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PATTANAWADEE PATTANATHABURT: BODY IMAGE SATISFACTION AND DISORDERED
 EATING BEHAVIOR AMONG THAI ACTRESSES. THESIS ADVISOR: ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
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Thai soap opera TV actresses were questionable of having risk of eating disorders. Because of public perception on beauty as well as occupation competition, they made high afford to control their weight and shape seriously. This research aimed to measure body image satisfaction levels and disordered eating behaviors and their association among Thai soap opera TV actresses. The subjects of 246 actresses aged 14 – 49 years old who performed during 2001-2005 in Thai free TVs were randomly selected from 534 actresses in databases for completing self-governed structured questionnaires. Socio-demographic questionnaire, Eating Attitude Test (EAT-26), and Body Shape Questionnaire (BSQ) were the main tools in questionnaire completion. Moreover, 15 actresses who were classified by EAT-26 score with having eating disorders were also interviewed in depth to gain more qualitative data. Most of the actresses were Thai (80.9%), in the ages of teen and young adult (85.0%), single (84.2%), and had no children (89.4%). Most of the study population were well-educated with 83.7% studying in universities or obtained higher degrees. About half of the actresses had an annual income below 500,000 Baht (about 13,000 USD). For the occupational factors, 95.1% were still in the entertainment business in the past on year, 42.3% played the role of ‘Main Support’ most, 34.6% played ‘Polite’ character most, and 55.7% admitted that beauty was necessary for their roles. The average year in entertainment business of the study population was 9.1 years with average of 2.7 soap opera shows per year. The result showed that, 77.6% of the actresses were underweight according to WHO. However, 64.4% of the underweight group wanted to be thinner. 20.7% of the actresses had normal weight, but 92.2% of the normal group also wanted to be thinner. According to BSQ score, 18.7% of the actresses were rated as very low satisfaction and had high risk of eating disorder while the rest were rated as normal satisfaction. This result was consistent with the EAT-26 score, 17.9% of the actresses were rated as having high risk of being eating disorder, and the rest of them were rated as normal. There were also high correlation between body image satisfaction and eating disorder, especially between BSQ score and EAT-26 score ($r = 0.782$, $p < 0.01$). The actresses who were Thai-East-Asian, tended to have more eating disorder risk than actresses who were Thai, Thai-European, or Thai-Indian ($p=0.002$). The actresses who had children tended to have less risk of eating disorder than actresses who did not have children ($p=0.013$). The actresses who were still in entertainment business had lower body image satisfaction level than the actresses who were not in the business ($p=0.039$) in the past one year. The study also found that the longer actresses were in entertainment business, the more they had normal body image satisfaction level ($p=0.012$) and the less risk of having disordered eating behaviors ($p=0.005$). The results from the qualitative interview also supported the above results. It was found that a significant number of the actresses may indeed had eating disorders and at least were underweight while not having self-realization. They were scarified themselves to be thinner for the occupation purpose and public expectation. It was also found that significant people such as producers, directors, had influence on actresses’ body image satisfaction and eating behavior. The recommendation of the study is that the actresses and influential people in entertainment business were needed to be better educated on health risk and eating disorders, both short-term and long-term effect.

Field of study Health Systems Development

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