

Risky Health Behaviors and Mental Health Problems among Young Individuals in Turkey: The Case of being NEET

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Abstract:

In this study, we examine the effects of being in neither employment nor education (NEET) on probability of having risky health behaviors (namely smoking and alcohol consumption), probability of being obese and having mental health problems among young individuals in Turkey. This research also aims to investigate the relationship between risky health behaviors/mental health and demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the young individual, as well as the characteristics of his/her parents. In this study, we employ all THS data sets for the years 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2019. In this research, we refer 15-29-year-olds as young, following Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) criteria. Empirical analyses are conducted by applying multivariate logit, bivariate probit and propensity score matching (PSM) techniques. Preliminary results suggest that while being NEET does not significantly affect the mental health of the young person, it significantly increases the probability of being overweight. In addition, being NEET increases the probability of smoking and alcohol consumption, however the effects are insignificant. Hence, we conclude that having risky health behaviors and mental health problems are mostly affected by socio-economic background of the young person, such as the parent's education level and employment status. The risky health behaviors and mental health problem of young person does not depend on his/her NEET status.

Keywords: NEET, risky health behaviors, mental health, Turkey

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