

An Exploration of the Psychological Impact of Obesity in Ethnic Minority Communities in the UK

3. Search Strategy

Databases

Google Scholar • PsycINFO • PubMed • Scopus • ONS
• NHS Digital • Public Health England

Keywords & Boolean Operators

- “Obesity” AND “ethnic minorities”
- “Psychological impact” OR “mental health”
- “Weight stigma” OR “self-esteem”
- “UK” AND “health inequalities”
- “Depression” AND “obesity” AND “ethnicity”

Filters

English • 2014–2025 • UK-based or UK-relevant •
Peer-reviewed or official reports

Search String Example

PsycINFO search: “obesity AND ethnic minorities AND
mental health AND UK” — 85 results before filtering.

Search Outcomes

- Initial results: 310
- After screening: 72
- Final included sources: 38

4. Inclusion & Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion

- UK-based studies on obesity and mental health
- Research focusing on ethnic minority groups
- Peer-reviewed articles, government reports, policy documents
- Published within the last 10 years

Exclusion

- Physical-health-only studies
- Non-UK contexts unless theoretically relevant
- Opinion pieces or non-academic sources
- Outdated research (>10 years old)

1. Introduction

Obesity disproportionately affects ethnic minority communities in the UK, including Black African, Black Caribbean, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and mixed-heritage groups (ONS, 2023). Beyond physical health risks, obesity contributes to psychological consequences such as depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, internalised stigma, and identity conflict (Roberts et al., 2020). Due to the sensitivity of weight-related stigma and mental health, a secondary qualitative research design was selected.

2. Research Approach

- A qualitative secondary research methodology was chosen because it:
- Avoids ethical risks associated with interviewing vulnerable individuals
- Allows synthesis of large-scale datasets and peer-reviewed evidence
- Supports analysis of cultural, psychological, and structural determinants
- Aligns with undergraduate research expectations
- This approach enables a thematic exploration of existing literature, policy documents, and national statistics.

5. Source Tracking & Evaluation (Condensed)

(Full table in Appendix A)

Author & Year	Method	Key Findings	Relevance
Roberts et al. (2020)	Quantitative	Weight stigma linked to depression	High
Khanolkar (2024)	Cohort study	Ethnic inequalities in obesity & mental health	High
PHE (2022)	National report	Ethnic obesity patterns	High
ONS (2023)	Dataset	NCMP ethnic disparities	High

7. Quality Appraisal: CRAAP Test

Sources were evaluated using the CRAAP criteria:

- Currency
- Relevance
- Authority
- Accuracy
- Purpose

CRAAP Consistency

Sources scoring below 18/25 were excluded.

CRAAP Summary (Poster Version)

Source	Score
Decision	NHS Digital (2024)
25/25	Included
Roberts et al. (2020)	24/25
Included	PHE (2022)
25/25	Included

8. Ethical Considerations

- No primary data collected
- Sensitive, non-stigmatising language used
- Cultural awareness and intersectionality considered
- Avoidance of bias
- Harvard referencing throughout

6. Data Analysis: Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis followed Braun & Clarke’s (2006) six-step framework.

Key Coding Categories

- Psychological outcomes (depression, anxiety, self-harm risk)
- Weight stigma and cultural shame
- Identity and self-perception
- Barriers to mental health support
- Cultural beliefs about body image
- Structural inequalities

How Codes Became Themes

Codes that appeared repeatedly across multiple studies were grouped into broader themes based on frequency, conceptual similarity, and relevance to the research aim.

Final Themes

- Psychological consequences of obesity
- Barriers to mental health support
- Cultural and structural influences
- Intersectional and identity-based experiences

9. Visual Data: Obesity Prevalence by Ethnicity (ONS, 2023)

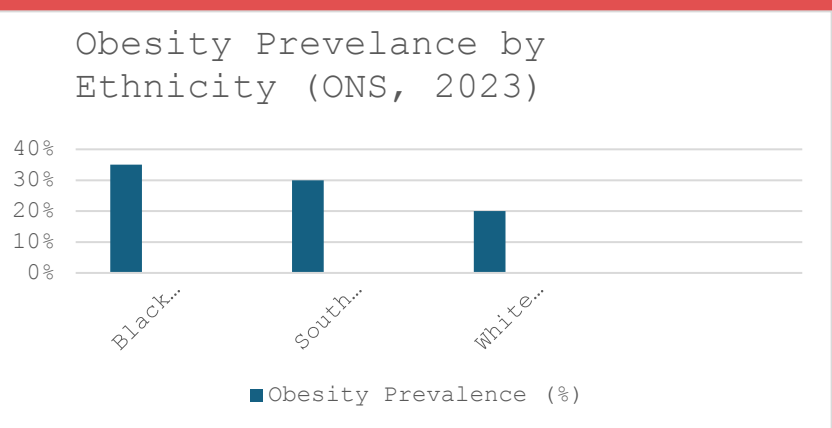


Figure 1. Obesity prevalence by ethnic group (ONS, 2023). Ethnic minority groups show significantly higher obesity rates, reinforcing the need to explore psychological impacts.

10. Limitations

- No lived experiences captured
- Limited UK-specific psychological research
- Some datasets lack detailed ethnic breakdowns
- Potential publication bias

11. Reference List (Poster Version)

- Khanolkar (2024); Roberts et al. (2020); ONS (2023); NHS Digital (2024); Public Health England (2022).