

Effects of Weight Consciousness, Circadian Arousal, and Depression on Young Women' s Memory

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ABSTRACT

Weight consciousness has been found to significantly affect women' s cognitive performance. In the present study, the effects of circadian arousal and depression were investigated by examining the relationship between young women' s weight consciousness and memory performance. College women were tested on a picture recall task consisting of neutral and weight-related pictures. Participants were categorized into morning, evening, and intermediate types, and were tested either in the morning or late afternoon/evening (peak and non-peak testing times, or control). Our results showed that participants who were weight conscious were also more depressed. When tested at non-peak times, depressed participants recalled significantly more weight-related pictures than neutral pictures, while non-depressed participants did not show this recall pattern. These results suggest that young women with depression are less likely to inhibit memory of weight-related pictures when tested at their non-peak times of the day.

KEYWORDS

Memory, Women, Weight Consciousness, Circadian Arousal, Depression

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