

## Abstract

This study examined the role of self-deficit, defining as low in self-esteem but high in fear of negative evaluation, in the development of disordered eating behaviors among adolescent girls in Hong Kong. Nine hundred and twenty-one high school girls, age ranged between 11 and 19 years, completed questionnaires assessing body mass index (BMI), body dissatisfaction, drive for thinness, self-esteem, fear of negative evaluation, and disordered eating symptoms. Findings indicated that compared to participants of low self-deficit, girls of high self-deficit reported higher body dissatisfaction, stronger drive for thinness and more disordered eating symptoms, although the two groups did not differ in BMI. Findings also indicated that drive for thinness explained more variances in eating symptoms among high self-deficit girls. In addition, the predictive powers of the predictor variables increased along with the degree of self-deficit. Possible mechanisms of how self-deficit affects the development of disordered eating were discussed.