

INTRODUCTION:

This paper examined the context of fat shaming among Filipino overweight and obese adults. Fat shaming though prevalent globally, developed countries has embarked most social research on the impact of fat shaming mostly in the social media. Among countries in Asia social research about this social issue much of recorded experiences and accounts were documented and discussed through personal blogsites that became a venue to express, advocate and explain impact and importance of fat shaming in contemporary time. In contemporary Philippine setting, it was found to depict fat shaming experiences through personal blogsites and other forms of social media. The blogsites are likely to address the impact of fat shaming as an emotional expression among those affected by this stigmatization. Discourse on fat s





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As Puhl & Heuer (2009) stresses that for 19th and 20th century thinkers, fatness was a key marker of inferiority, of an uncivilized and primitive body that endures today, fueling on cultural distress over obesity epidemic and objectified as a social and interpersonal symbol of stigma to conform to the ideal body form which is basically connected to colonial influence. The family becomes the distasteful venue of fat shaming (. Thus, the fat body has been transformed into various presentation (e.g. media, public health campaigns, food and beverage advertisement). Consequently, family members would make small talk and make something to laugh during small

member. Specifically, family members would fat shame a family in varied forms, that is, using funny looks usually among the females who wear something fitted and exposing the belly. Fat shaming can hurt. Indeed, teasing during childhood and adolescence may be regard as a product of human interaction and the influence of colonial influence and associated with the cultural background of those perceiving the deviation from the ideal body form.

The extent of understanding fat shaming emphasizes the importance of the cultural context of fat stigma and how the body form changes the context of time. The theory of labeling comes into picture when the fat shamed individual is exposed to other people and interacts with them. Subsequently, fat shaming experience is a product of symbolic interaction. The cultural equation

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A belief that teasing is something to be endured as a natural element of childhood and adolescence may lead people to conclude that, as adults, the experiences become relegated to the past and the name-calling and taunting are safely forgotten. However, the residual effects of teasing -esteem and body image may be more prevalent than might be assumed. Fat shaming may continue to impact and influence perceptions of body and self of the childhood teasing recipients well into adulthood.

The emotional suffering from stigma can exceed all other aspects of the self and identity (Goffman, 1963). The context of fat shaming becomes an established entity that the community perceived as an image of humor and derision. The fat body becomes a symbol of interaction and how fat shaming can now impact other stigmas such as poverty, economic status and healthy food option. Fat shaming becomes an interactive discourse between the family members and society because as a form of stigma is developed through interaction with other people. The stigmatization becomes experiential that it is not ideal rather unique



METHODOLOGY

There are three overlapping methods utilized in this paper: thematic analysis, interviewing through using the *Facebook Messenger*, and drawing analysis. The researcher publicly solicited self-identifi persons, regardless of their politics around their body size, others were recruited through referral from friends and colleagues. Some respondents



core themes that emerged are the following: family pressure, invisibility, disembodiment, rejection, changing body image, and internalization. The categories extracted are quite emotional and highly reactional. Other findings included identity transformation and changed lifestyle following fat shaming. The participants reported that they are largely influenced by their fat shaming experiences such, i.e. self-esteem, attractiveness and enhancing their large body. All sixteen participants referred to a long-lasting hurt and majority of the women appeared to be disgusted of ridicule and derision they received. The male participants revealed that their fat shaming was taken transitory except one that really made a remarkable change of his lifestyle.

Since the participants come from various ages with mean age of 32 years (55 years as oldest and 18 years the youngest), majority are based in Manila due to their respective jobs and studies. Majority of the participants were women. The researcher is fully aware that these women have a

perspective of fat shaming will surface and highlighted from the themes. This would make sense since many women have experienced fat shaming in their lifetime. These lived experiences identify their struggles in their large body form specifically, plus sized body as euphemism for women living large in a size medium world (Owen, 2008). Many of the participants would conceal their bad experiences because they range from awkward to humiliating. Several participants have reservations in disclosing their experiences because they would recall painful events. The researcher encouraged them to describe them through through visual representation. Thus, the researcher painted with a broad brush some of their everyday fat shaming experiences, including their coping strategies by describing these experiences through artwork.

Fat shaming experiences among the 16 respondents was extracted based on the following **resentaneous** (1) How would you describe

your experiences on fat shaming being as an overweight and obese individual? (2) To what extent these fat shaming experiences has affected you in your daily interaction with other people? and (3) How are you able to manage the challenges of fat shaming in your everyday life?

The interviews are a profound experience, not nc5m5()]TJg703(e)-6(c)4(a)-3(us95(h)-3)-148(t7)13(e)-6()-30]TJg

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Family Pressure

Peachy, 42, teacher, single mother revealed: *become apathetic.*

na hindi ako insultuhin, na mataba ako, kaya sabi ko naman?

What is the connection of being overweight in our turbulent marriage? My fat shaming experience

irritates me that my family members are picking on me. I often talk to myself,

kayo! They engage my being overweight and my family life in small talk and laugh about it during

As Anne, 18-year-old, freshmen student revealed in her live chat interview:

my parents and sibling in relations to the **space I** occupy in the room- are chairs set too close? Can I move them? How low is the seating? Will you be able to get back up? When I am sitting down, I try to draw my body in as much as possible so that I do

tried to become hyperconscious of all the time and I would imagine myself that I become fatter. I

Jess, 26-year-old, guidance counsellor added: **judged by my parents** that I would not be able to have boyfriend. They resort to teasing me especially I am wearing fitted shirts and would often venture to

situation because my parents would comment about my size when there are guests are



What will they think if my legs are touching theirs when I sit down?

Drew, 38, blogger argues that: As part of my daily activity, I go to the Sports Complex to do my exercises because I want to lose weight because I think of myself as **not seen and not heard by my friends and co-workers.** They always shut me out and left me there as if I am stuff toy. They only remember me if they have no one to talk to. I scared of being alone and have trauma about being overweight. I have to lose weight to get my identity back into visual field of my friends and



to exercise and hang out in the gym is one month, so my weight was a yoyo- I would lose, gain, lose again- until I got tired of the

care. Then came the health scare-laboratory stats went haywire. I panicked, and I went back to the gym and became consistent since then. I technically feel not being fat shamed by other people (although the closest friends would comment about my beer belly), but the truth be told, I had a poor self-image when I was overweight. I would say that I was fatshaming myself.

Divina aged 52 disclosed at my age now, I feel guilty because I have to blame myself of getting nakaka-guilty

when buying clothes because I tried hard to buy dark

mirrors in public except my private room. I realized that I am avoiding my large body. But my self-



mother would often go into my room and secretly

brought me to child psychiatrist and I was diagnosed with emotional eating as a teenager. I undergo therapy and for some time, I was on antidepressants. My mom enrolled me to a personality class and there I saw myself because I was able to relate same situation with girls my age. I discovered myself through painting, sketching and Hawaiian dancing. I was grateful for the patience of my mother and my aunt as my support According to Coleman (2010), invisibility imposes social rejection, isolation and lowered

as uttered by several participants in their interviews. As a result of this invisibility continuing fat shaming becomes a symbolic spectacle, i.e., blaming of it on themselves because they are fat and other people who tend to ignore or

ANALYSIS

The data gathered, specifically the discourse thread of the participants in the social media revealed that overweight and obese persons

are invisible, or at least not as important. When reading literature on fat shaming, most authors mentioned the feeling of invisibility. In fact,

of the participants particularly women always experience that they are hyper-visible, yet they are invisible when their needs are to be address (e.g. dothes fitting). Fat shaming becomes relevant experience because they become a public spectade (Kusz, 2005; Owen, 2009, Pyle and Loewy, 2006).

As overweight and obese participants

invisibility becomes symbolic, feeling unseen rather than highly obvious. The interaction between the one being fat shame is detached as the participants experiences and stories show they are ridiculed, derided and ignored. Specifically, when addressing for their needs, they must struggle to get their attention and yet they get offended. Invisibility becomes a censorship of a fat person thus he or she becomes invisible (Butler, 1990).



themselves into tiny nooks, fold themselves inward in order to limit the insult of in their bulks. The stigmatized persons attempt to minimize their stigmatized attribute in order to make those

When the environment hurts plus size people, they usually blame themselves and wonder how to change their body and protect their image. change ourselves and protect others from us. Thus, when bloggers or newspaper journalists condemn fat persons for taking up too much space on airplanes, buses, at tables, in theatres, in restaurants, or while simply standing in line (Grosz, 2005



is their way of releasing the stigma and giving them a chance to accept their body form, as their actions speak louder than words (Wann, 1998).

CONCLUSION

The culture of fat shaming is prevalent in the Filipino family and perpetuated in the society. This being formed within the family and inculcated into the mind of the large individuals. It clearly shows that the human mind is conditioned to look





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