



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Experiences in Healthy Dieting of Male College Students with Obesity in Korea

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Abstract

Objectives: The purpose of this study was to describe and understand experiences of healthy dieting in male college students with obesity.

Methods: The interview data were collected from nine male students and analyzed by using descriptive phenomenology of Colaizzi. The procedural steps described the phenomenon of interest, collected participants' descriptions of the phenomenon, extracted the meaning of significant statements, organized the meanings into clusters, wrote exhaustive descriptions, and then incorporated data into an exhaustive description.

Results: The findings in 246 restatements, 47 constructed meanings, 31 themes, eight theme clusters, and four categories were deduced. The four categories were "Uneasiness at interpersonal relationships", "Developing durability in dieting strategies", "Practicing healthy diets based on information", and "Perceived on healthy diets as a whole health support strategies".

Conclusion: This study described experiences in healthy dieting of male college students who were discharged from military services. These findings have important implications for understanding healthy dieting in young men and must be considered in developing health promotion in youth.

1. Introduction

Recently, concerns about disease prevention and health promotion have led to trying to resolve problems of obesity. Health problems of obesity have been impacted by socioeconomic development [1]. Especially, obesity has been a preceding factor of cardiovascular diseases, chronic conditions, and cancers [2]. Therefore, our society has a new view that obesity itself is a disease.

According to Korean Health Statistics, the percentage of obese adults has been increasing. A 2011 survey

showed that 31.9% adults among the total population were obese [3]. In particular, a body mass index (BMI) > 30 kg/m² was seen in the greatest percentage of young men among all of the population. This revealed that obesity leads to a risk of disease in a young population. It was reported that domestic young people had a high subjective perception on obesity, but physical activity was continuously low [3].

Korean literature on healthy dieting activities for young college adults reviews practices on dieting [4,5], lifestyle [6], and motivation [7]. Psychosocial factors on

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dieting practices were identified. Regardless of sex, dieting has been a concern for young people, but preceding literature usually focused on dieting practices for female college students. A related article reported that female's healthy dieting was the process of developing self-competence by a qualitative approach [8].

In addition, literature from abroad reported the relation of physical fitness and academic achievement [9] and adiposity and metabolic risk factors [10]. Qualitative reports referred to determinants of weight control behaviors [11], psychosocial and environmental determinants [12], and barriers and enablers [13]. Therefore, we knew it was mainly due to activity of diet and moving that was contributed by psychosocial effects.

In the case of male college students, an increase of weight reflected a risk of metabolic syndrome [14], and higher BMI, higher levels of blood pressure and cholesterol [15].

From these perspectives, this paper focused on male college students. The aim of this paper was to describe experiences of healthy dieting from their perspective.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Design

Colaizzi's descriptive phenomenology, a qualitative exploratory design, was used for this study [16]. Colaizzi's method has been used for identifying common characteristics in health dieting experiences of participants.

2.2. Participants

To measure fatness, body mass index (BMI) proposed by World Health Organization was applied [17]. So, the participants were male college students with a BMI range $> 25 \text{ kg/m}^2$. The general characteristics of participants are presented in Table 1.

2.3. Data collection

Interview questions started with, "What your experiences on healthy dieting were?" and then according to their responses, Kvale's interview method was timely applied [18].

These interviews performed about two to three times/participant. One mean time duration was 45 minutes. Then, recorded data were transcribed through repeated listening. Through these processes, vague meanings were identified.

2.4. Data analysis

Audio recording and observations were transcribed *verbatim*. Based on Colaizzi' methods, data analysis were performed by the following.

Step 1: After repeated listening, record data were transcribed *verbatim*.

Table 1. General characteristics of participants.

		Number of participants
Discharge from military service	Yes	5
	No	4
Major field	Human science	4
	Natural science	2
	Engineering	3
Housing	One's own house	5
	Self-boarding students	2
	Dormitory	2
Cohabitation	Families	5
	Friends	2
	Live alone	2
Rate of change in body weight (%)		10.03 ± 4.01
Age (y)		24.23 ± 1.92

Step 2: Among the statement, related phenomenon of the study spelled out and identified 246 significant statements.

Step 3: Significant statements were summarized re-statements by participants' language.

Step 4: From the 246 re-statements, 47 meanings were extracted. These extracted meanings were compared to the original statement by identifying participants' experiences for validity. This process was progressed by a professor for objective validity.

Step 5: Thirty-one themes were identified from previous extracted meanings. Then, eight theme clusters and four categories were organized.

Step 6: Tried to write an exhaustive description by relating themes to interested phenomenon.

Step 7: For constructing essential structure, there was a return to participants for validation of the description. Nine participants identified their each description and agreed extracted themes.

2.5. Ethical issue

This study received institution ethics approval from Pukyung Natinoal University Committee (IRB No:1041386-20131205-HR-003-04). Students who were intended to participate in this study were given a brief verbal explanation of the research. They were given a copy of consent to sign to prove that their vocal sounds were recorded. They were told their participation was free and they had the right to be involved or to withdraw participation at any time. Finally, students were offered a gift as recompense for their participation.

3. Results

Since the analyzing process have continued by Colaizzi' method, thirty-one themes consisted in seven

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