Social acceptance of 'fat shaming'
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Objectives

Research Questions
- Which observers accept fat shaming?
- Which victims and offenders are mostly accepted in regard to fat shaming?

Background
- fat shaming = acts of private or public criticizing of overweight and obese people to make them feel ashamed of their weight (Korbik 2014)
- problematic because: COBWEB Model (Tomiyama 2014): ‘vicious cycle’ of perceived stigma, stress reactions, increased cortisol secretion and ultimately weight gain

Survey Method
- **Where?** University of Technology Chemnitz, Germany
- **Who?** Bachelor students
- **When?** 2nd to 6th semester Sociology, Sports, Psychology, Economics

Data

**Bilder der Körperformen**

How? vignette study paper pencil questionnaire

During a class reunion a male acquainted classmate with body shape m1 replied to your old female school friend with body shape w3 ‘Maybe you should lose some weight’. How do you judge this situation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignettes</th>
<th>Bilder der Körperformen</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>w1 w2 w3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>m1 m2 m3</td>
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</tbody>
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**Survey Methods**
- Typical accepting observer
  - male
  - athletic
  - low BMI
  - bad final grade
- Typical accepted offender
  - male
  - low BMI
  - close social relationship to observer
  - makes a weak discrediting statement
- Typical accepted victim
  - male
  - high BMI
  - distant social relationship to observer

Results

Logistic Regression
- Dependent Variable: 1 = observer accepts fat shaming

Discussion

Theoretical Interpretation
- general rejection of fat shaming (85%)
- men are more likely to be accepted as victims than women, contradicting the literature (Magallares, Morales 2013)
- possible explanations:
  - Plus size trend addresses women (higher costs of verbal abuse of women)
  - Expectation: Men take the verbal abuse easier, because they are the ‘stronger sex’ (lower costs of being ‘honest’ with men)

Further Questions
- Is the acceptance of fat shaming effected if respondents are victims, offenders or persons who have lost a lot of weight themselves?
- Why are the offender’s characteristics apparently unimportant?
- How has the vignette question mainly been understood by the respondents – as a question on facts or a question on attitudes?

Literature

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