



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PAIN AND DEPRESSION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: A TURKISH SAMPLE

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Although few cross-sectional studies have investigated the relation between psychosocial factors and neck pain, there is little evidence about the association between chronic nonspecific neck pain (CNNP) and depression especially in young population. The aim of this study was to analyze the relation between CNNP and depression among university students. The study was carried out at Pamukkale University in Denizli/Turkey. The university students who had CNNP were included in the study. The severity of pain was measured by visual analog scale (VAS) and the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) was used for assessing the depression. The Daily computer usage and working hours of students were also questioned. The results of 704 students with CNNP were analyzed. The students found to have moderate level of pain with $4,53 \pm 1,89$ VAS score. The average value of BDI was $9,54 \pm 5,91$. The average hours of Daily computer usage and working were found as $1,59 \pm 0,82$ and $2,13 \pm 1,12$ respectively. There was a significant relationship between pain and depression levels ($p < 0,05$, $r = 0,339$). A significant relationship was not found between pain and daily computer usage as well as daily working duration ($p > 0,05$). The results of this study showed that the severity of pain was at moderate level and the level of depression was low among university students with CNNP but there was a relationship between pain and depression. Many studies indicate that the lifetime prevalence of pain symptoms (eg, joint pain, back pain, neck pain...) ranges from 24% to 37% and depression is also common, with prevalence of 5% to 10%. There are not many studies linking the prevalence of depression in chronic pain patients to life stage. Although depression and chronic pain may occur independently, they are often comorbid. In one of the previous studies it was found that whereas depression occurred in 8% of the population, this rate rose to 18% in people who also had chronic pain. This study contributes to the results of previous studies indicating the relationship between pain and depression.

Keywords: Neck pain, Depression, Computer usage.