

Abstract

As prevalence of eating disorders in Chinese culture has become higher, there has been an increased need for psychometrically sound measures of eating attitudes and behaviors in non-western societies. The present study investigates the factor structure and psychometric properties of the Eating Attitudes Test (EAT-26) in Hong Kong. A group of 2631 Chinese adolescent girls completed the EAT-26 and other measures assessing other related eating and psychological variables. Lower mean score on the EAT-26 than the West was obtained. The 3-factor solution produced factors included "Dieting", "Bulimia and "Food Preoccupation", and "Social Pressure", whereas the 4-factor solution gave one more factor, "Vomiting". The structure resembled that of Garner et al. (1982), despite that some culturally-inappropriate items were found. The factor solution from the EAT+ group (mean total EAT-26 \geq 20) yielded a slightly different structure. Results suggested that for Chinese girls, desire for slimness is more attitudinal than behavioral, which usually manifests in the awareness of food contents and oral control. Vomiting or purging are not commonly adopted as means of weight reduction. Concurrent validity of the EAT-26 is demonstrated. The present study confirms the utility of the EAT-26 in measuring eating attitudes & behaviors among Chinese girls in Hong Kong.