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I am more vomit than a woman: perceptions of the body image of pregnant women in Bello, Antioquia

Soy más vómito que mujer: percepciones sobre la imagen corporal de mujeres embarazadas de Bello, Antioquia

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ABSTRACT

Palabras clave:

Perceptions, body image, pregnancy.

Pregnancy brings physiological, psychological, and emotional changes that influence the way women perceive the mental image they have of their own body, so the objective of this research was to interpret the perceptions of the body image of a group of mothers in the municipality of Bello in their gestation process during the second half of 2023. The methodology was qualitative-narrative and the narrative interview and body maps were used as devices to construct information. The results showed that body image emerges as a central element, influenced by perceptual, cognitive-affective and behavioral aspects that impact the self-perception of pregnant women and the way they relate to the environment. It is concluded that bodily changes, acceptance of one's own body, physical activity, social interaction, self-concept, social stereotypes and family support emerge from the narratives that exist about the perception of body image in the gestational process.

RESUMEN

Keywords:

Percepciones, imagen corporal, gestación.

El embarazo acarrea cambios fisiológicos, psicológicos y emocionales que influyen en la manera en que las mujeres perciben la imagen mental que tienen de su propio cuerpo, por lo que, el objetivo de esta investigación fue interpretar las percepciones de la imagen corporal de un grupo maternas del municipio de Bello en su proceso de gestación durante el segundo semestre del 2023. La metodología fue cualitativo-narrativa y se emplearon la entrevista narrativa y los mapas corporales como dispositivos para construir la información. Los resultados evidenciaron que la imagen corporal emerge como un elemento central, influenciada por aspectos perceptivos, cognitivos-afectivos y conductuales que impactan la autopercepción de las mujeres gestantes y la forma en que se relacionan con el entorno. Se concluye que los cambios corporales, la aceptación del propio cuerpo, la actividad física, la interacción social, el autoconcepto, los estereotipos sociales y el apoyo familiar emergen de las narraciones que se tienen de la percepción de la imagen corporal en el proceso gestacional.

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Introduction

The text presents a research that narrates the perceptions of the body image of a group of pregnant women in the municipality of Bello, Antioquia during the second half of 2023. In the perception of body image, culture, physical and mental health converge, especially when going through physiological, psychological and emotional changes typical of the state of pregnancy.

This research arises from the need to know the perceptions that a group of pregnant women have of their body image. During pregnancy, women go through various physiological, cognitive, emotional and behavioral changes, such as alterations in eating, sleeping and physical activity routines, as well as variations in interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships. All these changes can be related to the physiology of the state of pregnancy, which can lead to a modification of the perception of body image, which can be addressed from the narratives of the mothers.

Knowing the perceptions about body image during pregnancy contributes to the formulation of public policies, protocols and intervention processes in physical and mental health adjusted to the specific needs of this population.

This problem has been addressed in various studies that are configured as antecedents at the international, national and local levels for this research. At the international level, Enriquez, Ortuño and Merlyn (2017), Ghemi (2018) and Sim-Sim, Martins, Barros, Ortet, and Miranda (2018) highlight the connection between body image and emotional health, that is, a healthy body image is related to the emotional dimension, specifically with an adequate process and management of emotions. Similarly, in these studies, a connection was found between age and self-appreciation of body image.

At the national level, Parra (2021), Nieto & Nieto (2020) and Monterrosa, Rodelo, Monterrosa,

& Morales (2022) reflect in their studies significant challenges in women's health care and well-being, while addressing concerns related to eating disorders and the negative perception of body image.

At the local level, research by Gonzalez (2006), Rincon et al. (2019) and Henao, Vargas, Usme, and Gómez (2019) account for the territory-specific problems such as unwanted pregnancies in young people, underscoring the importance of sex education. This has a direct impact on the perception of body image in pregnancy since the physical transformations that are typical of this process interact with sociocultural and demographic factors.

Similarly, the research of Cadavid Valderrama, García Gómez, Londoño Tabares, and Santos Mosquera (2022), accounts for how "the female body has been permeated by different ideas and discourses that have designated how it should be and look, even leading to models being assigned to it to move, express, and behave" (p. 74). This phenomenon significantly influences the self-perception of pregnant women and the way they relate to their educational environment.

This research contributes to the understanding of the intersection between pregnancy and body perception, which addresses the question: what perceptions do a group of maternal mothers in the municipality of Bello have of their body image in their gestation process during the second half of 2023? Configuring as a general objective to interpret the perceptions of the body image of a group of mothers in the municipality of Bello in their gestation process during the second half of 2023.

Conceptualization of the categories

In this section, the categories perception, body image and gestation, which served as the basis for this study, are presented. It details how these are treated in the theoretical and thematic framework, with the purpose of applying and analyzing them according to the stages of the research.

Perception

Perception is configured as a basic cognitive process of the human being that allows him to recognize the outside world and himself. In this process, others such as attention, memory and even emotional processes converge. Perception is derived from sensory processes but is not limited to these, it is not only what we feel, but how we feel it according to personal, social, historical and cultural factors.

In this way, de Merleau-Ponty (1975) states that perception is a partial process, because the observer does not manage to perceive things in their entirety, since the situations and perspectives in which sensations are held are variable and what is obtained is only one aspect of the objects at a given moment. This is why the perception of body image in the group of pregnant women varies according to their own process, being a particular configuration of the vital moment that each of them is going through. Understanding as a specific moment for this research, the gestation process.

Merleau-Ponty (1975) also points out that perception is a changing process. It is not an addition of events to past experiences but a constant construction of meanings in space and time with the influence of culture. This is why the perception of body image is not conceived as a static structure, but on the contrary it is a dynamic process that is modified by the different bio-psychosocial characteristics of the context and the subject.

Body image

For Cadavid, García, Jiménez, Luna, & Mora (2023) body image is typical of the human being, its definition is individual and is created in the mind of each person regarding how they look, how they feel, and what they think of their own body. From the time we are little, the people around us and the culture in general begin to influence the definition of our body image, even based on aesthetic ideals according to the society or culture in which we are

immersed. Thus, society is responsible for defining how we should look according to gender, sex, age and even socioeconomic status. The ideal images we see in magazines and social networks also have their part in this construction of body image.

Body image gives the notion of body awareness as a constant and direct knowledge that we possess about our own body. For Boulch (2021), this knowledge encompasses both moments of stillness and physical activity, allowing us to perceive the different parts of our body and their relationship with the space and objects around us.

In this way, body image is then understood as a cognitive abstraction of one's own body, which is directly related to emotional and social aspects. Body image is a dynamic abstraction, which fluctuates according to the cognitive and socio-affective structures of the subject, so that body image varies both over time and by the different events exogenous to the subject.

Gestation

For Tango (2021), gestation is the period in which a baby is formed inside its mother's womb, from the time the egg and sperm fuse within the woman's uterus until a fully formed baby is born to the world we know. Their growth is measured in weeks and lasts between 38 and 42, those who are born early are premature, and others who exceed this threshold are postmature.

Carrillo et al. (2021) show in their research how a woman's body undergoes a series of physiological changes, at all levels, which aim to adapt and respond to the great demand represented by the 40 weeks (approx.) of gestation that will last the formation of a new human being within her. These changes occur gradually, but continuously, throughout pregnancy and range from cardiovascular, digestive, pulmonary, hematological, and endocrine changes. These changes end up being gradually reversed during the postpartum period. Physiological changes

are related to the development of different symptoms, signs and alterations in pregnant women, as well as changes in the parameters of paraclinical studies. Similarly, at an emotional and relational level, the gestation process entails behavioral variations such as increased or lost appetite, irritability or sensitivity, and changes in interpersonal relationships.

Materials and Methods

The methodology used in this research is qualitative with a narrative/descriptive scope. According to Blasco (2007), this type of research consists of studying reality in its natural context as it happens, extracting and interpreting the phenomena according to the people involved. It uses interviews, images, observations, and life stories to describe routines and problematic situations, as well as meanings in the lives of the participants, relating to the approach to women's perceptions of body image during the gestation process.

According to Arias-Cardona (2015), narrative can be a reliable way to produce knowledge about the social world because it allows the construction of knowledge based on the opinions of the participants, following principles of interpretation. Narrative research conceives more than a process of construction of information, a construction of it through dialogue.

The descriptive scope is, according to Tamayo (2006), the one that seeks to describe situations or events; Basically, he is not interested in checking explanations, or in testing certain hypotheses, or in making predictions, so this research was based on the narratives of the mothers to account for the perceptions of their body image at this time.

Narrative interviewing and body mapping are then used as devices for constructing information. Each of them responds to each specific objective, with the intention of achieving the proposed general objective and being chosen in such a way as to

facilitate the participation of pregnant women in the process of constructing information.

Narrative interview

This information construction device is for Arias-Cardona (2015) a form of interpersonal communication that aims to provide or receive information through conversation. In this research, this device was used with the intention of identifying the narratives that a group of maternal mothers in the municipality of Bello have of their body image in their gestation process during the second half of 2023, thus fulfilling the first specific objective of this research.

Body Mapping

Body mapping makes it possible to analyze the corporeality of each of the women participating in the research and for Quiroz et al. (2002) it allows us to account for the body aesthetics of these women, to analyze how they visualize themselves while going through this state and how they perceive that they see themselves in relation to others. from the symbolic and the imaginary; allowing the recognition of their individual and group identities. With it, the second specific objective is achieved, which consists of describing the concept of body image based on the perceptions that this group of women have.

Moments of the investigation

For the development of this research, the following moments were carried out:

- **Preparatory moment:** The research is based on the interest in knowing the perceptions of the body image of pregnant women due to the personal experience of one of the researchers in her own pregnancy process.

- **Fieldwork moment:** At this time, the population was reached by informing them of the research idea and informing them of how they could

be part of the study. Subsequently, the request for authorization was made by the pregnant women through informed consent. After this, we proceeded with the application of the selected information construction devices (the narrative interview and the body maps) to finally categorize the information according to the categories proposed: Perception, body image and gestation.

- **Analytical moment:** After constructing the information, it was analyzed by coding the answers given by the participants in the development of the narrative interview and the body maps to classify the results in the analysis matrix used, which was named the Information Analysis Matrix. From this, seven emerging categories were identified, three from the body image category: Body changes, Acceptance of one's own body and Physical activity, then four from the perception/gestation category: Social interaction, Self-concept, Family support and Social stereotypes, as set out below.

- **Body changes:** they have to do with the modifications that the bodies of pregnant women had and that are inevitable in this gestational process.

- **Acceptance of one's own body:** Essential for integral well-being, as it directly influences self-esteem, mental and physical health, as well as interpersonal relationships. When the body is accepted as it is, greater self-confidence is fostered, stress and anxiety levels are reduced, and healthier lifestyle habits are promoted, generating a positive impact on quality of life and on the personal perception of happiness and emotional balance.

- **Physical activity:** Fundamental at each stage of life, especially in this one, facilitating not only body image, but also the integral process of what pregnancy entails.

- **Social interaction:** The relationship with other mothers is benefited in the response to unknowns about pregnancy and the release of

feelings by exposing their feelings and situations that they go through during this stage with other people.

- **Self-concept:** It refers to the perception and understanding that a person has about themselves, encompassing their beliefs, values, skills and roles. It is crucial in identity formation and decision-making, as it shapes how we see and relate to the world.

- **Social stereotypes:** They can have a significant impact on one's perception of oneself and others, influencing the attitudes, behaviors, and opportunities that people are given based on these social prejudices.

- **Family support:** refers to the emotional, economic and social support that comes from the family members of pregnant women. This is extremely important for the development of the human being and specifically in the process of receiving a new member into the family.

- **Communicative moment:** After giving shape to what was found in the research and reflecting on the different perceptions of the body image of pregnant women, the results of the study were socialized at the Itinerant Symposium of Undergraduate Projects of the Bachelor's Degree in Physical Education, Recreation and Sports of the Colombian Polytechnic Jaime Isaza Cadavid in 2023.

Participants

The participants of this research were 3 pregnant women from the Municipality of Bello who met the inclusion criteria: being a surrogate mother during the second semester of 2023, residing in the municipality of Bello Antioquia, being interested in participating in the study and authorizing their participation through informed consent.

Information construction devices

For the development of this research, a narrative interview, body mapping and an information analysis matrix were used.

Narrative interview: A narrative interview was applied to the women participating in the research who were pregnant. The interview consisted of 11 open questions to answer the different aspects related to the perceptions they have of their body image when they are in the process of pregnancy.

For the application of the narrative interview, a pleasant, illuminated space with good acoustics was available where the women met. A voice recorder was used to record the responses and facilitate their transcription.

Body mapping:

Body maps are a device for the construction of information that makes it possible to analyze the corporeality of each of the women participating in the research, their main intention and fulfilling the second specific objective of the same, is that each of them recognizes their body image, their figures, their outfits, their baby and their accessories. To do so, they were provided with materials and with them they had to sketch these elements in the silhouette of their body to dialogue at the end as a group about it. Photographs of the process were taken and a voice recorder was used to record the responses and facilitate their transcription.

Analysis Matrix:

A matrix was used in which the information was arranged for analysis. In it, the specific objectives and the corresponding information constructed through body mapping and narrative interview of the group of pregnant women in the Municipality of Bello were situated, in which the perceptions of their body image were analyzed.

Results and Discussion

After putting into practice the information construction devices enunciated for the development of this research, different results were obtained from the points of view of the pregnant mothers and how each of them has lived this experience. These devices allowed each of them to express their feelings for their babies, their relatives and for themselves. In the fieldwork process, the participants highlighted their experience as well as the perceptions they have of their body image.

Below, each of the findings made in the devices used in this research is described in detail. Participants will be named M1, M2 and M3, safeguarding privacy and information handling.

A. Interview Result:

The objective of the interview was to identify the narratives that a group of maternal mothers in the municipality of Bello have about their body image during their gestation process during the second half of 2023. That is why the questions asked in the interview with pregnant women were oriented to the perceptions they had of their body image.

When asked, Have you felt singled out or judged for the way your body looks right now? M1 and M2 state that they have felt singled out or judged when inhabiting public space. M1 narrates that she has been the subject of derogatory comments when relating her height and other physical characteristics that she describes, expressing that "sometimes older adults do not identify my age and see me as smaller than I seem, I imagine that my height also influences" (M1, narrative interview, 31/10/2023). In this line, M2 expressed that he has also felt these signs in the public space, although to a lesser extent. For its part, M3 denied these allegations. This could be related to the fact that in their narratives M1 and M2 expressed that they were in constant contact with people outside their relatives, while M3, by not working

on their interpersonal relationships, concentrated on their close circle.

The pregnant women narrated that their experience has been diverse. M1 narrates having felt confronted because she was used to having an athletic body and the gestation process led her to lose muscle mass in her buttocks and legs, increase fat mass in the belly and have acne breakouts. In view of these changes, the participant expresses the intention of being able to revert some of them in the future. M2 says that her gestation process has been comfortable and pleasant due to the acceptance of her social circle. While for M3, in her narration a process of acceptance is confided, not only of her body but of the whole experience. In this sense, she expressed that her pregnancy "is very hard because as I told you I didn't think it was going to happen but, I have entered a process of acceptance." (M3, narrative interview, 31/10/2023). During her narration, M3 said that she never believed in the possibility of getting pregnant, and now when confronting her situation through narration, her own body image and the social reality we share, signs of a cognitive accommodation of her beliefs regarding herself appear.

During the narratives, the strategies that the group of mothers use to take care of their physical appearance during pregnancy emerged: constant skin hydration, internal hydration with liquids, vitamin consumption, sports practices, physical activities and other cultural practices that they consider healthy for the development of their baby. These practices are configured as rituals for these mothers, in the sense that they are actions that mark time and space, are loaded with symbolism and are endowed with a sense of transcendence. From an art psychology perspective, Porres (2020) mentions that human beings are called to configure these rituals to give and give meaning to their life experience, especially those moments and places that are subjectively and collectively relevant.

During the interview, the perception of their body image was inquired about and it was found that it was strongly related to the derived physiological changes and their physical appearance, understood by Salaberria, Rodríguez, and Cruz (2007) as the first source of information in social interaction, which uses the conceptions of ugliness, disfigurement, congenital deformation, trauma to establish the relationship with another body. For example, constant vomiting and nausea, acne or increased belly size are part of the identity configuration that are related to the conceptions that intervene in physical appearance, with respect to this M3 said that "I have vomited horrible, I am more vomit than a woman" (M3, narrative interview, 10/31/2023).

The results of the interview propose a dialogue with what Saus (2023) suggests that the birth of a baby represents an enormous metamorphosis for women at a personal, family and social level. From these results, it is understood that gestation is part of the metamorphosis referred to by Saus (2023) because as the baby is developing within its mother, changes at the personal, family and social levels are already beginning to be glimpsed.

B. Body map results

Through this device, it sought to investigate the perceptions of the body image of a group of pregnant women in the municipality of Bello during the second half of 2023. The objective was to understand the perceptions that these women have about their bodies in the context of pregnancy.

The questions posed were designed to capture the voices of these unborn mothers about the bodily changes experienced during this period. The analysis revealed significant findings that allow for a deeper understanding of their experiences.

First, a sense of deep emotional connection was identified between the women and the developing being within their wombs. This connection is closely related to feelings of love, happiness, and security.

M1 mentioned regarding her body mapping that "it caught my attention that we have all put figures that represent feelings on the abdomen of our silhouettes, such as hearts and butterflies" (M1, body mapping, 10/31/2023), suggesting that gestation is not only a physical process, but also an emotionally transformative one for these women.



Figure 1. Emotional connection with corporeality

Source: Application of the information construction device "Body Map" applied on 10/31/2023

In addition, other perceptions of their body image emerge that are related to the acceptance of body changes, the ability to find distraction in this period of transformation and the strengthening of social relationships with other pregnant women. M2 says that the body maps produced show "how different each one's bodies are, even if we are all pregnant (M1, body mapping, 31/10/2023). Although the perception of body image is a personal, unique and individual process, it does not distance itself from the social nature of the human being, in this sense the way we perceive ourselves, is thanks in part to the way we perceive others, identify ourselves and build an idea of who we are, because we differentiate ourselves and assimilate others, and thus configure part of our identity (Guidano, 1994).

In the preparation of the body maps, M3 mentioned that "I find it funny that we have not put brains, or belly buttons or anything from the other parts of the body, it is as if we only thought about babies" (M3, body mapping, 31/10/2023). This expression points to the complexity of the experience of motherhood and how pregnant women not only

experience physical changes, but also immerse themselves in an emotional process that involves a wide range of perceptions regarding their body image and their connection with the unborn being, which during the development of the body map appear aesthetic elements such as points, flowers, hearts, butterflies around in her belly focusing on this part of her body the creative exercise of mapping.

In this way, the perception of the body image of these women in their gestation process is related to what Meneses (2008) proposes, which indicates that there is an interrelation of the perceptual image (perceptual aspects regarding our body), the cognitive image (thoughts, self-messages, beliefs about our body) and the emotional image (includes our feelings about the degree of satisfaction with our figure and the experiences that our body provides us) in the body image, this being what is identified through the development of this information construction device.

In conclusion, it could be highlighted that the pregnant women who actively participated in the research are aware of their condition and the changes that can be perceived in it, in addition, they accept them and consider them correct for their process, since they are supported by their relatives in a constant way serving as emotional support.



Figure 2. My body, my belly.

Source: Application of the information construction device "Body Map" applied on 10/31/2023

D) Result of the analysis of the information:

In this matrix, the categories perception, body image and pregnancy were arranged, relating them to the answers provided by each pregnant woman who was a participant in the research, in the same way the theories of the authors that were related to what was answered by the same participants were corresponded to proceed to the analysis of the information and, finally, to identify the emerging trends that resulted from the process of triangulation of the information collected with the authors' discourses.

In addition, the specific objectives of the research were established, and from them the following elements were developed. The category of research associated with each objective was identified, the result obtained using the applied technique was recorded, and relevant information from authors related to these results was searched. Subsequently, a critical analysis was developed that linked the two previous elements and the emerging categories were identified as trends in the research, which were conceptualized in the last section. The analysis table for the first specific objective is shown below to provide an overview of the information analysis process.

Table I. Data Analysis Matrix.

Specific objectives	Research categories	Relevant and redundant result instrument 1, (data related to this category) Interview 30-10-2023	Textual citations of results from previous research related to the findings of the relevant and redundant category or on the concept that was worked on in this result.	Critical view of the researcher based on the results of the instrument and the textual quotation	Pop-up category
To identify the narratives that mothers in the municipality of Bello have of their body image in their gestation process during the second half of 2023.	Body image	<p>How have you felt during this process in social, affective and psychological aspects?</p> <p>Mom #1: Well, on a social level I don't feel so affected but since I look younger than the 25 years I am, then I receive sometimes uncomfortable and contemptuous looks from older adults as if I were a little girl.</p> <p>Mom #2: Very good, thank God in all aspects.</p> <p>Mom #3: Everything has been very hard, the first month, the first weeks, have been horrible, realizing why it was so unexpected, it was very hard, a very strong shock for my family and my partner and psychologically it</p>	<p>In relation to physical exercise, we have obtained results with an inverse relationship with body image. We already know all the benefits of physical exercise on health, also on the health of a pregnant and postpartum woman. We found physiological benefits, physical exercise is protective, it is positively associated with physical fitness, it also has great psychological benefits such as the reduction of depression, better quality of life and better perception of health. (Tornero et al., 2013)</p> <p>In the post-hoc analysis, students classified as normal-low and low weight scored significantly higher than the other groups in attractiveness, physical self-concept, and general.</p>	<p>If it comes, it is important to have a good acceptance and perception of one's own body, even more so in this state of gestation where the psychological aspect is so involved, in addition, it is necessary to highlight the good use of physical activity before, during and after going through this pregnancy.</p> <p>It is necessary to have a good accompaniment of these women and of the human being in general when they go through</p>	<p>Body changes</p> <p>Acceptance of one's own body</p> <p>Physical activity</p>

<p>To identify the narratives that mothers in the municipality of Bello have of their body image in their gestation process during the second half of 2023.</p>	<p>Body image</p>	<p>affected me since I did not want children, I have vomited horrible, I am more vomit than a woman, but I hope this improves.</p> <p>How do you feel about your unborn body?</p> <p>Mom #1: At first it was too confronting a topic for me, I am used to striving to have an athletic body and the changes that I began to have such as losing muscle mass in buttocks and legs, the increase in the belly, the acne outbreaks due to hormones, has been difficult, now that I am finishing this process I think I have understood that this had to happen and that maybe I can remove a little more evidence Go ahead</p> <p>Mom #2: I feel very good since I have been very accepted during my pregnancy.</p> <p>Mom #3: It's very hard because as I told you I didn't think it was going to happen, but, I've entered a process of acceptance.</p>	<p>On these same scales, the normal-high weight group showed better perceptions than the group of girls categorized as overweight and obese. On the other hand, the obese and overweight groups had better perceptions of strength than the underweight group. (Fernández, 2014) The correlation between BMI and ICP with the frontal silhouette was 60.8% and the corresponding correlation between waist circumference and ICP with profile silhouettes was 59.8%. The correlation decreased according to the weight group: in women with weight within normal ranges it was 62% (0.30 to 0.82), while in those who were overweight it was 28% (-0.01 to 0.53) and in obese women it was only 21% (-0.08 to 0.47) (Rodríguez, et al, 2010).</p>	<p>something new for their lives, something that completely changes the perspective of our lives as is the creation of this new being.</p>	<p>Body changes</p> <p><i>Acceptance of one's own body</i></p> <p><i>Physical activity</i></p>
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Discussion and conclusions

Table II. Research categories

The following table presents the main categories that correspond to the concepts of Body Image and Perception/Gestation, approached from the concepts presented by Raich (2000), Neisser (2009) and Robbins (2011). Likewise, the emerging categories are presented, which are: body changes, acceptance of one's own body, physical activity, social interaction, self-concept, family support and social stereotypes, extracted from the development of the interview and body mapping devices to the research participants. below to provide an overview of the information analysis process.

General Categories		Emerging Categories	<i>Body changes</i>
			<i>Acceptance of one's own body</i>
	<i>Body image</i>		<i>Physical activity</i>
	<i>Perception/Gestation</i>		<i>Social Interaction</i>
			<i>Self-concept</i>
			<i>Social stereotypes</i>
			<i>Family Support</i>

In the general category of body image, three emerging categories were established. The first is body changes, since it was possible to show that the changes of the gestational process that are perceived by these women influence the perception of their body image. The second is acceptance of one's own body, since, in the results, it was evident that the participants expressed great acceptance for their own body due to the love they have for their child. **And the third, physical activity, plays a fundamen-**

tal role in the gestation process, as it contributes to maintaining the muscle mass and adequate physical condition of the pregnant woman for the challenges of her day-to-day life and motherhood.

In accordance with the above, Cash and Pruzinsky (1990) mention that body image is composed of three aspects. The perceptual aspects have to do with the way in which the size, weight and shape of the body is perceived, the cognitive-affective aspects that refer to the attitudes, feelings, thoughts, evaluations that the body awakens, its size, weight, shape or some parts of it and the behavioral aspects that are the behaviors that derive from the perception and feelings associated with the body.

In this case, it can be said that although in the perceptual aspects the body of the participants has gone from an athletic condition to one with low body mass and weight gain, in the cognitive-affective aspects there are loving evaluations about it, due to the child they are expecting. As for the behavioral aspects, rituals such as the application of creams, body hygiene processes and even the performance of physical activity that they perform in this state and that helps them stay physically and emotionally healthy stand out.

Regarding the general category of Perception/Gestation, four emerging categories were found, which are social interaction, self-concept, social stereotypes, and family support. Regarding the first, it can be said that the perception of body image is influenced by the social relationships and social interaction that the pregnant woman has with her family, friends and even with people who are not part of her close circle, since, as evidenced in the results, The looks, comments and attitudes of others with respect to their body affect the cognitive-affective aspects of their body image, making them value their body differently than they did because they also value the social interaction they have in their daily lives.

The second, which is self-concept, is addressed by Goffman (2020) and Rogers (1993) as the image

we have of ourselves and how we perceive ourselves, is directly related to social interaction, as it is a central focus that encompasses the mutual influences that arise when two or more people are physically present. This social dynamic undoubtedly impacts the formation of our personal image and how we relate to the environment.

The third is social stereotypes, which are addressed by García-Ael, Molero, and Lois (2017) as beliefs about social groups that affect individual perception by influencing how we see ourselves in relation to these groups. In this case, the stereotype is related to age and physical appearance, since, as indicated in the results, one of the participants was likened to a minor in a state of pregnancy due to her height.

The fourth emerging category, which is family support, refers to a psychosocial process contextualized by meanings and values in a specific socio-historical environment that plays a crucial role in the formation of personal image, influencing interactions and self-perception within the context where the pregnant woman develops.

Finally, it is concluded that these categories highlight how body image emerges as a central element, influenced by perceptual, cognitive-affective and behavioral aspects that impact our self-perception and way of relating to the environment. The complex web of influences also includes the social stereotypes that shape how we see ourselves in relation to different groups and the crucial role of family support rooted in meanings and values specific to socio-historical contexts. In turn, individual perception and social interaction converge in the formation of self-concept, reflecting the complexity of how we perceive ourselves in relation to others, influenced by stereotypes and supported by the family and social context. As Barrientos Lezcano and Cadavid Valderrama (2023) point out, 'the process of constructing personal meanings is mediated by the interaction between lived experience and its reinterpretation through language and reflection' (p. 6).

This interaction is particularly relevant in the context of pregnant women in Bello, Antioquia, since their experiences and perceptions of body image are not only shaped by internal and affective factors, but also by the predominant social and cultural narratives in their environment. Thus, the reinterpretation of these experiences through family support and personal reflection allows a more resilient and adaptive construction of their self-concept, evidencing the importance of considering both individual and contextual aspects in the understanding of body image during pregnancy.

Additionally, as Cadavid Valderrama, Barrientos Lezcano, Vera Hoyos, and Hernandez Patiño (2023) point out, 'the continued practice of activities that promote social interaction contributes to the advancement of social skills, has a positive impact on the execution of tasks typical of their daily lives, improves self-esteem and confidence, tends towards social interaction, and allows them to experience their environment in a positive and creative way' (p. 14).

This observation highlights the importance of activities that encourage social interaction, which is crucial for pregnant women who face similar challenges of self-perception and social adjustment

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