

Self-Esteem and Emotional Intelligence's Association to Nutritional Status in Adolescent Schoolchildren in Chile

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Abstract : Self-esteem and emotional intelligence are variables that are related to people's nutritional status. Self-esteem may be at low levels in people living with obesity, while emotional intelligence can play an important role in the way people living with obesity cope. The objective of the study was to measure the association between self-esteem and emotional intelligence to nutritional status in adolescent population. Methodology: A cross-sectional study was carried out with 179 adolescent schoolchildren between 13 and 19 years old from a public school. The objective was to evaluate nutritional status; weight and height were measured by calculating the body mass index and Z score. Self-esteem was evaluated using the Coopersmith Self-esteem Inventory adapted by Brinkmann and Segure. Emotional intelligence was measured using the Emotional Quotient Inventory: short, by Bar On, adapted questionnaire, translated into Spanish by López Zafra. For statistical analysis: Pearson's Chi-square test, Pearson's correlation, and odd ratio calculation were used, with a p value at a significance level < 5%. Results: The study group was composed of 71% female and 29% male. The nutritional status was distributed as eutrophic 41.9%, overweight 20.1%, and obesity 21.1%. In relation to self-esteem, 44.1% presented low and very low levels, without differences by gender. Emotional intelligence was distributed: low 3.4%, medium 81%, and high 13.4% -no differences according to gender. The association between nutritional status (overweight and obesity) with low and very low self-esteem, an odds ratio of 2.5 (95% CI 1.12 - 5.59) was obtained with a p-value = 0.02. The correlation analysis between the intrapersonal sub-dimension emotional intelligence scores and the Z score of nutritional status presented a negative correlation of $r = -0.209$ with a p-value < 0.005. The correlation between emotional intelligence subdimension stress management with Z score presented a positive correlation of $r = 0.0161$ with a p-value < 0.05. In conclusion, the group of adolescents studied had a high prevalence of overweight and obesity, a high prevalence of low self-esteem, and a high prevalence of average emotional intelligence. Overweight and obese adolescents were 2.5 times more likely to have low self-esteem. As overweight and obesity increase, self-esteem decreases, and the ability to manage stress increases.

Keywords : self-esteem, emotional intelligence, obesity, adolescent, nutritional status

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