

The Relationship Between Adverse Childhood Experiences and Elder Abuse in Türkiye

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Introduction: Elder abuse (EA) is a major public health issue, yet its associated factors remain underexplored. Older adults with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) may be at higher risk for EA. However, there is limited research on this topic, and no studies from Türkiye exist. This study investigates the association between ACEs and EA in Türkiye

Methods: This cross-sectional study included older adults in Türkiye. Socio-demographic data and comorbidities were collected. Participants underwent Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) scale and Turkish version of the Geriatric Mistreatment Scale (GMS) were used. ACE captures psychological, physical, sexual abuse, and neglect. GMS evaluates various elder abuse types. The relationship between ACE

and elder abuse (EA) was analyzed. Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant ethics committee.

Results: A total of 352 patients (the mean age of 77.7 ± 7.3 , 76.7% female) were included in the study. The prevalence of ACEs was 44.6%, and EA was 24.1%. Individuals with a history of ACEs had significantly higher rates of diabetes mellitus, cancer history, depression, dysphagia, and insomnia compared to those without ACEs ($p < 0.05$). Additionally, the presence of three or more ACEs was linked to excessive daytime sleepiness, physical, psychological, and sexual mistreatment, as well as overall EA components, compared to the absence of ACEs ($p < 0.05$).

Discussion: ACEs were identified in over 40% of the sample and having multiple ACEs increased the risk of EA. Therefore, health care providers should be aware of this relationship, when assessing older adults who have experienced multiple ACEs. Those with ACEs were more likely to experience sleep problems, have a history of cancer, experience depressive mood, dysphagia, and physical, psychological, and sexual mistreatment in advance age.

Keywords: adverse childhood experiences, elder abuse, sleep, cancer, depression