

Perception of healthcare providers on their body image: Am I fat or fit?

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Body self-image is an essential issue among healthcare providers (HCPs) that requires attention and intervention. Understanding body image is crucial in defining the social and psychological consequences of obesity, the medical effects of psychological issues, and psychological factors that contribute to the aetiology of obesity. This study aimed to determine the perception of body image among excess body mass index (BMI) HCPs in Terengganu. **Materials and Methods:** A cross sectional study was conducted among 208 HCPs with excess BMI. The list of HCPs with mass index of 25 kg/m² and more, was obtained from Health screening records in Terengganu districts and the state health department. Study criteria exclude those who were pregnant, working less than 1 year and not available during data collection. The perception of Body self-image is assessed using a validated Malay Version of Body Self-Image Questionnaire-Short Form (Malay version BSIQ-SF). Scoring for negative affect and height dissatisfaction were between 1 to 40, and 1 to 15, respectively. The higher scores indicate a higher degree of body dissatisfaction. Meanwhile, the scoring for attractiveness evaluation and physical functionality awareness was between 1 to 30 and 1 to 20, respectively; a higher score indicates higher body satisfaction and higher awareness of maintaining good physical functionality. Data were entered and analysed using SPSS version 25. **Results:** The study participants were 150 women and 58 men with a mean (SD) age of 39.6 (7.17) years. We found that the mean (SD) score for the domain negative affect, attractive evaluation, physical functionality awareness and height dissatisfaction were 27.2 (7.73), 18.5 (5.21), 15.8 (3.48) and 8.6 (3.79) respectively. **Conclusion:** Healthcare providers in Terengganu showed dissatisfaction toward one's own height and their body image on negative emotional well-being. However, they were satisfied with their appearance and health fitness, and also had good awareness to maintain good physical functionality. These findings showed that there is a need for an intervention program focusing on healthy lifestyles to improve body image perception among healthcare providers.