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A PORTUGUESE SURVEY ABOUT THE KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF THE POPULATION REGARDING DIETARY FIBRES

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Dietary fibres assume an important role on today's diet, and the consumption of dietary fibre in food such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes is critical for fighting the epidemic of obesity in developed countries. Given this importance, the knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of the Portuguese regarding dietary fibre were investigated by undertaking a consumer survey by means of questionnaire.

The questionnaire was administered by e-mail among the adult population and a total of 182 validated answers were obtained. Regarding the sample, 54.4% were female and 45.6% were male; the great majority had a university degree, 127 people, representing almost 70% of the sample; over 74% lived in urban areas, whereas about 26% lived in rural areas.

A factor analysis was done to group the knowledge about food fibres, and it revealed that the most appropriate solution involved three factors (health effect, food and fibres, general knowledge), explaining 71% of the variance in the original data.

A cluster analysis was done for the segmentation of the sample population, and it led to the identification of 3 clusters: people in cluster 1 can be considered as practising a healthy diet, in cluster 2 those who eat out, and in cluster 3 those who do not concern about these matters.

Keywords: dietary fibre, diet, health, cluster analysis, factor analysis.

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