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## Dealing with Demons: Life of Someone Suffering from Body Shame

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### ABSTRACTS

People of all ages, genders, socioeconomic conditions, origins, and races are impacted by the significant issue of body shaming. Overall appearance, social images (appearance-cued stereotyping, social implications of appearance stereotyping), developmental consequences of appearance for psychological adjustment, and body-self interactions may all be affected. This research looks at the lives of students who have been victims of body shaming; how it affects the victims' lives and well-being; the sorts of care they need; their everyday experiences in terms of education and their surroundings; and how to assist them in building a new positive outlook on life. The diverse statements and experiences of the five (5) students from Sultan Kudarat State University Laboratory High School who were purposefully selected and interviewed through Google Meet were analyzed using a qualitative case study approach. The study's participants go about their regular lives, absorbing every bit of criticism they encounter into their motivation and inspiration. Finally, the victims have not overlooked the need for life preservation and are aware of it. Many of them make every effort to realize them, even if it means putting their emotions on the line. As this research emphasizes the value of everyone's life, it allows us to have a deeper understanding of students who are suffering from personal issues. Despite all that has occurred to them, they remain hopeful and prepared to take chances to achieve their objectives. As a result, it is recommended that the community learn more about body shaming.

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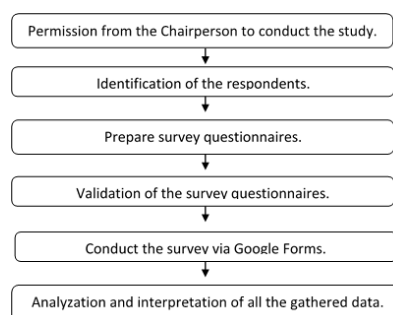
*Body dysmorphia,*  
*Body image,*  
*Body shaming,*  
*Experiences,*  
*Victims of body shaming,*  
*Well-being.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Body shaming, weight shaming, or appearance-based harassment can lead to low self-esteem, low body dissatisfaction, and depressive symptoms, which is consistent with the growing body of work emphasizing the harmful role of appearance-based harassment among youth. These people's daily lives are impacted by conditions that affect their mental state and how they express themselves in society. The current Filipino environment is both harsh and hilarious toward people who are classified as "fat" or "tabachoy", "skinny" or "payatot," etc. implying that a body-shaming mentality persists in Philippine society. Body shame is unique and can vary depending on the type of discrimination, bullying, intensity, and frequency involved. Thus, this study aims to address and understand the participants' experiences with body shaming. Even though just a few dedicated volunteers revealed their personal experiences with body shaming, their stories have shed light on how the process of body shaming affects victims' lives. Many reports conducted on body shaming in the Philippines. However, there have been no studies conducted on the experiences of those who have been subjected to it, how they have coped with it, or the consequences it has had on their well-being. Therefore, this research looked at and talked about how the participants were shamed about their bodies.

## 2. METHODS

The qualitative case study approach was utilized in this research, with the case being the experiences of victims of body shaming. The purposive Sampling Technique was used to choose five (5) participants. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, an explanatory type of case study was employed and completed online, and the interview was conducted through Google Meet. The data was gathered via an in-depth interview and a structured interview. Thematic Analysis (TA) was utilized to analyze the data. **Figure 1** presents the procedures that were followed in collecting the data. The following procedures were followed to obtain data from participants: First, a letter to conduct was sent to the school for the Chairman of the Laboratory High School. The next step was to identify the five individuals who were selected using purposive sampling. Once the individuals were identified, we formulated the interview questions. After formulating the interview questions, we would conduct the interviews using Google Meet. Finally, we would compile and analyze all the data before interpreting the results.



**Figure 1.** Data gathering procedure.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

With the data that was gathered, on Body Shaming's Effects on Victims' Well-Being, their experiences lead to the following: Physically is Starvation and Body overexertion; Mentally is Low self-esteem, Self-confidence, and Indignation; Socially is the change in their social

connection and became socially insecure; Mentally is the psychological change and Insecurity; in the Spiritual sense is Belief. The topic of Starvation, Body overexertion, and Body comparison in physical well-being make body-shamed students, which are more likely to engage in unhealthy habits. Some of the victims make judgments about themselves based on the opinions of others. Three out of five participants said that they refused to eat or starve and were forced to do their diet just to make a change in their physical appearance from being a victim of body shaming. The victims felt compelled to overwork themselves physically and adopt an unhealthy diet due to this (Satghare *et al.*, 2019). Through the theme of Low self-esteem/low self-confidence and Indignation, we discovered that people experience mood swings and develop insecurities. The participants stated that they experienced sudden mood changes when they are being criticized by the image. Some of the participants even doubt their value or self-pity. Two participants stated that it has led people to be desperate to reach the standards of other people and made it hard to control their emotions and made the issue even worse. As body shaming has such a profound impact on a person's feelings and confidence, mood swings are frequently developed and experienced.

Through the topic of Social Connection and Self Consciousness, the study discovered that sufferers are most likely to be concerned whenever they socialize. Some participants even stated that they wish to isolate themselves from other people because they are self-conscious about their appearance. One participant said that body shaming had affected them as they acquired social insecurities and started comparing themselves to others. Body shaming triggers feelings of guilt and comparison, as well as the belief that individuals should be assessed primarily on their physical characteristics. Through the theme Psychological Change and Insecurity, we discovered that body shaming harms their mental health and makes individuals paranoid in the worst-case situation. Because of their ordeals, some victims find it difficult to regain their confidence. Some participants stated that body shame increase low self-esteem, self-image, and self-worth resulting to be predictive of mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem (Schwager *et al.*, 2020). We discovered that the victims had not lost faith through the theme of Belief, even though some have questions about their existence. The negative consequences of thin-ideal internalization on body dissatisfaction are lessened by having a strong relationship with God (Akrawi, 2015). However, two participants stated that body shame has no impact on their faith or relationship with God. Some have even developed a far more robust relationship with their Creator, which, despite their difficulties, is a positive thing.

As to their experiences whenever they go to school in terms of Education, there is the school influence and an Academic Change. In terms of their Environment, their experiences are classified as changes in social behavior, low self-esteem, and timidity. Through the theme of School influence and Academic change, we discovered no change in their Education. Body shaming leads to poor academic performance, low marks, school absences, and even dropping out. Some of the victims, on the other hand, have little social impact on them since it makes them self-conscious while presenting or engaging in activities. However, one individual used the insults as an incentive to work harder and accomplish more, and as a result, their academic performance was unaffected. Through the theme of social behavior and Low self-esteem in terms of their Environment, the researcher discovered that body shaming affected individuals and their interactions with others. The progression of behavior through time and the concern of being judged by others are what the participants described based on their experiences. There is plenty of evidence that people were prejudiced against overweight persons, the same as what the participants have experienced (Wu & Zhang, 2021).

Furthermore, it appears that the Objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997), which states that changes in these mental health risks appear to occur in lockstep with life-course modifications in the body, is consistent with the data gathered from students at Sultan Kudarat State University-Laboratory High School, as it proves that there are effects on an individual's life and well-being physically, emotionally, socially, mentally, and spiritually even in their experiences whenever they go to school in terms of their Education and Environment.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, Body Shaming's Effects on Victims' Well-Being, their experiences lead to the following: Physically is Starvation and Body overexertion; Mentally is Low self-esteem, self-confidence, and indignation; Socially is the change in their social connection and social insecurity; Mentally is the psychological change and insecurity; in the Spiritual aspect is belief. Moreover, to their experiences, whenever they go to school in terms of Education, there is school influence and academic change. In terms of their Environment, their experiences were changes in social behavior, low self-esteem, and timidity.

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#### 6. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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