

AN EVALUATION OF THE DUAL-PATHWAY MODEL OF BINGE EATING IN ITALIAN ADOLESCENT BOYS: A LONGITUDINAL STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING APPROACH

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Introduction: Studies conducted with American and Australian samples of pre-adolescents and adolescent girls support the tenets of Stice and colleagues' dual-pathway (DP) model. The DP model is a cohesive framework for understanding how sociocultural pressures are translated into behavioural and negative affect risk factors potentially promoting binge eating. Males are likely to exhibit sub-threshold binge eating disorder and are roughly equal to females in regard to the number of cases of any binge eating. To date, only preliminary support has been provided for the validity of the DP model's core predictions with adolescent males.

Objectives: The current prospective study examined the suitability of the DM model in other western cultures (such as an Italian one) where adolescent boys are characterised by high levels of eating and body-related disturbances in response to sociocultural pressure.

Method: 221 Italian adolescent boys ($M_{age} = 14.9$) were examined at Baseline and after 1-year through semi-structured clinical interviews and self-reported measures. Data were analysed via a latent variable longitudinal structural equation modeling approach.

Results: Perceived pressure and internalization of societal ideals regarding male body shape led to body dissatisfaction, which in turn led to dietary restriction. Both body dissatisfaction and dietary restriction predicted negative affect, which in turn predicted binge eating. However, data did not support the relationship between body mass index and body dissatisfaction or between dietary restriction and binge eating.

Conclusions: The prospective validity of the DP model was partially supported in adolescent boys: body dissatisfaction predicted binge eating only via negative affect.