

The Relationship between Body Mass Index and Temperament, Based on the Knowledge of Traditional Persian Medicine

Mohammad Mahdi Parvizi^{1,2,3,4},
Alireza Salehi¹,
Majid Nimroozi^{1,2,4},
Mahdiyeh Hajimonfarednejad^{1,2,3,4},
Fatemeh Amini^{1,2,3,4},
Zahra Parvizi^{3,5}

¹Research Center for Traditional Medicine and History of Medicine, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran;

²Essence of Parsiyan Wisdom Institute, Traditional Medicine and Medicinal Plant Incubator, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran;

³Student Research Committee, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran;

⁴Association of Iranian Traditional Medicine, Shiraz Branch, Shiraz, Iran;

⁵Health Policy Research Center, University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran

Abstract

Background: Temperament is one of the key concepts in traditional Persian medicine (TPM), which is the quality that will be obtained by the reaction between the four elements of water, earth, fire and air, and its property is different from the component property. According to TPM, temperament is influenced by many factors and the bulk of the body is one of these factors. In this study, we aimed at determining the relationship between person's temperament based on the knowledge of TPM and the body mass index (BMI).

Methods: This study is a cross-sectional study that examines the relationship between person's temperament and their BMI. For this purpose, 86 employees (20-40 years) of Shiraz Medical School were selected and their temperaments assessed using Dr. Mojahedi's temperament questionnaire and visitation by a TPM specialist. SPSS 18 was used for statistical analysis.

Results: In this study, 86 employees were evaluated including 18 (20.9%) male and 68 (79.1%) female. The mean age of the participants was 32.45±4.93 years old and the mean BMI was 23.75±2.94. Minimum and maximum BMI were related to people with temperament of cold and dry and cool temperament and more with the mean of 20.55±1.90 and 28.13±0.35, where the difference was statistically significant (P=0.0003). BMI in people with a temperament of hot and dry was significantly less than those with cool and wet temperament (P=0.01).

Conclusion: Based on TPM, people with wet temperament are usually more obese and people with dry temperament are thinner. The results of this study confirm that obese people are cold and wet or have phlegmatic temperament whereas in comparison thin people are drier. This is in-line with the principles of TPM.

Keywords • Medicine • Traditional • Body mass index • Temperament