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The Necessity of Psychotherapy in the Practice of Physical Exercises

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Abstract: Now a days it is important for the people to be aware of the importance of psychotherapy in practicing physical activity. Living in a world where the people are having more and more health problems because of obesity and the ignorance for self-care, due the fact that they are more involved in their jobs and family issues, the necessity of the practice of physical exercises it is mandatory. The best method to make the people understand the benefits of practicing physical activities is to participate at psychotherapy sessions which are very helpful to chance the mentality of the people regarding this necessity and to show them that taking care of their bodies represents a very healthy way to improve their state of mind. The fundamental aim of this study is to demonstrate that the psychotherapy and the practice of physical activities are 2 items that should be combined in the health programs in order to have the best results and also, one other purpose of this study, is to convince people that their health is more important than their jobs and if they manage to improve the process of self-care is going to help them to reduce the stress.

Keywords: psychotherapy; physical activity; health; obesity self-care

Introduction

The WHO (World Health Organization) recognizes that in this century, obesity has a prevalence equal to or greater than malnutrition and infectious diseases. Therefore, in the absence of drastic prevention and treatment measures in 2025 over 50% of the world's population will be obese (Tagoe, 2011). Obesity is therefore a chronic disease, with a very prevalence large and affecting men and women of all races and

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ages. Pre-obesity and obesity are problems important public health and need a common strategy, which includes promoting habits healthy eating and a more active lifestyle, as well as proper treatment and care (Dake, 2011).

In Romania 6 from 10 people have weight problems and the main reason that causes obesity is the imbalance between calories consumed and calories burned (INSP, 2017). To this is added the unbalanced and sedentary lifestyle (Pacak, 1998). The jobs that the peoples have nowadays is also a big reason that causes the wight problems and also the obesity (Johnson JV, 2011). Many of us are having office jobs which keeps us busy on a chair and makes us forget about exercises or walks. More over this office jobs are causing also a lot of stress which makes us eat a lot of unhealthy food.

Increasing body weight increases the risk of health problems, such as: cardiovascular disease, heart failure, high blood pressure, myocardial infarction, stroke, joint conditions, some types of diabetes, some types of cancer (Theorell T, 2011). Body weight and health are in an interdependent relationship. Health can influence, beneficially or not, body weight and vice versa, any decrease or increase in body weight can influence, for better or worse, health (Obesity and inequities, 2014). Therefore, maintaining a normal body weight is one of the most important ways to maintain good health, to avoid the risk of illness and the best way to prevent the weight problem or to solve it is to practice physical activities. Like this the calories are burned and also the lifestyle is a better one (Michael, 2020).

The question is: how could psychotherapy help this people? In my opinion, the answer would be pretty simple: a psychotherapist is the indicated person that can make the people with weight problems or the obese people to see that they have an issue and they should solve it before having a disease which is caused by obesity (Breckon JD, 2008). The psychotherapist is the one that can help this people to maintain their physical activity sessions during their therapy but also after finishing the therapy which was indicated by a physical-therapist (Helen, 2019).

The main purpose of this article is to see the importance that a psychotherapist has in the physical activities' programs of the people with weight problems and the obese people.

2. Material and Methods

2.1. Research methods and eligibility criteria:

The research was made in 3 state institutions from Romania, Brăila in the period 01.05.2021-01.07.2021. There were chosen 53 persons which are working in front of a computer every day between 8 and 10 hours, from Monday till Friday and sometimes also in the days from Weekend. All the subjects included in the research made an BMI (Body Mass Index) test before beginning the programs from the study, where their result were over the normal values and also after the programs of the research ended in order to realize if it was helpful for them this study.

Table 1. The values for IMB Test

Body Mass Index (BMI)	Interpretation of the results	Risk of disease
18.49 or less	Underweight	✓
Between 18.50 and 24.99	Normal weight	No risk of disease
Between 25.00 and 34.99	Overweight	✓
Between 30.00 and 34.99	Obesity 1 st degree	✓
Between 35.00 and 39.99	Obesity 2 nd degree	✓
40.00 or more	Morbid obesity	✓

The second criteria by which the 53 persons were chosen in the research was the psychological tests to which they were subjected. The psychological tests were to observe the level of stress from the life of the subjects, their lifestyle and the way they relate to reality. The tests used are the questionnaire: “S.T.A.I. FORMA X1” and “S.T.A.I. FORMA X2”.

At the beginning of the study all the 53 subjects were interviewed regarding their health problems in order to be able to create the correct physical exercises program for them.

For the interpretation of the result from the BMI test and the psychological tests there were used Microsoft Excel Worksheet and SPSS – Statistic program.

As for the methods used in order to help the participants to there were used psychotherapy sessions, individuals and group ones and physical exercises sessions.

At the end of the study which included psychotherapy sessions and physical exercises sessions the participants completed a questionnaire made as exhaustive research in order to realize if the psychotherapy sessions helped them in their problem against extra pounds.

2.2. Participant Characteristics

- Age and sex: The age of the 53 subjects chosen for the research is between 27 and 53 years old from which 27 are ladies and 26 are mans.
- Psychological tests: By the responses that the subjects gave to the two questionnaire that they were given we could observe the psychological reasons that brought them to the weight problems. From the results of the questionnaires, we could observe that most of the participants are having weight problems because of the stress at work, bigger concentration for work related problems and anxiety of losing their jobs. The result of the psychological test is represented in table no.2 as follows:

Table 2. Group Statistics Regarding the Results of the Questionnaires “S.T.A.I. FORMA X1” and “S.T.A.I. FORMA X2”

Subjects	N	Mean	
anxiety_state	1	27	46.46
	2	26	47.44
anxiety_feature	1	27	42.42
	2	26	40.19

- BMI test: All the subjects that were chosen for this research had values over the normal ones at the BMI test, all of them being overweight but also with obesity first and also second degree. The result of the BMI test from the participants of the research can be seen at sample number 1 represented below.

Sample no. 1: Graphical representation of the BMI test number 1 (before beginning the program)

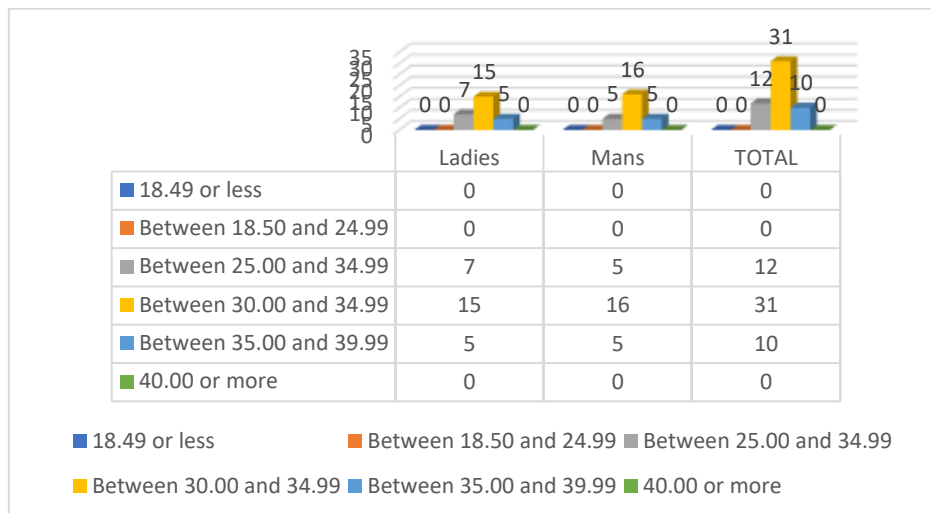


Figure 1. Sample Regarding the Results of the BMI Test of the Participants at the Beginning of the Study

3. Procedure

All the subjects included in the research participated at 3 individual psychotherapy sessions in order to discover the real problems of each of them and to adapt the future counselling and physical exercises session to help them with their needs and to show them that the psychotherapy programs are very useful in order to achieve their goals which were feeling better with themselves, to get rid of stress and thus, losing weight. After the 3 individual psychotherapy sessions of each subject, depending on the problems of the participants, there were created 3 group psychotherapy sessions in order to make them realize that they are not alone in this problem and that there are many other people that are facing the same issues.

In the psychotherapy sessions the subjects were also advised to follow a regular program of feeding in order to have success in their goals. Most of the subjects agreed to try another program and way of eating depending on their individual needs. The individual diets for the subjects were made by a kinetotherapist.

Following the individual and group psychotherapy sessions, all the 53 subjects of the research agree to participate also at 10 physical exercises sessions which were also created depending on their results from the BMI test and their health problems.

In all the physical therapy sessions that were used in the program the music was present in order to give a better vibe for the students. This decision was made because all people now-a-days, are smiling when they hear the music that they like and also, they have a better mood for doing things that doesn't really have an importance for them. The kind of music used at the was chosen for the physical exercises sessions was chosen depending on the tastes in music of the subjects.

4. Research Results:

The research includes 3 items as follows:

1. Item no. 1 – The utility of the study regarding the overweight and obesity problems.
2. Item no. 2 – The utility of the physical exercises' sessions in the study.
3. Item no. 3 – The necessity of psychotherapy in the practice of physical exercises.

Item no. 1 referred to the utility of this study for the participants that took part of it. At this item the response comes from the results of the second BMI test of the subjects, made at the end of the study's programs. The results can be seen as a graphic representation shown at figure no. 2 below.

Item no. 1: Graphical representation of the BMI test number 2 (after ending the program).

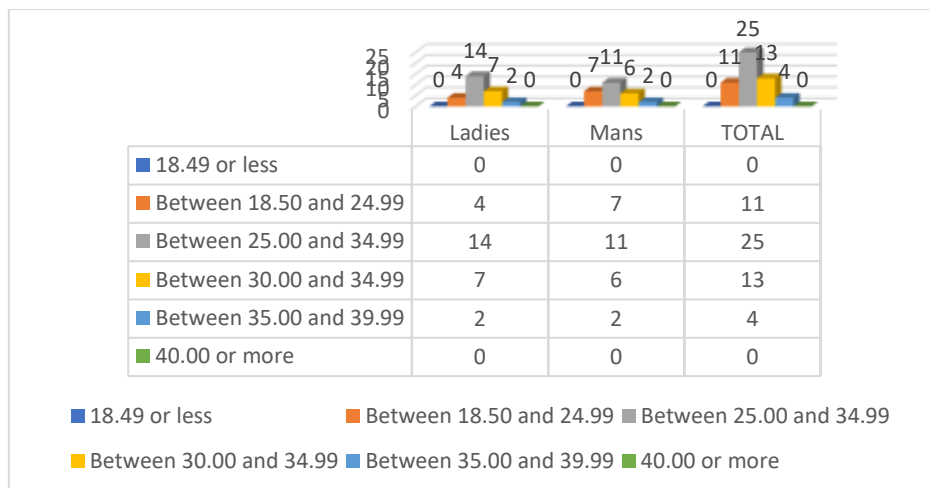


Figure 2. Sample Regarding the Results of the BMI Test of the Participants at the End of the Study

Sample no. 2 – Graphic comparison between the BMI results before and after the study’s program

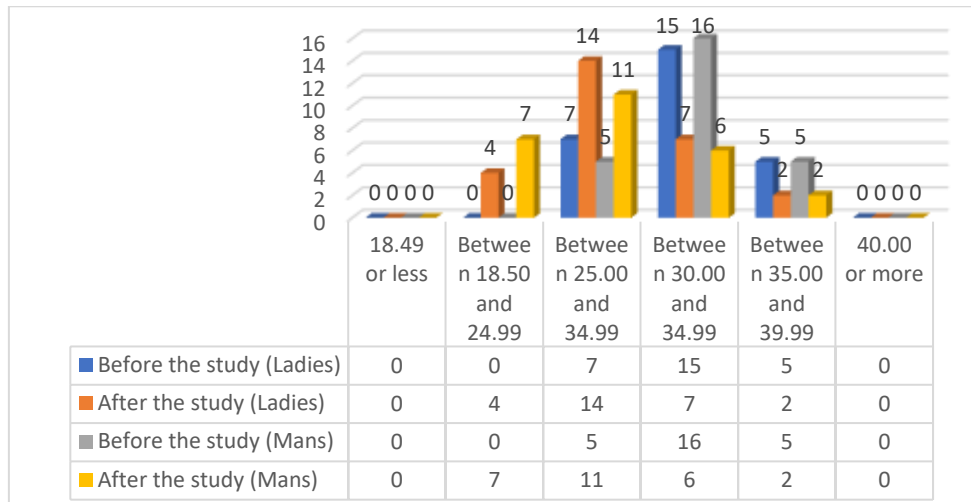


Figure 3. Sample Regarding the Results from the BMI Tests Before and After the Study

Item no. 2 referred to the utility of the practice of physical exercises for the subjects. For this item it was used a survey which the participants completed in order to realize if the programs of physical exercises helped them in achieving their goals.

Item no. 2 – The opinion of the participants regarding the utility of the physical exercises

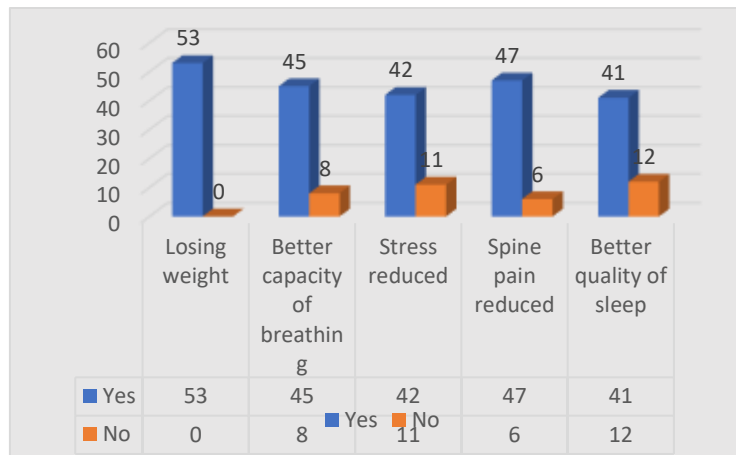


Figure 4. Sample Regarding the Utility of the Physical Exercises of the Study

Item no. 3 referred to the necessity of psychotherapy in the practice of physical exercises. For this item the participants completed a survey in order to realize if the psychotherapy helped them more to achieve their goals.

Item no. 3 – The opinion of the participants regarding the necessity of psychotherapy in the practice of physical exercises.

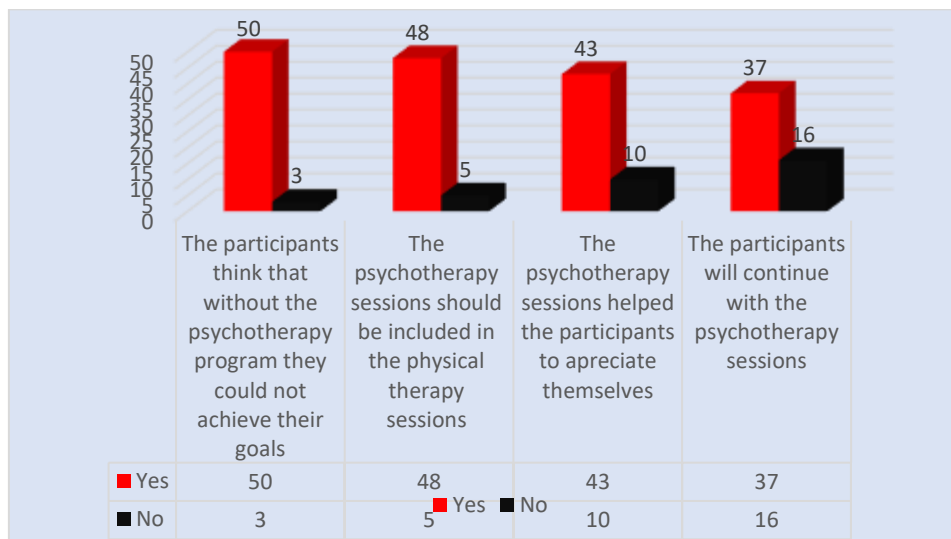


Figure 5. Sample Regarding the Opinion on the Participants Regarding the Necessity of Psychotherapy in the Practice of Physical Exercises

5. Discussions

The present study was realized to realize if the psychotherapy it is indeed necessary in the practice of physical therapy in order to help the people with work related issues and stress which caused them bad habits in their life style and also overweight problems including obesity first and second degree.

From the first item regarding the utility of the present study we can see that by the comparison of the results from the first BMI test made before beginning the study and the second one, made after the study that the programs used in the research helped the subjects to reduce some pounds and implicit improving their health. In the figure no.3 it was graphic represented the comparison between the results from the BMI tests before and after the study. As the figure shows us, we can realize that the study has been helpful for the subjects that took part of this program. If in the beginning of the study the results from the BMI test showed us that no subject was

having the normal value, between 18.50 and 24.99, 12 of them, representing 22,64% from the total number of subjects that participated at the study, were overweight, 31 of the participants, representing 58,49% from the total number of subjects, were having obesity first degree and 10 of them, representing 5,3% from the total number of the participants were having obesity second degree, the results of the second BMI test realized after the study, 11 subjects, representing 20,75% from the total amount of subjects were having normal values, so implicit normal weight, 25 participants, representing 47,16% from the total number of subjects, lost pounds and from the value of obesity first degree they were having the value of overweight, 11 subjects, representing 20,75% from the total amount of participants were having the results for obesity first degree and only 4 of them, representing 7,54% from the total number of subjects were having the value for obesity second degree.

From the result on the second item we can conclude by the opinions of the participants that the practice of physical exercises was helpful in losing weight as all 53 subjects answered “Yes” on this questions. By the question if they have a better capacity of breathing, 45 of them, representing 84,90% from the total amount of subjects said “Yes” and 8 of them, representing 15,09% from the total number of participants said “No”. Regarding stress reduced, 42 participants, representing 79,24% from the total amount of subjects, said “Yes” and 11 of them, representing 20,75% from the total number of participants said “No”. By the matter of spine pain reduced, 47 participants, representing 88,67% from the total amount of subjects, said “Yes” and the other 6 of them, representing 11,32% from the total number of participants said “No”. As for a better quality of sleeping, 41 of the participants, representing 77,35% from the total amount of subjects said “Yes” and 12 of them, representing 22,64% from the total number of participants, said “No”.

On the third item, regarding the necessity of psychotherapy in the practice of physical exercises we can conclude that the psychotherapy is very helpful for the people in the physical exercises’ sessions. On the question if the participants think that they could not have achieved their goals without the psychotherapy sessions 50 of them, representing 94,33% from the total amount of participants, agreed and 3 of them, representing 5,66% from the total number of subjects said “No”. By the same item 48 participants, representing 90,56% from the total amount of subjects think that the psychotherapy sessions should be included in the physical therapy sessions and 5 of them, representing 9,43% from the total number of participants, said “No”. Also 43 participants, representing 81,13% from the total amount of subjects think that the psychotherapy sessions helped them to appreciate themselves and 10 of

them, representing 18,86% from the total number of participants said it was not helpful for them. On the question if the participants of this study will continue with the psychotherapy sessions, 37 of them, representing, 69,81% form the total amount of subjects said “Yes” and 16 of them, representing 30,18% from the total number of participants at the study, said “No”.

6. Conclusions

By the results at BMI test after the study and the answers of the participants at the second item we can conclude that the study was very helpful for majority of the participants.

As for the main scope of this research, to realize if the psychotherapy is a necessity in the practice of physical exercises, by the answers of the participants on the survey regarding this item, we can conclude that the psychotherapy should be a must in the physical therapy sessions. By the answers that the majority of the participants gave at the last survey we can conclude that without the psychotherapy sessions they could not achieve their goals: losing weight, having a better life style, get rid of the work stress and having a normal feeding program.

As the research shows as, we conclude that in the physical therapy programs should be included at least 3 sessions of psychotherapy in order to make the patients realize that the self esteem is very important and they can solve their day-to-day issues without being stressed.

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