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717 - CULINARY SKILLS AND DIET QUALITY AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS: BASELINE FINDINGS IN THE CONTEXT OF CULINARY MEDICINE AT UNICAMP, BRAZIL

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Resumen

Background/Objectives: Health professionals' lifestyles influence patients' behaviors and adherence to clinical recommendations. Therefore, incorporating culinary competencies into medical training is relevant, especially for obesity prevention and management. This study assessed medical students' culinary skills (CS) and diet quality at baseline, prior to participation in Culinary Medicine training offered by the MeNu Project (Culinary Medicine and Nutrition in Health Care).

Methods: Cross-sectional baseline assessment of 83 fourth- and fifth-year undergraduate medical students from a public university, conducted between February and October 2025. CS were assessed using the Brazilian Cooking Skills Questionnaire (BCSQ), which evaluates behavioral, attitudinal, and culinary self-efficacy domains and classifies CS as low (20-43), medium (44-73), or high (74-100). Diet quality was evaluated using the Diet Quality Questionnaire and the Global Dietary Recommendations (GDR) score (0-18), reflecting adherence to dietary recommendations protective against noncommunicable diseases (higher scores reflect better diet quality). Analyses included Mann-Whitney test, Spearman correlations, and chi-square tests with Fisher's exact correction, $p < 0.05$.

Results: The sample included 57% female students (24 ± 3 years); 48.9% were from southeastern Brazil. The mean CS score was 70.2 ± 14.7, with 48% classified as medium, 47% as high, and 5% as low CS. Female students had higher overall CS ($p = 0.05$) and greater cooking confidence ($p < 0.001$), while male students demonstrated greater knowledge of culinary terms and techniques ($p = 0.01$). High GDR scores were observed in 82% of students, with no gender differences. Age was negatively correlated with culinary behavior ($r = -0.28$; $p = 0.01$), and culinary attitudes were positively correlated with BMI ($r = 0.23$; $p = 0.03$). Fruit and vegetable availability was positively associated with all CS domains and diet quality ($p = 0.01$). All BCSQ domains were positively correlated with each other.

Conclusions/Recommendations: Most medical students had medium-to-hight CS, with differences by gender, age, and fruit/vegetable availability. Female students demonstrated greater cooking confidence, while male students showed greater culinary knowledge. The correlations among BCSQ domains support coherence and interrelationships among culinary knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy. High GDR scores reflect substantial adherence to dietary recommendations, highlighting the relevance of Culinary Medicine education to strengthen CS, support healthier food choices, and enhance physicians' capacity to prevent and manage diet-related diseases.

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