The Relationship Between Self-Esteem, Body Size, and Dietary Intake in College Females

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The objective of this study was to determine if self esteem in college age females correlates with body size, total caloric intake, or dietary nutrient composition. Self esteem was estimated using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale in college females enrolled in an elective nutrition class at the University of Vermont in 2009-2010. Height and Weight were measured using a Dectecto Scale and Body Mass Index (BMI) was calculated as (weight in kg/height meters^2). The students' energy intake (TDEI) and dietary nutrient composition were determined from 3-day food diaries. The data were analyzed using PASW-SPSS software and Pearsons correlation matrix. It was found that low self esteem is inversely correlated to BMI and TDEI. There was also an inverse relationship between self esteem and the intake of percent fat and percent carbohydrate. However, self esteem was positively correlated with the consumption of percent protein and percent alcohol. The results indicate that in female college students low self esteem is closely, but not significantly ($P < 0.05$) related to increased body size and total daily energy intake.