Background

Korea has undergone a rapid nutritional transition, leading to an increase in overweight women. Korean women are becoming increasingly concerned with their body image, and the Western ideal body image has become an important standard of comparison in the context of social interactions. Not only overweight women, who deviate greatly from the thin body ideal, but also those with normal weight are often vulnerable to a distorted body weight perception (BWP), a negative body image, or body weight dissatisfaction (see Fig. 1).

The survey includes information on Korean women's BMI, BWP, UWCB, and depression. The survey includes stratified multistage sampling design from 20,981 women aged 20-64 years in 25 districts throughout Seoul, Korea.

In Korean society, the gap between clinically ideal (normal size) and culturally ideal (slim size) physiques for women has widened in recent years, promoting an increased concern in women's health behaviors and health status.

Objectives

1. To examine the mediating function of BWP in the relationship between BMI and UWCB and between BMI and depression.
2. To investigate who is at greater risk of UWCBs and depression.

Measures & Analysis

- UWCBs: those who have ever engaged in at least one UWCB during the last year, such as losing weight, using diet pills, or exercising to maintain a certain body weight.
- BMI: body mass index. BMI is calculated using body weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared (kg/m²).
- Combination of BMI and BWP (BMI-BWP), and unhealthy weight control behaviors (UWCBs) on depression among adult Korean women.

Discussion & Conclusion

There has been a substantial difference in the rates of increase between those who are overweight in terms of BMI and those who perceive themselves to be overweight in recent years, especially young women (see Fig. 2 and 3).

In Korean society, the gap between clinically ideal (normal size) and culturally ideal (slim size) physiques for women has widened in recent years, promoting an increased concern in women's health behaviors and health status.

According to a recent study by Oh et al. (2010), Korean female college students aged 17-20 years have lower mean BMI but a higher prevalence of distorted BWP on UWCBs and depression for even normal-weight women (p=0.0940).

Despite this, studies on adult women with all those factors entering BMI, BWP, unhealthy weight control behaviors (UWCBs) and depression, have been understudied.

Conclusion

- UWCBs: those who have ever engaged in at least one UWCB during the last year, such as losing weight, using diet pills, or exercising to maintain a certain body weight.
- BMI: body mass index. BMI is calculated using body weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared (kg/m²).
- Combination of BMI and BWP (BMI-BWP), and unhealthy weight control behaviors (UWCBs) on depression among adult Korean women.

This research used the mediating procedures proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986).

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