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The relationship of hedonic hunger with food addiction and obesity in university students

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Abstract

Purpose: In this study, it was aimed to evaluate the relationship of hedonic hunger with food addiction and obesity in university students.

Methods: The research sample consists of 275 university students between the ages of 19-28 years. Body weight (kg), height (cm), waist and hip circumference (cm) were measured by applying a face-to-face questionnaire including descriptive characteristics of individuals, the Power of Food Scale (PFS), the Palatable Eating Motive Scale (PEMS) and the Modified Yale Food Addiction Scale (mYFAS) 2.0. Statistical analysis of the data was done with SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) 18.

Results: In individuals, according to the mean PFS score the presence of food power-induced hedonic hunger was detected. While according to the mean PEMS score no motivational hedonic hunger was detected. According to the BMI classification the average scores of PFS ($p = 0.002$), PEMS ($p = 0.009$), and mYFAS 2.0 ($p < 0.001$) showed a gradual increase from underweight to obese. A weak positive correlation was found between BMI and PFS score ($r = 0.238$; $p < 0.05$) and PEMS score ($r = 0.196$; $p < 0.05$), respectively. The moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.439$ $p < 0.001$) was found between mYFAS 2.0 and the PEMS scores.

Conclusion: As a result, the presence of food-based hedonic hunger was determined in young individuals. A relationship was determined between food addiction and hedonic hunger caused by the motivation to consume delicious foods. Accordingly, hedonic hunger is related to food addiction and obesity in university students.

Level of evidence: V, cross-sectional descriptive study.

Keywords: Food addiction; Hedonism; Hunger; Obesity.

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