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Factors Affecting Dietary Choices and Attitudes Towards Nutrition Among Youth in

Hong Kong

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Abstract:

**Objectives:** To study the factors affecting dietary choices and attitudes towards health and nutrition of college age young adults (between the ages of 18-24) in Hong Kong. **Method:** Ninety-two surveys were completed by an even mix of local Hong Kong students and visiting international students primarily based at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. The data was analyzed to form comparisons between the two groups of students. Further in-depth interviews and literary research analysis was conducted to strengthen the analysis and derive more comprehensive conclusions. **Results:** It can be asserted that local Hong Kong students share similar attitudes with international students in relation to healthy diets, including efforts to consider nutrition labels, limit excessive intake of certain food groups (high sugar, fat, salt), and views that healthy food is inexpensive. However, it can be seen that local Hong Kong students seem to be uniquely affected by factors such as limited nutritional knowledge, inaccurate or negative perceptions about weight and negative weight loss behaviors, as well as challenges in relation to perceived lack of time and availability of healthy food options. **Discussion:** It is clear that a stronger focus on formal nutritional education in Hong Kong amongst 18-24 year old students is key in addressing a lot of the issues highlighted.

My research study aims to explore the factors that affect the dietary choices of youth in Hong Kong. Here, ‘youth’ is defined as college age young adults between the ages of 18 to 24. The literature on nutrition that I have examined explores many factors that could influence dietary choices and consumption of nutritional food among young adults, including ‘food culture’ in the home, social norms, and knowledge and awareness of food and nutrition information. However the body of research on this topic is largely focused on case studies in the United States. There is very limited research on the topic conducted in Asia, specifically Hong Kong. My research will attempt to fill this void, and examine if the variables identified by existing literature as determinants of nutritional/ healthy food consumption (FVC) among young adults holds true in the context of Hong Kong.
Previous research in the US (e.g. CDC 2007a) has provided insight into what variables are expected to be related to nutritional/healthy food consumption. It is clear that demographics may impact the consumption of fruits and vegetables, such as age and gender. For example, a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) determined that “adults between 18 to 24 years ate the fewest vegetables, with almost 80% reporting they regularly do not consume any vegetables” (CDC 2007a). In addition, research has shown differences in consumption of fruits and vegetables by gender, with consumption typically lower among men in comparison to women (CDC 2007a).

Generally, it is evident that consumption of nutritional/healthy food as well as fruits and vegetables goes hand in hand with a larger awareness and appreciation of organic, local and sustainably sourced food. For example, Jennifer Pelletier and Melissa Laska in their paper “Positive Attitudes toward Organic, Local and Sustainable Foods Are Associated with Higher Dietary Quality among Young Adults” identifies that young adults who place high importance on alternative production practices of food also had higher levels of food and vegetable consumption, and lower levels of fast food consumption. Their study, conducted in the US, points to a correlation between consumption of high nutrition foods such as fruits and vegetables, and awareness of the value of organic and sustainable eating practices.

However, at the same time it could be asserted that the variable of ‘awareness and appreciation of organic, local and sustainable foods’ ties into an underlying factor of socioeconomic status. For example, Adam Drenowski in his paper, “Fat and Sugar: An Economic Analysis” asserts that economic variables, such as individual income, may influence the intake of fruits and
vegetables, since high income could indicate a better access to nutrition information compared to lower income households. As he puts it, “[l]ower income consumers consume lower-quality diets than do higher income consumers. The lowering of energy costs ($/MJ) through technological innovation has been most marked for foods containing added sugars and fat…Obesity in the United States and similar societies may be a socioeconomic, as opposed to a medical, problem and one that is related to diet structure and diet costs” (Drenowski, 2). In general, Drenoskwi asserts that placing a higher value on labor market time leads to decrease in the time spent in the household, and thus, less time can be devoted to preparing meals. For example, research shows that working college students might buy more take-out foods or use ready-to-prepare entrees (Capps, Tedford, and Havlicek 1985, Chou, Grossman, and Saffer 2004).

On a parallel vein, some researchers assert that the larger notion of ‘social norms’ and ‘perceived food culture’ could affect the consumption of nutritional/healthy food among young adults. For example, Robinson, Fleming and Higgs identify that the perception of the eating behaviors of others, or “perceived eating norms” influence eating behavior in adults. Robinson et al. assert that adults ate more fruits and vegetables when they were led to believe that their peers had eaten a large amount of fruits and vegetables. This view is mirrored by Dan Graham and Jennifer Pelletier in their paper “Social Norms and Dietary Behaviors Among Young Adults”, who assert that the eating habits of friends and family play a significant role in the food and vegetable consumption of young adults. As they put it, the “[p]erception that family and friends eat healthfully was positively related to the outcomes of fruit and vegetable purchasing, preparation, and consumption using linear regression” (Graham et al., 3). A similar view is established by Heidi Wengreen, in her paper “Can ‘Social Norms’ be Used to Influence Fruit and Vegetable
Consumption Among College Students”, who asserts that social norms theory can be used as a framework for the examination.

Furthermore, this variable of ‘social norms’ which is identified as a determinants of fruit and vegetable consumption among young adults can be said to fall under the overarching notion of ‘food culture’, which Christine Schroeter or Lisa House identify as a key variable in fruit and vegetable consumption. The two researchers define the term food culture as the “measurable factors that describe taste preferences, food choices and familiarity with foods” (Schroeter, House 2). For example, in their paper “Fruit and Vegetable Consumption of College Students: What is the Role of Food Culture?”, Schroeter and House attempt to understand the correlation between culture and fruit and vegetable consumption by contrasting the levels of fruit and vegetable intake while at college and while with family. They use a Tobit model to identify assert that “family consumption of fruits was highly predictive of the individual's consumption of fruits” (Schroater, House, 13). As they put it, “for each unit increase in the reported consumption of fruits (vegetables) with the family, the respondents' fruit (vegetable) consumption at school increased by 0.65 (0.30) units compared to the base consumption level of 1.95 (1.82) times of fruit intake per day” (Schroater, House, 13). These findings are reinforced by one of their other papers in which they determine the impact of demographics, dietary and health knowledge, and food culture on fruit and vegetable consumption of college students in Arkansas and Florida. They assert that food cultures significantly impacts consumption of fruits and vegetables, a finding which emphasizes the need to target cultural aspects when developing effective and efficient management of agribusiness firms.
With regard to factors connected to college, researchers find that many college students engage in behaviors that decrease the likelihood of optimal health and increase the likelihood of overweight and obesity (Huang et al., 2003; Racette, Deusinger, Strube, Highstein, & Deusinger, 2008). Furthermore, studies that have looked beyond the freshman year have demonstrated that weight gain continues throughout years of college study (Racette et al., 2008). Even if students do not gain weight, the nutritional value of their food is not optimal. For example, a 2007 research study asserts that “only one in three college students consume a diet consistent with national recommendations across a variety of food groups” (Kolodinsky, Harvey-Berino, Berlin, Johnson, & Reynolds, 2007). In addition, it has been asserted that college students’ fruit and vegetable intake and physical activity deteriorate over time (Huang et al., 2003).

Finally, research suggests that the living situation of college students also plays an important role in the nutrition behaviors of college students. Meg Nelson, in her paper, “Changes in Eating and Physical Activity Behaviors Across Seven Semesters of College: Living On or Off Campus Matters”, asserts that while few college students consumed fruits and vegetables or exercised at optimal levels during the seven semesters surveyed, and even these levels declined significantly from the first to the seventh semester, for both of these findings, living off campus exacerbated the problem. Similar variables of location and convenience have been identified by Dan Graham and Jennifer Pelletier who identify several other factors that limit fruit and vegetable consumption which include access barriers such as lack of availability of fruits and vegetables in the neighborhood as well as personal barriers such as the lack of cooking skills.
Therefore, it can be seen that there is a large body of research that identifies variables connected to the consumption of nutritional/healthy food, and fruits and vegetables among young adults and college students. These include awareness and appreciation of local and organic food, socioeconomic status, gender, social norms and food culture, whether or not the young adults go to college, as well as their living situation. However, a lot of this research has been carried out in the context of the US. My research will attempt to identify which of these variables are applicable to the context of Hong Kong.
Methodology

The primary source of data for my research was through the completion of online and physical surveys by students at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and other college-age students in the surrounding areas. The survey attempted to grasp the nutritional knowledge and dietary practices of students as well as participants’ demographics and background. The questions for the survey were compiled from previous research studies in the field including the National Health and Nutritional Examination Survey (NHNES), Matthew R. Major’s research study, “Dietary Habits and Knowledge of College Age Students”, Paula Devine, Katrina Lloyd and Anne Marie Gray’s study, “University Student’s Food Attitude and Behavior Survey”. Finally, Courtney E. McKinney’s study “Assessment of Dietary Behaviors of College Students Participating in the Health Promotion Program BUCS: Live Well” was used to compile questions to assess the nutritional efficacy of students. The survey was distributed through listservs, with the help of Professor Jimmy Fung, professor in the Environmental Science department at HKUST. I also collected completed surveys by distributing physical copies to students in dining halls. In addition, personal contacts were used to distribute the survey to students not on campus and non-university students in the larger Hong Kong area. The information gathered from the survey enabled me to make an assessment of the nutritional awareness of college age students in Hong Kong, their dietary practices, and nutritional bucs. In order to analyze the differences between local Hong Kong students and their college-age counterparts from other countries, I also collected data from 18-24 year old international students doing a summer program at
HKUST. These students were primarily from the US, Europe and Canada. I was able to use the results of the survey to conduct comparisons between the international students and students in Hong Kong. The international visiting students were asked to answer the questions based on their experiences in Hong Kong, in order to provide a framework for comparison, by keeping the environment between local and international students constant, thereby highlighting the differences in attitudes and approaches based primarily on culture. Finally, certain selected students were approached for more in-depth interviews regarding their survey answers in order to gain a more comprehensive qualitative analysis. My survey was completed by 92 students, out of which 47 were Hong Kong locals and students living in Hong Kong for more than two years, while 45 of the survey respondents were considered international visiting students, who were in Hong Kong for the summer.
Findings: Attitudes towards Nutrition

Through my research, I discovered that, on many different levels, local Hong Kong students share very similar attitudes and approaches to international students from around the world with regard to approaches and attitudes towards the nutritional values of their diets, including efforts to eat healthy, and attempts to eliminate unhealthy foods. For example, I found that a majority of both local and international students actively try to avoid eating high sugar, high fat, and high salt foods in their daily diets. The figures, which were almost identical between Hong Kong locals and international students, showed a similar trend that the 18-24 year old students actively made an effort to control their diet towards limiting intake of excess sugar, fat and salt. The following graphs illustrate this trend, showing the values as percentages of each group in order to provide a more accurate comparison between the two groups of students.

Chart 1.1: Percentage of 18-24 year olds actively trying to avoid eating high fat content foods
The above graphs demonstrate that in a majority of cases, students aged 18-24 actively attempt to reduce their intake of high fat and high sugar foods. While these numbers are largely similar between Hong Kong local students and international students, in fact, it is possible to see that with each nutrient group, there are slightly higher percentages of Hong Kong locals actively avoiding the excess intake, in comparison to the international students. Furthermore, when it comes to salt intake, Hong Kong students still show a majority actively avoiding excess intake of
salt, whereas international students show a minority that try to avoid salt intake. These findings demonstrate to me that Hong Kong students care about the nutritional value of the food they consume, on a similar scale to students from around the world. Although both groups also contain a large percentage of students who do not actively avoid excessive intake of unhealthy foods, the data illustrates that there is a consistent majority of students between both groups that do.

In fact, this finding is succinctly summarized the following graph which illustrates that an overwhelming majority of students, both Hong Kong locals and international students care about the nutritional facts of the food they consume. When asked the question, “does knowing the nutritional facts of the food you consume affect what you eat”, an overwhelming 75.5% of Hong Kong locals and 80% of international students answered ‘yes’.

This trend of a majority of young students actively controlling food intake to consider nutritional value, and efforts to consume healthy food continues for both international students and Hong Kong locals when questioned about the content and interpretation of nutritional labels, as well as perceived costs of eating healthy. As the following graphs illustrate, a majority of both
Hong Kong locals and international students agreed that they took nutritional labels on foods into consideration when deciding what kinds of food to consume, and did not find these labels difficult to interpret.

![Chart 1.5: 18-24 year olds responding to the statement “I often read the nutrition labels of food products”]

![Chart 1.6: 18-24 year olds responding to the statement “The nutrition information on food labels is difficult to interpret”]

It is clear that Hong Kong local students and international students of the same age consider the nutritional value of their food, through reading nutrition information on labels. The nutrition labels displayed on foods in Hong Kong is different from nutrition labels in most Western
countries, which is why the question of interpretation was considered important.\textsuperscript{1} However, it is clear that a majority of both Hong Kong locals and international students did not find that nutrition labels were difficult to interpret.

Similarly, Hong Kong local students and international students agreed that healthy foods were not expensive, with 53.1% of local students and 50% of international students disagreeing with a statement that ‘healthy foods cost too much’.

![Chart 1.6: 18-24 year olds responding to the statement “Healthy foods cost too much”](image)

Finally, an important factor that I wished to consider when analyzing the dietary choices of these students was self-efficacy in relation to nutritional choices. In her paper “Assessment of Dietary Behaviors of College Students Participating in the Health Promotion Program BUCS: Live Well”, Courtney E. McKinney defines self-efficacy as “a situation-specific confidence on one’s ability to successfully adopt a behavior or accomplish a task successfully without relapse” (McKinney, 21). McKinney asserts that it is “the individual’s perception about accompl-

\textsuperscript{1} Food products from Hong Kong and mainland use Chinese Nutrient Reference Values, while those imported from other overseas countries may use different reference values, such as Daily Value (DV) adopted in the US and Canada, or Daily Intake (DI) in Australia. See: http://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/faq/faq_14.html
The behavior change, not the individual’s actual ability to do so, that determines how well that individual achieves and maintains these changes” (21). Following through with this definition, I was interested in students’ confidence in being able to stick to certain dietary choices regardless of what food was available to them. Through my research, I found that only a minority of both local Hong Kong and international students have high self-efficacy in relation to their food choices. Only 20% of international students and 31.9% of local Hong Kong students asserted that they had high confidence in their ability to eat a healthy diet regardless of the food that is available to them. It is clear that although local Hong Kong students and international students are similar in this aspect, a large percentage of both groups feel low self-efficacy when it comes to their dietary choices and confidence in their ability to make healthy choices in situations where healthy food is not necessarily conveniently available.

![Chart 1.6: 18-24 year olds responding to the statement “I am confident in my ability to eat a healthy diet regardless of what food is available to me”](chart)

**The Differences: Nutritional Knowledge, Perceptions About Weight and Busyness**

So far, we have seen that local Hong Kong students and international students share many similarities in their dietary choices and attitudes towards eating healthy, nutritious food. On one
hand, it is clear that a majority of both international students and local Hong Kong students make conscious attempts to eliminate excess of certain food groups (high fat, high sugar etc.), attempt to understand and consider nutrition values of foods, and make healthy choices in consumption. In addition, a majority of both groups of students agree that they read and consider nutrition labels on foods, and disagree that healthy foods cost too much. However, at the same time, a majority of both international students and students from Hong Kong have low self-efficacy when it comes to healthy eating. They assert that the choices that they make are highly dependent on the food that is available to them. If it is only unhealthy food choices that are available to them, students lack the confidence to assert that they will still eat healthy. Even with all these similarities, within my research, there were some distinct differences between the international student group and local students that stood out, which were in relation to nutritional knowledge and perceptions about weight.

For example, I found that while international students and local Hong students shared the same desires to eat healthy foods, in fact, a larger percentage of international students had more accurate knowledge of the recommended intake amounts for certain food groups, when compared with local Hong Kong students. This ‘knowledge’ was determined based on questions that asked students to ascertain if a certain value (in grams) of a specific food group, either fat, sugar or salt, was a lot, a little, or an acceptable amount, in a given sample of food of 100 grams. They were also given the option to respond that they didn’t know the answer. Their responses were then compared against internationally accepted intake amounts for these food groups\(^2\) to deter-

\(^2\) Based on dietary guidelines and recommendations by the World Health Organization (WHO). See: http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs394/en/
mine if they had ‘accurate knowledge’, if they answered correctly, or ‘inaccurate or no knowledge’, if they either answered incorrectly or answered that they didn’t know. It was clear that a higher percentage of international students had ‘accurate knowledge’ in each category. This was especially apparent for the category of recommended amount of salt intake, where only 22.99% of local Hong Kong students had ‘accurate knowledge’ of the recommended amount of salt intake, in strong contrast to the 82.9% of international students.

Chart 1.6: 18-24 year olds knowledge on recommended intake for sodium levels in foods.

Chart 1.6: 18-24 year olds knowledge on recommended intake for fat levels in foods.
Although the values for knowledge on recommended sugar intake and fat intake showed less discrepancy between the international students and local Hong Kong students, it was clear that a significantly higher percentage of international students in each category had more accurate knowledge on these values as well, when compared to local Hong Kong students. This is particularly interesting given that a majority of both groups of students answered that they consider these kinds of recommended intake amounts and look at nutrition labels when deciding what kinds of food to consume.

Another significant difference between local Hong Kong students and international students in the survey results was with regard to perception of their own weight and body mass Index (BMI). In the survey, participants were asked to self-describe whether they were underweight, a healthy weight or overweight. Participants were also asked to report if they were at
present trying to lose weight, trying to gain weight, maintain their same weight or doing nothing about their weight. Participants also voluntarily reported their height and weight, which I used to calculate their actual body mass index (BMI) and determine if they were considered underweight, a healthy weight, or overweight, according to international guidelines.

Upon comparing participants’ self-estimated weight status to their BMI determined weight category, I found that a majority of Hong Kong students overestimated their own weight, self-identifying as overweight even if they were a healthy weight or underweight, while this percentage was significantly less among international students. Similarly, I found the same trend in relation to the question of whether participants were attempting to gain weight, lose weight, maintain their weight or do nothing about their weight. I found that a high percentage of local students had negative perceptions of their own weights, determined by the fact that they were trying to lose weight even if they were a healthy weight or in some cases underweight. This percentage was significantly less among the international student group.

![Chart 1.6: Percentage of 18-24 year olds with inaccurate (negative) perceptions about their weight status](chart.png)
Finally, one other difference that I observed between the group of international participants’ surveyed and the local Hong Kong students was in relation to the perception that they were too ‘busy’ to eat healthy foods. I found that while a majority of both groups of participants disagreed with the statement that they were “too busy to eat healthy foods”, it was only 47.9% of local Hong Kong students that disagreed, while the international student group showed an overwhelming majority of disagreement, with 72.5% of students. This sentiment of being ‘too busy’ to eat healthy food was echoed by survey participants in individual interviews, when they stated that convenience due to limited time available was one of the primary factors that affected their choices in food. They would make more nutritious choices, if they had more time. Uni Tsang, a student who just graduated the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology asserts that his busy schedule, and the fact that he lived on campus greatly affected his ability to eat fruits and vegetables and more nutritious food. He states: “[t]he choices available to me on campus and in the surrounding area is very limited”.

Chart 1.6: Percentage of 18-24 year olds responding to the statement “I am too busy to eat healthy foods”
Discussion and Analysis

Based on my research, it is evident that a majority of local students in Hong Kong have a desire to eat healthy, nutritious food. They share this desire with a majority of international students surveyed, from around the world. Furthermore, as predicted at the beginning of my study, Hong Kong students seem to reaffirm many research studies conducted in the US, confirming that factors such as living situation, awareness and appreciation of local and organic food, socioeconomic status, gender, social norms and food culture affect their dietary choices and consumption of healthy and nutritious food. However, it seems that students in Hong Kong lack several tools that allow them to achieve their health and weight goals, which include but are not limited to: lack of adequate nutritional knowledge, unrealistic or negative perceptions about their own health and body image, and pressures and issues faced due to lack of time and ready availability of healthy food options.

The lack of nutritional knowledge shown by a majority of local Hong Kong students at the university is symptomatic of a lack of formal education on issues relating to healthy eating and nutrition. In individual interviews, students reported that although they were given lessons in primary school, and although the government sometimes aired short infomercials on the benefits of healthy eating, they did not have any recent education on the subject, or information to guide their choices. While a majority of the students interviewed admit to doing personal research on the subject and watching documentaries to gain more information to support their choices³, some

³ Interviews with Terry Lee ('17), and Shangyi Jiang ('16): Transcripts will be attached in Appendix
students do not have a factual basis for the seemingly ‘healthy’ choices that they make. For example, although senior year student Uni Tsang affirms that he often reads nutrition labels for amount of sugar in drinks, he admits that he is not confident what the recommended daily intake value is for sugar. He asserts that the last time he studied about nutrition, it was in primary school, and he cannot remember a lot of it. He states “I just make an estimate, and based on the percentage of sugar in a drink, but I am not confident about the actual values.”

In fact, this issue of limited knowledge of health and nutrition facts is quite common amongst the young population in Hong Kong. According to a report released by the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Group (HKFYG), relatively few young people in Hong Kong practice health-promoting behaviors (Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, 1999). The report identifies that only 58% of young people exercise regularly; and that males are more eager to perform physical exercise than females. Furthermore, only 68 and 60% of males and females, respectively, take breakfast or eat fruits daily. The report asserts that the consequences of this kind of behavior is significant: since, according to information provided by the World Health Organization, although these behaviors do not have an immediate visible effect, they create issues later on in life, which are sometimes irreversible. (World Health Organization, 1996).

Another finding of my research was that it is clear that a majority of local students surveyed in Hong Kong, at least at the university where the research was primarily conducted, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, are different from students around the world in that they believe that they are “too busy to eat healthy foods”. This notion is interesting to consider, since it reflects the availability of healthy food choices to the students. In the survey

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4 Interview with Uni Tsang (’16): Transcripts attached in Appendix
conducted, 29.2% of local Hong Kong students affirmed that ‘habit or routine’ was a primary factor that they considered when deciding what or where to eat, as opposed to only 9% of international students. This suggests that they frequently make the same choices with regard to food, and convenience is a key factor that affects their choices. Furthermore, in individual interviews, students reflected that a majority of the time, their primary concern when deciding what to eat was the limited time that they usually felt was available to them for meals, and therefore would choose foods that were readily available to them. However, the issue that they faced was that foods that were readily available to them would not necessarily be considered ‘healthy options’.

A majority of students surveyed and interviewed during the study asserted that the food that was conveniently available to them on campus and in the surrounding area could not necessarily be considered healthy food options. Students assert that the food available to them on campus, and the fact that they do not make their own food limits the options of healthy food available to them. When considering the fact that a majority of these students also declared low self-efficacy and confidence in the face of limited options, it is not surprising that students are not able to follow through with their desires and intentions to make healthy food choices. Furthermore, it is possible that these challenges of limited knowledge, repeated unhealthy choices due to limited time and options lead to inaccurate and negative perceptions about their own bodies.

However, in individual interviews, young individuals in Hong Kong attributed the negative perceptions of body image and unhealthy weight loss goals to external pressures from media, peers, and their own families. Shangyi Jiang, a final year student at the Hong Kong Universi-
ty of Science Technology moved to Hong Kong after having grown up in mainland China, and having lived for four years in Boston, USA. She asserts that she experienced changes in her own perception of body image and weight when she moved to Hong Kong. She states: “[a] large part of it is to do with sexual appeal—boys in Hong Kong prefer smaller girls. At the same time, Asian media tends to prefer girls that are really slim. Even if chubby girls are shown in the media and TV shows, they are portrayed in a comedic and parodic light”. Sing Lee and Antoinette Lee, in their paper “Disordered Eating and its Psychosocial Correlates Among Chinese Adolescent Females in Hong Kong”, echo this sentiment when they assert that “fat phobic attitudes, body dissatisfaction and a propensity for weight control behaviour are prevalent among female adolescents in Hong Kong” (Lee, Lee, 181). Furthermore, they suggest that while Chinese people have traditionally emphasized that attractiveness is based on the beauty of the facial features rather than body shape, recent research shows that young Chinese women in Hong Kong share the same ideal of slimness as Caucasian women in western societies, although relatively few engage in serious dieting (Lee & Lee, 1996). The majority of Hong Kong females reported that they ‘felt fat’ and wanted to lose weight despite the average body weight being low by western standards (Lee & Lee, 1996). They affirm that the traditional positive view is no longer accepted by modern Hong Kong Chinese, with body shape and physical fitness taking precedence over facial attractiveness (Lee & Lee, 2000). It may be possible to attribute these perceptions to the negative body image and negative weight loss behaviors that seem to be highly prevalent among the local Hong Kong youth surveyed. Furthermore, it could be said the more prevalent these kinds of behaviors seem to be, the more they persist. As cited earlier in my literature review, Jennifer Pel-
letier assert that ‘young adults’ dietary behaviors appear to reflect their perceptions of normative behavior, particularly among friends’ (Pelletier, 21).

It is clear that there are many prominent trends and factors that affect the dietary choices and eating habits of young adults in Hong Kong. It can be asserted that in order to address some of the issues connected to unhealthy dietary choices, attention needs to be paid to strengthening formal education on the issue, and creating awareness on healthy eating habits and body image.
Works Cited


