

Socio-economic Position and Obesity among Turkish Migrant Women in Vienna, Austria

Esra Kilaf and Sylvia Kirchengast

University of Vienna, Department for Anthropology, Althanstrasse 14 A-1090 Vienna, Austria

KEYWORDS Obesity. Somatometrics. Socio-economic Position. Integration. Turkish Migrants

ABSTRACT In Central Europe, high obesity rates are described for migrants originating from Mediterranean countries or the Near East. This increased prevalence of obesity is mostly attributed to the low socio-economic position and a lack of integration of migrants. This cross-sectional study was performed to evaluate the impact of socio-economic factors and the degree of integration on somatometric parameters and weight status among Turkish migrant women living in Vienna Austria. The study population consisted of 145 Turkish women aged between 18 and 56 ($\bar{x}=31.1 \pm 10.3$). Socio-demographic parameters such as socio-economic position (SEP) and educational level but also indicators of integration in particular knowledge in German and the duration of stay in Vienna were collected by personal interviews using a structured questionnaire. Stature height, body weight and fat percentage were measured. Weight status was determined by means of the BMI categories defined by the WHO. Overweight and obesity rates were extraordinarily high, that is, more than 40 percent of women aged between 20 and 29 years were classified as obese or overweight. Among women older than 30 years nearly 80 percent were overweight or obese. Nevertheless socio-demographic factors such as socio-economic position (SEP) and educational level were significantly negatively related to body weight fat percentage and obesity. Parameters indicating the degree of integration such as German knowledge or duration of stay in Austria were not related significantly to somatometric parameters. Summing up the results of this study demonstrate the impact of socioeconomic factors on obesity rates among migrants in Austria.