

Abstract

Original Paper

**Association of Body Mass Index with Eating Attitudes,
Self Concept and Social Comparison in High School Students**

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Abstract

Aim: In this study we aimed to investigate the association of body mass index with eating behaviours and psychosocial characteristics.

Method: This was a cross sectional study that utilised a questionnaire form that included data related to socioeconomic and psychosocial characteristics of subjects. The data were gathered via student identification form, eating habit inventory Eating Attitude (EAT-40) test[®], Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale and Social Comparison Scale. Weight, height, waist and hip circumferences were measured. The study was conducted among 936 high school students who were randomly sampled through 9 different types of high schools in Bursa city.

Results: Among the cases 56,9% were are female (n: 542), and 43,1% were male (n: 411) and the mean age of the whole study group was 15, 74±1, 27. The mean body mass index (BMI) of the students was 21,14±3,43 kg/m². Of the students; the mean eating attitude test score was 20.59±11.69, the mean self-esteem score was 56.07±10.13, and the mean social comparison scale score was 69.51±25.31. No significant association was found between body weight, eating disorders and self esteem scores (p>0.05).A weight perception problem exists evident as the finding that 50% of thin students and 35.4% of normal weight students thought they were overweight. Approximately, 73% of overweight and 80% of obese students were aware of their status.

Conclusions: The development of the adolescents and environmental factors make the group susceptible to eating disorders and this age group needs to be closely monitored.

Key Words: Eating attitudes, Self-concept, Body mass index, Social comparison, Adolescents