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Does internet addiction make us obese? Cross-sectional study in university students

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Background: The aim of this research was to investigate the effect of internet addiction(IA) in development of obesity.

Methods: This study was planned as cross-sectional analytical study. The research was conducted at the faculties of Dokuz Eylül University(DEU) The study population was first grade students of faculties of DEU and aged between 18-25. Study sample is selected by cluster sampling method. for data collection questionnaire consists of Online Cognition Scale(OCS) developed by Davis, along with demographic data and variables that cause obesity. Chi-square test, t-test, correlation analysis and logistic regression analysis were used to analyse data.

Results: In research, 2105 students has been evaluated. 43.8% of respondents(906) were male, 56.2%(1,162) were female. The average age of participants was 20.46 ± 1.99 (min=17-max=46). When the participants from OCS evaluated according to their score of 85.03 ± 33.07 total score was (min=36-max=222). As we look at the Sub-scales, mean score of social support scale was 27.85 ± 12.19 , mean score of loneliness depression subscale was 13.53 ± 6.67 and mean score of decreased impulse control subscale was 24.02 ± 10.62 . Mean score of distraction subscale was 19.66 ± 8.97 . BMI was found to be correlated with the OCS score and the subscales score in a positive direction. BMI was also associated with OCS score. These findings were more prominent for the male gender.

Conclusion(s): IA among university students has been found as a factor in the occurrence of obesity. IA describes the interest of internet which is out of control and harmful use of the Internet. As in other types of addiction, but not yet fully drawn frame is not a diagnostic and assessment criteria. The impact effect of the formation in obesity, IA is very important. To fight against the formation of the obesity which is one of the health problems. In Turkey, it is necessary to increase the interest about this subject.