

Food skills among the academic community of a Lisbon institute and their relation with Mediterranean diet adherence

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Introduction

Healthier eating habits are associated with a higher level of food skills (FSCk)¹. The Mediterranean Diet (MD) is one of the healthiest diets in the world and its define by the high intake of plant based foods and the habits it promotes². Among these, are cooking skills (CSk), a component of FCSk^{2,3}.

Goals

To evaluate the level of FCSk among the academic community and to determine the existence of a correlation between FCSk level and MD adherence.

Methods

A **cross-sectional** study was conducted among a **Lisbon's academic community**. An on-line self-field questionnaire was applied, it included:

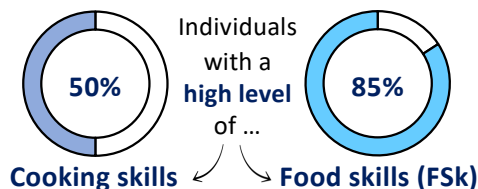
- 14 MEDAS questions⁴ → Evaluate the MD adherence (MDA);
- Lavelle and colleague's questionnaire⁵ → Evaluate the FSCk level.

Statistical analysis was performed using the R version program.

Results and discussion

103 individuals answered the questionnaire. The majority of our sample were students (**77%**), had less then 25 years (**66%**) and were women (**76%**).

Food and cooking skills level



Our sample had a higher level of FCSk, then the Lavelle et al study, suggesting that Portuguese adults have better skills⁵.

Food skill among our sample....

Highest



Read and interpret the expiration date

Lowest



Plan meals ahead



Buy cheaper cuts of meat to save money

Cooking skill among our sample....

Highest



Boil or simmer food

Lowest



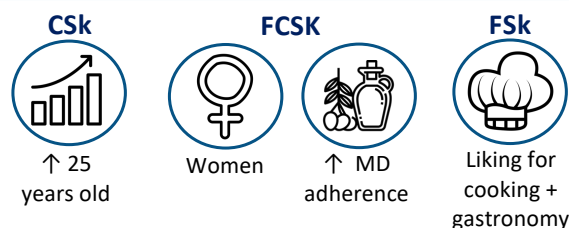
Stewing food



Cooking pulses

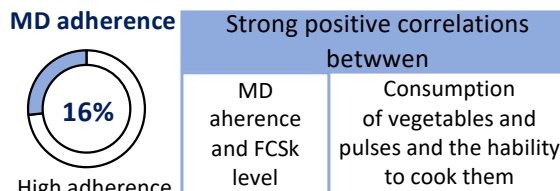
Similar results were found in the Lavelle et al study⁴. The low capacity to cook pulses comes with no surprise, do to it's low intake among the portuguese adult population⁶.

Individuals with higher skills



Similar results were found in other studies⁷⁻¹⁰

Mediterranean Diet and Food skills



The correlation between FCSk level and MDA is not surprising, considering that high FCSk promotes healthy eating habits¹ and the MD is one of the healthiest dietary patterns².

Conclusion

There is a need to promote MD among Portuguese adults. Promotion of specific FCSk, may enhance MD adherence.