Abstract

Original Article

An Assessment of the Relationship between Body Appreciation and Obsessive-Compulsive Symptoms: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Abstract

Introduction: Positive body image influences people in multitude of ways, both in an inner level and in their interpersonal relationships. Very few studies have examined the relationship between positive body image and obsessive-compulsive symptoms in the general population.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted with a sample of 287 individuals (n=287) from Greece's general population. A composite questionnaire was used, including: demographic information, the questionnaire of Body Appreciation Scale (BAS) and the Obsessive Compulsive Inventory-Revised (OCI-R). The statistical program SPSS 21.0 was used for data analysis.

Results: The sample's mean age was 31.94 years, while 36.9 % were men and 63.1 % women. The mean Body Mass Index (BMI) was 23.75. The mean total score of BAS questionnaire was 49.21 and of OCI-R was 23.22. The BAS score of "non-obsessive- compulsive" participants was significantly higher than the one of "obsessive-compulsive". Significant negative correlations were found between body appreciation (BAS) and OCI-R (and OCI-R subscales). The strongest negative correlation was observed between BAS and the subscale Obsession (r=-0.314, p<0.05), while the weakest negative correlation was observed between BAS and the subscale Checking (r=-0.162, p<0.05). There was no statistically significant correlation between BAS and the rest OCI-R subscales (Washing, Mental Neutralizing, Ordering). People with higher body appreciation show less obsessive-compulsive symptoms. On the contrary, individuals with obsessive-compulsive characteristics have a less positive body image. In addition, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between BAS and BMI, (r=-0.232, p<0.01), which shows that increased body weight is related to low body appreciation.

Discussion: Body appreciation is negatively correlated to the presence of obsessive-compulsive symptoms in the general population. More specifically, body appreciation is negatively correlated to Obsession, Hoarding and Checking symptoms.

Conclusion: The development of positive body image can contribute to reduction of some obsessive-compulsive symptoms and to improve an individual's well-being. Future research is suggested, so that further clarification of the study's results to be possible.

Key-words: Body image, body appreciation, positive body image, obsessive-compulsive symptoms, obsession