

Peer Review Report

Review Report on Social perception of obesity – a 2025 nationwide cross-sectional survey among adults in Poland

Original Article, Int. J. Public Health

Reviewer: Jason Were

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EVALUATION

Q 1 Please summarize the main findings of the study.

The study found that obesity stigma remains widespread, with many holding inaccurate and stigmatizing attitudes toward people with excess body weight. Attitudes varied by sociodemographic factors, with certain groups more likely to view obesity as shameful, while others were more inclined to support greater social acceptance of overweight and obesity.

Q 2 Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

Strengths

Use of recent data

Well written, Coherent

Limitations

Knowledge gaps and novelty not clearly articulated.

I am further concerned about specific methodological decisions (sampling strategy, variable choices and analysis), which I have articulated in my reviewer comments

Q 3 Please provide your detailed review report to the authors. The editors prefer to receive your review structured in major and minor comments. Please consider in your review the methods (statistical methods valid and correctly applied (e.g. sample size, choice of test), is the study replicable based on the method description?), results, data interpretation and references. If there are any objective errors, or if the conclusions are not supported, you should detail your concerns.

Thank you for inviting me to review this study on social perception of obesity in Poland. This manuscript examines a topic of potential relevance, and the authors have made a clear effort to present their work in a coherent manner. However, despite these strengths, the study does not currently present a sufficiently compelling thesis to justify the necessity of the research. The introduction does not clearly articulate the specific gaps in existing knowledge that the study seeks to address, and as a result, it is difficult to assess the study's intended contributions. As currently presented, the discussion does not convincingly demonstrate that the findings advance our understanding of social perceptions of obesity beyond what is already established in the existing literature. I believe with thoughtful revision, the authors can substantially improve the clarity, positioning, and contribution of the manuscript. Below are my comments for the authors to consider.

Major comments

1. The introduction is well written; however, it lacks a critical synthesis of the literature on social perceptions of obesity. The current presentation does not clearly establish the state of existing knowledge, identify key gaps, or explain how this study contributes to filling those gaps.
2. The authors should provide a clearer justification for the use of quota sampling instead of a probability-based design that would allow for more robust population inference. Relatedly, the criteria used to define the quota categories are not sufficiently explained. Although the sample is described as representative in terms of age, gender, and place of residence, these characteristics alone may not adequately capture relevant sources of heterogeneity in social perceptions of obesity. In particular, socioeconomic status is a well-established

determinant of obesity-related attitudes and stigma and should be considered either in the sampling design or analytically.

3. The reference category for the outcome variable in the logistic regression models is not specified. Additionally, the manuscript does not clarify how "I do not know/difficult to tell" responses were treated in the analysis.

4. The manuscript does not adequately explain the rationale underlying the selection of variables for inclusion in the regression models. In particular, it is unclear whether a theoretical or conceptual framework informed these decisions. In the absence of such justification, the analysis appears to be primarily data-driven rather than grounded in theory.

5. Much of the Discussion section largely reiterates the results rather than engaging in substantive interpretation. The engagement with the existing literature is limited, resulting in a relatively shallow discussion of the findings in relation to prior work. Consequently, the Discussion does not clearly articulate how this study advances knowledge in the field.

Minor Comments

1. Lines 76 to 78 is information for the results section and not the methods section.

2. The manuscript contains several typographical errors and would benefit from careful proofreading prior to resubmission

PLEASE COMMENT

Q 4 Is the title appropriate, concise, attractive?

Yes

Q 5 Are the keywords appropriate?

Yes

Q 6 Is the English language of sufficient quality?

Yes

Q 7 Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?

Yes.

Q 8 Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?)

No

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Q 9 Originality



Q 10 Rigor



Q 11 Significance to the field



Q 12 Interest to a general audience



Q 13 Quality of the writing



Q 14 Overall scientific quality of the study



REVISION LEVEL

Q 15 Please make a recommendation based on your comments:

Major revisions.