The effect of belief in weight controllability on anti-fat attitudes: An experimental manipulation(Article)

[Effet de la croyance en la possibilité de contrôler son poids sur les attitudes envers les personnes en surcharge pondérale : une expérimentation]

- Ksinan, A.J.^aEmail Author,
- Almenara, C.A.^{bc}Email Author,
- Vaculik, M.^dEmail Author
- [View Correspondence \(jump link\)](#)
- ^aUniversity of Kentucky, Department of Family Sciences, University of Kentucky, 160 Funkhouser Drive, Lexington, KY, United States
- ^bMasaryk University, Institute for Research on Children, Youth and Family (IVMDR), Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University, Joštova, 10, Brno, Czech Republic
- ^cUniversidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas (UPC), Faculty of Psychology, Av. Alameda San Marcos, s/n, Lima, Peru

[View additional affiliations_](#)

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Introduction Anti-fat attitudes reflect a type of discrimination on the basis of body weight and are one of the last accepted types of social stigma. **Objective** To evaluate the effect of exposure to priming messages about the causes of obesity on attitudes toward fat people. **Method** Participants (n = 580, M age = 22.19, 64.1% female) were randomly assigned to one of three possible conditions and then provided responses on three AFA subscales: Dislike, Fear of fat, and Willpower. **Results** Priming participants with messages confirming/challenging the weight controllability belief was associated with higher/lower levels on Willpower respectively compared to the control group. Unexpectedly, participants in both confirming and challenging groups showed significantly higher scores on Fear of fat. No differences were found on scores indicating Dislike. **Conclusion** The current findings emphasize the effect of exposure to information about the causes of obesity on weight controllability beliefs. © 2016 Elsevier Masson SAS

Author keywords

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- Obesity

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  - Weight-controllability belief
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