

Social stigma of being obese of adolescents in low-income countries.

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Introduction

Obesity stigma and discrimination are widespread, with several negative effects for their mental and physical health. Despite decades of scientific evidence, the public health ramifications of weight stigma are largely overlooked. Instead, fat people are blamed for their weight, with widespread belief that stigmatization is justified and can encourage people to adopt better habits. To address these assumptions, we look at the facts and explain the public health implications. We propose that weight stigma is not a useful public health intervention for reducing obesity based on existing evidence. Instead, stigmatizing obese people endangers their health, creates health inequities, and thwarts successful obesity intervention initiatives. Weight stigma is a social justice issue as well as a public health one, according to these studies [1].

In North American society, negative sentiments about obese people are widespread. Weight-based prejudices that overweight and obese people are lethargic, weak-willed, ineffective, uneducated, lack self-discipline, have poor willpower, and are noncompliant with weight-loss treatment have been observed in numerous researches [2]. Obese people face stigma, prejudice, and discrimination in a variety of settings, including the workplace, health care facilities, educational institutions, the media, and even close interpersonal relationships, as a result of these stereotypes. Negative attitudes and stereotypes toward obese people have been reported frequently by employers, co-workers, teachers, physicians, nurses, medical students, dietitians, psychologists, peers, friends, family members, and even children as young as three years old, possibly because weight stigma remains a socially acceptable form of bias.

According to recent studies, the prevalence of weight discrimination has increased by 66% in the last decade, and is now comparable to racial discrimination rates in the United States. Despite decades of research demonstrating weight stigma as a significant societal issue, it is rarely challenged in North American society, and its public health implications are mostly overlooked. Instead, current societal attributions blame obese people for their excess weight, with widespread belief that weight stigmatization is justified (and perhaps even necessary) because obese people are personally responsible for their weight, and that stigma could even be used to motivate obese people to adopt healthier lifestyle behaviours [3].

We looked at the data to address these weight stigma assumptions and highlight the public health implications. Our goal was to highlight significant findings from this body of work to evaluate the public health implications of weight stigma, a problem that has gotten little attention in the obesity sector.

Comprehensive literature searches in computerized medical and social science databases, such as PubMed, PsycINFO, and SCOPUS, yielded the publications cited in this paper. To find research addressing the relationship between weight stigma and public health, as well as the mental and physical health repercussions of obesity stigma, search terms were confined to various phrase combinations referring specifically to body weight and stigma descriptors. We also looked for specific writers and journals that had published relevant research on these issues by hand. We also extracted references from a recently published comprehensive systematic evaluation of peer-reviewed research articles revealing bias and stigma toward obese people. The vast majority (87%) of studies we included were published in the past decade, with the exception of several studies published earlier that are cited when relevant to the historical context of the discussion or to provide 7 examples of landmark studies.

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Public health and disease stigma

Stigma is a well-known foe in the realm of public health. Throughout history, stigma has caused misery to people who are vulnerable to sickness and has hampered efforts to stop disease progression. When people are blamed for their illnesses because they are considered immoral, filthy, or sluggish, disease stigma emerges. In 19th-century America, for example, Irish immigrants were widely blamed for epidemic diseases because they were "filthy and unmindful of public hygiene." Many saw the deaths of vast numbers of Irish-born immigrants who died of cholera and other maladies as acts of retribution against the immoral and spiritually unworthy.

Rather of investing in tuberculosis prevention or treatment when African Americans were dying from the disease around the turn of the century, several communities issued warnings to White inhabitants about mixing with or hiring African

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Americans [5]. Even the stigmatisation of gonorrhoea sufferers and injectable drug users has been criticised as a barrier to diagnosis and treatment. These examples have led to a greater awareness of the public health implications of stigma.

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