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STEREOTYPES ABOUT OBESITY

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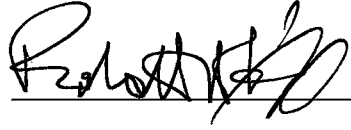
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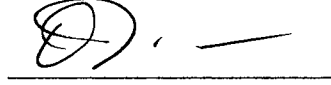
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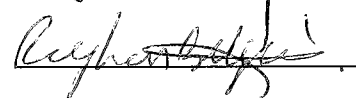
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ABSTRACT

STEREOTYPES ABOUT OBESITY

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The present study aimed to investigate reactions to obese and nonobese targets with respect to a number of variables. Two of these variables were Target Sex and Student Sex.(perceiver). Another variable of interest was the availability of individuating information about the target. The respondents of the study were Turkish adolescents. First, contents of stereotypes about the obese were elicited in the pilot study, using the free response technique. Twenty male and 20 female high school students participated in the pilot study. The information gathered in the pilot study was used in constructing the stimulus material of the main study which were used in order to investigate discriminatory evaluations of the obese. The main part of the study provided respondents with written information about obese and thin targets. Some participants received information that includes some details about the targets' personal lives whereas others received information only about age, sex, and height/weight of target (individuating-non individuating manipulation). One hundred and fifty-two male and 146 female high school students were requested to rate the target on a number of bipolar scales. The following results were found: 1) Obese targets were rated as possessing less positive, more negative and less introverted characteristics than thin targets. 2) Individuating information resulted in less negative and more positive reactions toward obese male than thin male targets.

Keywords: Obesity, Stereotypes, Weight, Individuating

ÖZ

ŞİŞMANLIKLA İLGİLİ KALIPYARGILAR

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Bu çalışmada, şişman ve zayıf hedef kişilere karşı tepkilerin, farklı değişkenler dikkate alınarak incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu değişkenlerden ikisi, hedef kişi ve algılayıcının cinsiyetleridir. Diğer bir değişken, hedef kişi ile ilgili bireyselleştirici bilginin mevcut olup, olmamasıdır. Çalışmanın denekleri, Türk gençleridir. Ön çalışmada, şişmanlarla ilgili kalıpyargıların içeriği, serbest çağrışım tekniği kullanılarak elde edilmiştir. Bu çalışmaya, 20 erkek ve 20 kız lise öğrencisi katılmıştır. Ön çalışmadan elde edilen bilgilerden, çalışmanın ikinci bölümünde, şişmanlarla ilgili ayırdedici değerlendirmelerin araştırılması için kullanılan uyaran gerecinin hazırlanmasında yararlanılmıştır. Çalışmanın ikinci bölümünde, şişman ve zayıf hedef kişilerle ilgili yazılı bilgi sunulmuştur. Deneklerden bazılarına, hedef kişilerin özel yaşantıları hakkındaki bazı ayrıntılara ilişkin bilgiler verilmiş, diğerlerine ise sadece hedef kişinin yaşı, cinsiyeti ve boy/kilosu bildirilmiştir.(bireyselleştirici bilgi manipulasyon). Yüzelliiki erkek ve 146 kız lise öğrencisinden, geliştirilen ölçekler üzerinde hedef kişiyi değerlendirmeleri istenmiştir. Elde edilen sonuçlar şöyledir: 1) Şişman hedefler, daha az olumlu, daha çok olumsuz ve daha az içedönük olarak değerlendirilmişlerdir. 2) Bireyselleştirici bilgi, şişman erkeklerin, zayıf erkeklere oranla, daha az olumsuz ve daha çok olumlu tepkiler almaları sonucunu getirmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Şişmanlık, Kalıpyargılar, Kilo, Bireyselleştirme

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Research has shown that physical appearance is an important factor which influences social interaction. A person's weight is an important aspect of one's physical appearance and may trigger related stereotypes which influence others' responses toward the person during social interaction. The purpose of the present study was to investigate evaluations related to obese targets. Stereotypes about thin people were also investigated in order to provide a basis for comparison. The study aimed to investigate the content of stereotypes about obese and thin people as well as reactions toward obese and thin targets. The possible relationship between gender and body weight was also investigated in view of the fact that body weight might be a more important criterion for shaping reactions toward female than toward male targets. A further variable of interest was the presence or absence of individuating information about targets. As will be discussed in a later section, individuating information may dampen discriminatory responses toward obese targets or it may enhance discriminatory reactions.

1.1 STEREOTYPES

Stereotypes have been defined in many different ways over the years. Some early definitions of stereotypes include special kind of schemata, widely accepted and

oversimplified beliefs about particular groups of people, and a kind of framework for interpreting and processing social interaction(Snyder, Berscheid, & Tanke, 1977; Lingren, 1973; Baron & Byrne, 1987). There was little consensus among earlier researchers on the definition of stereotypes. Contemporary theorists, however, are in agreement that "stereotypes are characteristics that are descriptive of, attributed to, or associated with members of social groups or categories" (p.361, Stangor & Lange, 1994).

Stereotypes facilitate efficiency and adaptiveness in social interaction because they organize knowledge about others and lead to expectations about others' future behavior. Stereotypes may also create their own reality by channeling social interaction. They provide perceivers with hypotheses about what will happen in specific situations and about what to expect from people occupying specific roles or from members of socially defined groups. Expectancies are known to influence information processing strategies and emotional responses in the presence of others. Furthermore, social expectations also influence responses to others by biasing information processing and information search in ways that tend to strengthen existing expectations. Thus, stereotypes may guide and influence perceivers' interactions with other individuals. Briefly, stereotypes influence both judgments and behavior toward others.

When perceivers make judgments concerning others on the basis of expectations, without being aware of being influenced by their expectations, there will be a tendency to apply these expectations indiscriminately to every individual who possesses the feature with which the expectancy is associated. However, sometimes stereotypes may be inaccurate. Thus, when people sometimes approach others with preestablished classifications and do not process the available information in an unbiased fashion, the

result may be unfair and detrimental for the target person. This is especially true when these expectations are negative.

Stereotypes about racial and occupational groups, social classes and gender have been investigated. Research has revealed that, once formed, stereotypes tend to persist in the face of contradictory evidence and experience (Snyder et al., 1977; Stephan in Lindzey & Aronson, 1985; Lindesmith, Strauss, & Denzin, 1975). Direct contact with members of stereotyped groups does not always lead to change in stereotyped beliefs. Often, category membership rather than individuating information is encoded about atypical members of social groups, leading to persistence of existing stereotypes (Fiske & Taylor, 1984). As long as people are classified as belonging to a category, those category members who do not possess stereotypical characteristics are dismissed as exceptions to or deviations from the norms. Since low frequencies of stereotype-incompatible behavior tend to be discounted, a wide range of stereotype-inconsistent behaviors may be needed to change a stereotype.

1.1.1 Features of Stereotypes

Theorists considered generalization, distinctiveness, and group differences to be important features of stereotypes (Stangor & Lange, 1994).

a) Generalization: Many theorists considered a characteristic to be a stereotypic only if it is generalized to the group as a whole. If "independence" is a trait associated with men, for instance, then, people should believe that men are, by and large, independent. Nevertheless, the generalization notion is problematic because terms that appear to be stereotypical on the basis of other criteria are not, in fact, generalized to a large percentage of group members. This is particularly true for negative characteristics.

This difficulty is clearly demonstrated in a study by Stangor and Lange (Stangor & Lange, 1994) in which the researchers asked their first group of subjects to generate a list of characteristics of seven different social groups. Then they coded these responses by selecting the six traits that were listed most often for each group and asked a second group of subjects from the same population to estimate the percentage of people in each of these groups who possessed each of the traits. The traits presented to the second group should have been perceived as highly stereotypical because they were those that were most frequently cited by the first group as descriptive of the target groups. Nevertheless, the average percentage ascription of the stereotypical traits across all groups was only 61% for the positive traits and 52% for the negative traits. One half of the negative traits were perceived as being true of less than 50% of the group. Thus, this study demonstrated low generalization of stereotypical traits.

b) Distinctiveness : Some researchers argued that group distinctiveness is a more important characteristic of stereotypes than generalization (Stangor & Lange, 1994). Distinctiveness may be defined as a characteristic which is perceived to be more highly associated with one group in comparison with other groups. For instance, in the above mentioned study by Stangor and Lange (1994), it was found that out of the seven groups, "intelligence" was one of the three most often generated traits for Russians and Asians, "sociability" was generated most often for Blacks, Hispanics, and Jews, and "hostility" was generated as highly stereotypical of Arabs, Blacks, and Russians. On the other hand, 'gentle' was used only for Asians and for no other group. Thus, Stangor and Lange's study showed that although "intelligence" was highly stereotypical of Asians, it was not as distinctive a characteristic of Asians as "gentle", which was not used for any of the other six groups.

c) Differentiation: Categorical representations develop to provide useful information about the environment. Moreover, categories are particularly informative when the mean difference between categories on a set of attributes is large relative to the variability of those attributes within the categories (Turner, 1987). According to this logic, one likely determinant of whether a characteristic is strongly associated with a category in memory, is the degree to which it maximizes category informativeness.

Ford and Stangor (1992; cited in Stangor & Lange, 1994) have tested the hypothesis that traits become stereotypical to the extent that they maximize category differentiation. In order to test their hypothesis, they conducted an experiment in which subjects read a series of behaviors supposedly performed by members of two social groups. Subjects were told that these behaviors were selected from real social groups which were labeled as the "blue" group and the "red" group. The behaviors read by subjects were selected such that the red group performed behaviors that demonstrated more intelligence than the blue group, whereas the blue group performed behaviors that were more friendly than the red group. Group distinctiveness was manipulated in two ways. In one set of conditions, the size of the between-group difference was varied to be either greater on the friendliness dimension or on the intelligence dimension. In the other set of conditions between-group differences were held constant, while within group variability of the traits was manipulated to be greater for either intelligence or for friendliness. After learning about the groups, subjects were asked to list the thoughts that they remembered about each of the groups. It was found that the stereotypes developed about the groups were more likely to consist of the trait dimension that more highly differentiated the two groups, regardless of whether that differentiation was the result of

high between-group distinctiveness or low within-group variability. These effects did not occur when the extremity and variability of the traits were manipulated in the same manner, but when subjects learned about only a single group. Thus, it was shown that stereotypes about the two groups were likely to consist of the trait dimension that highly differentiated the two groups. The data suggest that, when within-group variability is controlled, a trait is more stereotypical if it differentiates groups, on the other hand, when between-group differences are controlled, traits that show lower within-group variability become more stereotypical.

1.1.2 Stereotype Measurement

The study of stereotypes and stereotyping is one of the oldest interests of social psychologists. Nevertheless, there is still little agreement concerning the most appropriate technique for assessing stereotypes about existing social groups. Some methods of measurement are discussed below.

1.1.2.1 Traditional Measurement Techniques

There are four commonly used measures of assessing stereotypes. These are stereotype-checklist, Likert scale, a percentage estimate, and diagnostic ratio techniques.

Stereotype-checklist technique, provides subjects with a list of trait terms and requests them to indicate terms that are descriptive of social groups of interest. (For example, "To what extent are the following terms a characteristic of men in general?" strong, independent etc.). *Likert Scale technique*, requests subjects to rate a list of descriptive trait terms on degree of appropriateness for describing the target group.

Percentage estimate technique, asks subjects to estimate the percentage of people within a target group who possess an associated characteristic (What percentage of men are independent?). *Diagnostic ratio measure*, on the other hand, requests subjects to provide percentage estimates of people possessing certain traits for particular target groups and for people in general (What percentage of men are independent ? / What percentage of people are independent ?). The ratio of percentage of the target group members possessing the trait to the percentage of people in general possessing the trait comprises the diagnostic ratio. This technique is a modification of the percentage estimate technique.

The above measurement techniques have been used in virtually all stereotyping studies over the past 20 years. Thus, they represent the traditional approach to stereotype measurement. Since these stereotype measures are highly intercorrelated and since they tap some common aspect of stereotypes, the particular measure used does not make much difference. However, the above measures have been criticized because they are not adequate in assessing stereotypes as conceptualized in terms of mental associations. In other words, they are likely to provide only an indirect assessment of associational strength (Stangor & Lange, 1994).

1.1.2.2 Modern Measurement Techniques

If a characteristic is stereotypical to the extent that it is strongly associated with a group in memory, then any measure of the strength of relationship between the category label and the trait should serve as a direct measure of that characteristic's stereotypicality. Several such measures are available.

Reaction time technique is offered as a direct measure of associational strength between trait names and category membership. This method presents individuals with words associated with the group stereotypes and requests a 'yes' or 'no' answer, indicating association or lack of association between the trait word and the target group. The association between the trait word and the target group is assumed to be directly related to the reaction time for answering.

Free-response technique is a potentially useful measure. This technique requests individuals to indicate what thoughts come to mind when they think about the relevant social group. By using *Open-ended questionnaires*, subjects are asked to freely provide their own terms for describing the target group of concern. The free response technique has some advantages over the traditional techniques (Stangor and Lange, 1994). Firstly, the free-response technique represents a more direct indication of the strength of association between a category label and a characteristic than do traditional measures. Ford (1992; in Stangor & Lange, 1994), for instance, provided supportive evidence for this argument. Ford conducted a study in which subjects learned about two groups by reading behavioral descriptions of group members. The behaviors performed by the "red" group were more friendly than those performed by the "blue" group, whereas behaviors performed by the "blue" group were more intelligent than those performed by the "red" group. After learning about the groups, subjects completed a free-response measure (they listed whatever thoughts came to their mind about the groups) as well as traditional (percentage estimation and Likert Scale) measures of stereotypes. They also completed a reaction-time task consisting of a number of trials in which the category label was presented simultaneously with either friendliness or intelligence. For this task, subjects indicated as quickly as possible whether the trait term

could be used to describe the group. Results revealed that the thought-listing and reaction-time measures were highly correlated, as were the two traditional measures. A two-factor solution of data, based on the traditional versus associational dichotomy, provided supportive evidence for the use of free-response techniques to assess stereotype strength. That is to say, free-recall measure was highly correlated with the direct measure of mental association.

After discussing advantages and disadvantages of various techniques, Stangor and Lange (1994) concluded that open-ended questionnaires are the most sensitive indicators of prejudice and discrimination.

1.1.3 Consequences of Stereotypes

Although beliefs do not always lead to belief-congruent behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977) stereotypes may have behavioral consequences.

Discrimination is one of the possible consequence of stereotyping. It is the behavioral reflection of negative stereotypes (e.g., prejudice in action). It can take many different forms. It involves simple avoidance, exclusion from jobs, education, or residential segregation. In extreme cases, it may even involve aggression toward the targets of negative stereotyping. Other forms of discrimination are reverse discrimination and tokenism.

In *reverse discrimination*, persons possessing stereotypes concerning members of some social groups evaluate or treat members of these groups more favorably than members of other groups. For instance, individuals exposed to reverse discrimination receive raises, promotions, and other benefits without actually deserving them. Fajardo

(1985) investigated the presence of reverse discrimination in educational settings. In this investigation, teachers were asked to grade essays designed in advance to be either poor, moderate, or excellent in quality. Information attached to the essays indicated that they were prepared by either white or black students. If reverse discrimination exist, it would be expected that the teachers (all of whom were white) would rate the essays more favorably when they were supposedly prepared by black than by white students. (The essays themselves were identical in both cases, but the presumed race of students was varied). Results provided supportive evidence of reverse discrimination. Moreover, the tendency of white teachers to favor black students was strongest under conditions where the essays were of moderate rather than excellent or poor quality. In this study, the teachers indicated that they read black students' essays more carefully, and graded them more leniently. Although reverse discrimination seems to benefit the target, over the long run, it may be harmful. In the case of students, reverse discrimination may lead some students to develop inflated opinions of their own abilities, and unrealistic expectations about the likelihood of future success. These expectations may result in frustration.

In *tokenism*, individuals engage in trivial, positive actions toward members of groups they dislike. For example, they hire a single black for a trivial position and then use this action as a rationale against hiring blacks for more important positions or as a justification for later discrimination. Regardless of its form, the consequences of discrimination are always negative, even for people who seem to profit from their existence. In other words, members of target groups are always harmed in some fashion.

1.2 INDIVIDUATING AND DISCRIMINATION

The likelihood of discrimination is generally higher if people are perceived as members of social categories than if they are perceived as individuals (Wilder, 1986). Approaching people as members of categories rather than as individuals results in more stereotypical reactions. On the other hand, approaching people as individuals results in less stereotypical responding. Thus, when people know nothing about the target person, they expect him/her to behave similarly to a typical member of his/her group (Desforges, Lord, Ramsey, Nason, Van Leeuwen, & West, 1991). However, if social norms and/or one's self conception inhibit discrimination against certain groups, there may be less stereotypic and discriminatory responding under nonindividuating than under individuating conditions. For example, white college students gave more money to a black panhandler when they were made to believe that they were prejudiced than when they were not (Dutton & Lake, 1973). Similarly, Rogers and Prentive-Dunn (1981) demonstrated that nonangered whites were less aggressive towards blacks than they were toward whites.

One explanation for the above findings has been offered by Leyens and coworkers (Leyens, Yzerbyt, & Schadron, 1992). According to these researchers, when people believe that they do not have enough information about a member of the target group, they do not use categorical information as a basis for their judgment. One explanation of this occurrence may be concerns about self presentation, i.e. desire to be fair. In one relevant study, Leyens et al.(1992) gave subjects categorical information about a target person, and through a bogus dichotic listening task, led half of their subjects to believe that they had also received behavioral information about the target

(no relevant information was actually presented). The other half of the subjects received exactly the same categorical information and participated in the same listening task but were not led to believe that the information they had heard was descriptive of the target. Researchers found that their subjects used the category information as a basis of judgment only in the condition in which they believed that they had also received behavioral information. They interpreted these results as demonstrating the fact that subjects preferred not to use the category label and the associated stereotypes to describe the target unless they could justify their use on the basis of having other information. This tendency may be interpreted as an attempt by subjects to prove themselves that they really were not prejudiced (Dutton & Lake, 1973), that they have a liberal outlook, and that they are motivated by a general sense of fairness.

1.3 STEREOTYPES ABOUT PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS

One widely held stereotype in Western cultures involves physical attractiveness. Physical attractiveness is a salient factor affecting social perception and acceptance by the society. Results of a number of studies indicate that people have stereotyped expectations about characteristics of attractive and unattractive people. In general, attractive people are judged more positively on a wide variety of dimensions and are more likely to be preferred as heterosexual interaction partners than are unattractive people. On the other hand, stereotypes about unattractive people are predominantly negative. More specifically, studies revealed that physically attractive people were perceived to be warmer, kinder, stronger, more responsive, more sensitive, more interesting, more sociable, and more outgoing than persons of lesser physical attractiveness. On the other hand, physically unattractive people are judged to be deviant in a variety of ways,

including homosexuality, political radicalism, and psychopathology (Clayson & Klassen, 1989; Baron & Byrne, 1987).

The above expectations about attractive and unattractive people may serve as self fulfilling prophecies. An investigation by Snyder and coworkers (1977) demonstrated behavioral confirmation of stereotypes involving physical attractiveness as well as revealing a tendency among subjects towards fostering the belief that "beautiful people are good people". In this study, 51 male "perceivers" interacted over the telephone with female "targets" whom they believed to be physically attractive or unattractive. Male perceivers were assigned randomly to one of two conditions of partner physical attractiveness. Subjects received folders containing biographical information and photographs of their interaction partners. Female targets knew nothing of the photographs possessed by their male interaction partners. After looking at the folders, males rated their initial impression of their partners on an Impression Formation Questionnaire. The questionnaire included items such as intelligence, physical attractiveness, friendliness, social adeptness, etc.. After rating the task, male subjects initiated a getting-acquainted conversation with their female partners. The tape recording of conversations were content analyzed by judges naive with respect to experimental condition. These analyses revealed that female targets, who interacted with subjects who assumed their interaction partner (unknown to the target) to be physically attractive, behaved in a friendly, likable, and sociable manner in comparison with female targets who interacted with perceivers who believed them to be unattractive. Thus, this study demonstrated that expectations based on attractiveness of interaction partners are transmitted to targets in subtle ways and affect the behavior of targets.

Research shows that attractive and unattractive people do, indeed, differ in ways consistent with stereotypes about attractiveness. Reis and his friends (Reis, Wheeler, Spiegel, Kernis, Nezlek, & Perri, 1982) found that physical attractiveness was related to people's social participation in everyday life. Subjects that were used in Reis and his friends' study were 43 male and 53 female university students. These subjects were requested to fill out an interaction record which was to be completed for every interaction that lasted ten minutes or longer. Then, subjects were photographed to obtain physical attractiveness ratings. They then completed a number of personality scales within which a measure of social self-esteem was included. Two further sessions were scheduled with subjects. During one, social skills measures were administered. During the second session, fear of rejection and trust scales were completed. Results showed that attractiveness related positively to the affective quality of social experience for both sexes. It was also found that attractive males were more assertive and were lower in fear of rejection by the opposite sex than unattractive males. Attractive females, on the other hand, were less assertive and were lower in trust of the opposite sex than were unattractive females. Besides, social competence was found to mediate part of the influence of attractiveness on males' interaction patterns. For females, the effects of social competence and attractiveness on social interaction were independent. The authors emphasized the importance of understanding how and why physical appearance may influence people's social interactions.

Beliefs about attractive and unattractive individuals are generally thought to be based on cultural preferences. However, there are some common variables across almost all cultures which are thought to be responsible for attractiveness judgments. One such variable is weight. Crocker, Cornwell, & Major (1993) found that the obese were

frequently stereotyped as aesthetically displeasing. Rothblum, Miller, and Gorbitt (1988) also found in their study that the obese were perceived as unattractive by people and being thin was seen as a prerequisite for being perceived as physically attractive. Facial characteristics also play an important role in physical attractiveness judgments for both sexes (Baron & Byrne, 1987; Counts, Jones, Frame, Jarvie, & Strauss, 1986). For example, Counts and his colleagues (1986) indicated that obesity and facial characteristics are the salient aspects of physical unattractiveness.

Hair color is another variable which is associated with judgements of physical attractiveness. A study combining obesity and hair color was conducted by Clayson & Klassen (1989). Clayson & Klassen were interested if obesity stereotype was related to hair color stereotype and if people held similar beliefs about the cause of obesity and about the cause of having a certain hair color. Three hundred and eighteen undergraduate junior and senior business majors from a university participated in the study. There were 180 men and 138 women students. Each student was given a résumé of a worker that described the worker's position, personal characteristic, and medical history. The résumés were identical except that sex, obese-nonobese, and hair color of the target were manipulated in a 2 x 2 x 4 factorial design. Hair colors included red, blond, brown, and black. Each student was asked to evaluate the worker whose résumé he or she had read on several scales including an attractiveness scale which asked "How attractive do you think this person is?" The students responded using seven-point scales ranging from "Not attractive" to "Very attractive". Results indicated that there was a marginal difference in perceived attractiveness of targets as a function of sex and hair; women and blondes, in general, were described as more attractive than men and redheads. Hair color by obese-nonobese interaction was not significant. Whereas, sex by

obese-nonobese interaction effect was significant as well as the sex by obese-nonobese by hair color triple interaction. Specifically, nonobese persons were seen as significantly more attractive than obese persons, regardless of sex and/or hair color except for redheaded men. In addition, it was also found that obesity was perceived as being under a person's own control whereas hair color was not viewed as a quality related to personal choice. In another study, Lynn and Shurgot argued that (p.198, Baron & Byrne, 1987) having red hair was perceived as unattractive and was associated with some negative outcomes, such as loneliness.

Thus, some facial features, having red hair and being obese are seen as variables which are associated with judgments of unattractiveness (Clayson and Klassen, 1989; Counts et al., 1986).

1.4 STEREOTYPES ABOUT OBESE PEOPLE

Obese people, in most cultures, are the targets of negative stereotypes. These individuals are generally devalued in society and receive some negative outcomes. Several investigations document that obese women and men are viewed as lazy, sexless, ugly, self-indulgent and sloppy and that they are not viewed as admirable, attractive, energetic, neat or sexy (Harris, Walters, & Waschull, 1991; Rothblum et al., 1988; Crocker et al., 1993; Bagley Conklin, Isherwood, Pechiulis, & Watson, 1989; Maroney & Golub, 1992; Allison, Basile, & Yuker, 1991; Harris, 1990).

Negative responses toward the obese may partly be due to physical unattractiveness associated with increased weight. Since people have stereotyped expectations about characteristics of attractive and unattractive people and since their stereotypes about unattractive people are predominantly negative, negative reactions

toward obese people may be partly attributable to negative stereotypes about unattractive people in general. There is research evidence that stereotypes about physical attractiveness may explain negative perceptions of obese people (Rothblum et al., 1988; Boyd, 1989; Crocker et al., 1993).

For example, Rothblum and his colleagues (1988) conducted an experiment. In this study, college students ($n = 104$) rated applicants for two different positions. The applicants' résumés either were accompanied by pictures of obese and nonobese targets who were matched in attractiveness or by written descriptions of obese and nonobese targets whose attractiveness was not described. Results showed that subjects perceived nonobese targets significantly more attractive than obese targets. Specifically, the obese were stereotyped by the subjects, especially by those who had to infer the target's attractiveness from a written description, as aesthetically displeasing, morally and emotionally impaired and socially handicapped. However, when attractiveness was controlled, students exhibited little negative stereotyping of obese applicants. These results suggest that obese individuals are evaluated negatively, and that this negative evaluation is due to the physical unattractiveness associated with increased weight.

Similar results were found in another study about the stereotypes of obesity and love (Harris, 1990). In this study, 222 college students completed questionnaires concerning their experiences with love, including the Love Attitude Scale of Hendrick and Hendrick. They then saw a photograph of an obese or normal weight male and female, and responded to an identical questionnaire as they thought the pictured person would respond. Results of this study were consistent with the literature in that the obese stimulus persons were judged to be less attractive, lower in self-esteem, less likely to be dating, less Erotic, less Ludic, and more Manic on the love scales, and to deserve a

fatter, uglier love partner than the nonobese stimulus persons. Subjects' own obesity was unrelated to dating or marital experience, self-esteem, or scores on love subscales. All these findings were consistent with the idea that obese people are stereotyped as having fewer resources to contribute to relationships.

In another study, Maroney and Golub(1992) found that societal attitudes toward and stereotypes about obese persons are predominantly negative and that many health care professionals share these beliefs. This study compared 67 US nurses' attitudes toward obesity to those of 107 Canadian nurses. These nurses were given a questionnaire consisting of 20 questions about attitudes toward obese persons and also included four questions regarding ethnic attitudes. Results revealed that a majority of both US and Canadian nurses endorsed negative stereotypical attitudes toward obese persons. However, The US nurses showed more negative attitudes toward obese persons and they also expressed more ethnic prejudice than did Canadian nurses. Interestingly, the Caucasian obese adult was the target of most prejudice; similar prejudice toward Hispanics, African-American, and Jewish obese adults was not seen. Researchers interpreted the results of this study by arguing that people may find it more acceptable to express discriminatory attitudes toward the majority, that is, Caucasians than toward minorities.

Consistently, Bagley and his colleagues(1989) found that nurses viewed obese patients negatively, not only because of problems of care (difficulty of moving and mobilizing), but also because they shared the negative stereotypes of the general population. In other words, nurses endorsed the stereotype of the obese as lazy, passive, weak, bad, and cruel. In their study, the researchers employed methods drawn from attitude research. They employed a 15-item Nursing Management Scale measuring

nurses' attitudes about obese people, and a 13-item Personality and Lifestyle Scale. The result of their correlational analysis showed that older nurses had less favorable views of obesity than younger nurses and that those with more years of professional education had more favorable attitudes than those with fewer years of professional education. Dissatisfaction with own body weight was linked to negative attitudes toward obese adults.

Research indicates that negative stereotypes about the obese develop at an early age. Children as young as five years old show a preference for photographs of average or thin children who are handicapped, amputated or disfigured over drawings of obese (Rothblum et al., 1988). Similarly, children do not want obese children as friends (Crandall & Biernat, 1990; Rothblum et al., 1988; Counts et al., 1986). So, children, as well as adults, have similar negative perceptions of obese.

Adults share the general negative view of obesity even when they are themselves obese or members of groups that are at high risks for being obese. For instance, Goodman et al.(1963, cited in Crandall & Biernat, 1990) found that obese individuals rate an obese child as least liked among the various handicapped and disliked silhouettes. This finding implies that the negative stereotypes about obesity are often shared by the obese themselves and personal experiences of obesity are not an important influence on these stereotypes (Harris, 1990; Harris et al., 1991; Tiggeman & Rothblum, 1988).

To summarize, the above investigations showed that adults, both women and men, young and old alike, children, and even the obese themselves have negative

stereotypes about the obese and that these negative stereotypes may be associated with "a stigma" concerning the obese.

1.5 OBESITY AS A STIGMA AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF BEING STIGMATIZED

Stigma may be defined as an attribute that deviates in an undesirable direction from accepted norms and which results in deep discreditation by society. Social stigma is a pervasive aspect of social life. According to researchers in the field, all stigmatized individuals are unacceptable for the society because these individuals show a deviance from what people had anticipated (Goffman 1963 in Archer, 1985; Farrel & Swigert, 1975). Goffman distinguished between *discredited* (e.g. deformities, physical handicaps, and other manifest disabilities) and *discreditable* stigma (e.g. criminal history, sexual deviance, epilepsy, and other invisible conditions) and discussed a wide variety of stigma. The difference between the two types of stigma has important consequences for social interaction. Individuals who are discredited are forced to deal with their stigma in almost all interactions, including initial contact whereas individuals with discreditable stigma may conceal their stigma by utilizing interaction management strategies. Thus individuals with discreditable characteristics may decide to inform no one about their stigma or they may decide to reveal it only to selected individuals. Consequently, possessing a discredited attribute leads to unavoidable negative reactions whereas such negative reactions may be avoided in the case of possession of discreditable characteristics.

Obesity is a physical characteristic which is difficult to conceal, thus, it may place an individual within the group of people possessing a discredited stigma. Obesity

affects most social interactions since being obese is immediately visible to others (Crocker et al., 1993). Research indicates that, of all the conditions for which a person may be stigmatized in a society, the stigma of being obese may be the most prevalent one. One reason for this situation is that concerns with body weight are very common among people, especially among women. There exists research evidence that most people and even children as young as five years old place importance upon body size and shape, and show worries about their current weight (Tiggemann, 1992; Wadden, Brown, Foster & Linowitz, 1991; Davis & Cowles, 1991; Straumann, Vookles, Berenstein, Chaiken, & Higgins, 1991).

Contemporary psychologists have begun to be concerned with the stigma of obesity and its possible consequences. A number of studies have shown that stigma of obesity is used to make attributions about personality, character, and general competence of stigmatized individual. There exists quite a few studies demonstrating that people who are obese elicit almost uniformly negative responses from others (Crocker et al., 1993; Rothblum et al., 1988; Rothblum, Brand, Miller, & Oetjen, 1990; Harris et al., 1991; Allison et al., 1991; Crandall & Biernat, 1990). For example, Allison and coworkers (p.599, 1991) concluded, as a result of a study measuring attitudes toward obese persons, that "obesity is a stigma, obese persons are often rejected, and many obese persons internalize the negative attitudes of society". Results of this study implied that negative societal attitudes toward the obese may have serious negative consequences for obese individuals. Discrimination is one of the possible consequence of these negative societal attitudes.

As it has been reviewed in "Consequences of Stereotypes" and "Individuating and Discrimination" sections, research suggests considerable amounts of discrimination

against stereotyped individuals, especially for the obese. For instance, it was well documented that obese persons are discriminated against in the job market (Rothblum et al., 1990; Rothblum et al., 1988; Brink, 1988), in colleges (cited in Allison et al., 1991), and even in health services (Bagley et al., 1989; Maroney & Golub, 1992). It was shown that job résumés were rated more negatively when the applicants were obese than when they were nonobese. Brink (1988) conducted two studies: In the first study, he asked subjects to evaluate six candidates on a 1-to-10 job acceptability scale for a position as psychology professor. No significant differences in evaluations of various applicants differing with respect to sex, age, race, marital status and number of children emerged in this study, whereas significant discriminations were made between applicants varying with respect to weight. Obese candidates were evaluated as less acceptable for the position of psychology professor. In a second study, subjects were asked to recommend obese or nonobese sales workers for promotion on a 1-to-10 point scale and it was found that the worker thought to be obese was rated with much lower promotion prospects when compared with the worker thought to be nonobese.

Another study indicating job discrimination against obese was conducted by Belizzi, Klassen, & Bellonax (1989). In this study, participants were given the personnel record of a sales trainee and were asked to make a sales territory assignment decision. Participants were informed about the three vacant territories and were told to assign the trainee to one of the territories. The results revealed that the sales recruit described as extremely obese was less likely to be assigned to an important or desirable sales territory and more likely to be assigned to an undesirable territory than the recruit who was not described as obese. The likelihood of not being selected at all for an assignment was also higher for an obese person than for a person of average weight. Furthermore, the

researchers also found that obese saleswomen were discriminated against more than obese salesmen.

Obesity may also affect attitudes on the job. For example, in a recent study, Jasper and Klassen (1990) examined the attitudes toward obese and nonobese salespersons. In this study, subjects were instructed to read an "employee's summary sheet" including information about body sizes. Then, subjects were asked two questions concerning the salesperson (employee) about whom they read. First they were asked about how much they desired to work with the salesperson, then they were asked about how effective they thought the salesperson would be in selling them a product they desired to buy. Data suggested that subjects were less enthusiastic to work with obese salespersons and that they thought obese salespersons would be less effective in selling products. Similarly, it was found that obese students, especially obese females, were less likely to be accepted to colleges than the nonobese (cited in Lindzey & Aronson, 1985). In addition results of another study suggest that even landlords are less likely to rent to the obese (Karris, 1977). In short, the above studies showed that the obese are a strongly disliked group and being fat is associated with negative characteristics and discrimination.

Perhaps the main reason that the obese are strongly disliked and discriminated against is that they are held responsible for their condition. The dislike is based on the belief that obese people are self-indulgent and lacking in personal effort and will (Harris et al., 1991). Thus people who are obese are frequently blamed for their condition. According to some researchers, controllability is an important dimension of stigma (Crocker et al., 1993) Research reveals that individuals with controllable stigma are less likely to be liked or pitied, and elicit more anger and less assistance than individuals with

uncontrollable stigma (Crocker et al., 1993; Crandall & Biernat, 1990). For example, a study comparing American and Canadian nurses' attitudes toward obese persons showed that a majority of nurses from both groups believed that obesity can be prevented by self-control, and that obese adults should be put on a diet (Maroney and Golub, 1992). Several questionnaire items regarding nursing care on this study also showed that, a great number of nurses believed that caring for an obese person is exhausting and stressful because they believed that obese people are lazy and unable to control themselves.

In short, the negative consequences of being obese seem to be predicated on the notion that the obese are largely responsible for the solution to their problem through dieting and exercising (Crandall & Biernat, 1990). People believe that obese men exercise too little, and obese women eat too much. Both fat and thin people appear to have views of obesity indicating lack of control over one's life (Mackenzie, 1984, cited in Crandall & Biernat, 1990). However, today, it is known that for the most part, one's weight is greatly the result of one's genetic and physiological make-up and not one's own doing. Perhaps because of unrealistic beliefs, few social sanctions against the expression of negative responses toward the obese exist. Thus, people are responsible for being fat and a societal tolerance for expressing hostility toward obese people can be seen as some possible factors which permit public expression of prejudice and discrimination.

It is obvious that the negative consequences of stigma are not lost on the stigmatized. The obese learn that their stigmatized condition produces reactions that are usually negative. This leads to emotional distress and psychological problems for the stigmatized. Anxiety, negative self perception, disturbed body image, lower self-esteem, feeling of shame and guilt, and even depression are some examples of psychological

problems that result from emotional distress caused by stigmatization (Allison et al., 1991; Tiggeman & Rothblum, 1988 ; Theron, Nel & Lubbe, 1991; Page, 1991; Wadden et al., 1991). A study conducted by Page (1991) suggested that persons who maintain a perception of being fat may exhibit emotional distress as a result of the negative attitudes of society. 630 adolescent females of different weights participated in this study. The average age of the sample was 15.3 years of age. Data gathered from this sample showed that even thin girls, who considered themselves to be fat, scored significantly high on indicators of psychological distress, such as loneliness and hopelessness. Similarly, Crocker and coworkers (1993) investigated the affective consequences of stigma for members of stigmatized groups, especially those for obese people. Twenty-seven obese and 31 normal weight college women participated in this study and received either positive and negative social feedback from a male evaluator. Results of the study revealed that obese women receiving negative feedback attributed the feedback to their weight, and this attributional pattern resulted in negative mood, as measured by psychological distress measures. Another study also showed that stigma of being obese was associated with lower levels of self-esteem in youngsters (Mendelson & White, 1985). Researchers of this study examined the development of self-body-esteem in overweight and normal weight youngsters. In addition, it examined the relation between self-esteem and body-esteem. Subjects of this study were 97 children from different age groups and measures were Coopersmith's Self-Esteem Inventory and the Body-Esteem Scale. Results indicated a negative relationship between obesity and appearance-esteem which in turn was positively associated with overall self-esteem. Due to prevalent stigmatization in societies, obese individuals tend to evaluate their physical outlook negatively. The negative evaluations one has of his/her body relates to a higher degree of

negativity in that person's overall evaluation of self. A possible explanation of the negative psychological states experienced by obese people may be that the obese begin to internalize the negative attitudes of the society. As a result, they have poor self-images and they experience distress (Allison et al., 1991; Tiggemann & Rothblum, 1988; Theron et al., 1991; Page, 1991). The Attributional Ambiguity Framework suggests a different explanation of this issue. According to this explanation, members of some stigmatized groups may suffer from negative affect and low self-esteem either because they do not recognize the negative consequences their stigma has for their interactions and outcomes or because, although they believe that their stigma affects their outcomes negatively, they do not attribute those outcomes to prejudice and discrimination on the part of others (p.62, Crocker et al., 1993). In short, they do not make external attributions for being mistreated.

In summary, it is well documented in the literature that people's stereotypes and reactions toward obese individuals are generally negative. Consequently, obese individuals are dehumanized, devalued, and mistreated within society also by themselves.

1.6 GENDER DIFFERENCES ON OBESITY RELATED STEREOTYPES

Gender is an important factor which appears to mediate effects of obesity. A number of researchers have suggested that being obese is generally viewed as more serious and more unattractive for women than for men (Belizzi et al., 1989; Jasper & Klassen, 1990*1990; Harris et al., 1991; Bowen, Tomoyasu, & Cauce, 1991; Cash & Hicks, 1990; Sobal & Stunkard, 1989). Women also express greater concern with obesity and weight (Harris et al., 1991; Pliner, Chaiken, & Flett, 1990) and greater desire

for thinness than do men (Harris, Walters, & Waschull, 1990; Brodie, Slade & Riley, 1991; Jasper & Klassen, 1990*1990; Zellner, Harner, & Adler, 1989; Thompson & Thompson, 1986; Fallon & Rozin, 1985; Garner, Garfinkel, Schwarts, & Thompson, 1980).

A study investigating attitudes about body weight and appearance in a group of young adults asked subjects about their weight, dieting, social activities etc., and also asked about their stereotypes about fat and thin men and women. Undergraduate psychology students of two different universities participated in this study. Twenty percent of the sample was obese and 50% of the subjects perceived themselves to be obese to some degree. Researchers developed a ten-item scale designed to assess the perceived likelihood of obese and normal-weight individuals' engaging in various activities. In addition, subjects were asked to rate the extent to which eight qualities (warmth, friendliness, happiness, self-confidence, self-indulgence, self-discipline, laziness, and attractive appearance) were typical of thin/fat woman/man on a 5-point Likert scale (Tiggeman and Rothblum, 1988). The study revealed that obese people were perceived as unhappier and as less self-confident than normal-weight people. They were also viewed as more self-indulgent, less self-disciplined, lazier, and less attractive than others. In addition, the study revealed that negative stereotypes were more prevalent for female than for male targets, and that women tended to rate thin and obese targets more discrepantly than did men.

Similarly, in a study investigating the relationship between obesity and employment related victimization, Rothblum et al.(1990) found that women experienced greater concern and unhappiness about their weight than did men. In addition, negative consequences of obesity were greater for women than they were for men when

measured by victimization measures such as attempts to conceal weight and reduced self-confidence because of weight. Thus, Rothblum and associates argued that negative consequences of obesity had greater impact on women's self perceptions than they did on men's self perception.

Six-hundred and fifty college students, aged 17-25, from different ethnic groups (92% White with 6% being African-American, 2% Asian, and 0.2% Hispanics) participated in a study designed to investigate the effects of gender and ethnicity upon perceived consequences of obesity (Harris et al., 1991). Participants in this study completed a questionnaire with three sections; including background information and questions about dating and obesity. Results showed that females indicated greater concern with obesity than did males, were more likely to describe themselves as obese, express more dissatisfaction with their bodies and wish to lose weight more often than did males. In addition to the above gender effects, ethnic differences were observed in the above study. Compared with whites, black females were more satisfied with their body shape and black males were less likely to refuse to date someone because of her weight. The findings suggest that reactions to obese individuals may vary as a function of gender and ethnicity.

Consistently, Koff and Rierdan (1991) found that feeling fat and wishing to lose weight were becoming normative for females, especially for young adolescent girls. In this study, 206 fifth grade girls responded to an extensive number of questions on a 5-point scale about their weight, body image, dieting practices, and attitudes toward weight and toward eating. Some open-ended questions were also included in the questionnaire. Results suggested that majority of the girls wished to weight less than they did presently and said that they dieted at least occasionally. For most girls, weight concerns had

emerged between ages of 9 to 11, and interestingly, even the girls who were satisfied with their appearance shared these concerns. Furthermore, it was found that the negative attitudes toward obesity at early ages was present among girls but were largely absent among boys (Guyot, Fairchild, & Hill, 1981; cited in Sobal & Stunkard, 1989). This difference in attitudes toward obesity between boys and girls has already found its expression in gender differences with respect to dieting, exercising, perceived body image and self-esteem.

In their literature review about the contributing factors to high prevalence of weight related problems, Bowen et al., (1991) argued that weight is a major issue for women. This argument is consistent with the findings of Wadden and his associates (1991) who report that weight and figure are the primary concerns of adolescent girls but not of boys. Gender differences with respect to concern with weight may be explained by sex role stereotypes. Beauty has been a feminine attribute, and a female responsibility. Physical health and physical beauty are associated with the idea of being slim. Women are under pressures to conform to ideals of beauty. Since conformity to what is considered ideal weight is more central to evaluation of women than of men, it is easy to understand women's preoccupation with their physical appearance including their weight. Under the circumstances, obese women are bombarded with picture of what they should look like in order to be beautiful because being thin is equated with happiness, success, marital bliss, and positive self-esteem. On the other hand, being obese is seen as a stigmatizing condition and as a reason for feeling blue, tired, and unsociable for the women (Davis & Cowles, 1991; Koray & Pekcan, 1985).

1.7 STEREOTYPES ABOUT THE OBESE AND EFFECTS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Socio-economic status (SES), as a sociocultural factor has been extensively studied and appears to be related to incidence of obesity. However, there is little consensus about conceptualizing and measuring SES. Different researchers choose different measures. In general, studies investigating SES with respect to various variables have utilized indicators such as income, education, occupation, parental education or parental income. Most researchers used only one measure, however, some have used several indicators or composite scales of SES. Nevertheless, whatever the measure, most research has revealed somewhat similar results.

Existing literature on the issue of the obesity showed that SES and obesity are related and that obesity is not evenly distributed in communities (Mustajoki, 1987; Rand & Kuldau, 1990; Sobal & Stunkard, 1989; Bowen et al., 1991). According to literature, people who belong to a low social class become fat more easily (Sobal & Stunkard, 1989), but the converse may also be true, i.e. obese people loose social status.

A study employing a random sample of 2115 black and white adults, aged 18-96 conducted interviews on weight and weight concerns (Rand and Kuldau (1990). The results revealed that 46% of black women, 28% of black men, 18% of white women, and 16% of white men were obese. Results obtained from this study showed that there were significant age, gender, race, and social class differences in prevalence of obesity and that prevalence of obesity was lowest among youngest and oldest respondents. In addition, white women were less obese and black women were more obese than all other groups. An inverse relationship between prevalence of obesity and social class

emerged among adult women, that is lower SES women were more obese than high SES women. This inverse relationship was particularly strong for white women. Prevalence rates of obesity for men were not related to SES. The results of this study were consistent with other research reporting an inverse relationship between SES and obesity for females; lower class women being more obese than upper class women (Crandall & Biernat, 1990; Rand & Kuldau, 1990; Sobal & Stunkard, 1989). Bowen and coworkers (1991) also presented similar results in their review paper. They concluded that there was a greater prevalence of obesity among lower SES than among higher SES groups and that this relationship between class and weight was particularly strong for women. They also reported that prevalence of excess underweight was high among white women of middle and upper-middle class groups.

Goldblatt, Moore, and Stunkard (1965; cited in Sobal & Stunkard, 1989) also provided supportive evidence for the above findings. They showed that obesity was six times more prevalent among women of lower SES than among those of upper SES. In men, the difference between SESs was also significant but not so pronounced as among women. The correlation between obesity and social class was well documented in the review article by Sobal and Stunkard (1989). Sobal and Stunkard also report a monotonic increase in the desire to be thin with increasing social class among girls aged 12 to 17, even when weight - which decreased with SES - was controlled. Among boys from different social classes, by contrast, there were only small and inconsistent differences in the desire for thinness.

In another study, it was shown that 30% of lower-class women were obese, compared with 4% of upper-class women. This figures for upper and lower class men were 33% and 21%, respectively (Moore, Stunkard, & Srole, 1962; cited in Rothblum

et al., 1988). In the same study, it was also found that obese women were more likely than nonobese women to have lower socioeconomic status than their parents, whereas nonobese women were more likely to have higher socioeconomic status than their parents. No such relationship was evident for men. Consistent with the above findings, Goldblatt, and coworkers (1965; cited in Crandall & Biernat, 1990) indicated that obese women were much more likely than normal weight women to occupy a lower SES than their parents.

One explanation of the relationship between obesity and SES has been that people who belong to a low social class become fat more easily possibly because of faulty eating habits and lack of opportunities for exercise. However the converse may also be true, i.e. that obese people lose social status (Sobal & Stunkard, 1989). The reports concerning occupation of lower SES by obese women than by their parents is supportive of the latter explanation. Prejudice and discrimination against the obese may be explanations of possible downward mobility by obese women. Supportive evidence for effects of prejudice and discrimination are provided by studies that showed that SES was inversely related to positive attitudes toward obese persons for females but not for males in developed societies (Allison et al., 1991; Mustajoki, 1987).

1.8 PURPOSES AND QUESTIONS OF STUDY

The present study aimed to investigate reactions to obese and nonobese targets with respect to a number of variables. Two such variables were Target and Perceiver Sex. Another variable of interest was the availability or nonavailability of individuating information about the target. The respondents of the study were Turkish adolescents. This age range was selected because of the high salience with concerns with body during

this stage of life and because of rising concerns about obesity during this stage of life (Richards, Boxer, Petersen & Albrecht, 1990; Erikson, 1968). The study first aimed to elicit contents of stereotypes about the obese using the free response technique. The information gathered in the first stage was used in construction of the stimulus material for investigating discriminatory evaluations of the obese in the second part of the study. The second part of the study utilized a rather artificial and conventional method which provided respondents with written information about targets and requested ratings on a number of bipolar scales.

The specific research questions of the present study are listed below:

1. What are the contents of stereotypes related to obese and thin individuals?
2. Are obese targets evaluated more negatively than thin targets?
3. Is gender of a target a significant variable with respect to evaluations of obese and thin targets?
4. Is gender of perceiver a significant variable with respect to evaluations of obese and thin targets?
5. Is SES of perceiver a significant variable with respect to evaluations of obese and thin targets?
6. Is there a relationship between the availability or unavailability of individuating information about the target and evaluation of obese and thin targets?
(Individuation - Target Weight interaction)
7. Is there a relationship between the availability or unavailability of individuating information about the target and evaluation of male or female obese or thin targets? (Individuation, Obese, Target Sex interaction).

8. Is there a relationship between Perceiver Sex, the availability or unavailability of Individuating Information about the target and evaluation of obese or thin targets? (Individuation, Obese, Perceiver Sex interaction)



CHAPTER 2

METHOD

2.1 Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted in two stages. In the first stage high school students were asked to provide trait words descriptive of obese and thin persons. In the second stage the same students who participated in the first stage of the study were asked to make evaluative ratings of the trait words generated in the first stage of the study.

Sample

Participants of this study were 20 male and 20 female students who attended Aydınlikevler Lisesi. The mean age of students was 16.8 years with a range between 15 to 19 years. Twenty percent of these students reported that their perceived monetary condition was low, 32 percent reported that it was average, and 35 percent reported that it was high. Approximately 97.5 percent reported cities the longest residential place during their lives.

Parental Education ranged from illiteracy to doctoral degrees; 42.5 percent of mothers and 35 percent of fathers had high school degrees. Sixty-two point five percent of mothers and 87.5 percent of fathers had education above elementary school. Only 3 mothers were not graduates of any school.

Instrument

Questionnaires consisting of two parts were administered in the first stage of the study. The first part of the questionnaire included questions related to age, sex, parental education, perceived monetary status and place of longest residence. In the second part of the questionnaire, students were asked to write all positive and negative adjectives that come to their minds for describing both "an obese" and "a thin" person (See Appendix A). The obese person was described first followed by the thin person in order to reduce confusion in filling out questionnaires. In the second stage of the study, the students were asked to evaluate the words that were elicited in the first stage on a 5-point evaluative Likert type scale (1=very positive, 5= very negative).

Procedure

Questionnaires were administered to students during class hours by the researcher. The class teachers were present during administration of questionnaires and helped the researcher. Standardized oral instructions were provided. The instructions were " please write down characteristics (achievement related, social relationships, physical) that may be found in an obese/thin individuals.

Results

As a result of adjective-listing, a total of 39 descriptive terms were elicited from the pilot sample. Thirty-five words each were obtained from descriptions of obese and thin individuals. On the average 5.63 (SD=2.60) adjectives were used to described obese persons and 4.53 (SD=1.91) adjectives were used to described thin persons, $F(1,39)=14.79, p < .001$. Adjectives that were mentioned more than once were included in

the final list and percentages were calculated on the basis of the total number of respondents. Adjectives, their frequencies, percentages and evaluative ratings may be seen in Table 1.

It may be seen in Table 1 that adjectives that have been cited by over 25% of respondents as descriptive of obese persons may be grouped into three categories. The first group consists of positive social characteristics such as warm, joyous, tolerant, helpful, cheerful, honest, compliant, mature. The second group of adjectives includes negatively evaluated words indicating lack of energy and discipline, such as undisciplined, lazy, careless, lacks will power, procrastinating. The third group includes adjectives associated with introversion such as sensitive, and introverted.

Traits describing thin individuals were mostly related to physical appearance such as attractive, beautiful/handsome, elegant, athletic, energetic and positive social traits such as admirable, and polite. Thin people were also described as nervous.

Three words were cited by over 25% of respondents as characteristic of both obese and thin people. These were sensitive, hard to get along with, and lethargic. As may be seen in Table 1 words describing obese individuals included both positively and negatively evaluated adjectives. It is also a point to note that lethargic was cited as descriptive of both obese and thin individuals.

Table 1

Frequencies, percentages and average evaluations of traits describing obese and thin individuals.

Trait Terms	Evaluative Ratings		Frequencies			
	M	SD	Obese		Thin	
			N	%	N	%
Warm						
Canayakın	1.55	.60	12	30.0	6	15.0
Attractive						
Çekici	1.80	.88	5	12.5	13	32.5
Lethargic						
Uyuşuk	4.05	.75	10	25.0	12	30.0
Elegant						
Zarif	1.80	.76	0	0.0	14	35.0
Undisciplined						
Disiplinsiz	3.70	1.01	15	37.5	0	0.0
Energetic						
Enerjik	1.80	.82	4	10.0	25	62.5
Intelligent						
Zeki	1.65	.74	1	2.5	2	5.0
Clumsy						
Sakar	3.65	.98	6	15.0	0	0.0
Honest						
Dürüst	1.20	.41	12	30.0	3	7.5
Lazy						
Tembel	4.10	.78	13	32.5	5	12.5
Hard to get along with						
Geçimsiz	4.40	.81	16	40.0	23	57.5
Beautiful/Handsome						
Güzel/Yakışıklı	1.40	.59	4	10.0	18	45.0
Joyous						
Neşeli	1.80	.76	26	65.0	3	7.5
Curious						
Meraklı	3.20	.94	9	22.5	1	2.5
Careless						
Dikkatsiz	3.45	.99	8	20.0	0	0.0
Impolite						
Terbiyesiz	4.80	.41	5	12.5	2	5.0
Tolerant						
Hoşgörülü	2.10	.81	19	47.5	8	20.0
Helpful						
Iyiliksever	1.70	.65	15	37.5	3	7.5
Polite						
Nazik	1.80	.76	3	7.5	11	27.5

Table 1 (continued)

Trait Terms	Evaluative Ratings		Frequencies			
	M	SD	Obese		Thin	
			N	%	N	%
Generous						
Cömert	1.70	.65	6	15.0	2	50.
Lacks will power						
İradesiz	4.25	1.10	20	50.0	2	5.0
Ugly						
Çirkin	4.55	.64	16	40.0	2	5.0
Withdrawn						
Çekingen	3.70	1.02	8	20.0	5	12.5
Creative						
Yaratıcı	1.15	.36	0	0.0.	3	70.5
Mature						
Olgun	1.50	.68	11	27.5	0	0.0.
Well adjusted						
Uyumlu	1.90	.78	12	30.0	7	17.5
Compliant						
Söz dinleyen	3.25	1.08	13	32.5	0	0.0
Athletic						
Atletik	1.40	.59	2	5.0	20	50.0
Irresponsible						
Sorumsuz	4.35	1.08	5	12.5	7	17.5
Nervous						
Sinirli	4.38	.81	2	5.0	10	25.0
Sensitive						
Hassas	1.95	.75	23	57.5	16	40.0
Procrastinating						
Üşengeç	3.50	.99	13	32.5	5	12.5
Cheerful						
Güleryüzlü	1.78	.70	25	62.5	6	15.0
Aversive						
İtici	4.35	.92	18	45.0	7	17.5
Aggressive						
Saldırgan	3.90	1.15	6	15.0	3	7.5
Introvert						
İçine kapanık	3.70	1.02	20	50.0	4	10.0
Self-confident						
Ken. güvenen	1.60	.90	0	0.0	12	30.0
Clean						
Temiz	1.00	.00	0	0.0	5	12.5
Liked						
Beğenilen	1.35	.48	4	10.0	27	67.5

2.2 Main Study

The main study was conducted as two parallel studies with two different samples. Individuating information about the target person was presented in the first study but not in the second one. Students from the same school participated in both studies on consecutive years. The data from both samples comprised the total data set.

Sample I

One hundred and fifty-two male and 146 female fifth grade students attending Bahçelievler Cumhuriyet Lisesi served as participants. Participants' ages varied between 15 and 22 with a mean of 17.34 and standard deviation of 1.24. As can be seen in Table 2, the participants originated from home environments where fathers were somewhat better educated than mothers. Seventy five point one percent of fathers had high school education or higher, whereas this percentage was 54.4 for mothers. The percentage of mothers without a diploma was 6.7. This percentage was only 2.7 for fathers.

Table 2

Parental Education of participants for Sample I (percentages)

Level of Education	Mothers %	Fathers %
Less than primary school	% 6.7	% 2.7
Primary school	% 13.1	% 6.1
Junior high school	% 25.5	% 15.8
Senior high school	% 34.6	% 42.1
More than high school	% 19.8	% 33.2
Missing	% 0.3	% 0.1

Fourty-eight point three percent of participants reported their perceived monetary condition to be above average, 32.6 percent reported it to be average, and only 19.2 percent reported it to be low. Eighty-seven point nine percent of the subjects reported cities as the longest residential place during their lives. Only 36 out of 298 have lived in villages or towns for any length of time.

Sample II

Second sample consisted of 120 students (51 males, 69 females) from Bahçelievler Cumhuriyet Lisesi. The mean age of this group was 14.34, ranging from 13 to 17. As shown in Table 3, fathers were better educated than mothers. Specifically, 12.5 % of the mothers were university graduates and post-graduates, while this proportion was 34.2 % for fathers. Again, 2.5 % of the fathers were not graduates of any school, whereas this proportion for mothers was 8.3.

Table 3

Parental Education of participants for Sample I (percentages)

Level of Education	Mothers	Fathers
	%	%
Less than primary school	% 8.3	% 2.5
Primary school	% 10.8	% 9.2
Junior high school	% 30.8	% 21.7
Senior high school	% 37.5	% 32.5
More than high school	% 12.5	% 34.2
Missing	% 0.1	% 0.0

Subjects were also asked about their perceived monetary conditions. Thirty-five point eight percent of the students perceived their monetary conditions as low, 29.2% as average, and 35% as high. Furthermore, 98.4% of the students were reported cities as the longest residential place during their lives.

Comparison of two samples

The two samples were compared with respect to age, parental education and perceived monetary condition. A one way ANOVA where age served as the dependent revealed a significant effect of sample, $F(4,16) = 470.89, p < .001$. On the average, sample II participants were younger than sample I participants (sample I: $M = 17.34$ ($SD = 1.24$), sample II $M = 14.34$ ($SD = 1.37$). No other differences between the two samples were significant.

Instrument I

Four different questionnaires consisting of several parts were utilized (The questionnaire is included in the Appendix B). The first part included questions about age, sex, parental education and monetary condition and place of longest residence of participants. The second part of the instrument included a short paragraph about a 16 year old girl or boy who was either obese or thin and who was of average height. Thus each of four different questionnaire types included information about one of four sex/weight combinations. The paragraph included both positive and negative information about the target person. The person was described as successful in some subjects and unsuccessful or mediocre in others. He or she was described as being independent, responsible, maladjusted at times, compliant, polite, quiet, tardy, negligent,

generous, witty, short tempered and sometimes getting into fights. The target person was said to be evaluated as above average in intelligence and below average in self confidence. The paragraph stated that the target did not have very high hopes of attending university. After reading the paragraphs, students were first asked to report on height, weight and hair color of the target in the paragraph. Then they were asked to rate the appropriateness of 39 traits for describing the target person on a 5-point scale (1= very appropriate, 5= not at all appropriate). These 39 traits were words obtained from the pilot study and included words that were used to describe the target person in the paragraph that the students had read in the previous page. After rating the appropriateness of the words for describing the target person, the students were asked to provide ratings of the target person's performance in several school subjects. Lastly they were asked to indicate the degree of target person's closeness to his/her parents, friends and siblings.

Instrument II

Four different questionnaire types including information about one of four target Sex/Weight Combinations were utilized (See Appendix C). The first part of these questionnaires included questions about age, sex, parental education and monetary condition, and place of longest residence of participants. Next, the participants were given information concerning height, weight and sex of a target person and were asked to rate appropriateness of 39 traits for describing the target person on a 5-point scale (1= very appropriate; 5= not at all appropriate). The trait words were the same words that were included in instrument I.

Next, students were asked to report on height, weight, and hair color of the target person that they had rated. Lastly, participants were asked to rate the persons' performance in several school subjects and the degree of closeness of his/her relationship with parents, friends, and siblings.

Procedure I

Instrument I was administered to students during class hours. Both class teachers and the researcher were present during the administration and answered questions.

Procedure II

Instrument II was administered to students during class sessions. The data collection was completed in a single session lasting for about 10 to 20 minutes.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Data analysis was conducted in several stages. In the first stage, a factor analysis was conducted on ratings of trait words not included in the story. Items loading on the main factors emerging from factor analysis constituted the scales used in the study. In the second stage, reliability analyses were conducted on scales emerging from the factor analysis. In the third stage manipulation checks comparing weight perceptions of obese and thin targets were conducted. Research hypotheses were tested in the fourth stage. Data from subjects participating in both samples were used in the above five stages. Lastly analyses were conducted for the sample 1 on measures related to perception of target persons on items included in the story. These analyses provided information with respect to possible systematic distortion of information presented in the story in this condition. Such systematic distortion was not an issue for the nonindividuating condition. Therefore no analyses were conducted on those measures for data obtained from Sample II.

3.1 Manipulation checks

A one way ANOVA comparing perceived weight of obese and thin targets was conducted in order to assess the success of target weight manipulation. Results of this

ANOVA revealed a significant effect of Target Weight, $F(1, 416) = 1023.94, p < .001$, obese target $M = 2.82$ ($SD = .46$); thin target $M = 1.24$ ($SD = .55$) where 1= thin, 2= average 3= obese.

3.2 Scale construction

A varimax rotated factor analysis was conducted on ratings of 28 items which were not included within the descriptive paragraph in first instrument. The analysis yielded 6 factors which accounted for 65% of the total variance. First 3 factors accounted for 51% of the total variance. Table 4 shows the results of this factor analysis.

The first factor, labeled as "**Positive Characteristics**", explained about 34% of the total variance and had an eigen value of 9.51. This factor consisted of items with positive loadings such as energetic, attractive, beautiful/handsome, elegant, warm, athletic, and liked, and also included items with negative loadings such as lethargic, curious and lazy. The alpha value of the related scale was .92.

The second factor was labeled as "**Negative Characteristics**". This factor explained 11% of the total variance and had an eigen value of 2.95. It consisted of items such as aversive, lacks will power, procrastinating, ugly, irresponsible, and impolite. The alpha value of the scale was .83.

Table 4

Factor Loadings of The Items

ITEMS	Positive Characteristics	Negative Characteristics	Introversion
Energetic	.82154	-.16810	.08102
Attractive	.79394	-.11452	.11615
Beautiful/Handsome	.77196	-.22695	.18330
Elegant	.76493	-.17286	.05176
Lethargic	-.73383	.31623	.10686
Warm	.69298	-.03726	.29036
Athletic	.62904	-.21936	.16585
Curious	-.55469	.44099	.13496
Liked	.53565	-.42846	.23663
Lazy	-.50348	.39946	.06225
Aversive	-.45045	.74135	-.06990
Lacks will power	-.26294	.72296	-.05372
Procrastinating	-.39694	.68468	.02905
Ugly	-.58811	.60061	.09142
Irresponsible	-.13654	.59160	-.27681
Impolite	.19069	.51321	-.16253
Introvert	-.06119	-.01203	.74961
Sensitive	.26424	-.30070	.71521
Tolerant	.22950	.01344	.61648
Compliant	.04871	-.17271	.57499
Withdrawn	-.01783	.09782	.55628

The third factor was labeled as "**Introversion**". It explained 6.3% of the total variance and had an eigen value of 1.75. The included items were introvert, sensitive, tolerant, compliant, and withdrawn. The Cronbach's Alpha of the scale related to this factor was .73.

3.3 Ratings of obese and thin targets on positive characteristics, negative characteristics and introversion scales

Two Target Weight x Target Sex x Student Sex x Condition x Rating Scale ANCOVAs were conducted where ratings on the three scales served as the dependent measure and Age and Perceived monetary condition served as covariates. The first three factors in these analyses were between subjects factors and the last factor was a within subjects factor. The effects of covariates (Age and Student Monetary Condition) were not significant. Therefore, a Target Weight x Target Sex x Student Sex x Condition x Adjective Scale ANOVA was conducted. The results of this ANOVA were presented in Table 5.

Although there are a large number of significant effects in Table 5, only those involving interactions of Target Weight and Adjective Scales are meaningful. The first interaction to be discussed is the significant Target Weight x Adjective Scale interaction. The means associated with this interaction are presented in Table 6.

Table 5

Target Weight x Target Sex x Student Sex x Condition x Rating Scale

Sources of variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
Within cells	123.39	377	.33		
Target Weight (T.Weight)	1.91	1	1.91	5.84	.016
Target Sex (T.Sex)	1.13	1	1.13	3.44	.064
Individuation/Non individuation (Ind/Non ind.)	.01	1	.01	.04	.842
Student Sex (S.Sex)	.20	1	.20	.61	.437
T.Weight X T.Sex	.03	1	.03	.10	.748
T.Weight X Ind/Non ind.	.00	1	.00	.00	.949
T.Weight X S.Sex	.31	1	.31	.94	.332
T.Sex X Ind/Non ind.	2.86	1	2.86	8.75	.003
T.Sex X S.Sex	.29	1	.29	.90	.344
Ind/Non ind. X S.Sex	.13	1	.13	.39	.531
T.Weight X T.Sex X Ind/Non ind.	.16	1	.16	.48	.489
T.Weight X T.Sex X S.Sex	.20	1	.20	.61	.436
T.Weight X Ind/Non ind X S.Sex	.69	1	.69	2.10	.149
T.Sex X Ind/Non ind X S.Sex	.20	1	.20	.60	.438
T.Weight X T.Sex X Ind/Non ind X S.Sex	.45	1	.45	1.36	.244
Within cells	409.80	754	.54		
Adjective Scale (Adj)	15.43	2	7.72	14.20	.000
T.Weight X Adj	115.18	2	57.59	105.96	.000
T.Sex X Adj	5.45	2	2.72	5.01	.007
Ind/Non ind X Adj	2.77	2	1.38	2.55	.079
S.Sex X Adj	1.85	2	.92	1.70	.183
T. Weight X T.Sex X Adj	3.09	2	1.55	2.84	.059
T. Weight X Ind./Non ind X Adj	4.36	2	2.18	4.01	.018
T.Weight X S.Sex X Adj	1.23	2	.62	1.14	.322
T.Sex X Ind/Non ind X Adj	.69	2	.34	.63	.531
T.Sex X S.Sex X Adj	.46	2	.23	.42	.656
Ind/Non ind X S.Sex X Adj	1.83	2	.92	1.69	.186
T.Weight X T..Sex X Ind/Non ind X Adj	4.14	2	2.07	3.81	.023
T.Weight X T.Sex X S.Sex X Adj	.14	2	.07	.13	.880
T.Weight X Ind/Non ind X S.Sex X Adj	.88	2	.44	.44	.445
T.Sex X Ind/Non ind X S.Sex X Adj	.17	2	.09	.16	.852
T. Weight X T.Sex X Ind/Non ind X S.Sex X Adj	.10	2	.05	.09	.914

Table 6

Ratings of Thin and Obese Targets on Three Adjective Scales (1= positive, 1=negative, 1=introvert)

	positive	negative	introversion
obese target	3.56a (.66)	2.66a (.83)	2.70 (.73)
thin target	2.17b (.60)	3.71b (.95)	2.53 (.60)

As may be seen in Table 6, the obese target was rated as less positive, more negative and less introverted than the thin target. The F's were as follows: positive $F(1, 391) = 473.87, p < .001$; negative $F(1, 391) = 171.36, p < .001$, introvert $F(1, 391) = 6.06, p < .02$. These results are generally consistent with the generally negative stereotypes about obese individuals. The finding that the obese target was perceived as less introverted than the thin target is also consistent with the 'jolly good fellow' conceptualization of the obese.

It may be seen in Table 7 that Target Weight x Condition x Adjective Scale interaction was also significant. Means and standard deviations associated with this triple interaction effect are presented in Table 7. The obese target was perceived as more positive and less negative under individuating than nonindividuating conditions, positive $F(1, 195) = 10.91, p < .01$; negative $F(1, 195) = 14.72, p < .001$. No other comparisons between individuating and nonindividuating conditions were significant. These results support previous findings with respect to lower levels of stigmatization under individuating conditions. It appears that norms against stigmatizing obese individuals are not operative for our high school sample.

Table 7

Ratings of thin and obese targets on three adjective scales under individuating and nonindividuating conditions :Target Weight x Condition x Adjective Scale interaction

	Obese Target		Thin Target	
	individuation	non individuation	individuation	non individuation
positive	3.46a (.67)	3.79b (.58)	2.21 (.65)	2.06 (.46)
negative	2.80a (.85)	2.32b (.68)	3.77 (.71)	3.57 (.87)
introvert	2.67 (.76)	2.78 (.67)	2.52 (.61)	2.57 (.60)

Means involved in the significant four way Target Weight x Target Sex x Condition x Adjective Scales interaction are presented in Table 8. It may be seen that the effect of individuating-non individuating condition is significant for the obese male target for ratings of all three adjective scales, positive $F(1, 94) = 19.09, p > .001$; negative $F(1, 94) = 5.35, p < .05$, introversion $F(1, 94) = 7.57, p < .01$. The condition effect was not significant for any of the scales for thin male targets. The condition effect was significant for only one of the scales for obese female targets, negative $F(1, 99) = 9.83, p < .01$. However, this condition effect was also significant for the thin female target, negative $F(1, 101) = 6.92, p < .01$, implying that the negative evaluation under nonindividuating condition might not be related to obesity. This finding is contrary to expectations based on Western findings (reported in the introduction) which would predict greater discrimination against obese females derived from Western findings.

Table 8

Ratings of thin and obese male and female targets on three Adjective Scales under Individuating and Nonindividuating Conditions :Target Weight x Target Sex x Condition x Adjective Scale interaction

	Obese Target		Thin Target	
	male target	female target	male target	female target
Positive				
Individuate	3.35 (.61)	3.57(.72)	2.07(.59)	2.34(.68)
non individuate	3.94(.60)	3.66(.54)	1.93(.41)	2.19(.47)
Negative				
individuate	2.89 (.86)	2.71(.83)	3.84 (.62)	3.71 (.77)
non individuate	2.46 (.71)	2.18 (.63)	3.88 (.82)	3.26 (.81)
introvert				
individuate	2.49a (.73)	2.84 (.75)	2.58 (.59)	2.46 (.62)
non individuate	2.94b (.72)	2.63 (.61)	2.48 (.58)	2.67 (.61)

Table 9

Ratings of targets in Individuating and Non-individuating Conditions on three Adjective Scales

	individuating	non-individuating
positive characteristics	2.85 (.91)	2.91 (1.01)
negative characteristics	3.28 (.92)	2.95 (1.00)
introversion	2.59 (.69)	2.68 (.65)

Target Sex x Adjective Scale interaction was also significant. It may be seen in Table 10 that female targets were rated more negatively than males on Negative Characteristics Scale, $F(1,391) = 5.88, p < .02$. Sex differences were not significant for the other two scales. Target Sex x Target Weight x Adjective Scale interaction was not significant.

Table 10

Ratings of male and female targets on adjective scales

Items	Target Sex	
	male	female
positive	2.79 (.96)	2.94 (.92)
negative	3.31 (.94)	3.06 (.95)
introvert	2.60 (.67)	2.65 (.68)

3.4 Ratings of obese and thin targets on adjectives mentioned within the paragraph (Sample I data).

A MANOVA where ratings of adjectives mentioned in the paragraph were used as dependent measures and Target Weight, Target Sex, Subject Sex and Subject Monetary Condition served as independent variables was conducted. This analysis was conducted with only Sample I data. This MANOVA revealed a significant multivariate effect of Target Weight, $F(11, 274) = 11.58, p < .001$. All the univariate effects were also significant for this effect. As may be seen in Table 11, the obese target was perceived as more careless, nervous and hard to get along with and less intelligent, helpful, polite, generous, mature, aggressive, self confident and less adjusted than the thin target. Overall, it may be seen that the obese target was evaluated more negatively than the thin target even on traits for which identical information was provided for the two targets within the paragraph included in the questionnaire. This finding was consistent with earlier findings with respect to effects of stereotypes on memory for inconsistent information.

Table 11

F values of Ratings of obese and thin targets on adjectives mentioned within the paragraph

Items	TARGET WEIGHT				F(1,284)
	obese		thin		
	M	SD	M	SD	
intelligent	1.88	.71	1.52	.61	20.48
hard to get along with	2.79	.73	3.76	1.04	83.96
careless	3.03	1.03	3.50	.65	21.38
helpful	2.01	.69	1.81	.60	7.36
polite	2.13	.93	1.59	.62	32.83
generous	2.60	1.34	1.99	.97	20.01
mature	2.59	.90	2.15	.75	19.90
well adjusted	2.76	.71	2.26	.71	35.33
nervous	2.30	1.08	3.10	1.22	34.25
aggressive	3.55	1.28	4.14	.90	20.06
self-confident	3.10	1.19	2.75	1.04	7.24

3.5 Ratings of obese and thin targets on subjects that the target received good, bad and mediocre grades (deviations from information provided within the paragraph)

Differences between students' ratings of grades received from various courses by the targets and grades reported in the paragraph was calculated and served as the dependent measure in an ANOVA where Target Weight, Target Sex, Subject Sex, and Performance in Coursework (failing, mediocre, good) served as independent variables. Performance in Coursework was a within subject variable in this analysis. Results of this ANOVA revealed a significant Target Weight x Performance in coursework interaction, $F(2, 516) 9.67, p < .001$. Although none of the comparisons between obese and thin targets were significant, as may be seen in Table 12, obese targets were perceived to be more mediocre in their school work than thin targets.

Table 12

Ratings of obese and thin targets on subjects in which the target received good, bad and mediocre grades (deviations from information provided within the paragraph)

	good	mediocre	bad
obese	-.58 (.56)	.04 (.57)	.95 (.80)
thin	-.34 (.49)	.26 (.70)	.71 (.85)

Table 13

Ratings of obese and thin individuals' relationships with significant others (deviations from information provided within the paragraph)

	male target		female target	
	Obese	Thin	Obese	Thin
mother	-.42 (.55)	-.45 (.50)	-.61 (.87)	-.35 (.48)
father	1.19 (.72)	1.75(1.09)	1.51(1.13)	1.60(1.13)
friend	.30 (.82)	.63 (.62)	.10 (.89)	.49 (.60)
sibling	2.34*(.63)	2.06 (.62)	2.31 (.64)	2.11 (.60)

3.6 Ratings of obese and thin individuals' relationships with significant others (deviations from information provided within the paragraph)

Information about the targets' relationships with their mothers, fathers, friends was provided in the paragraph. Differences between students' ratings and information provided in the paragraph were calculated. No information was provided about targets' relationships with siblings. Therefore no calculations were performed for this measure. A Target Weight x Target Sex x Subject Sex x Relationship ANOVA was performed where the last factor was a within subjects measure. A significant Target Weight x Target Sex x Relationship interaction emerged from this analysis, $F(3, 831) = 3.70, p < .02$. Further analyses of this significant interaction revealed that obese male targets were perceived as being more distant to fathers, friends and siblings than thin

targets, $F_s(1,147)$ 13.08, 6.14, 7.58, $p_s < .001$, .02, and .001, respectively. (see Table 13) . No significant differences were found in perceived relationship with mothers between obese and thin male targets. Obese female targets, on the other hand, were perceived to be more distant to mothers and friends than thin female targets, $F_s(1,147)$, 5.17, 8.23, $p_s < .05$, .01. No significant differences were reported between obese and thin female targets with respect to relationships with siblings and fathers.



CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

The present study, conducted with a sample of Turkish adolescents, revealed findings consistent with Western research on stereotypes about the obese. Obese targets were rated as possessing less positive, more negative and less introverted characteristics than thin targets. Thus, in general, obese targets were rated more negatively than were thin targets. Perceptions of lower levels of introversion for obese in comparison with thin targets were also consistent with Sheldon's typology concerning endomorphs (Sheldon, 1942 cited in Davidoff, 1987). Reactions toward female obese targets were not more negative than those toward male obese targets. Neither were female students more sensitive to weight of targets. These findings were inconsistent with Western studies reporting greater discrimination against female obese targets (Bowen et al., 1991; Koff & Rierdan, 1991; Page, 1991). Although female targets were generally rated more negatively than male targets by the sample of the present study, obesity did not result in greater derogation of females than of males. One explanation for the absence of greater derogation for female targets in the present study may be the fact that the present sample was drawn from a school in a lower middle class neighborhood. As discussed above, female concern with weight is more prevalent for higher than lower SES samples in the West (Goldbatt et al., 1965, cited in Sobal & Stunkard, 1989). Another explanation may

be sought in the possible preference of traditional values concerning the desirability of plump women in Turkey for the present sample.

The finding that obese targets were rated more negatively than thin targets on adjectives for which identical information was provided was also consistent with research related to the effects of stereotypes on remembering (Stangor & Lange, 1994). Similarly, obese targets were rated as having more distant relations with same sex parents and friends than thin individuals. These results are somewhat inconsistent with perceptions of lower levels of introversion with respect to obese than thin people. It might be that a rather negative kind of sociability is associated with obese individuals. The reason why the obese target's relationship with same-sex parent is perceived as comparatively more distant is not clear. Distant parent-child relationships might have been perceived as the cause or consequence of obesity. The present study did not include measures of perceived causes for the nature of targets' social relationships. Further studies including measures of perceived causality may be useful for explaining this finding. Correlations between perceived causes of obesity and ratings of obese targets might also be useful in understanding the reasons for devaluation of obese individuals. As mentioned in the introduction, Western research demonstrated that obesity was perceived as internally caused (Page, 1991; Allison et al., 1991).

The results of the study were also consistent with Western research concerning the effects of individuating information with respect to discrimination toward stigmatized groups. As discussed in the results section, the obese targets were rated as less stereotypic when individuating information was available than when it was not. The effect of individuating information was significant for all three scales for the obese male targets whereas it was significant for only one scale (negative characteristics) for the

obese female target. The availability of individuating information did not affect ratings of thin male targets, whereas it resulted in less negative evaluations on the negative characteristics scale for the female thin target. The interaction between availability of individuating information and target sex is hard to explain, so is the higher negative characteristics attributed to female targets in general. The results of the study revealed that negative characteristics were rated more typical of female targets, in general, than of male targets by both male and female students. Whether or not this negative view of females is pervasive among Turkish high school students is a question worth investigating. In view of the finding that significant effects of individuating information emerged for negative characteristics -the characteristics that differentiate both obese and thin females from males -, it may be argued that individuating information resulted in less stereotypic reactions toward a stigmatized group, namely, females.

The finding that individuating information resulted in more positive rather than more negative reactions toward obese targets is an indication that there are no internalized inhibitions against discrimination against obese persons among the present sample. The lack of such inhibitions may imply that such persons may have to face negative reactions in their daily lives. The negative reactions the obese have to face as well as the internalization of the social stereotypes about the obese by these people may have negative consequences for the self concepts of obese people. The consequences of others' negative reactions may be especially influential during adolescence, a stage of life important in the crystallization of the self concept (Erikson, 1968). Research has indeed demonstrated the relationship between obesity and self concept both for Turkish and Western adolescents (Mendelson & White, 1985; Martin, Housley, McCoy, Greenhouse, Stigger, Kenney, Shoffner, Fu, Korslund, Ercanli-Hoffman, Carter,

Chopin, Hegsted, Clark, Disney, Moak, Wakefield, & Stallings, 1988; Lawson, 1980; Kartal, 1996). Martin et al., (1988), for instance, investigated the relationship between body-weight and self-esteem. The subjects of this study were adolescent girls between the ages of 14-20. Self-esteem was assessed by Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (1965) and obesity was assessed by Body-Mass Index. The results indicated a negative correlation between esteem scores and weights of the subjects. Mendelson & White (1985) were found similar results with a sample of children. Findings of Kartal's (1996) study with a Turkish sample replicated results of previous research in Western cultures stating that obese have lower self and appearance-esteem than individuals in normal weight categories. All these results were interpreted by the researchers as indicative of internalization of societal attitudes and stereotypes about weight.

The incidence of bulimia in the West during adolescence may be related to negative stereotypes related to obese individuals (Koff & Rierdan, 1991; Strauman et al., 1991; Cash & Hicks, 1990; Moses, Banilivy, Lifshitz, 1989; Richards et al., 1990). The finding that there were no differences in reactions toward male and female obese targets is possibly one explanation of the low incidence of bulimia among Turkish females.

In conclusion, the present study has constructed measures related to the stereotypes about obese people and has shown that obese targets were generally rated more negatively than thin targets. However, it should be remembered that obese people were also perceived as less introverted than thin individuals. The present study had a rather limited scope. It was concerned with only stereotypes about obesity, neither causal attributions for these stereotypes nor the consequences of these stereotypes for the obese were included in the scope of the study. Further studies in those topics might be worthwhile.

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APPENDIX A

AÇIKLAMA

İnsanların, fiziksel özellikleri ile kişilik özellikleri arasında herhangi bir ilişki olup olmadığını öğrenmek amacı ile bir araştırma yapmaktayız. Bu nedenle sizden bazı soruları cevaplamanızı rica ediyoruz. Özel konularda soru sormamaya özen göstereceğiz ve kimliğinizi kesinlikle gizli tutacağız.

Bize ayıracağınız zaman için size şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

Adınız, Soyadınız -----

Doğum Tarihiniz -----

Şube ve Sınıfınız -----

Cinsiyetiniz -----

Anne ve Babanızın Eğitimi nedir? Sadece en son mezun olduğu okulun karşısına bir işaret koyunuz.

	Anne Eğitimi	Baba Eğitimi
Okur-yazar değil	-----	-----
Okur-yazar	-----	-----
İlkokul mezunu	-----	-----
Ortaokul mezunu	-----	-----
Lise mezunu	-----	-----
Üniversite Mezunu	-----	-----
Lisansüstü	-----	-----

Maddi durumunuz nedir?

Fakir -----

Orta -----

Ortanın altı -----

Ortanın üstü -----

Zengin -----

En uzun süre yaşadığınız yerleşim yeri neresidir?

Köy -----

Kasaba -----

Şehir -----

Büyük şehir -----

APPENDIX B

AÇIKLAMA

İnsanların, bazı ipuçlarını değerlendirerek, başkalarının kişilik özelliklerini ne derece doğru tahmin edebildiklerini öğrenmek amacı ile bir araştırma yapmaktayız. Bu nedenle sizden bazı soruları cevaplamanızı rica ediyoruz. Özel konularda soru sormamaya özen göstereceğiz ve kimliğinizi kesinlikle gizli tutacağız

Bize ayıracağınız zaman için size şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

Adınız, Soyadınız

Doğum Tarihiniz

Şube ve Sınıfınız

Cinsiyetiniz

Anne ve Babanızın Eğitimi nedir? Sadece en son mezun olduğu okulun karşısına bir işaret koyunuz.

	Anne Eğitimi	Baba Eğitimi
Okur-yazar değil
Okur-yazar
İlkokul mezunu
Ortaokul mezunu
Lise mezunu
Üniversite Mezunu
Lisansüstü

Maddi durumunuz nedir?

Fakir -----

Orta -----

Ortanın altı -----

Ortanın üstü -----

Zengin -----

En uzun süre yaşadığınız yerleşim yeri neresidir?

Köy -----

Kasaba -----

Şehir -----

Büyük şehir -----



Aşağıda “Ali (Ayşe) isminde, 16 yaşındaki bir lise öğrencisi ile ilgili çeşitli bilgiler veren bir paragrafa yer verilmiştir. Sizden bu bölümü dikkatle okumanız ve onunla ilgili soruları cevaplamanız istenmektedir.

“Ali 16 yaşında bir lise öğrencisi. Yaşıtlarına kıyasla orta boylu ve zayıf bir genç. Babası öğretmen, annesi ise bir bankada çalışıyor. Ali’nin 9 yaşında bir kız kardeşi ve 18 yaşında bir erkek kardeşi var.

Ailesi ile ilişkisi sorulduğunda, annesi ile olan ilişkisini yakın ve sıcak olarak tanımlayan Ali, babasını kendisine uzak buluyor. Annesine göre o, bağımsız ve sorumluluk sahibi biri, fakat bazen uyumsuz davranıyor ve söz dinlemiyor.

Ali’nin okuldaki başarısına bakıldığında, matematik, coğrafya ve müzik derslerinde başarılı bir öğrenci olduğu görülüyor. Bu derslerdeki notu “A”. Fen bilimleri, yabancı dil, ve beden eğitimi derslerinde “C”, Türk dili ve edebiyatı, tarih ve felsefe derslerinde ise aldığı not “D”. Öğretmenlerinin değerlendirmelerine göre Ali nazik ve sakin bir öğrenci, ancak kimi zaman ev ödevlerini yapmamasından ve sık sık okula geç kalmasından şikayetçiler. Ayrıca dikkat, olgunluk ve arkadaşlık ilişkileri açısından onu orta olarak değerlendiriyorlar.

Ali’nin sınıfta herkes kadar arkadaşı var. Onu sevenler olduğu kadar, sevmeyenler de var. Ali çabuk sinirlendiği için, arkadaşları ile zaman zaman kavga ediyor. Buna karşın, o iyiliksever, cömert ve esprili bir geç.

Geçenlerde okulun bütün öğrencileri üzerinde yapılan psikolojik değerlendirmeler, Ali’nin zeka düzeyinin yaşıtlarının ortalamasının üzerinde, psikolojik uyumunun ortalamada, kendine güveninin ise ortalamanın altında olduğunu gösterdi.

Ali bir üniversitede öğretim üyesi olmak istiyor. Ancak okulu bitirdiği zaman, üniversiteye girebileceğinden fazla umutlu değil”.

Aşağıda bir takım kelimeler verilmiştir. Sizden bu kelimeleri kullanarak paragrafta adı geçen kişinin nasıl bir insan olabileceği hakkında tahminde bulunmanız istenmektedir. Örneğin, söz konusu kişinin “hoşgörülü” kelimesinin yanındaki boşluklardan “çok uygun” kelimelerinin altını, kesinlikle hoşgörülü bir insan olamayacağını düşünüyorsanız, “hiç uygun değil” kelimelerinin altını işaretlemeniz gerekmektedir. Lütfen paragrafta adı geçen kişiyi tanımlarken bütün kelimeleri kullanınız ve anketimizi doldururken arkadaşlarınıza danışmayınız.

Sizce “Ali’nin/Ayşe’nin fiziki görünümü ile ilgili belirgin özellikleri neler olabilir?

Boy	:	Uzun-----	Orta-----	Kısa-----
Kilosu	:	Zayıf-----	Orta-----	Şişman-----
Saç rengi	:	Sarı-----	Kahve-----	Siyah-----
Göz rengi	:	Açık-----	Koyu-----	

Sizce ařađıdaki kelimeler ‘‘Ali’yi/Ayře’yi’’ tanımlamakta ne derece uygun?

	Çok Uygun	Uygun	ne uygun,ne uygun deđil	Uygun deđil	Hiç uygun deđil
Canayakm	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Çekici	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Uyuřuk	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Zarif	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Disiplinsiz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Enerjik	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Zeki	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Sakar	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Dürüst	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Tembel	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Geçimsiz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Güzel/yakıřıklı	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Neřeli	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Meraklı	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Dikkatsiz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Terbiyesiz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Hořgörülü	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
İyiliksever	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Nazik	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

	Çok Uygun	Uygun	ne uygun,ne uygun değil	Uygun değil	Hiç uygun değil
Cömert	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
İradesiz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Çirkin	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Çekingen	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Yaratıcı	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Olgun	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Uyumlu	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Söz dinleyen	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Atletik	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Sorumsuz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Sinirli	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Hassas	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Üşengeç	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Güleryüzlü	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
İtici	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Saldırgan	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
İçine Kapanık	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Kendine güvenen	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Temiz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Beğenilen	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Sizce “Ali’nin/Ayşe’nin” derslerdeki notları nedir?

	A	B	C	D	E
Matematik	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Tarih	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Coğrafya	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Beden Eğitimi	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Felsefe	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Yabancı dil	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Müzik	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Fen Bilimleri	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Sizce “Ali’nin/Ayşe’nin” ailesi ve arkadaşları ile ilişkileri nasıldır?

	Çok Yakın	Yakın	ne yakın,ne yakın değil	Yakın değil	Hiç yakın değil
Annesi ile	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Babası ile	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Kardeşleri ile	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Arkadaşları ile	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

APPENDIX C

AÇIKLAMA

İnsanların, fiziksel özellikleri ile kişilik özellikleri arasında herhangi bir ilişki olup olmadığını öğrenmek amacı ile bir araştırma yapmaktayız. Bu nedenle sizden bazı soruları cevaplamanızı rica ediyoruz. Özel konularda soru sormamaya özen göstereceğiz ve kimliğinizi kesinlikle gizli tutacağız

Bize ayıracağınız zaman için size şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

Adınız, Soyadınız -----

Doğum Tarihiniz -----

Şube ve Sınıfınız -----

Cinsiyetiniz -----

Anne ve Babanızın Eğitimi nedir? Sadece en son mezun olduğu okulun karşısına bir işaret koyunuz.

	Anne Eğitimi	Baba Eğitimi
Okur-yazar değil	-----	-----
Okur-yazar	-----	-----
İlkokul mezunu	-----	-----
Ortaokul mezunu	-----	-----
Lise mezunu	-----	-----
Üniversite Mezunu	-----	-----
Lisansüstü	-----	-----

Maddi durumunuz nedir?

Fakir -----

Orta -----

Ortanın altı -----

Ortanın üstü -----

Zengin -----

En uzun süre yaşadığınız yerleşim yeri neresidir?

Köy -----

Kasaba -----

Şehir -----

Büyük şehir -----

“Ali/Ayşe, 16 yaşında, orta boylu, şişman bir lise öğrencisi”.

Sizden, aşağıdaki kelimeler yardımı ile, “Ali’nin/Ayşe’nin” nasıl bir insan olabileceği hakkında tahminde bulunmanız istenmektedir. Örneğin, söz konusu kişinin “hoşgörülü” bir insan olabileceğini düşünüyorsanız, “hoşgörülü” kelimesinin yanındaki boşluklardan “çok uygun” kelimelerinin altını, kesinlikle hoşgörülü bir insan olamayacağını düşünüyorsanız, “hiç uygun değil” kelimelerinin altını işaretlemeniz gerekmektedir. Lütfen paragrafta adı geçen kişiyi tanımlarken bütün kelimeleri kullanınız ve anketimizi doldururken arkadaşlarınıza danışmayınız.

Sizce aşağıdaki kelimeler “Ali’yi/Ayşe’yi” tanımlamakta ne derece uygun?

	Çok Uygun	Uygun	ne uygun,ne uygun değil	Uygun değil	Hiç uygun değil
Canayakın	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Çekici	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Uyuşuk	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Zarif	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Disiplinsiz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Enerjik	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Zeki	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Sakar	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Dürüst	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

	Çok Uygun	Uygun	ne uygun,ne uygun değil	Uygun değil	Hiç uygun değil
Tembel	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Geçimsiz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Güzel/yakışıklı	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Neşeli	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Meraklı	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Dikkatsiz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Terbiyesiz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Hoşgörülü	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
İyiliksever	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Nazik	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Cömert	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
İradesiz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Çirkin	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Çekingen	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Yaratıcı	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Olgun	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Uyumlu	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Söz dinleyen	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Atletik	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Sorumsuz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

	Çok Uygun	Uygun	ne uygun,ne uygun değil	Uygun değil	Hiç uygun değil
Sinirli	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Hassas	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Üşengeç	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Güleryüzlü	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
İtici	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Saldırgan	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
İçine Kapanık	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Kendine güvenen	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Temiz	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Beğenilen	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Sizce “Ali’nin/Ayşe’nin fiziki görünümü ile ilgili belirgin özellikleri neler olabilir?

Boy : Uzun----- Orta----- Kısa-----

Kilosu : Zayıf----- Orta----- Şişman-----

Saç rengi : Sarı----- Kahve----- Siyah-----

Göz rengi : Açık----- Koyu-----

Sizce “Ali’nin/Ayşe’nin” derslerdeki notları nedir?

	A	B	C	D	E
Matematik	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Tarih	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Coğrafya	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Beden Eğitimi	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Felsefe	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Yabancı dil	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Müzik	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Fen Bilimleri	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Sizce “Ali’nin/Ayşe’nin” ailesi ve arkadaşları ile ilişkileri nasıldır?

	Çok Yakın	Yakın	ne yakın,ne yakın değil	Yakın değil	Hiç yakın değil
Annesi ile	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Babası ile	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Kardeşleri ile	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Arkadaşları ile	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----