Body Image in Collegiate Male Athletes: Education and Awareness on an Underexplored Topic

Eleanor C. Pell
The College at Brockport
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Cover Page Footnote


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Isn’t That a “Girl Thing?”

A literature review of Male Body Image in Athletics
Body Image

Body image involves perceptions and attitudes toward one’s own physical appearance (Phillips & de Man, 2010)
A History

- Ancient Greece and Rome
- Socialization of male identity
  - The ideal male body is associated with leanness and musculosity (e.g., Baghurst 2009)
- Social Construction

(e.g., Baghurst 2009, Alexander, 2003; Mishkind, Rodin, Silberstein, & Striegel-Moore, 1986)
Predictors

- Wrestling
- Football  
  - 5% satisfied with weight
- Running  
  - 37% satisfied with weight
- Bodybuilders  
  - 5-10% met conditions for muscle dysmorphia

(Peters & Phelps, 2001; Parks & Read, 1997)
Why Should we Care?

- Negative Body Image ➔ Lower Self-esteem ➔ Risk for Deleterious Health Effects
  - Exercise Dependency
  - Eating Disorders
  - Muscle Dysmorphia
  - Depression/Anxiety
  - Suicide

- Positive Body Image ➔ High Self-esteem ➔ Higher academic achievement
  - Self-Efficacy
  - Lower behavior problems
  - Higher athletic performance

(Morgan, 2003; Thompson et al., 1999)
**Best Practices for Practitioners**
(Burlew & Shurts, 2013)

- **Prevention**
  - Psychoeducational
    - Distinguishing between healthy v. excessive exercise
    - Teaching proper food choices for lifestyle
    - Unlinking physical appearance and self-worth
  - Workshops, seminars, wellness programs, social media

- **Intervention Process**
  - Ask questions
  - Body Image Ideals questionnaire
  - Counseling and Group Therapy
    - Cognitive dissonance
    - Abstaining from unhealthy behaviors
  - Trans-theoretical model, motivational interviewing, gender-sensitive therapy
Take Home Points

1.) Male do suffer from BID
2.) Diagnostic criteria is gender specific
   ->Should it be?
Questions? Thank you?