

Abstract

The current study was designed to: (1) explore the prevalence of BED and its subclinical group among Chinese secondary school students in Hong Kong; (2) compare the different profiles of affective style and emotion regulation exhibited by different categories of binge eaters; and (3) investigate the ability of affective style and emotion regulation in predicting bingeing traits and distress. Participants included 598 male and 956 female students recruited from four local secondary schools. Subjects completed measures accessing their binge eating and bulimia traits, affective style and emotion regulation difficulties. Based on the Questionnaire of Eating and Weight Patterns – Revised (QEWP-R), prevalence of BED and its subclinical group were 0.5% and 9.2% respectively. Results indicated that binge eaters generally had higher emotional arousal and more difficulties in emotion regulation than non-binge eaters. BED and BN subclinical individuals shared similar profile in affective style and emotion regulation. Yet, while emotional arousal played a more important role in predicting BED's bingeing traits, body weight and shape issues were the major predictors for BN group. The findings highlight the importance of emotion regulation in the treatment of BED patients and the role of cognitive therapy in BN treatment.