



FOOD LITERACY AND NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF ADOLESCENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN A BRAZILIAN NORTHEAST CITY: A PILOT STUDY



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Background

Adolescence is a transition phase between childhood and adulthood, essential for adoption of healthy habits.

Unfortunately, nowadays there is a high prevalence of excess weight associated with bad eating habits.

In this context, it is important to consider the influence of food literacy on eating behavior and, consequently, on nutritional status.

Adolescent eating habits can improve by promoting their food literacy.

Objective

To evaluate the relationship between adolescents' food literacy and their nutritional status

Methodology

- Pilot, cross-sectional, descriptive, quantitative study, carried out in municipal public schools in Eusebio city, Northeast Brazil.

- 45 students aged 14 to 16 years old, enrolled and attending classes. Four schools were chosen, 2 larger and 2 smaller.

- Food Literacy was assessed by an instrument which verifies access, understanding, evaluation and application of information about food (*).

- Nutritional status was assessed using the Body Mass Index (BMI),

- Adolescents were divided into group 1 (not overweight) and group 2 (overweight).

- Descriptive analyzes: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences - SPSS, version 22.0

Results

- 55,6% 14 Years
- 57,8% Brown skin color (“parda”)
- 55,6% Female
- 55,6% 9th grade
- 68,9% Eutrophic
- Only access to information had a high prevalence among adolescents in both groups.
- Statistical test was not carried out due to the sample size.

Food Information	GROUP 1 %	GROUP 2 %
Access	81,3	84,6
Understand	18,8	30,8
Appraise	12,0	15,4
Apply	18,8	15,4

Conclusion

The food literacy of the assessed group was adequate in the access dimension, but there were difficulties in understanding, evaluating and applying the accessed information. There is a need to evaluate these dimensions with a larger sample, in order to confirm differences related to the presence of overweight. The participants demand educational actions to operationalize information about food.

(*) Farias, PKS. (2022). Food Literacy among Adolescents from public schools in Montes Claros, MG, Brazil, 2019/2020. IJAERS, 9(1): 77-87. DOI: 10.22161/ijaers.91.10



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