

Barriers to Physical Activity and Coping Strategies among Overweight Learners Towards Contextualized Wellness Program

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Abstract

This study examined the barriers to physical activity and the coping strategies of overweight learners in a public secondary school in Manila as a basis for developing a contextualized wellness program. Specifically, it identified the personal, social, environmental, and institutional barriers encountered by overweight students and the coping mechanisms they use to manage these challenges. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, involving 114 overweight learners from Grades 7 to 10. Data were gathered using a validated and reliable survey questionnaire and analyzed through weighted mean and Pearson product-moment correlation. Findings revealed that personal and social barriers were highly encountered, particularly low self-confidence, negative body image, fear of judgment, and experiences of teasing. Environmental and institutional barriers were also evident, including limited access to safe spaces and the lack of inclusive physical education programs. In terms of coping strategies, learners commonly used emotion-focused and avoidant coping, while problem-focused coping was less frequently practiced. Results further indicated a significant relationship between the barriers to physical activity and the coping strategies employed by the respondents. Based on these findings, the study recommends the development of a contextualized, inclusive, and learner-centered wellness program that addresses both physical and psychosocial needs. Such a program should emphasize supportive school environments, adaptive physical activities, and coping skills development to promote sustained participation in physical activity among overweight learners.

Keywords: Coping Strategies, Contextualized Wellness Program, Overweight, Physical activity barriers.

