

Eating behaviour, body image, and self-esteem of adolescent girls in Malaysia

ABSTRACT

This cross-sectional study was undertaken with 489 secondary school girls, ages 15 to 17 years, to examine disordered eating behaviours of adolescent girls in Malaysia and to estimate associations with body weight, body-size discrepancy, and self-esteem. Dietary restraint, binge eating, body image, and self-esteem were assessed using the Restrained Eating scale of the Dutch Eating Behaviour Questionnaire, the Binge Scale Questionnaire, the Contour Drawing Rating Scale, and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, respectively. Pearson correlations estimated associations between variables. There were 3.1% underweight, 9.8% at risk of being overweight, and 8.6% overweight girls. A total of 87.3% were dissatisfied with their own body size. Dietary restraint and binge eating were reported by 36.0% and 35.4%, respectively. Body Mass Index ($r = .34$, $p < .01$) and body-size dissatisfaction ($r = .24$, $p < .01$) were significantly associated with dietary restraint and binge eating, but self-esteem ($r = .20$, $p < .001$) was significantly associated only with binge eating.