



The Causal Relationship of Culture Oriented Tendency to Control Weight Based on Self Concept (Ideal and Real) among Overweight Girls Mediated by Alexithymia

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Abstract

The research was purposed to study causal relationship of culture oriented tendency to control weight based on self-concept (ideal and real) among overweight girls mediated by alexithymia. The statistical population consisted of all overweight girls referred to nutritional clinics in Ardabil. The sample encompassed 250 subjects whom were selected via convenient sampling procedure. The research method was descriptive of correlational one. To collect data Rogers' Self-Concept Scale (1938), Toronto Bagby et al.'s Alexithymia Scale (1994) and Dietary Adherence Scale (1994) were implemented. The data was analyzed by applying Pearson's correlation coefficient and path analysis, using SPSS-26 and AMOS-23 software. The results revealed that there was a direct positive and significant relationship between ideal self-concept and tendency to control weight, while there is a negative and significant relationship between real self-concept and tendency to control weight. The results of indirect correlation coefficient also suggested that alexithymia, as a mediating variable between the real self-concept and tendency to control weight, could negatively and significantly predict the tendency to control weight and positively and significantly predict the tendency to control weight in the relation between ideal self-concept and tendency to control weight. The results indicated an optimal goodness of fit of the model. Finally alexithymia as a mediating variable in the relationship between self-concept and the tendency to control weight can play an important role in controlling the weight of overweight girls.



Extended abstract

Introduction: In Iran, as a developing country facing the phenomenon of urbanization and industrialization, the prevalence of obesity and overweight has been high in recent years and increases with age. 70% of Iranians are obese or overweight. In various researches, the etiology of obesity includes various genetic, metabolic, environmental, and behavioral factors. Self-concept and body mass index have an inverse relationship. Overweight is defined as a risk factor for health, with excessive and abnormal fat. Researches have shown that one of the most important and influential psychological variables that can be effective in losing weight in overweight people is emotional indifference. Overweight individuals consistently reported higher levels of emotional dysregulation. So the research was purposed to study causal relationship of culture oriented tendency to control weight based on self-concept (ideal and real) among overweight girls mediated by alexithymia.

Method: The statistical population consisted of all overweight girls referred to nutritional clinics in Ardabil. The sample encompassed 250 subjects whom were selected via convenient sampling procedure. The research method was descriptive of correlational one. To collect data Rogers' Self-Concept Scale (1938), Toronto Bagby et al.'s Alexithymia Scale (1994) and Dietary Adherence Scale (1994) were implemented. The data was analyzed by applying Pearson's correlation coefficient and path analysis, using SPSS-26 and AMOS-23 software.

Results: The results revealed that there was a direct positive and significant relationship between ideal self-concept and tendency to control weight, while there is a negative and significant relationship between real self-concept and tendency to control weight. The results of indirect correlation coefficient also suggested that alexithymia, as a mediating variable between the real self-concept and tendency to control weight, could negatively and significantly predict the tendency to control weight and positively and significantly predict the tendency to control weight in the relation between ideal self-concept and tendency to control weight. The results indicated an optimal goodness of fit of the model.

Conclusion: Overweight is a multidimensional phenomenon that is influenced by biological, psychological, social and cultural factors and mutually affects these factors. Therefore, in order to correctly understand overweight and the factors involved in weight control, it is necessary to examine these factors in relation to each other. As an example of culture with direct and indirect effects on psychological variables, its role should be investigated first, and then by providing solutions that fit the cultural conditions of people, it is possible to deal with excess weight in different groups of society in a suitable way. In explaining the role of culture and society in the prevalence of overweight and behaviors related to weight control, it can be inferred as follows; currently, cultural factors have had destructive effects on psychological variables, including self-concept and regulation of people's emotions, which has led to a high prevalence of overweight and the inability of people to control their weight. It should be mentioned that by paying special attention to cultural factors and their role in the formation of various psychological disorders, they can be used in order to improve the health of the society. Finally, it is recommended that by providing the necessary educational platform to provide practical training based on the correct regulation of emotions and increasing positive self-concept to increase the



tendency to control weight by people in the society, necessary planning should be done in order to reduce the cost of treatment that obesity and Excess weight can be imposed on the country, it should be prevented. Also, due to the determining role of psychological variables in other interventions aimed at weight control by nutritionists and sports trainers; It is recommended to use an integrated approach that includes the effective psychological factors of self-concept and proper regulation of emotions; It can be used to increase the effectiveness of weight control diet programs. Finally, alexithymia as a mediating variable in the relationship between self-concept and the tendency to control weight can play an important role in controlling the weight of overweight girls.

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