

**Views and Experiences of Lifestyles of Overweight and Obese People: A Qualitative Study
in a Selected Group of Sri Lankans**

**Bookoladeniya D. R.¹✉, Perera R. H.¹, Senevirathne K. A.¹, Silva S. M.¹,
Gunawardana H. A. K. S.²**

Abstract

Overweight & obese people have different perspectives on weight management. Stigma and discrimination toward obese persons are pervasive and pose numerous consequences for their psychological and physical health. This qualitative study has been conducted to explore the views and experiences of lifestyles of overweight and obese people. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee of CINEC Campus, Malabe. A purposive sample of 30 (17 overweight and 13 obese) from selected walking paths in Colombo District was taken and semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect the data. Data analysis was done by using thematic analysis. 03 major themes emerged; living with increased body weight is challenging, unrealistic expectations, social pressures. Difficulty in performing normal daily activities, difficulty in finding clothes as per preference where the sub-themes derived under life with increased body weight is challenging. Under the major theme of unrealistic expectations, the majority of the participants expect to lose weight, most of them stated that they find it difficult to control the food intake & do weight monitoring regularly. Under the major theme of social pressures, respondents were being criticized, humiliated by the closed people, and making them feel negative were the subthemes. Weight loss is a difficult task with physical, social, behavioral & environmental elements that appear to assist and inhibit weight-loss efforts concurrently. The findings suggested the critical role of support in the obesity self-management process. Awareness of the perception of the people who have excess body weight is needed for society to minimize the psycho-social impact on them. Society can play a major role to increase the quality of life of people with increased body weight.

Keywords - *Overweight, obese, views, experience, lifestyle*

¹ Department of Biomedical Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences, CINEC Campus, Malabe, Sri Lanka

² Department of Health & Medical Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences, CINEC Campus, Malabe, Sri Lanka

✉ Corresponding author: demiduravinda@gmail.com