



Experiences of Weight Stigma in Everyday Life: Implications for Health Motivation

Weight stigma is a prevalent social problem which is becoming more widespread and prevalent as attitudes towards individuals living with obesity are worsening. Weight stigma is associated with a plethora of negative mental, physical, and behavioural outcomes for individuals, including: depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, reduced physical activity, weight gain, etc.

Previous literature indicated that stigma experiences are associated with decreased motivation to engage in health behaviors. However, most studies are limited by reliance on self-reporting and retrospective reporting. This study aims to assess the affective and motivational consequences of weight stigma in people's everyday lives.

The study included 43 participants, and used ecological momentary assessment (EMA) to assess the impact of weight stigma on the motivational consequences of individuals. Participants completed baseline measures of prior stigma experiences and internalised weight bias before taking part in the EMA component of the study. Subsequent to this, each time participants experienced an episode of weight stigma over the course of two weeks, they reported their positive affect (PA), negative affect (NA), and motivation to diet, exercise, and lose weight.

Participants experienced weight stigma almost once per day, on average, indicating that stigma experiences are common in people's everyday lives. Findings include: higher internalised weight bias was associated with less PA following a stigma experience, more frequent prior stigma experiences were associated with more NA following a stigma experience, following an experience with weight stigma, women reported less motivation to diet than did men, higher internalised weight bias was associated with lower motivation to diet.

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