

**EATING ATTITUDE AND BODY IMAGE
PERCEPTION AMONG UCSI FEMALE
STUDENTS TAKING HEALTH SCIENCES
RELATED PROGRAMS & NON HEALTH
SCIENCES RELATED PROGRAMS**

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2010

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to compare the eating attitude, nutritional status and body image perception between the female students taking health sciences related programs and non health sciences related programs in UCSI University. A sample of 124 female university students aged 18-24 completed the anthropometric measurements and a self administered questionnaire, which incorporated questions on demographic data, lifestyle practices which included meal skipping, fast food consumption and eating attitude by using Eating Attitude Test-26 and body image perception using Figure Rating Scale. In the result obtained, eating disorder risk was more prevalent among students taking non health sciences related programs (33.9%) compare to the students taking health sciences related programs (27.4%). However, no significant difference was found between the two groups of students. Subjects taking health sciences related programs had a significant higher median BMI of 19.95 and median waist circumference of 69.74 than the subjects taking non health sciences related programs (19.19 and 68.86 respectively). Health sciences related programs students had a healthier eating patterns and lifestyle habits with higher percentage of consistent meal time and consumed vegetables daily where more non health sciences related programs students practiced meal skipping frequently and consuming fast food frequently. There was no correlation found between EAT -26 score and BMI of both the two groups of students. Non health sciences related programs subjects had a larger percentage of at risk eating attitude. Body image perception did not differ significantly between the two education groups of subjects. However, both health sciences related programs and non health sciences related programs students tend to perceive their body size bigger than actual. In conclusion, no significant difference found in eating attitude, lifestyle practice and body image between subject groups. However, non health sciences related programs students had more negative eating patterns and tend to idealize bigger body size and overestimate their body weight as compared to health sciences related programs students.