

Weight Bias in Work Settings – a Qualitative Review

Literature has continuously demonstrated the influence which physical appearance and body weight has upon attitudes and treatment towards individuals within the workplace. Qualitative evidence reveals that a high proportion of American individuals report to have experienced weight-based discrimination within their workplace.

Results of the review highlighted 5 aspects of work life where bias, stigma, and discrimination are common and recurring:

- general work-related stereotypes towards individuals with obesity
- obesity as a general barrier to employment
- obesity as a barrier to certain professions
- obesity as a barrier to professional success
- obesity as a risk factor for unequal treatment in the workplace

Qualitative evidence demonstrates that individuals living with overweight and obesity experience general difficulties in finding employment – which is more common within certain professions. These individuals are also impeded in terms of professional success. Further to this, individuals living with overweight/obesity are more likely to experience stereotyping around their capacity to work and generally receive unequal treatment in the workplace.

Giel, Katrin Elisabeth, et al. "Weight Bias in Work Settings - a Qualitative Review." *Obesity Facts*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2010, pp. 33–40, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20215793, 10.1159/000276992.