

Abstract

This study compared attitudes towards body, eating behavior and psychological adjustment between Hong Kong and Beijing adolescent girls. Subjects, 979 Hong Kong and 568 Beijing high school girls, completed questionnaires measuring the importance of 14 different body parts in determining female attractiveness, their own satisfaction towards each of these body parts, body attitudes, disordered eating behaviors, depression and self-esteem. Results showed that Hong Kong adolescent girls were more dissatisfied with their bodies in general as well as with each of the selected body parts, especially for those which they considered important in judging attractiveness. No significant difference was found in body attitudes. Concerning pathological eating behavior, more Hong Kong adolescents showed binge eating and weight loss behavior, they also had higher level of depression and lower self-esteem. It was suggested that the attenuating traditional Chinese value and the endorsement of Western thin-ideal body shape for women might have a role to play.