

B22 The correlations between intuitive eating, body image satisfaction, and weight difference among Malaysian youths during the post-pandemic

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Responding to the Malaysian government's Movement Control Order (MCO), individuals have been forced to confine at home. Literature suggested that lockdown may have a detrimental impact on eating habits and body image satisfaction. Therefore, this study investigates the correlations between intuitive eating, body image satisfaction, and weight difference in youths throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Through convenience and snowball sampling, a total of 290 respondents were recruited for this study. Socio-demographic information, body height, body weight during the MCO 3.0, and body weight after the pandemic were self-reported by the respondents. Intuitive eating behaviour during the post-pandemic was assessed using the Intuitive Eating Scale-2 (IES-2), while the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire (MBSRQ-AS) was used to measure the body image perception among the youths. The findings of this study revealed that 54.1% of youths gained an average weight of 3.34 ± 2.46 kg due to the pandemic. The Body-Food Choice Congruence (BFCC) was positively correlated with Appearance Evaluation (AE) ($r=0.252$, $p<0.001$), Appearance Orientation (AO) ($r=0.208$, $p<0.001$), Overweight Preoccupation (OP) ($r=0.194$, $p=0.001$) and Body Areas Satisfaction Scale (BASS) ($r=0.222$, $p<0.001$). Likewise, Unconditional Permission to Eat (UPE) ($r=0.172$, $p=0.003$), Reliance on Hunger and Satiety Cues (RHCS) ($r=0.246$, $p<0.001$), Eating for Physical Rather Than Emotional Reasons (EPR) ($r=0.198$, $p=0.001$), and Body-Food Choice Congruence (BFCC) ($r=0.222$, $p=0.001$) were positively correlated with Body Areas Satisfaction Scale (BASS) during the post-pandemic. Although there was no significant correlation observed between body image satisfaction with weight difference, three of the subscales in IES-2 were found to be correlated with the weight difference of the youths. Findings in the current study suggested that UPE ($r=0.197$, $p=0.001$), RHCS ($r=0.140$, $p=0.017$), and BFCC ($r=-0.123$, $p=0.036$) were correlated with weight difference. The COVID-19 pandemic has induced a change in the eating behaviour and body image perception among Malaysian youths. Therefore, government agencies or non-governmental organisations should encourage the youths to adopt intuitive eating as a weight management strategy after the pandemic.