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## Body Mass Index, Body Shape Concern and Diet Restraint Status of Baccalaureate Nursing Students in Hong Kong

Mavis Tong Ying-Ting\*, Windy LEE Wai-Man and Michelle CHUNG Po-Po

School of Nursing and Health Studies, The Open University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

**Background:** Nurses are healthcare professionals well-equipped with health related knowledge, but they demonstrate unhealthy eating behavior. Long starvation period during work and heavy workload are associated with overeating and overweight. Diet restraint behavior might be demonstrated to maintain body shape. Nursing students share similar eating characteristics with nurses. Tertiary education institution is the final arena for dietary behavior modification.

**Methodology:** In a cross sectional survey done on baccalaureate nursing students in Hong Kong (n = 128) in 2018, participants' body mass index (BMI), body shape concern and diet restraint status were assessed. BMI was calculated from measured body weight and height. Body shape concern and diet restraint status were measured by self-administered Body Shape Concern Questionnaire (BSQ) and Diet Restraint Scale (RS).

**Results:** For BMI, 7% (n = 9), 68.8% (n = 88), 10.2% (n = 13) and 14.1% (n = 18) were underweight, normal, overweight and obese respectively. For body shape concern, 23.4% (n = 30) had no concern while 37.5% (n=48), 30.5% (n = 39) and 8.6% (n = 11) had mild, moderate and marked concern respectively. For diet restraint status, 27.3% (n =35) were diet restraint positive (have demonstrated diet restraint behavior) while 72.7% (n =93) were not.

**Conclusions:** More than 70% of the students were underweight or with normal BMI. Still more than half of them reported moderate to marked body shape concern. 27.3% of them were diet restraint positive. It merits input on dietetic health of baccalaureate nursing students.

### Biography:

Mavis Tong is a Senior Lecturer of the School of Nursing and Health Studies, The Open University of Hong Kong. She received her Bachelor of Nursing degree and Doctor of Nursing degree from the Nethersole School of Nursing, The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Dr. Tong's research interest focuses on dietary behavior, especially in intervention to promote dietary behavior change. She is member of several societies such as Hong Kong Society of Behavior Health. Dr. Tong has received several presentation award and scholarships in international conference and during her doctoral study.