

A multinational examination of weight bias: predictors of anti-fat attitudes across four countries

Attitudes towards weight and weight stigma vary substantially between countries and cultures. Despite this, little evidence exists comparing attitudes towards weight on a multinational scale. The aim of this study was to conduct a multinational examination of weight bias in four countries with comparable prevalence rates of adult overweight and obesity - Canada, the United States, Iceland and Australia. The countries also have comparable per capita income and governance structures (all are parliamentary or congressional democracies with representative institutions) and similar socio-cultural values of thinness

This study used a questionnaire to ascertain views on the following:

- Participant demographic and body weight information
- "Fat Phobia scale" - where participants measured their thoughts about individuals living with overweight and obesity
- Universal Measure of Bias-FAT version (UMB-FAT)
- Beliefs about the causes of obesity.
- Experiences of weight bias
- Attributions of weight-related blame and willpower

The extent of weight bias was consistent across countries, and in each nation attributions of behavioral causes of obesity predicted stronger weight bias, as did beliefs that obesity is attributable to lack of willpower and personal responsibility.

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