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Weightism: Understanding the lived experiences of overweight filipino adolescents

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Aims: Today's society standardizes how an adolescent should look like. One of the traits of an ideal adolescent should be maintaining a normal body weight. Adolescents strive to be in line with the standards of the society. The aim of this study is to know and understand the lived experiences of the various adolescents who fall under the category of being overweight. It intends to find out on how their weight affects different aspects of their personal and social relationships.

Methods: Participants were selected through the use of purposive sampling method. A semi-structured interview questions were formulated by the researchers with the grand question, "What is life like for an overweight adolescent?" The set of questions formulated were validated by the qualitative expert and translated by a language expert. Six Filipino overweight female adolescents living in Metro Manila who have a BMI from the 85th to 95th percentile or a BMI of 25-29.9 were interviewed by the researchers. The participants are aged from fourteen to sixteen years and an informed consent and assent was secured to the participants and to their respective guardian. The Colaizzi's method was used to analyze and interpret the gathered data from the participants.

Results: The following themes emerged from the study: Awareness and Acceptance. Awareness is defined as how the female overweight adolescent have or shows realization, perception or knowledge about something such as situation, condition or problem that exists in their life. Acceptance is defined as to how female overweight adolescents embrace their condition and experiences. An eidetic insight was presented as the representation of the Weightism Phenomenon.

Conclusion: Through the collective analysis of the verbalizations of the participants, the female overweight adolescents are aware of their condition and how it affects them. The different experiences they underwent made them aware of how others perceived them.

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