

The Risk of Eating Disorders among Female Undergraduates in Taiwan

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to investigate disordered eating among female college students. The study sought to establish a predictive model for the risk of eating disorders in young female university students in Taiwan. A group of 336 student participants were recruited with the results showing that more than one third (43.2%) of the college women surveyed were identified to be at risk for developing an eating disorder. The results of multiple logistic regression showed that bulimia score, elevated depression index, eating binges, the use of laxatives and medicine to control weight, and having lost 20 lb, or more, in the past 6 months were all considered to be risk factors for developing an eating disorder (the corresponding area under receiver operating characteristic curve = 0.905). The results demonstrate that unhealthy dietary behaviors are rapidly spreading among young Taiwanese female students. For the sample described in this article, 67.6% of the female college students had lost weight: 51% had dieted at least once to lose weight, 43% used exercise to lose weight, 24% used low-calorie diets to lose weight, 11% used healthy food to lose weight, 9.2% used rubber clothing and a diet patch to lose weight, 17.9% of the students used weight-loss drugs, and a few students sought medical assistance from weight-loss clinics or actually underwent liposuction (1.5%).