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Internet addiction in university students: cross-border study in Algeria, France and Hungary

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Background: The objectives were to measure the prevalence of internet addiction among university students in three countries with different socio-cultural contexts : Algeria, France and Hungary.

Methods: A multicentre cross-sectional study was conducted in three university students' campuses in Algeria (Constantine), France (Rouen) and in Hungary (Miskolc). The students filled in a questionnaire about internet addiction (Orman test), stress (Cohen score), and smoking.

Results: A total of 2681 students were included: 187 in Algeria, 873 in Hungary and 1621 in France. The sex ratio M:F was 0.35 in Algeria, 0.65 in France and 0.24 in Hungary; the mean age was 23.8 (SD=3.3) in Algeria, 20.2 (SD=2.3) in France and 20.7 (SD=3.0) in Hungary. The prevalence of internet addiction was 59.3% in Algeria, 23.5% in France and 17.4% in Hungary ($p<0.0001$). The mean of stress was 16.4 (SD=6.3) in Algeria, 15.5 (SD=7.5) in France, 17.0 (SD=5.5) in Hungary ($p<0.0001$). 5.5% of students were smoker in Algeria, 21,0% in France and 22.3% in Hungary ($p<0.0001$). After logistic regression, students in Algeria had a higher risk of internet addiction and students in Hungary students a lower risk of internet addiction than students in France (respectively aOR=5.12; 95% IC:3.70-7.12 and aOR=0.67; 95% IC:0.54-0.84). Stress was associated with internet addiction aOR=1.07; 95% IC (1.05-1.09)

Conclusion: In three different socio-cultural contexts : Algeria, France and Hungary, risk internet addiction are different. Whatever the country stress is associated with internet addiction. These findings are important to target the students for different awareness and information campaigns.

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