

## (SELECTED PRESENTATIONS)

### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NUTRITIONAL HABITS, BODY MASS INDEXES AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SCHOOL OF HEALTH STUDENTS

Ece Nur Kaya<sup>1</sup>, Albena Gayef<sup>2</sup>, Berrin Telatar<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Istanbul Bilim University, School of Health, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Istanbul, Turkey

<sup>2</sup>Trakya University, Faculty of Medicine, Department of Medical Education, Edirne, Turkey

<sup>3</sup>Istanbul Bilim University, Faculty of Medicine, Department of Family Medicine, Istanbul, Turkey

**Objective:** Nutrition is very important in every aspect of life. Healthy eating habits in the adolescence period constitute the basis of being healthy adults in later ages. Academic success is related to many factors such as eating habits, physical activity and so on. This research was conducted to investigate the relationship between university students' nutritional habits, body mass indexes and academic achievement.

**Methods:** In the study, a questionnaire was applied with informed consent form to the volunteer students in order to determine the socio-demographic characteristics, eating habits and body mass indexes. Academic achievement of the students was evaluated with weighted grade point average (AGNO). The data obtained in the study were analyzed by SPSS 21.0 statistical program. Significance level was taken as  $p < 0.05$  in all statistical procedures. Frequency, percentage, independent t test, one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Pearson correlation analysis were used in the evaluation of the data.

**Results:** More than half (51.2%) of the students participated to the study were students in the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics. 69.5% of students' body mass index was normal. While 49.3% of the students think that they some time eat healthy, 35.7% think that they are eating healthy. While 87.8% of the students stated that they had missed meals, 60.6% stated that they missed lunch most frequently. 65.7% of the students stated that they some times consumed meals, while 27.2% stated that they consumed meals. There was a weak, negative and significant correlation between students' body mass indexes and academic achievement ( $r = 0.178$ ;  $p = 0.009$ ). There was a significant difference between academic achievement of students according to skipmeals ( $p = 0.012$ ). Academic achievement of the students who thought that they were eat healthy were significantly higher than those who did not think that they were eat healthy ( $p = 0.017$ ). Academic achievement of the students who thought that they were eat healthy some times were significantly higher than those who did not think that they were eat healthy ( $p = 0.019$ ).

**Conclusion:** Students' eating habits are related to academic achievement. Particular emphasis should be placed on nutrition in order to raise healthy, productive and successful generations in the adolescent era, where development continues and habits acquired may continue in adulthood. Nutritional training and incentives can be useful for this purpose.