

Perception of Reproductive Age Group Females of a Central University in India about Body Image

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Abstract : Background: Self-perception of an individual about own body has a strong influence on their food preference and thereby on their nutritional status. Body image is gaining importance in social theory. Globally, women in particular seem to be favour of one ideal body type (Viz A slim, tall and perfectly proportionate body). Beauty and body image ideals among research scholars can play a significant influence on their own actions. Objectives: 1) To assess perception of study subjects about body image; 2)To analyze the relationship between body image and residential status of study subjects. Material and Method: 176 female research scholars of Banaras Hindu University were selected through multistage sampling. They were interviewed with pre designed and pre-tested proforma about area of residence and perception about body image. Result: As much as 86.4% subjects were happy with the way they looked whereas 83.0% subjects considered themselves as attractive. In case of 13.6%, 27.3%, 31.8%, 14.2% and 13.1% subjects, best-described body shapes were thin, normal, curvy, athletic and overweight, respectively. Area of residence was significantly ($p < 0.05$) associated with perception of attractiveness and description of body shape. Conclusion: In spite of varied description of body image, majority of subjects had positive perception about their body image.

Keywords : attractiveness, body image, body shape, nutritional status

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