Socio-Economical Inequalities on Physical Activities and Mental Health Status among the Young People

Belgin Akın, PhD
Associate Professor, Healthy Science Faculty, Nursing Department, Selcuk University, Konya, Turkey.

Emel Ege, PhD
Associate Professor, Healthy Science Faculty, Nursing Department, Necmettin Erbakan University, Konya, Turkey.

Deniz Koçoğlu, PhD
Assistant Professor, Healthy Science Faculty, Nursing Department, Selcuk University, Konya, Turkey.

Selda Arslan, PhD
Assistant Professor, Healthy Science Faculty, Nursing Department, Selcuk University, Konya, Turkey.

Correspondence: Selda Arslan, Assistant Professor, Healthy Science Faculty, Nursing Department, Selcuk University, Konya, Turkey seldayarali@hotmail.com

Abstract

Background: Health inequality among the social groups is accepted as one of the most important matters of the public health.

Objective: The study was to investigate socioeconomic health inequalities in terms of physical activity and mental health among young people.

Methods: This cross-sectional study sample consisted of 1274 randomly selected university students. A questionnaire and General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) were used to collect data.

Results: It was questioned the activities during the last week for assessing the physical activity status of students. Of the students 27.2% had moderate and 47.1% had vigorous physical exercise during last week. Females, those perceiving their social position in class middle or worse had negative characteristics in terms of having physical exercise (p<0.05). The mental health of females, those having mother of low educational level, perceiving their economic situation moderate or worse, being blue-collar social class, perceiving their social position in class middle or worse and having no physical exercise were worse (p<0.05).

Conclusion: As conclusion, socioeconomic status and physical exercise had an important effect on mental health. Focusing on healthy life style only would have limited effect on health promotion efforts.

Keywords: Young people; Health behaviors; Mental health; Socioeconomic Status.