

Level of Information about Dietary Fibre: a Study Involving 10 Countries

Raquel Guiné¹; Marcela Leal²; Ivana Rumbak³; Irena Barić³; Drazenka Komes³; Zvonimir Satalić⁴; Marijana Sarić⁴; Monica Tarcea⁵; Zita Fazakas⁵; Dijana Jovanoska⁶; Dragoljub Vanevski⁶; Elena Vittadini⁷; Nicoletta Pellegrini⁷; Viktória Szűcs⁸; Júlia Harangozó⁸; Ayman EL-Kenawy⁹; Omnia EL-Shenawy¹⁰; Erkan Yalçın¹¹; Cem Kösemeci¹¹; Dace Klava¹²; Evita Straumite¹²

¹ CI&DETS/CERNAS Research Centres, Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Portugal.

² Faculty of Health Sciences, Maimonides University, Argentina.

³ Faculty of Food Technology and Biotechnology, University of Zagreb, Croatia.

⁴ Department of Health Studies, University of Zadar, Croatia.

⁵ University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Tirgu-Mures, Romania.

⁶ Public Health Institute, Centre for Public Health, Tetovo, Macedonia.

⁷ Department of Food Science, University of Parma, Italy.

⁸ National Agricultural R&I Centre - Food Science Research Institute, Budapest, Hungary.

⁹ Genetic Engineering Institute, University of Sadat City, Egypt.

¹⁰ Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts, Menofiya University, Shebin Elkom, Egypt.

¹¹ Department of Food Engineering, Abant İzzet Baysal University, Turkey.

¹² LUA Latvia University of Agriculture, Latvia.

Introduction: Dietary fibre (DF) is recognized as healthy for long, so that health claims are allowed by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) due to its proved benefits, extended but not only confined to many diseases of the gastrointestinal tract.

Objective: This work intended to analyse the level of information about DF in 10 countries, situated in Europe, Africa and South America.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was undertaken through a survey based on a questionnaire of self-response applied to a sample of 6010 participants. The data were lately treated by factor and cluster analyses, including validation methodologies.

Results: Factor analysis showed that ten of the twelve items used to assess the knowledge about DF could be arranged into two factors: one related to health effects ($\alpha = 0.854$) and the other to the sources ($\alpha = 0.644$). Furthermore, cluster analysis showed that the participants could be divided into three groups: 1) Good knowledge about sources and health effects of DF; 2) Good knowledge about the sources of DF but poor knowledge about the health effects; 3) Poor knowledge about the sources and health effects of DF.

Conclusions: The results clearly allowed identifying two factors and three clusters, and the variables that most influenced cluster membership were country, living environment and level of education.

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