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The social construction of gender in Spanish physical education students

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The objective of this study was to analyse sex stereotypes in Spanish high-school students. Three hundred boys and girls from 12 to 17 years old participated in this study by completing a 41-item survey about their preferences for different body types. The survey was applied using a set of visual triggers. Analysis of data showed that body stereotypes determined the way boys and girls perceived physical activities. These influences made boys manifest masculine stereotypes (cult of muscularity) and girls to follow traditional feminine stereotypes (cult of thinness). We conclude that teachers have to be alert for sports practices becoming a vehicle for reproducing stereotypes related to gender.

Introduction

The aim of this article is to analyse how masculine and feminine stereotypes are expressed in secondary school physical education (PE) classes. Our study investigates male and female students' experiences in school-based physical education (Bramham, 2003). Sports and physical education are intimately connected with the construction and maintenance of embodied, hegemonic masculine stereotypes (Hickey *et al.*, 1998). Recent studies of the formal PE curriculum provide compelling evidence to suggest that many girls are underserved by existing provisions (Gorely *et al.*, 2003), and this tendency is repeated around the world. In many secondary school PE lessons, girls are currently allowed to choose the activities in which they wish to participate. Girls are given this flexibility since most PE programmes are dominated by masculine values (Wright, 1996; Reynold, 1997; Penney, 2002). Body shape and size and their relationship to physical activities such as sport and exercise have increasingly become markers of gender identity. Many authors report this evidence, first by considering young people's constructions of the relationship between masculinity and muscle, secondly by considering femininity and muscularity, and finally by analysing their perceptions of the risks of transgressing conventional boundaries of gender and sexuality (Gorely *et al.*, 2003).

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Oliver and Lalik (2004) examined what happened during their efforts to develop a curriculum strand designed to be implemented in girls' physical education classes. The curriculum strand had the objective of helping adolescent girls to name the discourses that shape their lives and regulate their bodies. These perspectives allowed them to think carefully about ways of working with the girls. William and Bedward (2001) state that there is a cultural and generational gap between teachers and students, and this gap has led to a neglect of girls' interests in PE, and is also reinforced by traditional family structures (Kay, 1995; Deam & Gilroy, 1998). Brown and Evans (2004) studied the role played by male PE teachers in reproducing gender relationships and ideologies, and reached the conclusion that the gender dispositions embodied by student teachers constitute a powerful influence on their professional behavior.

Hargreaves (1994) suggests that in order to gain public recognition and acceptance of their participation in PE, women have increasingly had to 'play like men'. Evans *et al.* (2001) consider that gender differences, evident in primary school years, become greater with age and persist in extra-curricular leisure activities. Thus, activities such as aerobics, dancing to pop music, hip-hop dancing, circuit training and general fitness have greater levels of participation among women than men.

For many post-structural feminists the body is a symbol of desire in its psychic, discursive and material dimensions (Kelly, 1997). Social perception of the body, which is based on thinness and physical development, has been of vital importance in the development of masculine and feminine stereotypes (Matthews, 1987; Bordo, 1990; Hall, 1996). Research about the concept of body dimension in teenagers is the key to establishing conceptual differences between boys and girls (Davies & Harre, 1989; Kirk, 1999). Shen *et al.* (2003) examined the extent to which personal interest, situational interest and measurable learning outcomes were associated with gender. Girls demonstrated higher personal interest in dance than boys. Girls were not as physically active as boys, but their skill and knowledge outcome measures were higher than those of boys. It appears that gender may have little impact on the motivational effect of situational interest and that girls' in-class learning might have higher quality than that of boys as a result of higher personal interest. According to González Ravé *et al.* (2004), socio-historic studies about PE, including those concerning gender, show that traditionally in Spain PE has reinforced masculinity in boys and a certain kind of femininity in girls.

With the educational reform of 1990 there was a strong movement among professionals to try to change and reshape the dominant masculinity of the activities proposed in the PE curriculum. This movement defends the idea of an equal physical education for everybody, boys and girls, but this change is very slow and exists in declaration more than in practice. The enactment in 1970 of the General Law of Education meant that co-education offered the possibility of a formal equity, since the physical school space and the curriculum were shared among boys and girls. Unfortunately this curriculum represented masculine culture. In the 1990s the new educational system considers the need to educate and shape people equally, with a system of values, behaviours and rules that do not follow a gender hierarchy.

Additionally, González Ravé *et al.* (2004) state that every type of sport currently practiced demands a certain ideal body figure. The idea of a muscular body as synonymous with masculinity is the subject of controversy when such a body is feminine, which leads to the use of pejorative adjectives such as ‘butch’ or the remark ‘she looks like a guy’. Young people used to make comments of this kind because muscular women did not fit typical feminine stereotypes (Paechter, 2001). When developing a PE programme a reflective teacher should take several things into account. First, it is necessary to be able to change the class curriculum and modify socio-cultural viewpoints that are negative for certain groups (Penney, 2002). It is also necessary to maintain certain acceptable standards for every ethnic and religious group, such as the extent to which Muslim girls can freely use their bodies (Young, 1980; Benn, 1996), a problem that Spanish physical education teachers have begun to solve in their schools. However, if PE programmes are adapted to such specific groups, can we achieve the same objectives for the remainder of the group?

Method

This study must be considered as exploratory research. It had the objective of analysing individual differences in the perceptions of masculine and feminine stereotypes in physical education experiences.

Data reported for this study were collected over a 4-month period between February and May 2002. The precise dynamics of this research will be explored another time, but some contextualization is helpful here. Three hundred students, aged 12 to 17 years, participated in this study (see Table 1). The schools included in the study come from a wide range of geographical locations across central and southern Spain and are representative of socio-economic and cultural circumstances in this part of Spain. We employed the research protocol used by Gorely *et al.* (2003) in their research study.

Data were generated through group interviews in class. The total number of interviews was 25. Group interviews were 30–40 minutes in duration and were constructed around a series of visual triggers. These triggers consisted of eight slides showing different body types (divers, male and female bodybuilders, anorexic people, dancers and a female discus thrower). Images were intended to stimulate discussion among the group members, centered on issues identified in the literature as

Table 1. Distribution of students by age and gender

Age (years)	No. of boys	No. of girls
12	25	26
13	30	23
14	27	35
15	35	34
16	24	30
17	6	5

important to the construction of embodied identity among young people, such as body shape and size, attractiveness, gender-appropriate bodies and athletic bodies and gender (Gorely *et al.*, 2003).

School principals' permission was requested. PE teachers were informed about the protocol and how the questions and slides were going to be presented. Once we had authorization, we set a time and a date for the event in each school. We assembled students in a classroom during PE classes and asked them to write the answers to the questionnaire based on their first impression.

We used a 41-question free-answer survey (Appendix 1), used by Gorely *et al.* (2003) in their research study, to ask the students about their preferences for different body types. We were interested in students' opinions about:

- The appearance of the person in the slide.
- Comparison of the person's body and their own body.
- The advantages of looking like the person in the slide.
- Comparison of the different body types.

It is important to stress from the outset that both the research process and the research outcomes were crucially dependent on the nature of existing relationships between PE staff and pupils. The central focus of these questions was to discover how young people made use of particular discursive resources about body shape and size as part of the process of socially constructing femininities and masculinities (Gorely *et al.*, 2003). Data collection, analysis and interpretation of slides were all carried out by the research team.

To address the trustworthiness of our data, we followed the general outline for qualitative data analysis. To begin the process, we organized our data by cycle and sex. We read through the data separately; next, working together, we took turns reading the data aloud and shared our recorded insights. Using these insights and the main research objective as our guide, we segmented and categorized the data.

Within each major category we developed subcategories to further specify the information in each data segment. For example, included among the subcategories for appearance of the person in the slide were reasons, likes and dislikes. We coded data segments under more than one category whenever we deemed more than a single category to be relevant (see Appendix 2).

Results

In order to present the results of this study, we discuss them slide by slide, showing relevant thoughts about the relationships between body shape and size and the social construction of the body, particularly on issues of slenderness, muscularity and physicality. All of these have been of central importance to the construction of feminine and masculine stereotypes.

Figure 1 shows a female diver. The majority of the 12-year-old boys answered that they did not want to look physically like her, either because of her muscularity or



Figure 1. Female diver

because they were satisfied with their own bodies, although 19% of them said they liked some parts of her body, or would like to have her healthy lifestyle.

Most 12- and 13-year-old students liked her muscular body, and they considered her attractive. However, 17% of the 13-year-old boys thought that her body type was the result of too much effort and training. There was an interesting difference between boys and girls: although 40% of boys recognized that they liked her body mainly because of her muscles, girls did not like this feature.

(Throughout this article, numbers rather than names are used to identify young people in the study.) The first impression of most boys and girls aged 12, 13 and 14, upon seeing the diver in Figure 1, was that she seemed in good shape: 'She was muscular and strong' (boy 37). The majority of the 15- and 16-year-old pupils agreed with this description of the diver, whereas only 20% of the 17-year-old pupils used these expressions.

On the other hand, the 13- and 14-year-old boys said they would like to look like the female diver, because of her muscles and strength, and considered her attractive.

However, 20% of them did not want to look like her because they were satisfied with their bodies and because they supposed that a lot of effort would be necessary to have that body. Most girls did not want to look like the female diver because she was too muscular and they thought ‘she looked like a man’ (girl 55).

Some of the 14-year-old students said that they would not like to look like her because she had ‘too much muscle’ (boy 101), while one 17-year-old pupil said ‘I’m satisfied with my body’ (girl 150). If we consider these data with reference to gender, 50% of boys and 70% of girls said they would not like to look physically like the diver because of her excessive muscularity.

When pupils were asked about the female discus thrower’s physical appearance (Figure 2), there were no positive responses; students stated that she looked like a man. In fact, the vast majority of 12- to 14-year-old girls and boys described her as if she were a man, adding that she was ugly, fat, rough, big and robust, despite the fact that she was also muscular and strong. Students commented ‘She looks like a man with so much muscle’ (boy 200) and ‘Her body is like a man’s body, not like a woman’s’ (girl 25). Therefore, the majority did not want to look physically like the female discus thrower on the slide. Phrases that represent the thoughts of 56% of boys and 85% of girls include ‘it is one thing to be a sportswoman and another thing to have a man’s body . . . girls with muscles don’t look good’ (girl 279), and ‘she is deformed and is a mannish woman’ (boy 54).

All agreed that this female discus thrower had this physical appearance because she did a lot of exercise, though a minority (30%) specified that her appearance was due to the strength necessary for her sport. Only one boy and one girl related her physical appearance to the ingestion of chemical substances.

All students considered that the female discus thrower accepted her own body and that her appearance was necessary for her chosen sport. They also agreed that the



Figure 2. Female discus thrower

main advantage of this physical appearance was great strength and freedom from bullying. Students also admitted the disadvantages of her appearance, calling it unpleasant and ugly and suggesting that she could suffer social rejection because she did not have a feminine body.

Students aged from 12 to 17 believed that the male bodybuilder Arnold Schwarzenegger (Figure 3) devoted himself to showing off his body and that he must work out a lot in the gymnasium to have this kind of body. When they described his body, 12- to 17-year-old students stated that he was too muscular, ugly and horrible and that he looked deformed. All students agreed that the bodybuilder did not have a good physical appearance. The majority of boys considered that this kind of body could generate social rejection. Meanwhile, girls said that his muscular build meant 'he couldn't think' (girl 70). However, all students agreed that this appearance was the result of hard workouts and exercise in the gym.

None of the students wanted to look like the male bodybuilder because they did not like his physical appearance at all: 'he has too many muscles' (girl 145) or 'his body is not accepted in our society' (girl 99). There were only two 13-year-old boys who wanted to look like him but they did not give any reason explaining why.



Figure 3. Male bodybuilder

Nevertheless, these students believed that this male bodybuilder was happy with his body: 'the majority of girls would kiss him' (boy 33), 'I thought he looked happy in the photo' (girl 26), 'if he is like that it's because he must be happy with himself' (boy 27), 'with a body like that it's possible to be happy' (girl 107).

The majority of respondents concurred that the main advantage of his appearance was great strength and, like the discus thrower, freedom from bullying, but 30% of 12-year-old boys and 20% of 12-year-old girls did not find anything positive in his appearance. On the other hand, the negative consequences of his appearance were identified as being too strong and having too many muscles (due to the ingestion of hormones), having to train so much or having a horrible physical appearance.

With regard to the future of the bodybuilder's physical appearance, students thought that it would be unpleasant, ruined, ugly or deformed, that his muscles would become weak and he could become fat: 'if he stops training he will suffer an enormous physical change'. Only 10% of boys and 16% of girls thought that his appearance would not change, saying: 'in a few years he is going to die' and 'if he still takes creatine, he will look as he does now; but if he doesn't, he will be flabby'.

All groups of students accepted that the female bodybuilder (Figure 4) had to train very hard to attain and maintain her appearance. Almost none of the students wanted to look like her because they did not like her physical appearance, commenting that she had too many muscles, her body was disgusting or she looked like a man.

The majority of the 12-, 13- and 14-year-old pupils did not like her physical appearance, because she did not appear feminine and looked unpleasant and ugly, while 20% of 13-year-old girls considered her body nice and not too exaggerated.

The majority of girls aged 12 to 17 (80%) considered her strength and agility an advantage. Regarding the disadvantages of her physical appearance, 12-year-old girls agreed that the female bodybuilder had an ugly body, 13-year-olds agreed that she looked like a man, and 14-year-old girls expressed concern about social rejection.

Pupils aged 12 and 13 did not acknowledge any social advantages to her physical appearance, and manifested the existence of a disadvantage in having an ugly body. Nevertheless, the majority of 14-year-old boys perceived her body to be strong and very agile, but on the other hand, 21% of them thought that she would not have any advantages from her physical appearance. Others believed that her physical appearance was important for her job.

The great majority of the students thought that the female bodybuilder's body was better than the female discus thrower's, because it was less exaggerated and she looked like a woman. Forty-three percent of 14-year-old boys didn't declare any differences between them. Students considered that the female bodybuilder was less muscular and more attractive. However, 28% of 14-year-old girls believed that both bodies were the same.

The majority of 15-, 16- and 17-year-old pupils concluded that her appearance had no advantages. Even so, 15% of 15-year-old pupils considered it an advantage to be strong and agile; whereas 16-year-old pupils recognized that the bodybuilder had the ability to defend herself. As with the younger students, the main disadvantage noted was possible social rejection based on appearance.

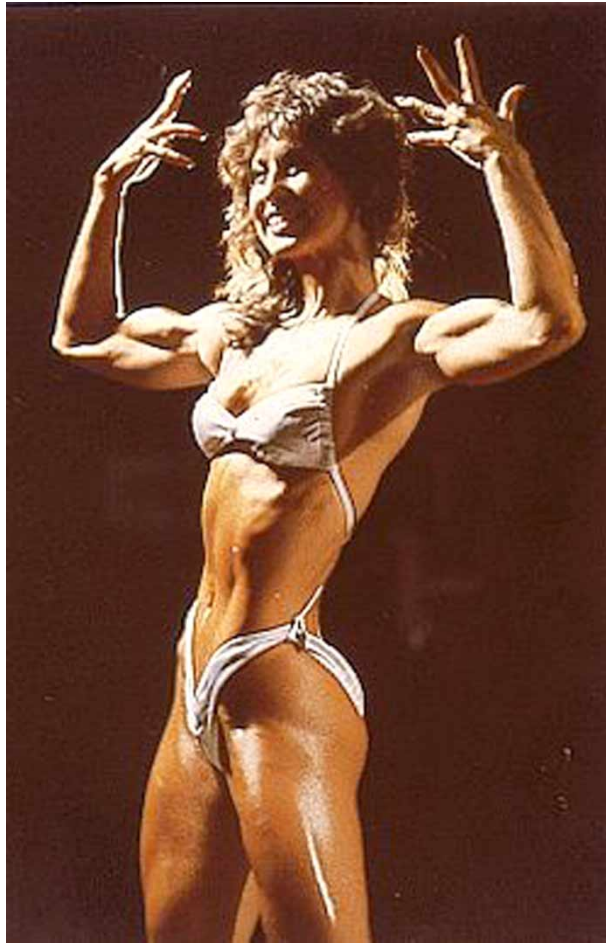


Figure 4. Female bodybuilder

Nevertheless, there were two boys in the 15–17 age group who said that they would like to look like her ‘because she is fit and strong’ (boy 88), and 28% of 15- to 17-year-old pupils considered her body nice and not too exaggerated.

Figure 5 produced different opinions about dancers: 42% of 12-year-old boys did not like them, whereas 37% of them believed that the dancers had good bodies. The majority of girls aged 12 agreed that they had good bodies, but the rest did not like either the men or the women and suspected that both could be homosexual. Only two girls aged 12 said that they would feel bad if they were a dancer.

On the other hand, 40% of 13-year-old boys believed that the dancers had a better physical appearance than the people in the previous slides, whereas another 40% thought that they were ‘homosexual’ (boy 89), ‘pretentious’ (boy 11) or ‘posh’ (boy 9).



Figure 5. Male and female dancers

The majority of girls aged 13 and 14 affirmed that the dancers had good bodies but echoed the view that they were ‘just dancers’, like any other person who might dance for entertainment: ‘These bodies are normal; the other ones didn’t look like people’ (girl 57).

Finally, 36% of 14-year-old boys said that the dancers had good bodies, and 20% felt that they had a good physical appearance. However, 21% of 14-year-old boys thought that the dancers were just like any other people, and did not view them as athletes. Only a minority of students did not like them. It was curious that nobody identified themselves with the dancers, except for one 14-year-old girl who said that dancers had good bodies, and three girls aged 13 and 14, because they liked to dance.

On the other hand, 30% and 8% of 13- to 14-year-old and 15- to 17-year-old girls, respectively, said they would feel ashamed or ridiculous if they were dancers. Only 8% of 15- to 17-year-old girls commented that they did not like the shape of the dancers' bodies.

The 15- to 17-year-old pupils agreed with their younger counterparts. Their first impression was that dancers' bodies were 'good and normal' (girl 8), and 20% of 17-year-olds thought that they had a better physical appearance than other athletes. Regarding the first impression upon viewing this slide before questioning, 18% of the boys and 20% of the girls reacted in a positive way and said they would not mind looking like dancers. Those students who reacted in a negative way (40% of the boys and 30% of the girls) said that they did not like the dancers' bodies, but 8% of boys and 37% of girls simply commented that the people on the slide were dancing and did not express anything about the dancers' bodies. The majority of boys said they would feel bad and ridiculous if they had to be dancers, and only 28% of them felt good about dancing (that is, ballet).

All students shared the same opinion about the anorexic twins in Figure 6, describing them as very thin, skeletal, having a repulsive appearance, ugly, disgusting, sorrowful, bony, scary, looking like dead men or ill. They gave several reasons for their condition: first because they did not eat, secondly because they felt and saw themselves as fat, and thirdly because they usually vomited what they ate.

Twenty percent of 12-year-old girls believed that the problem resided in a serious disease which drove them to believe that food was bad. The main opinion among some 13-year-old boys was that anorexia was caused by the bad influence of significant peer pressure.

All students admitted that they would feel bad if they had this appearance, and some of them added that they would feel disgusting, ugly and extremely thin. Pupils among the 15- and 16-year-olds also noted health concerns related to this condition and some 17-year-olds stated that they would be depressed and ashamed if they were anorexic.

All of them thought that it would be impossible for the anorexic twins to like their own bodies, because they were ugly and because anorexic people continued to see themselves as fat, though 25% of the students believed that anorexic people like their bodies because they decide to remain like that, saying 'if they are like that it is because they want to' and 'to be like that it is necessary to stop eating and to vomit'.

Asked what they would do if their best friends were anorexic, almost all said they would tell them that food was not bad, and if they did not eat, they would die. 'I would help her to eat and I would tell her that she is pretty!' and 'I will always be her friend' were some of the comments made by the students. Furthermore, a minority of the students said they would have advised anorexic friends to go to a doctor or psychologist in order to remedy their disease.

The vast majority of students explained that the person in Figure 7 was too muscular, ugly and very strong. Twenty percent of 13- and 17-year-old boys said that she had done too much gymnastics and exercise, and another 20% did not like her because she was 'disgusting'. Some 13-year-old girls asserted that she looked like a



Figure 6. Anorexic twins

man. There were two different opinions about Figure 7 among the 12- to 16-year-olds: half the students said that she was very muscular and looked like a man, and the other half described her as ugly and horrifying: ‘[she has] the body of an excessively strong man’, ‘Arnold Schwarzenegger’ (girl 8), ‘Conan’s wife’ (boy 12), and ‘addicted to exercise’ (girl 300).



Figure 7. Female weightlifter reflected in a mirror

Generally, no student expressed these opinions about themselves, although a very small percentage admitted that they had thought this about a partner or friend who was too muscular, ugly or horrible. Almost all of them said they would advise the person in Figure 7 not to do so much weight training and to improve her body, although 23% of students said they would advise her to continue with her work if she liked it.

After viewing all the slides mentioned above, students were shown the photo of the female diver (Figure 1) a second time. Their opinions changed somewhat from the first viewing. The great majority of pupils commented that she was the most 'usual' sportswoman and thought that her physical appearance was not as exaggerated as the others.

There were differences of opinion about whether students would like to look like her. Fifty percent of 12-year-old boys and 60% of 13-year-old boys said they would like to look like her, but pupils aged 14 did not feel that way. Fifty percent of girls of all ages wanted to be like her because they liked her body, especially after having

observed the other athletes, but the other half did not want to look like her. The majority of 12- to 14-year-old pupils changed their minds about the diver, though 30% did not. Most students decided the diver had a nice appearance and thought the other athletes looked worse.

Fifty-four percent of 15-year-old pupils changed their opinion because on a second viewing they saw the diver as less muscular than on their first impression. Sixty percent of the 16-year-old pupils agreed that the other athletes looked worse. But 30% percent of the 17-year-olds did not change their opinion because they agreed that the diver was equal to or better-looking than the others. On the other hand, 50% of 15- and 16-year-old pupils of both genders said they would not like to look like her, writing that she was muscular, whereas 17-year-old students said that they liked her body.

Discussion

The results of our Spanish study are broadly consistent with Gorely *et al.*'s results (2003) using a sample of English children. However, it is important to add that there are really two processes going on here. The first is that young people claim to have a liberal view of body shape: individuals can have whatever shape they want, at least in theory, due to the fact that the same body image is seen as positive and as negative by different students of the same age, as Gorely *et al.* (2003) found. Working against this view, however, is a second process. Young people's views are shaped by enduring and extremely powerful conventional notions about the range of body shapes and sizes that might be considered appropriately feminine and masculine (Hickey *et al.*, 1998; Bramham, 2003). These views are clearly activated when young people consider how they themselves would like to be and to look. The existence of these two apparently contradictory processes is important for education, since they suggest that it may be possible to assist young people in having a broader view of gender-appropriate body shapes and sport. However, helping them to do so may be very difficult, especially in the short term. As we saw, the slides of muscular feminine bodies were rejected by pupils, regardless of their age and gender. A social rejection exists among students of those masculine attributes that appear in women as muscular mass. The socially accepted feminine figure does not possess masculine attributes such as a muscular body.

On the other hand, the image of an excessively muscular man was not liked either. Although the majority of pupils thought that looking like this had its advantages, such as great strength, none of the male or female pupils wanted to look like him. The research on physical education and gender (Bramham, 2003; Gorely *et al.*, 2003; Brown & Evans, 2004) confirms this thought.

The results of this study indicate that a 'social construction' of the body exists, based on a masculine and a feminine pattern. As demonstrated in these results, teenagers like the body stereotypes connected with the figure of a female

diver, although they do not want to look like her because of her muscles and the 'suffering' implied by her training. The female bodybuilder and the female discus thrower are the most rejected stereotypes, owing to their similarities to men's bodies, which are said to be 'muscular and ugly'. We noted that hypermuscularity, particularly when this was for display rather than use, presented one of several contradictions within this conventional construction of masculinity.

Teenagers rejected the dancers' bodies, but not because they were brawny, as occurred with the bodybuilders. The 12- and 13-year-old male pupils liked the body type of the dancers, but dancing itself was rejected as feminine. Nevertheless the 14- to 17-year-old pupils did not think it was so bad. In this context it can be established that the content in PE is sexist, since the rejection is of the activity and not the body stereotype. All students agreed that the anorexic stereotype was so thin that it was as unpleasant as the excessively muscled body; some even thought of it as a ill body.

Therefore, one can conclude that a body stereotype determines the way men and women perform physical activities. The content of PE can be sexist if it is not taught adequately, as in the example of the dancers, or if it generates rejection of participation by girls because they believe it will increase their muscle mass, making them socially unacceptable. Inadequate teaching can also reproduce masculine stereotypes (cult of muscularity) and feminine stereotypes (cult of thinness), leading men and women to practice certain sports to reproduce the values related to their gender. As a result, it is necessary to analyse the importance of gender-focused PE.

In addition, it is also important to analyse how sports contribute to gender stereotypes, especially the idea that muscular bodies are masculine and not feminine (Oliver & Lalik, 2004), which coincides with our results (Connell, 1996; Hickey *et al.*, 1998). These stereotypes are based on the connections young people make between body shape and size, gender and physical activity, so socially constructed 'gender appropriateness' in students can mediate their motivation in learning physical activities (Young, 1980; Shen *et al.*, 2003), according to our study. The results showed that physical educators need to pay more attention to how adolescent girls' cultural perspectives contribute to their sense of self and to provide girls with many opportunities to notice and critique discursive practices that shape embodied subjectivity and desire, according to Oliver and Lalik (2004), because girls reject the practice of any physical activity that increases their muscle mass. We have also suggested that particular sports and other physical activities such as dance are themselves gender-differentiated, and that the physical value they offer girls is perceived to have little exchange value outside the field of physical activity (Wright, 1996; Shen *et al.*, 2003). Finally, it is important to recognize the role of PE teachers as direct promoters of physical activity and sport, as Brown and Evans (2004) proposed in relation to the elimination of sexist connotations of body size and shape.

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Appendix 1. Group interviews

1. Slide of female diver (Figure 1).
 - What is your first impression upon seeing this picture?
 - How do you feel about the way she looks?
 - Would you like to look like that? Why/why not?
 - Do you think that there are any good or bad points about looking this way?

2. Slide of female discus thrower (Figure 2).
 - How do you feel about the way this woman looks?
 - What sort of words would you use to describe her?
 - Do you wish that you looked like this? Why/why not?
 - Why do you think she looks this way?
 - Do you think that she likes the way her body looks?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of looking like this?

3. Slide of male bodybuilder (Figure 3).
 - Do you recognize this person?
 - What sort of words would you use to describe him?
 - Do you think he looks good? Why/why not?
 - Why do you think he looks this way?
 - Would you like to look like this? Why/why not?
 - Do you think he is happy with the way his body looks? Why/why not?
 - What are the good and bad points about looking this way?
 - Do you know what he looks like now?

4. Slide of female bodybuilder (Figure 4).
 - How do you feel about the way this woman looks?
 - Why do you think she looks this way?
 - Would you like to look like this? Why/why not?
 - Do you feel differently towards this picture compared to the one of the female discus thrower?
 - Do you feel differently towards this picture compared to the one of Arnie (i.e. Figure 3)?
 - Are there any advantages or disadvantages of looking like this?

5. Slide of male and female dancers (Figure 5).
 - What is your first reaction to this slide?
 - Why do you think you reacted in this way?
 - How does this picture make you feel?
 - Imagine it was you in the picture; how would you feel?
6. Slide of anorexic twins (Figure 6).
 - What words would you use to describe the way these sisters look?
 - How do you think they came to look like this?
 - How would you feel if you looked like this?
 - Do you think they like their bodies? Why/why not?
 - If this was your best friend, what would you say to her/him?
7. Slide of girl lifting a weight (Figure 7).
 - Can you explain this picture?
 - How does it make you feel?
 - Do you/have you ever felt this way about yourself?
 - Do you think that any of your friends feel this way about themselves?
 - What advice would you give to the girl in the picture?
8. Slide of female diver (Figure 1 repeated).
 - How do you feel about this picture now that you have seen these other slides?
 - Have your feelings towards this picture changed in any way?
 - Why do you think this is the case?
 - Would you like to look like this?

Appendix 2. Subcategories of first question about female diver

What is your first impression upon seeing this picture?

- I don't like it.
 - Athletic.
 - Artificial.
 - She's terribly plain.
- I like it.
 - Athletic.
 - Desirable.
- She is brawny and strong.
- She does it to keep fit.
- Other.