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Support for obesity policy: The effect of perceptions of causes for obesity and national identity in Canada

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ABSTRACT

Interventions in Canada to address obesity have largely been limited to individual-level change through education rather than a population-level public policy approach. Little is known about obesity policy support in Canada, and substantial national variation in obesity policy support prevents direct transferability of these policies among nations. Our study recruited 521 young adults for an online survey through leaflets and flyers. We investigated how respondents' demographics, health characteristics, political attitudes, beliefs regarding causes of obesity, and national identity affected their support for obesity policy. Results showed that there is high support for many obesity policies among Canadian young adults. Including Canadian national identity in regression models was significant in explaining obesity policy support beyond the combined effect of other predictors. Further exploration of national identity, in Canada and elsewhere, has implications for understanding obesity policy support that might assist policy makers in making more informed decisions in addressing obesity.

KEYWORDS

Obesity; Policy; National Identity; Canada; Opinion; Government

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