

ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN MUSCLE DYSMORPHIA, EATING DISORDERS, NARCISSISTIC TRAITS, AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIORS IN GYM-GOERS

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BACKGROUND AND AIM: Muscle dysmorphia (MD), a subtype of body dysmorphic disorder, is prevalent among gym-goers and often coexists with psychological constructs such as eating disorders, narcissistic traits, and antisocial behaviors. This study aims to explore the interrelationships between these constructs in gym-goers in Turkey to identify predictive factors of MD.

METHODS: This cross-sectional study included 418 gym-goers (81.1% male) aged 18–45, recruited from fitness centers in Turkey. Data were collected using the Muscle Dysmorphic Disorder Inventory (MDDI), Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire (EDE-Q), Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI), and Antisocial Personality Questionnaire (APQ). Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, and multiple regression to examine predictors of MD symptoms. Ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of İstanbul Nişantaşı University (Approval Number: 2024/02).

RESULTS: Participants demonstrated moderate levels of MD ($M=50.12$, $SD = 10.74$), eating disorder symptoms ($M = 49.83$,

$SD=11.48$), narcissistic traits ($M = 50.02$, $SD=10.81$), and antisocial behaviors ($M = 50.39$, $SD= 11.58$). MD symptoms were significantly correlated with eating disorders ($r = 0.681$, $p < .001$), narcissistic traits ($r = 0.772$, $p < .001$), and antisocial behaviors ($r = 0.681$, $p < .001$). Regression analysis revealed that narcissistic traits ($\beta = 0.60$, $p < .001$), eating disorders ($\beta = 0.55$, $p < .001$), and antisocial behaviors ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < .001$) significantly predicted MD symptoms.

CONCLUSIONS: The findings highlight the intricate connections between MD, eating disorders, narcissistic traits, and antisocial behaviors in gym-goers. Integrated psychological interventions are essential to address these co-occurring conditions, emphasizing the need for comprehensive assessments and targeted treatments.

Keywords: Muscle dysmorphia, eating disorders, narcissistic personality traits, antisocial behaviors, gym-goers