

*Shyness And Its Relationship With School Adjustment  
Among Obese Adolescents In Middle School*

**الخجل وعلاقته بالتكيف المدرسي لدى المراهق البدني في مرحلة التعليم المتوسط**

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Date of Receipt: 14/01/2025

Date of Acceptance: 03/11/2025

Date of Publication: 20/12/2025

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**ملخص:**

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى الكشف عن مستوى كل من الخجل والتكيف المدرسي لدى المراهق البدني في مرحلة التعليم المتوسط، إضافة إلى محاولة الكشف عن مدى وجود علاقة بين كل من الخجل والتكيف المدرسي لدى أفراد عينة الدراسة، ولتحقيق أهداف البحث تم تطبيق مقياس الخجل ومقياس التكيف المدرسي على عينة الدراسة قوامها 53 تلميذا وتلميذة في مرحلة التعليم المتوسط، واستخدمنا المنهج الوصفي الارتباطي الملائم وأهداف الدراسة، وبعد تحليل النتائج توصلنا إلى أن التلاميذ البدني في مرحلة التعليم المتوسط لديهم مستوى خجل مرتفع، كما أن مستوى التكيف المدرسي لدى عينة الدراسة منخفض، وهناك علاقة ارتباطية بين الخجل والتكيف المدرسي لدى التلاميذ البدني في مرحلة التعليم المتوسط.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:**

الخجل، التكيف المدرسي، التلميذ في مرحلة التعليم المتوسط.

**Abstract:**

The current study aimed to examine the levels of both shyness and school adjustment among obese adolescents in the middle school stage, in addition to investigating the existence of a relationship between shyness and school adjustment among the study sample. To achieve the research objectives, a shyness scale and a school adjustment scale were applied to a sample of 53 male and female middle school students. The descriptive correlational method, appropriate for the study objectives, was used.

After analyzing the results, it was found that obese middle school students exhibit a high level of shyness. Furthermore, the level of school adjustment among the study sample was low, and a significant correlation was found between shyness and school adjustment among obese middle school students.

**Keywords:**

Shyness, school adjustment, middle school student.

## **Introduction:**

Body image is extremely important in children at the beginning of adolescence as they begin to care about their appearance, choose appropriate clothing, and follow fashion trends to align with the developments happening in their society. At this age, the child starts to interact with the world through their body, spending long periods in front of the mirror to improve their appearance and gain the appreciation and approval of others regarding their body, which they associate with beauty and good grooming.

In some cases, students at the beginning of adolescence experience physical changes associated with this stage that shake their self-confidence. They feel that their relationship with others may be damaged as soon as any physical abnormality appears, and they seek quick and effective solutions to address the issue. One of these abnormalities is obesity, which is widely prevalent among adolescents, both males and females.

Modern technological innovations have surpassed our physiological adaptation abilities, as they have entered our daily lives extremely fast. All the developments that have occurred in our lives in recent years, such as fast food, modern transportation means, time- and energy-saving devices, televisions, computers, phones, and all new technologies that spare us from exerting any physical effort, have evolved so rapidly that we have not been able to keep up with them or adapt our various physiological aspects to them to prevent the damage they may cause, such as obesity and associated diseases.

Therefore, it can be said that obesity in students can cause many psychological problems, including anxiety and fear. The obese student often feels anxious and fearful at all times, even if they try to hide this feeling by showing indifference and a lack of concern for others. This person constantly feels wrong and that their behavior threatens their health and life. However, they feel powerless to control their weight, which fosters feelings of inferiority, a tendency to withdraw from family members, avoid social occasions, and isolate themselves. Additionally, they may experience a lack of self-confidence and self-acceptance due to dissatisfaction with their weight, leading to decreased effectiveness and feelings of inadequacy.

## **1- Research Problem:**

Adolescence is considered the most challenging period in a person's life. It is a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood during which various physiological, social, and psychological changes occur. Adolescents enter an identity crisis in search of themselves, which is unstable for them due to the way those around them treat them—sometimes as children and other times as adults.

The period of adolescence varies from one individual to another, from one geographic environment to another, and from one lineage to another. It also differs depending on the cultural patterns in which the adolescent is raised. In a primitive society, adolescence differs from that in a civilized society. Similarly, it differs between urban and rural communities. It also varies between a conservative society that imposes many restrictions and constraints on the adolescent's activities and a free society that provides the adolescent with opportunities for work, activity, and the fulfillment of various needs and motives.

Moreover, the adolescent stage is not entirely independent; it is influenced by the experiences the child went through in the previous stage, and growth is a continuous and interconnected process. The problems faced by adolescents are not limited to those that appear directly. Many long-term issues create a society with many educational, psychological, moral, and health-related flaws. Adolescents face a variety of problems, including psychological disorders affecting 40% of them, while 15% of adolescents face the risk of being overweight. Additionally, 30% of them are subjected to verbal abuse. Another issue is drug addiction, which is widespread in various places. (Daad Al-Sheikh, 2006. P68)

These serious problems cannot be underestimated due to their numerous consequences. In addition, there is the growing problem of addiction to the internet and video games, which also has significant psychological, health, and social repercussions. It is important to note that statistics from the World Health Organization confirm that traffic accidents are the leading cause of death among adolescents. Depression and suicide rank second as causes of death among adolescents aged 15 to 19 in the United States. Smoking also emerges as a major issue faced by adolescents, followed by obesity, which is also considered a serious problem. (Mazet (PH) et Houzel).

Since the first changes during adolescence are at the physical level, the adolescent's body image is central to all the psychological problems during this stage. While adolescents contemplate their bodies and seek reassurance about how well their physical reality matches the ideal body image, they also compare their bodies with the bodies of others. When a discrepancy occurs between the real and ideal body image, it can lead to the development of personal disorders, including cognitive, behavioral, and emotional disorders. (Alaa El-Din Kafafi and Maysa Ahmed Al-Nayal, 1997, p 38)

Due to the emotional sensitivity that characterizes this stage, especially regarding self-image (physical and social), the adolescent becomes absorbed in focusing on their body. This is reflected in behaviors such as frequently looking in the mirror and becoming preoccupied with changes in their body. They often seek the opinions of others about themselves, which can have negative effects if their evaluations are unfavorable.

Body image is an important psychological aspect for an individual, and its negative impact can lead to a state of maladjustment or imbalance. It is considered a mental and cognitive image that an individual forms of their body, whether in terms of its external appearance or its internal components and different organs, as well as their ability to use these organs and demonstrate their efficiency. This is accompanied by positive or negative emotions and attitudes toward the mental image of the body.

(Zeinab Mahmoud Shuqair,2005)

Algeria, like many countries around the world, has a large adolescent population that faces psychological and social challenges associated with the growth phase and the transition from childhood to adulthood. The cultural environment significantly influences how they perceive themselves and their body image. According to local studies, the prevalence of obesity among children and adolescents in Algeria has increased notably in recent years due to unhealthy eating habits and a lack of physical activity. Data from the Algerian Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization indicate that the obesity rate among Algerian adolescents has exceeded 18%, which increases the likelihood of them facing many psychological issues, such as introversion and isolation, in addition to lowered self-esteem.

Furthermore, cultural factors impose additional constraints on body image among adolescents, especially in rural and conservative societies, where traditions play an important role in defining standards of beauty and social acceptance. It is observed that girls in Algeria are more influenced by society's perception of their external appearance, with increasing pressure on them to maintain an ideal body image, which may lead to psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, and eating disorders.

In this context, it is found that children who suffer from overweight or obesity in middle schools are sometimes subjected to verbal bullying, which may affect their academic performance and their relationship with the school environment. Additionally, the lack of psychological support programs in our schools exacerbates the problem, as many adolescents struggle to cope with the physical changes they undergo during this stage.

A survey published on May 17, 2017, revealed that obesity among children and adolescents continues to rise in many parts of Europe, with estimates suggesting that one in three people suffers from overweight or obesity. According to the study published by the European Office of the World Health Organization in Copenhagen, physical inactivity, poor eating habits, and economic factors are the main reasons for the increase in obesity rates. The study noted that, in 16 out of 27 countries included in the study between 2002 and 2014, obesity prevalence increased, particularly in Eastern Europe. Exceptions were found among 13-year-old boys in Norway and 11-year-old girls in Spain. Health problems associated with obesity include increased risks of type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease. The study also explained that lack of physical activity and a "sedentary lifestyle," especially sitting, watching television, playing video games, browsing the internet, or doing other activities on a computer, was the second most common cause of obesity among adolescents. (Nawal Mohamed Atiya, 2001)

When an adolescent's weight is visible, the first thing they may suffer from is a psychological crisis due to the excessive sensitivity at this age, on the one hand, and the harsh comments, sarcastic jokes, and suspicious glances from others, on the other hand. Overweight is widely observed among adolescents in both poor and rich countries. Modern technologies, fast food, new transportation means, and a sedentary lifestyle have contributed to weight gain among adolescents, leading to obesity, which causes many health problems.

In a study conducted by researchers from the Sahlgrenska Academy in Sweden, the results showed that those who suffer from excess weight during adolescence are more likely to experience a stroke in the future. The study included 3,800 men whose cases were documented by the school clinic and records related to weight and height. After comparing the body mass index at the age of eight and then at twenty to determine the impact of changes (Alaa El-Din Kafafi and Maysa Ahmed Al-Nayal).

From a psychological perspective, adolescents suffering from obesity tend to withdraw from their peers for fear of rejection, experiencing anxiety that may turn into depression. They feel that they are always the subject of attention and ridicule, which leads them to try to hide the flaws of their obesity and body. They feel embarrassed and ashamed to appear in front of others, and they suffer from an inability to act freely, wear swimsuits without hesitation, or interact with others without restraint.

This causes a lack of self-confidence, social shyness, a tendency to be overly concerned with the opinions of others, self-deprecation, self-blame, and feelings of guilt, leading to psychological problems and complications.

This situation can affect their relationship with peers, teachers, and possibly with the school. Based on these factors, the importance of studying the relationship between shyness and school adjustment among adolescents suffering from obesity in Algeria becomes evident to gain a deeper understanding of how this phenomenon impacts their psychological and social development. Therefore, we raised the following questions:

- What is the level of shyness among obese students in middle school?
- What is the level of school adjustment among obese students in middle school?
- Is there a correlation between shyness and school adjustment among obese students in middle school?

## **2- Research Hypotheses:**

- The level of shyness is high among obese students in middle school.
- The level of school adjustment is low among obese students in middle school.
- There is a correlation between shyness and school adjustment among obese students in middle school.

### 3- Research Objectives:

- To determine the level of shyness among obese students in middle school.
- To determine the level of school adjustment among obese students in middle school.
- To explore the relationship between shyness and school adjustment among obese students in middle school.

### 4- Study Terminology:

- **Shyness:**

Hamdi and Dawood (1998) define shyness as a problem related to a lack of feeling secure, describing children who have low self-confidence and are overwhelmed by feelings of fear and anxiety (Mustafa Nouri Al-Qamash and Khalil Abdul Rahman Al-Maayta, 2009, p 223)

It is also defined as a complex human emotion that involves a negative sense of self, inferiority, and deficiency. People with this trait find it difficult to focus on what is happening around them. As a result, they become unable to form relationships with most people around them, such as friendships and collegial relationships. Therefore, the shy person often feels very lonely as their internal fear accumulates, making it difficult to ask important questions or inquire for fear of rejection. Fear, hesitation, tension, and similar traits clearly indicate that fear has fully taken hold of the person. (Zeinab Mahmoud Shuqair, 2005, p 82)

Shyness can be defined as an emotional state in which an individual experiences tension, anxiety, and confusion during social interactions. It is characterized by withdrawal from social communication with others, feelings of inferiority, and low self-confidence in unfamiliar social situations.

- **Operational Definition:**

Shyness is a form of fear characterized by disruption when an obese student in middle school interacts with others. It is always spread through people and is defined as a type of social anxiety, which is the level a student with obesity scores on the shyness scale developed by Hassan Al-Durini (1981).

- **Adaptation:**

Adaptation refers to a state of harmony, satisfaction, and contentment between an individual and themselves and between the individual and the social and physical environment in which they live. It leads to feelings of happiness, contentment, and balance, free from physical, mental, and emotional disorders, as well as conflicts, tensions, crises, doubts, and problems.

- **School Adjustment:**

School adjustment refers to the ability of the learner to adapt and align with the educational environment, including the various curricula and subjects, teachers, peers, etc. If the educational environment is generally aligned with their interests, desires, and attitudes, the student feels satisfaction, comfort, acceptance, and stability through give-and-take interactions with its members and social interaction, as well as self-esteem, respect, and self-expression in various academic fields (Nawal Mohamed Atiya, 2001, p23) .

Modern educational views state that school adjustment integrates the student into the school group to become a living and active member. This integration helps the student achieve self-realization physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally, allowing them to take their place alongside other members of the group. It ultimately enables the development of their abilities and talents to the greatest possible extent and flourishes their personality to the furthest limit (Ahmed Jamal Saqr, p 47) .

School adjustment is defined as the success of an individual in the educational institution, achieving normal cognitive and social growth, as well as adequate academic achievement and resolving academic problems such as poor academic performance (Amani Mohamed Nasser,2004).

- **Operationally:**

School adjustment refers to the adaptation of obese adolescents in middle school to their school environment. This is expressed by the score obtained by the obese student on the Youngman School Adjustment Scale (1979).

- **Obesity:**

According to the World Health Organization, "obesity" is the abnormal or excessive accumulation of fat in the body that harms individual health. Overweight is a condition in which the body fat percentage exceeds 10%, while obesity is a condition in which the body fat percentage reaches 35% or more (World Health Organization, 2015).

Obesity in children and adolescents is a medical condition characterized by excess weight due to an increase in fat tissue, which is distributed in the body areas where fat tends to accumulate. (Herve Benony & all, 2008).

An individual is considered overweight if their Body Mass Index (BMI) is 35 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or higher and is considered obese (World Health Organization, 2003).

## ➤ Field Study:

**1. Method Used:** To achieve the study's objectives, the correlational descriptive method is considered the most suitable for this type of research, as it focuses on describing phenomena, estimating their extent of occurrence, and understanding the relationships between different phenomena.

Through this descriptive study, we aim to describe and assess the level of shyness and school adjustment among middle school students and explore the existence of a relationship between the levels of shyness and school adjustment among the sample members.

**2. Field of Study:** The scale was applied in a group of middle schools in El Affroun, located in the Blida Province, at the beginning of October 2024.

**3. Sample of the Study:** Our study sample consisted of 53 male and female middle school students selected intentionally. The selection criterion was that the students should exhibit excessive obesity, which leads to difficulty in movement and makes them appear visibly larger and heavier than their peers. Their ages ranged from 11 to 14.

## 5. Study Tools

### 5.1 Shyness Scale:

The study utilized the Shyness Scale developed by Hussein El-Derini (1981), which is suitable for application to both adolescents and adults. The scale can be administered individually or in groups and consists of three parts:

**-Instructions:** The first part provides guidance on how to respond to the items.

**-Rating Scale:** The second part includes a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 7 (highest level of shyness) to 1 (lowest level of shyness), representing the individual's self-assessment of their level of shyness.

**-Items:** The third part comprises 36 items that measure shyness.

The scale includes both positive and negative items. Scoring is as follows:

- **Negative Items:** Responses are scored as 3 for "Yes," 2 for "Sometimes," and 1 for "No."
- **Positive Items:** Scoring is reversed, with 1 point for "Yes," 2 points for "Sometimes," and 3 points for "No."

**Positive Items:** 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 15, 25, 30.

**Negative Items:** 1, 2, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36.

The total scores on the scale range from 36 to 108, with higher scores indicating a higher level of shyness and lower scores indicating a lower level.

## 5.2 School Adjustment Scale:

The School Adjustment Scale is based on the Youngman Scale (1979), which was adapted to the Arab environment by Hussein Abdel Aziz El-Derini in 1985. The scale consists of 34 questions distributed across three dimensions, as illustrated in the following table:

**Table 1:** Representation of the dimensions included in the scale.

Dimension	Items	Total
Diligence and Effort	1, 5, 7, 11, 13, 19, 20, 22, 25, 29, 31, 34	12 items
Compliance with the Teacher	2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 26, 28, 32	15 items
Relationship with the Teacher	4, 6, 12, 21, 27, 30, 33	7 items

The scale items are answered by placing a mark (×) in the box that the student deems appropriate, based on the two options: Yes or No. A score of 2 is assigned for a "Yes" response, and a score of 1 is assigned for a "No" response. Accordingly, the total scores on the scale range between 34 and 68 points, with higher scores indicating good academic adjustment and lower scores indicating the opposite.

## 6- Statistical Tools

The SPSS statistical software was used to analyze the data obtained, utilizing the following statistical tools:

- **T-test for One Sample:** This test was used to determine the significance of differences in the levels of shyness and school adjustment among obese students.
- **Pearson Correlation Coefficient:** This test was used to study the relationship between shyness and school adjustment among obese students.

## 7. Discussion of Results Based on Study Hypotheses

### 1- Presentation, Discussion, and Interpretation of the Results of the First Hypothesis:

The first hypothesis states that the level of shyness among obese students is high.

**Table 3: Normal distribution table for the sample**

## Normality Tests

simple	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistiqu es	ddl	Sig.	Statistiques	ddl	Sig.
School adjustment	,076	53	,114	,988	53	,413
shyness	,086	53	,036	,979	53	,076

**Correction of the meaning of Lilliefors**

The table shows that the significance values for both tests "Sig" are greater than 0.05, indicating a normal distribution. Therefore, we chose the one-sample t-test for differences.

To test this hypothesis, we applied the One-Sample T-test to compare the mean scores of the study sample on the shyness scale with the expected average, calculated by multiplying the number of items on the shyness scale by the mean score of the alternatives ( $36 \times 2 = 72$ ).

**Table 3:** Shows the result of applying the One-Sample T-test to compare the mean scores of the study sample on the shyness scale with the expected mean score.

	Sample	Observed Mean	Expected Mean	Difference Between Means	t-value	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Level	Statistical Significance
Shyness	53	89.06	72	17.06	1.93	52	0.05	Significant

The table shows that the observed mean is estimated at 89.06, while the expected (theoretical) mean for the study is 72, which is lower than the observed mean. The difference between the two means is 17.06, a significant difference, indicating discrepancies between the two means. This is confirmed by the calculated t-value of 1.93, with 52 degrees of freedom, which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This confirms the existence of a significant difference between the observed and expected means, thereby supporting the research hypothesis, which states that the level of shyness among obese students is high.

In this regard, Samadoni's study found a difference between male and female adolescents in secondary education in terms of their frequent feelings of shyness. However, it is not considered a problem. Shyness is seen as an undesirable trait due to the feeling of being observed, and factors such as loss of self-confidence, lack of social skills, various types of relationships, and any physical deformity—most commonly obesity—are among the main factors contributing to shyness. The study also found statistically significant differences between groups regarding how they perceive individuals who influence them and trigger their shyness (Al-Zaydi, Ibtisam Awad, 2006)

It is important to note the impact of the cultural and social perspectives in our society on obese adolescents, as physical appearance is considered important. Therefore, obese adolescents suffer from social pressures that may lead to an increased sense of shyness. The stereotypical image of beauty is heavily influenced by cultural values that favor thinness and fitness, which makes obese adolescents feel isolated or uncomfortable. Local media and social customs often reinforce these beauty standards that glorify physical appearances.

Additionally, a lack of self-confidence, social skills, and familial and societal pressures may lead to constant comparisons among adolescents, increasing the likelihood of feelings of shyness.

Thus, our study, along with previous research, indicates that shyness among adolescents with obesity is heightened due to their poor body image. They perceive themselves as non-ideal and very different from their peers, even considering themselves inferior. They also feel ridiculed by others and prefer to withdraw from their peers to avoid hearing criticisms or taunts about their appearance and differences. Furthermore, they feel embarrassed about their bodies as they do not match their age, and in most cases, they prefer to be alone, fearing the reactions of others.

## **2- Presentation, Discussion, and Interpretation of the Results of the Second Hypothesis:**

The second hypothesis states that the level of school adjustment among obese students is low.

To test this hypothesis, we applied the One-Sample T-test to compare the mean scores of the study sample on the school adjustment scale with the expected mean, calculated by multiplying the number of items on the school adjustment scale by the mean score of the alternatives ( $34 \times 1.5 = 51$ ).

**Table 4:** Shows the result of applying the One-Sample T-test to compare the mean scores of the study sample on the school adjustment scale with the expected mean score.

	Sample	Observed Mean	Expected Mean	Difference Between Means	t-value	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Level	Statistical Significance
School Adjustment	53	44.50	51	6.50	5.11	52	0.05	Significant

The table shows that the observed mean is estimated at 44.50, while the expected (theoretical) mean for the study is 51, which is higher than the observed mean. The difference between the two means is 6.50, and while it may appear to be a small difference, it is statistically significant. This is confirmed by the calculated t-value of 5.11, with 52 degrees of freedom, which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This confirms the existence of a significant difference between the observed and expected means, thus supporting the research hypothesis, which indicates that the level of school adjustment among obese students is low.

This result aligns with Al-Kubaisi's (1993) study, which aimed to examine the social and school adjustment of obese students. The study compared students who practiced physical education with those who did not and found that obese students had moderate school adjustment. There were statistically significant differences in school adjustment between obese students who practiced physical education and those who did not, in favor of those who participated in physical education. Obese students did not feel adjusted to school because they felt their body image was distorted (Abdullah Al-Munizil, Suad Al-Abdilal, 1995)

In this context, this result can be interpreted from the perspective that obese students face difficulty in social adjustment due to societal expectations related to the ideal body image. Physical appearance is closely associated with social acceptance in our society. Obese adolescents are often subjected to cultural pressures that impact their self-image. In some social circles, excess weight is seen as undesirable, which enhances feelings of shyness, isolation, and a desire to distance themselves from others.

Therefore, obese adolescent struggles with poor school adjustment due to their fear of others' comments, especially if there are past experiences of ridicule or contempt. This makes them reluctant to interact with their peers and prefer to isolate themselves to avoid any reactions that might hurt their feelings and cause psychological pain. They also feel embarrassed about their appearance due to excess

weight compared to their peers, while their movement is slower, and their activity requires more effort, which leads their peers to prefer not to associate with them, fearing they might be a burden. All of this occurs at the level of their perceptions. However, their peers might like them for who they are, regardless of their appearance or size.

### 3- Presentation, Discussion, and Interpretation of the Results of the Third Hypothesis:

The third hypothesis suggests that there is a correlation between shyness and school adjustment among obese students.

**Table 5:** Shows the result of applying the Pearson Correlation Coefficient to study the relationship between the variables of shyness and school adjustment among obese students.

Variables	Sample	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Shyness	53	-0.82	Significant at 0.01
school adjustment			

The results shown in the table above, based on applying the Shyness and School Adjustment scales to obese students, indicate that the correlation coefficient was calculated at -0.82, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This supports the acceptance of the third hypothesis, which suggests that there is a correlation between shyness and school adjustment among obese students.

This result can be explained by the fact that body image is one of the significant challenges during adolescence, especially in the school environment, where social competition and group pressure often prevail. This pattern of behavior is usually seen as part of our society's culture, which places a high emphasis on ideal beauty standards, typically favoring slimness and fitness. As a result, obese adolescents feel social pressure due to not meeting the socially desired appearance and standards.

Our study showed a correlational relationship between shyness and school adjustment in obese students. The higher the level of shyness, the lower the level of school adjustment. An obese student who experiences frequent shyness is more likely to isolate themselves from their peers, fearing ridicule from classmates. This phenomenon is partly due to prevailing social expectations that place the ideal body

image at the center of societal focus, making obese adolescents feel different from the rest. Additionally, their limited physical activity and slower movement make it difficult for them to adjust to their peers in school, as their peers, typically in adolescence, enjoy excessive energy and activity. Physical activities and social interaction with peers are crucial elements in adolescent life. Therefore, obese students feel excluded from these activities, which require physical fitness they do not possess, deepening their sense of social exclusion and negatively affecting their school adjustment.

The results can also be interpreted through the Self-Determination Theory, which focuses on intrinsic psychological motivations and how they influence individuals' behaviors. According to this theory, individuals have three basic needs that drive their personal growth and psychological health. If these needs are unmet, the adolescent's self-esteem may decrease, particularly if the adolescent is obese. Such students need competence and the ability to accomplish various tasks. However, obese adolescents may feel a lack of physical competence compared to their peers, especially in sports or activities that require movement and physical exertion. This lack of competence may intensify feelings of shyness and negatively affect their ability to adjust to the school environment.

Moreover, adolescents need to establish relationships with others. Still, the presence of an obese adolescent in a school environment characterized by social comparison and group pressure may hinder their ability to form social relationships due to the fear of mockery or criticism. This prevents them from communicating with others, leading to feelings of inferiority, isolation, and a lack of social support, which is essential for social adjustment.

Furthermore, it is crucial for adolescents to feel autonomy and make decisions. However, obese adolescents may feel restricted in their independence due to the prevailing cultural norms about ideal body shape, which excludes excess weight and low physical activity. Additionally, the rejection of participation in sports activities or social interactions further restricts their ability to make decisions that positively impact their academic and personal lives. As a result, feelings of shyness, withdrawal, and isolation may occur, leading to poor adjustment to the school community.

## **8. Conclusion:**

Our study examined the relationship between shyness and school adjustment in obese middle school students. To achieve this, we used the Shyness Scale and the School Adjustment Scale on a sample of 53 obese male and female students from several middle schools in the Blida province. The following results were obtained:

- Obese middle school students experience a high level of shyness.
- Obese students show a low level of school adjustment.
- A correlational relationship exists between shyness and school adjustment in obese middle school students.

Adolescents undergo numerous changes during this stage, starting with physical changes that they place significant importance on. They spend much of their time enhancing their appearance to be seen as attractive by others. If their physical appearance is disrupted for any reason, such as obesity, obese adolescents experience significant shyness due to their excess weight, limited activity, and slow movement. They fear the reactions of others and the potential for criticism or harmful labels, which affects their self-esteem and leads them to prefer isolation from their peers, reflecting poor school adjustment.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that meeting the basic needs of obese adolescents may be the key to improving their adjustment in the school environment. Therefore, we conclude this study with the following recommendations:

- Create a school environment that encourages healthy social interaction and equality among all students.
- Integrate obese adolescents into activities that help and contribute to enhancing physical competence without pressuring them to participate in sports that are unsuitable or beyond their abilities.
- Promote a sense of autonomy in obese adolescents by helping them choose activities and exercises that match their capabilities.
- Contribute to spreading a culture of acceptance and respect among society members. Parents must understand their role in supporting their children psychologically and boosting their self-confidence, especially when dealing with obesity.
- Adolescence is a critical stage during which students face several crises, and caregivers must understand how to manage these crises to prevent the risk of psychological disorders that may impact their future.

- Encourage obese students to participate in various sports without a competitive atmosphere. Schools could organize sports programs suitable for all levels of physical abilities to enhance physical activity and self-confidence.
- Provide continuous psychological support for adolescents. Psychologists should play an active role in offering counseling and guiding students who struggle with feelings of shyness and isolation.
- Raise students' awareness of the importance of accepting others regardless of body shape or size. This will help reduce bullying and enhance students' ability to adjust to their school environment.

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