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Evaluation of self-esteem, body image and childhood trauma in obese women over 18 years old

A Duran Karagulmez(1), Fatma Goksin Cihan(2), R Kutlu(2)

(1) Konya Education and Research Hospital FM Clinic, Konya, Turkey

(2) NEU Meram Medical Faculty, Department of Family Medicine, Konya, Turkey

Corresponding author: Assistant Professor Fatma Goksin Cihan, NE University Merm Medical Faculty, Department of Family Medicine, Konya, Turkey. E-mail: goksincihan@yahoo.com

Background & Aim: The aim of this study was to evaluate the effect of childhood trauma on development of obesity and the self-esteem and body image disturbance in obese individuals.

Method: In this case-control study, 156 obese patients who admitted to Obesity Center and 210 women with normal BMI values were evaluated. A survey including sociodemographic traits, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ) and Body-Image Questionnaire (BIQ) were administered to participants.

Results: The mean age of obese women in this study was $35,95 \pm 10,65$ years and the mean age of control group was $35,49 \pm 10,48$ years. The average onset age of obesity in case group was $27,37 \pm 11,32$ years old. The obesity rate was significantly higher in married individuals than singles ($p=0,004$), in uneducated individuals than the educated individuals ($p<0,001$), in unemployed individuals than employed individuals ($p<0,001$), in women with low income than women with higher income ($p<0,001$). It was observed that women married with uneducated men were more obese than women married with educated men ($p<0,001$). The 71.1% of women on diet were obese while 35.2% of women who were not on a diet were obese ($p<0,001$). Self-esteem was considerably lower in obese women than others ($p<0,05$). Body image dissatisfaction was considerably higher in obese patients ($p<0,001$). Exposure to childhood trauma was higher in obese patients than non-obese ($p<0,05$). Physical neglect was higher in obese patients than non-obese ($p<0,05$).

Conclusions: Self-esteem and body image was lower in obese individuals. Childhood trauma and neglect had a role in development of adulthood obesity. Thus, obese patients should be evaluated psychologically. Parents should be educated for the future adulthood problems originating from childhood trauma and insecure attachment forms.