

ABSTRACT

The present study examined disordered eating attitudes and behaviors among Chinese adolescent boys in Hong Kong. Participants, 2190 boys of age 11 to 20, completed questionnaires assessing body concerns and disordered eating behaviors. Results showed that Chinese boys in Hong Kong were equally divided between those who wished to gain weight (44.4%) and those who wished to lose weight (43%). More than forty percent of boys were dissatisfied with their height and weight, while dissatisfaction with their overall body shape and parts of the upper body increased with age. More than one-third (35.4%) of boys reported experiencing uncontrollable binge eating episodes, with one-fourth (21.6%) engaged in dieting and more than one-fifth (15.5) exercised excessively to lose weight. Boys who wished to lose weight engaged in more frequent pathogenic eating behaviors, scored higher in drive for thinness, bulimia, body dissatisfaction and lower in self-esteem. Drive for thinness was central in the pathogenesis of eating disturbances and mediated other variables such as BMI and body dissatisfaction. These findings suggest that boys are also under the sociocultural pressure to attain certain ideal shape, thus preventive measures against disordered eating attitudes and behaviors should also target teenage boys.