



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Physical activity and health in Peruvian teachers



### Actividad física y salud en docentes peruanos

Dear Editor:

I read with great pleasure the article "Physical activity and health for teachers. A review" by Yury Rosales-Ricardo,<sup>1</sup> in which the author performs a documentary and literature review of scientific articles published from 1999 to February 2016 in order to update the international knowledge on physical activity and health in the teaching profession. This review is the motivation behind this letter, in which I seek to give a view of the current situation of teachers and lecturers in Peru and the constraints that a lack of physical activity place on this social sector.

According to the WHO,<sup>2</sup> an appropriate level of regular physical activity reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer and other conditions; it also improves mental, bone and functional health and is essential for weight control. However, these benefits<sup>3</sup> are overlooked by the over 40% of Peruvian teachers who carry excess weight and, still more alarmingly, the 30% who are obese (Table 1). This situation has come about because teachers do not take sufficient physical exercise<sup>5</sup> (Table 2).

Although we have a law that promotes physical activity in educational establishments<sup>4</sup> it is vitally important to reinforce the promotion of lifestyles that include a healthy diet and increased physical activity. This will reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and diabetes mellitus, and improve

**Table 1** Obesity and overweight according to the sex of university lecturers, 2016.

Body mass index	Women		Men		Total		P value
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Normal	12	27.3	23	19.2	35	21.3	
Overweight	19	43.2	59	49.2	78	47.6	
Obese I	10	22.7	31	25.8	41	25.0	.828*
Obese II	2	4.5	4	3.3	6	3.7	
Obese III	1	2.3	3	2.5	4	2.4	
Total	44	100	120	100	164	100	

\* Pearson's chi-squared test.

**Table 2** Teachers who take no regular physical exercise, 2015.

Country	Percentage
Argentina	60%
Ecuador	51%
Chile	72%
Mexico	64%
Peru	56%
Uruguay	73%

the quality of life of teachers and lecturers with their busy routines.<sup>3</sup>

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### Conflicts of interest

None.

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