

Adolescents perception of parents and peers diet and physical activity behaviour and encouragement

Ferro-Lebres V^{1,2}, Ribeiro JC¹, Moreira P^{1,3}

¹ Research Centre in Physical Activity, Health and Leisure, Faculty of Sport, University of Porto, Portugal

² Superior Health School, Polytechnic Institute of Braganza, Portugal

³ Faculty of Nutrition and Food Science, University of Porto, Portugal

E-mail address: vferrolebres@gmail.com

I. Introduction

• It has been well documented that parents and peers behaviour influence children and adolescents, namely regarding physical activity and eating behaviours. (Contento et al. 2006; Boutelle et al, 2007; Vagstrand et al, 2009; Beydoun e Wang, 2009).

• It is fundamental to understand how adolescents perceive their parents and peers behaviour and encouragement to adolescents own behaviour.

II. Aim

• To study the perception Portuguese adolescents have about their parents and peers behaviour and the encouragement to adolescents own physical activity and eating behaviour.

III. Methods

• 748 volunteer adolescents from North Portugal were recruited in four (4) junior high schools.

• A questionnaire about adolescents' perception of parents and peers behaviour and encouragement was design specially for this research.

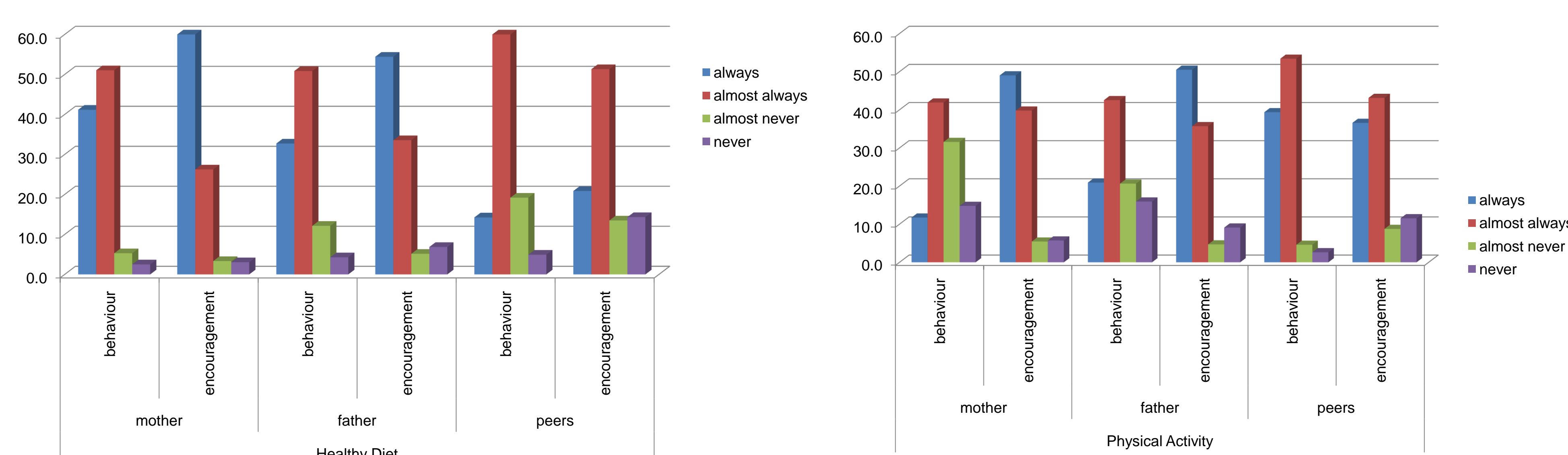
• Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Cohen's kappa, in the statistical software SPSS version 18.0.

IV. Results

Figure 1.

• The mean (SD) age was 16,7 (+/- 2,0) years.

Figures 1 and 2. Adolescents Perceptions Regarding Parents and Peers Behaviour and Encouragement



Adolescents perceptions		Healthy Diet						Physical Activity					
		mother		father		peers		mother		father		peers	
		behaviour	encouragement	behaviour	encouragement	behaviour	encouragement	behaviour	encouragement	behaviour	encouragement	behaviour	encouragement
Healthy Diet	mother	behaviour	-	0.346 ***	0.428 ***	0.274 ***		0.057 **	0.204 ***	0.088 ***	0.199 ***		
		encouragement	0.346 ***	-	0.178 ***	0.423 ***		0.042 **	0.204 ***	0.052 **	0.194 ***		
	father	behaviour	0.428 ***	0.178 ***	-	0.314 ***		0.072 **	0.089 **	0.140 ***	0.191 ***		
		encouragement	0.274 ***	0.423 ***	0.314 ***	-		0.039 *	0.226 ***	0.097 ***	0.347 ***		
	peers	behaviour					-	0.448 ***				0.235 ***	0.208 ***
		encouragement					0.448 ***	-				0.195 ***	0.287 ***
Physical Activity	mother	behaviour	0.057 **	0.042 **	0.072 **	0.039 *		-	0.093 ***	0.284 ***	0.165 **		
		encouragement	0.204 ***	0.204 ***	0.089 **	0.226 ***		0.093 ***	-	0.098 **	0.467 ***		
	father	behaviour	0.088 ***	0.052 **	0.140 ***	0.097 ***		0.284 ***	0.098 **	-	0.131 ***		
		encouragement	0.199 ***	0.194 ***	0.191 ***	0.347 ***		0.165 **	0.467 ***	0.131 ***	-		
	peers	behaviour					0.235 ***	0.195 ***				-	0.393 ***
		encouragement					0.208 ***	0.287 ***				0.393 ***	-

Table 1. Adolescents Perceptions Agreement: Cohen's Kappa Values

LEGEND: *P<0,05; **P<0,01 ***P<0,001

• Most adolescents perceive that both parents have always/ almost always healthy diets (92,2% mothers; 83,6% fathers) and are always/ almost always physically active (53,7% mothers; 63,4% fathers).

• Adolescents also perceive parents to encourage them to have healthy diets always/ almost always (93,9% mothers; 88,0% fathers) and to be physically active always/ almost always (86,3% mothers; 88,8% fathers).

• A Cohen's kappa moderate consistency among perception of fathers and mothers encouragement was found either to healthy diet (0.47; p<0.001), and physical activity (0.42; p<0.001); and between perception of peers stimulus and behaviour (0.45; p<0.001).

• A low agreement was found between perception of parents encouragement and own behaviour.

V. Conclusions

• There are more adolescents perceiving their parents to have a healthy diet, than being physically active, suggesting that more physical activity interventions involving parents are needed.

• Regarding eating behaviours, adolescents perceive their mothers to follow a healthy diet, more than their fathers. In opposite, fathers are perceived as having a more physically active life than mothers, these results are in accordance with previous studies.

• Perception of peers behaviour and encouragement have a moderate consistency, suggesting perceived coherence in peers.

• There is a consistency between perception of mothers and fathers encouragement to a healthy diet and to be physically active. This conclusion is very important, as it seems important to have a consistent message from both parents, in order to adopt and maintain health behaviours.

• These results suggest that the low consistency between the perception of parents behaviour and encouragement to adolescents behaviour is possibly one of the reasons why adolescents continue to have poor diets and physical activity levels. Future interventions must consider involving parents and reinforce the importance of changing to a healthier way their lifestyles.

VI. References

- Bassett, R; Chapman, GH; Beagan, BL. Autonomy and control: The co-construction of adolescent food choice. *Appetite* 2008; 50:325-332
- Beydoun, MA; Wang, Y. Parent-child dietary intake resemblance in the United States: Evidence from a large representative survey. *Social Science & Medicine* 2009; 68:2137-2144
- Boutelle, KN; Birkeland, RW; Hannan, PJ; Story, M; Neumark-Sztainer, D. Associations between Maternal Concern for Healthful Eating and Maternal Eating Behaviors, Home Food Availability, and Adolescent Eating Behaviors. *J Nutr Educ Behav*. 2007;39:248-256
- Contento, IR; Williams, SS; Michela, JL; Franklin, AB. Understanding the food choice process of adolescents in the context of family and friends. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 2006; 38: 575-582
- Fitzgerald A, Heary C, Nixon E, Kelly C. Factors influencing the food choices of Irish children and adolescents: a qualitative investigation. *Health Promot Int*. 2010 Apr 10. [Epub ahead of print]
- Parmenter and Wardle. Development of a Nutrition Knowledge Questionnaire. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 1999; 53:298-308
- Vagstrand, K; Linne, Y; Karlsson, J; Elfhag, K; Lindroos, AK. Correlates of soft drink and fruit juice consumption among Swedish adolescents.