and Thompson (2005) support this model and conclude that sociocultural factors, including the mass media and thin-ideal internalisation, have a statistically significant relationship with body image.

The “normal” trend for body image changes is characterised by increasing body image concerns and decreasing body image satisfaction throughout adolescence (Ricciardelli & McCabe, 2011;

Wertheim & Paxton, 2011). In addition, it seems that the largest decrease in body satisfaction appears in early adolescence for both sexes, followed by a slight improvement in older adolescent females, whereas changes in males seem to be associated with changes in body mass index (BMI) category (Eisenberg, Neumark-Sztainer, & Paxton, 2006).

About 70% of adolescent females reported a preference for thinness (Wertheim, Paxton, & Blaney, 2009), 60% wanted to change their weight and about 30% have developed low body satisfaction (Arrufat, 2006; Neumark-Sztainer, Paxton, Hannan, Haines, & Story, 2006). Several longitudinal studies have found that weight and shape concerns in adolescent females predict a subsequent increase in dieting, drive for thinness, depressed mood, low self-esteem, low levels of physical activity, bulimic symptoms, binge eating, compensatory behaviours and partial bulimia nervosa (Neumark-Sztainer, Paxton, et al., 2006; Wertheim et al., 2009). Therefore, it would be desirable to prevent body dissatisfaction by means of interventions regarding the internalisation of the thin ideal (Levine & Piran, 2004).

In adolescent males there seems to be a normative concern to achieve a muscular body and this desire to be stronger and more muscular than one currently is becomes a source of body image concern (Ricciardelli & McCabe, 2011). Almost 30% of boys want to change their height and weight (Ricciardelli & McCabe, 2001) and about 24% have developed low body satisfaction (Neumark-Sztainer, Levine, et al., 2006; Neumark-Sztainer, Paxton, et al., 2006). The longitudinal evidence supporting the relationship between body dissatisfaction and extreme weight-control

* Corresponding author at: Departament de Psicologia Clínica i de la Salut, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Edifici B Facultat Psicologia, Campus UAB (Campus d'Excel·lència Internacional), 08193 Bellaterra (BCN), Spain. Tel.: +34 581 31 70; fax: +34 581 21 25.

E-mail addresses: pegespinoza@hotmail.com, Paola.Espinoza@uab.cat (P. Espinoza), eva.penelo@uab.cat (E. Penelo), rosa.raich@uab.cat (R.M. Raich).

behaviours is scarce in adolescent males (McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2006; Neumark-Sztainer, Paxton, et al., 2006). The longitudinal association between low body satisfaction and high dieting levels, unhealthy weight-control behaviours and binge eating in adolescent males would be partly mediated by BMI (Neumark-Sztainer, Paxton, et al., 2006).

The programme “Eating, aesthetic feminine models and the media. How to train critical students in secondary education” (AMM-EC; Raich, Sánchez-Carracedo, & López-Guimerà, 2008) is a non-targeted prevention programme aimed at improving eating attitudes and reducing the influence of the beauty ideal in Western countries. It falls within the theoretical framework of the social cognitive model (SCM; Bandura, 1986) in terms of the reciprocal relationship between the environment and the individual, and is also based on the educational media literacy (ML) approach. The SCM proposes that beliefs, emotions, motivations, and behaviours are created, shaped, and sustained by the reciprocal interaction between personal, behavioural, and environmental determinants. For this reason, the programme pays special attention to socio-cultural factors, such as the glorification of thinness by the media (Levine & Piran, 2004). ML helps understand the role of media in society and aims to reduce or eliminate the negative influence of its exposure, by means of a critically analytical attitude to media content (Levine & Smolak, 2006). Studies evaluating the impact of ML programmes in girls have reported promising but inconclusive results, suggesting that brief systematic interventions can reduce thin-ideal internalisation (Levine & Chapman, 2011; Levine & Murnen, 2009). Such studies in boys are scarce, but there are some promising findings about the effect of ML programmes in reducing the risk factors of eating disorders, such as over-evaluation of shape and weight at 30-month follow-up (Wilksch & Wade, 2009). However, it is unclear whether ML programmes are as important for boys as for girls (Ricciardelli & McCabe, 2011).

The AMM-EC programme was designed to be applied to schoolgirls aged between 12 and 14 years and comprises two components: Media Literacy (ML) and Nutrition (NUT). The ML component criticises the current standard of feminine beauty and promotes critical thinking with respect to the messages that the mass media offers. The NUT component promotes healthy nutrition for girls and boys. In the current study, both sexes were considered in the assessment, intervention, and data analysis. Boys are also included because they constitute an important socialising agent of sociocultural pressures regarding thinness in girls, through their comments and jokes about weight and body shape (Levine & Smolak, 2002). If one can change the attitudes of boys towards the sociocultural ideal of thinness for girls, one can also improve the social environment of girls (O’Dea & Yager, 2011).

The effectiveness of the programme has been evaluated from approaches that are both quantitative (González, Penelo, Gutiérrez, & Raich, 2011) and qualitative (González, Mora, Penelo, Goddard, Treasure, & Raich, *in press*). For the former, long-term outcomes for the complete version (ML+NUT) and partial version (ML) were assessed when compared with a non-treatment condition. Both versions yielded to a reduction of self-reported disordered eating attitudes (related to diet, bulimia and food preoccupation and oral control) and thin-ideal internalisation among early and middle adolescent students of both sexes at 30-month follow-up (González et al., 2011). The results of the qualitative analysis suggest that both versions of the programme attain the objectives proposed by this intervention, and that there were more similarities than differences between the two versions. Nevertheless, adolescents participating in ML+NUT showed themselves to have more exact notions on nutrition and on the harmful effects of commercial diets than was the case for the ML and control groups (González et al., *in press*).

Taking as a basis the sociocultural model of eating disturbances proposed by Thompson et al. (1999), we might expect that

the AMM-EC programme—as well as the reduction of thin-ideal internalisation—would also promote favourable changes in body image over the long term. Thus, another important effect to examine is the impact of this AMM-EC programme on body image. In this regard, it is important to study both the evaluative-affective and cognitive-investment components of body image (Cash, Melnyk, & Hrabosky, 2004), since each can have a different effect on eating disturbances (Allen, Byrne, McLean, & Davis, 2008; Cash et al., 2004; Espinoza, Penelo, & Raich, 2010). González et al. (2011) did not evaluate body image and only addressed disordered eating attitudes (measured with EAT) and internalisation of the thin ideal (measured with the CIMEC questionnaire), because the validation study of the body-image measure used (QÚIC questionnaire, see method above) had not yet been published at that time (Penelo, Espinoza, Portell, & Raich, 2012).

The aim of the present study is to assess the effects on body image measures in adolescent boys and girls who took part in an AMM-EC programme at 30-month follow-up, as an extension of the evaluation of the programme that was first reported and evaluated in González et al. (2011). We expect adolescents participating in this programme based on media literacy to change their attitudes towards the current ideal of beauty and to reduce their desire to achieve this prescribed ideal. The evaluation of these changes is based on body image indicators, and specifically we focus on the two components of body image: the cognitive-investment (body problems dimension) and the evaluative-affective (body satisfaction dimension) components. We expected the participants who received the complete prevention programme (Media Literacy and Nutrition; ML+NUT) and the partial programme (Media Literacy; ML) to present fewer body image problems (Hypothesis 1) and greater body satisfaction (Hypothesis 2) than in a non-treatment control condition. In agreement with the results obtained in previous evaluations of this programme (González et al., 2011, *in press*) we also expected similar effects of the ML+NUT and ML programmes on both body image components (Hypothesis 3).

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited from second-year compulsory secondary education at three urban state and four state-subsidised schools in the city of Terrassa, located in the Barcelona area (Catalonia, Spain), selected by means of incidental sampling. Of 478 initial participants, data were obtained from 443 adolescents (92.7%; 254 girls and 189 boys) aged 12–14 ($M = 13.4$ years; $SD = 0.4$), the reduction in sample size being due to some of the questionnaires not being fully answered. Average BMI was 21.2 ($SD = 3.8$) in girls and 21.1 ($SD = 3.5$) in boys; 21.1% of girls and 35.4% of boys met the criteria for being overweight or obese (Cole, Bellizzi, Flegal, & Dietz, 2000). The distribution of participants in terms of origin was: 91.5% from Spain/Europe, 4.3% from Central and South America, 2.9% from Morocco, and 1.3% from other countries. Therefore, most participants were Caucasian, reflecting the ethnicity of the school populations from which the participants were drawn.

Assignment of the schools to the experimental conditions was conducted with schools as the sample unit, and not individually for participants, using the type of school as a stratification base, in order to avoid the spill-over effect between the experimental condition participants observed in a previous study with an earlier version of the programme (Raich, Sánchez-Carracedo, López-Guimerà, Portell, Moncada, & Fauquet, 2008). Moreover, it should be noted that in Spain such types of school (state or state-subsidised) are closely related to SES and that a relation has been reported between SES and body image, which is mediated

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/902991>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/902991>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)