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INFLUENCES OF ALEXITHYMIA AND ASSERTIVENESS IN THE SELF-CONCEPT -  
STUDY OF WOMEN'S SITUATION IN PORTUGAL

R. Lopes

UCP - Enfermagem de Saúde Mental e Psiquiátrica, Escola Superior de Enfermagem de  
Coimbra, Coimbra, Portugal

The self-concept, its importance has been widely investigated in different areas of  
knowledge and involved in numerous clinical situations, and is considered an entity in  
different vulnerable psychopathological disorders in women.

We conducted a study aiming to identify some psychological characteristics that influence  
and / or predictors of self-concept in women, specifically, alexithymia and assertiveness. In  
this study, descriptive, correlational and cross, the instrument of data collection was  
composed of scales (validated in the Portuguese population); Self-concept Clinical Inventory  
(SCCI) Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS20) and Rathus Assertiveness Scale (RAS).

The convenience sample consisted of 104 female students in the Bachelor of Nursing, aged  
between 18 and 35 years, mean age 19,32 years and standard deviation 1,7.

The self-concept varied between 58 and 94 (minimum-maximum), with an mean of 74,06  
and 72,00 of mode.

Correlational study found that alexithymia (TAS20) ( $\rho = -.426$ ;  $p = .000$ ) and its factors:  
identifying feelings (F1-TAS20) ( $\rho = -.270$ ;  $p = .006$ ), describe feelings (F2-TAS20) ( $\rho = -$   
,392;  $p = .000$ ) and externally oriented thinking (F3-TAS20) ( $\rho = .372$ ;  $p = .000$ ) correlated  
negatively and highly significantly with self-concept. Assertiveness correlated positively and  
highly significantly with self-concept ( $\rho = .412$ ;  $p = .000$ ).

Through hierarchical multiple regression predictor variables emerged as the self-concept:  
alexithymia (2,25%;  $p = .000$  negative contribution), assertiveness (2,64%;  $p = .002$  positive  
contribution) externally oriented thinking (2,92%;  $p = .008$  negative contribution).

We conclude that the implementation of strategies which promote personal and social  
development and personal and social skills of women, particularly assertiveness and  
expression of emotions are essential to a better self-concept and consequently to the mental  
health of women.