Abstract

Objectives: Research on the influence of body shape model on adolescent males is scarce. The current study aimed to assess this influence among adult males involved in intense physical activity and to determine its relationship to eating behaviour. Possible variations between 1998 and 2008 were also analysed. Method: A total of 950 males (672 in 1998 and 278 in 2008), all aspiring professional soldiers, were studied using the Questionnaire of Influences on Body Shape Model (CIMEC-V) and the Eating Attitudes Test-40 (EAT-40), as well as by assessing their physical/sporting activity and body mass index (BMI). Results: Scores on the CIMEC-V were significantly correlated with the EAT-40 and BMI. As regards physical activity the only positive correlation referred to gym-based exercise. A cluster analysis revealed two subgroups with respect to physical activity, BMI, and scores on the CIMEC-V and EAT-40. One of them scored higher on these three variables and they also had a BMI > 25. The comparative study of data from 1998 and 2008 showed significant changes in some variables. Conclusions: Generally, the results differ considerably from those reported for younger samples (which would suggest a lower risk of disordered eating behaviour). However, there is a higher risk group in which the influence of body shape models, physical activity and eating behaviour are related to greater body volume. The influence of the body shape model on males has increased, especially as regards the influence of friends and in terms of behaviours aimed at weight loss.

Keywords

Eating disorders, Body image, Risk factors, Physical activity, Gender differences.