

HERITABILITY OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, DIETARY HABITS AND SLEEP PATTERNS IN A FAMILY-BASED SAMPLE OF SPANISH ROMA INDIVIDUALS

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The influence of genetic factors on the variation of self-reported physical in/activity, dietary habits and sleep patterns was evaluated in 50 large and extended pedigrees, including 372 Roma individuals (147 males and 225 females) living in the Greater Bilbao (Spain). Information characterizing environmental variables (physical in/activity, dietary habits and sleep patterns) was obtained by personal interview using a standardized questionnaire. Univariate quantitative genetic analyses were conducted employing the SOLAR computer program. After accounting for significant covariates effects, heritability estimates were, in general, significant ($p < 0.01$), with moderate values ranging from 0.20–0.39. Practice of sports, walking activity and time spent eating the main meal of the day were the variables most influenced by additive genetic effects, showing heritability estimates of 0.39, 0.37 and 0.35, respectively. In conclusion, evidence of a slight but significant genetic contribution on variation of physical in/activity, sleep patterns and dietary habits has been found in this Spanish Roma population.

Key words: *family, heritability, genetics, environment, exercise*

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ADOLESCENCE NOW AND BEFORE: INTERACTIONS BETWEEN THE PSYCHOBIOLOGICAL AND THE SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS IN THE CHANGED CONDITIONS OF GROWING UP

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The research of and observations related to adolescence often lead to partly contradictory results. It may at times seem that adolescence has changed in the recent decades, and at other times that it has remained the same (Briggs, 2008). Research however indicates to the fact that particular parameters in relation to adolescence have indeed changed: e.g. adolescence lasts longer and is by far more diverse than described in the earlier theories of adolescence. The socio-cultural changes have most probably made the term “identity” – as defined by the earlier theoreticians, for instance Erik Erikson – questionable. Identity seems to be a multi-fold and complex concept, rather difficult to comprehend; hence, some authors (e.g. Cahn 1998; Briggs 2008) suggest it is necessary to tackle the idea of “subjectivism” or “subjectivation” (or “becoming subject”) more thoroughly. Since the “post-traditional” identity is more open and changeable, it seems as if an individual becomes a continued project of oneself (Thomson et al., 2004). The tension between the more narcissistic goals and those directed toward interrelation indicate to conflicts that potentially occur in more markedly individualised societies – unlike, if compared with, the situation in the earlier, more traditional societies, such as were present for a long time in technologically less developed countries (e.g. many former socialist countries of the Eastern Europe). A revision of the concept of narcissism might lead to a better understanding of growing up and development in and under changed socio-cultural conditions that strengthen the inclination towards the occurrence of more destructive and self-destructive behaviour (Waddell, 2006).

Key words: *adolescence, growth and development, psychobiological and the socio-cultural factors*

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