

ABSTRACT

The present study examined body image and eating behaviors among Chinese females across a wide age range in Hong Kong. A sample of 756 women of age 12 to 49 was surveyed using a self-report battery consisting of the Eating Disorder Inventory, Eating Symptoms Checklist, Body Part Satisfaction Scale, and the Attitudes toward Weight Scale. Results indicated that the ideal body figure for a beautiful woman in Hong Kong was relatively tall and slim. In addition, a curvaceous body shape with a narrow waist set against full hips appeared to be important body features in defining feminine beauty. Moreover, results indicated that as women got older, their Body Mass Index (BMI) increased, however their body dissatisfaction and eating disturbances remained relatively stable across the life span. Some factors appeared moderating the relationship between body dissatisfaction and disordered eating as women grew older. Present findings indicated that the ideal body size increased with women age. What women considered important also varied as they grew older. Younger women put more emphasis on physical appearance, however, as they got older, family security, wisdom and health became more important.