SCHOOL-RELATED SOCIAL SUPPORT DOES NOT MODERATE THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN BODY MASS INDEX AND HEALTH-RELATED QUALITY OF LIFE

INTRODUCTION

Obesity has been associated with impaired health-related quality of life (HRQoL) in adolescents (1). Better understanding which modifiable factors may enhance the psychosocial well-being of obese youth constitutes an essential step for improved care. Previous research has underlined associations between higher school-related social support and greater well-being in the general adolescent population (2), and in limited clinical samples of obese adolescents (3).

The current study extends the existing literature by testing the moderating effect of perceived classmate and teacher support on the inverse association between body mass index (BMI) and HRQoL in a large and population-based sample of thin, normal-weight, overweight and obese adolescents.

METHODS


Variables

– HRQoL score based on the self-report version of the 10-KIDSCREEN instrument (5).
– BMI in categories (IOTF references).
– Perceived classmate and teacher support: for each support source, 3 categories derived from terciles of sum scores (5-point Likert scales): “poor”, “average”, “good”.

– Sociodemographic characteristics.

Multiple linear regression analyses stratified by sex (with HRQoL as the outcome variable): 1.

Model 1

BMI categories and sociodemographic characteristics.

Model 2

Model 1 + perceived classmate (A) or teacher (B) support

Model 3

Model 2 + interaction “BMI X classmate support” (A) or “BMI X teacher support” (B).

RESULTS

In both sexes, obesity was significantly associated with decreased HRQoL, after adjusting for sociodemographic characteristics (Model 1, Figure 1).

Significantly reduced HRQoL was observed for boys and girls having an average or poor perception of classmate (Model 2A) or teacher support (Model 2B), in comparison with those indicating good support, after taking BMI and sociodemographic characteristics into account.

For both boys and girls, interactions “BMI X classmate support” (Model 3A: p=0.85 in boys and 0.58 in girls) and “BMI X teacher support” (Model 3B: p=0.97 in boys and 0.42 in girls) were not significant, after adjusting for sociodemographic characteristics (Figures 2 and 3).

CONCLUSIONS

HRQoL is lower for obese boy and girl adolescents than for their normal-weight peers.

However, school-related social support does not moderate the inverse association between BMI and HRQoL in adolescents: the decrease in HRQoL related to overweight and obesity is of a similar shape for the three levels of classmate and teacher support.

REFERENCES


SIPES • The results of HBSC survey in French-speaking Belgium are available on http://sipes.ulb.ac.be

Thérèse Lebacq1,2, Maud Dujeu1,2,3, Estelle Méroc1,2, Nathalie Moreau1,2, Camille Pedroni1,2, Isabelle Godin1,2, Katri Castelain1,2

1 Service Information, Promotion, Éducation Santé (SIPES), École de Santé Publique, Université libre de Bruxelles, Brussels, Belgium
2 Centre de Recherche en Épidémiologie et Économie de la Santé, École de Santé Publique, Université libre de Bruxelles, Brussels, Belgium

Contact: Thérèse.Lebacq@ulb.ac.be