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LIFESTYLE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS BETWEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

ESTILO DE VIDA E FATORES ASSOCIADOS ENTRE ESTUDANTES UNIVERSITÁRIOS

ESTILO DE VIDA Y FACTORES ASOCIADOS ENTRE ESTUDIANTES UNIVERSITARIOS

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to estimate the proportion of alcoholism, smoking, sedentarism among university students and associated factors. **Method:** descriptive study, with quantitative approach, carried out with 550 students from a Public Institution of Higher Education. The data were collected from the form, stored in SPSS 20.0, analyzed and presented in tables. **Results:** it was verified that the male sex ($p = 0.000$) and the courses of the Humanities and Exact sciences ($p = 0.009$) were significantly associated with harmful alcohol consumption in the human body. In relation to physical activity, we observed a higher proportion of female sedentarism ($p = 0.000$) and in university students belonging to economic classes C-D-E ($p = 0.028$). **Conclusion:** it is evident the risks related to the lifestyle that are exposed university students. Hence the importance of developing educational measures that encourage the adoption of healthy habits of life. **Descriptors:** Lifestyle; Alcoholism; Smoking; Sedentary Lifestyle; Students.

RESUMO

Objetivo: estimar a proporção de alcoolismo, tabagismo, sedentarismo entre universitários e fatores associados. **Método:** estudo descritivo, de abordagem quantitativa, realizado com 550 estudantes de uma Instituição Pública de Ensino Superior. Os dados foram coletados a partir de formulário, armazenados no SPSS 20.0, analisados e apresentados em tabelas. **Resultados:** verificou-se que o sexo masculino ($p=0,000$) e os cursos das áreas de Humanas e Exatas ($p=0,009$) apresentam associação significativa com o consumo de álcool danoso ao corpo humano. Em relação à atividade física, observou-se maior proporção de sedentarismo no sexo feminino ($p=0,000$) e nos universitários pertencentes às classes econômicas C-D-E ($p=0,028$). **Conclusão:** são evidentes os riscos relacionados ao estilo de vida ao qual estão expostos os universitários. Daí a importância do desenvolvimento de medidas educativas que estimulem a adoção hábitos saudáveis de vida. **Descritores:** Estilo de Vida; Alcoolismo; Hábito de Fumar; Estilo de Vida Sedentário; Estudantes.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: estimar la proporción de alcoholismo, tabaquismo, sedentarismo entre universitarios y factores asociados. **Método:** estudio descriptivo, de abordaje cuantitativo, realizado con 550 estudiantes de una Institución Pública de Enseñanza Superior. Los datos fueron recolectados a partir de formulario, almacenados en SPSS 20.0, analizados y presentados en tablas. **Resultados:** se verificó que el sexo masculino ($p = 0.000$) y los cursos del áreas de Humanidades y Ciencias Exactas ($p = 0.009$) presentan una asociación significativa con el consumo de alcohol dañino al cuerpo humano. En relación a la actividad física, se observó mayor proporción de sedentarismo en el sexo femenino ($p = 0.000$) y en los universitarios pertenecientes a las clases económicas C-D-E ($p = 0.028$). **Conclusión:** es evidente los riesgos relacionados con el estilo de vida que están expuestos los universitarios. De ahí la importancia del desarrollo de medidas educativas que estimulen la adopción de hábitos saludables de vida. **Descriptor:** Estilo de Vida; Alcoholismo; Fumar; Estilo de Vida Sedentario; Estudiantes.

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INTRODUCTION

Youth is characterized as a period of discovery, exploration, greater autonomy and growing responsibilities. In this step, vulnerabilities are extended, in the sense that behaviors, customs and choices of individuals, in their daily lives, are indispensable in the maintenance of health, and may or may not favor the prolongation of their longevity.

Thus, practices such as alcohol abuse, smoking and sedentary lifestyle emphasize the need for specific interventions, since they contribute significantly to the increase in the mortality rate of cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), lead to losses in academic performance, increase the risk of Unprotected sex, accidents, involvement in fights and exposure to physical injuries.¹⁻³ Moreover, these behaviors are increasingly common in the young population and last throughout life, compromising health also in adulthood.⁴

In the VIGITEL survey,⁵ of the Ministry of Health, conducted in the 26 Brazilian States and the Federal District, in 2014, 16.5% of adults reported abusive consumption of alcoholic beverages. In the month of the interview, and the proportion was higher in the age group of 25 to 34 years (23.2%). In addition, about 14.7% of the Brazilian population, over 18 years of age, are smokers, so that men had higher prevalence of smoking than women, with 200,000 deaths annually. Still, 3.2 million deaths a year in the world are attributed to insufficient physical activity, with an 18% increase in deaths over the last six years, representing the fourth largest risk factor for global mortality.

In this perspective, there is a growing concern about the way of life that young people adopt and, in the same proportion, it increases the need for frequent and urgent interventions, especially in places where there is a significant influx of young people. Therefore, it is essential that there be lectures, campaigns and conversational wheels in order to stimulate the awareness of these university students to prevent and combat new lifestyles.^{1,6-8}

For intervention on these risk conditions, it is important to know their distribution among young people. Thus, this study aimed to estimate the proportion of alcoholism, smoking, sedentarism among university students and associated factors.

METHOD

A descriptive and cross-sectional study of 550 students from a public higher education institution in the State of Piauí (PI), Brazil.

The study population consisted of 2,868 university students of both sexes enrolled at the study site. For the sample size, finite population formula was used, resulting in 550 participants. The selection of the participants met the following inclusion criteria: to have active enrollment in one of the nine university courses; aged 18 or over and to participate in all stages of the research.

The variables addressed correspond to socioeconomic data and data about their lifestyle (alcoholism, smoking and physical activity practice).

Regarding alcohol use, the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT), was used as a measurement instrument, which is a ten-question test developed by the WHO as a screening tool specifically to identify people with harmful alcohol consumption, as well as those who have Dependence on alcohol. The version validated in Brazil was used.⁹⁻¹⁰

The AUDIT presents so-called "risk zones" according to the scoring interval. The low-risk drinking pattern, zone I, refers to those who score from zero to seven and who can benefit from information about alcohol consumption. The medium-risk pattern, zone II, refers to those that score from eight to 15 points. The high-risk or noxious use pattern, zone III, includes those that score between 16 and 19; the so-called zone IV includes those who scored at or above 20 points.¹¹

With regard to smoking, students were classified into four categories: daily smokers, occasional smokers, ex-smokers, and nonsmokers. Daily smokers were those who smoked at least one cigarette per day, one month prior to completion of the questionnaire; occasional smokers, those who did not smoke daily; ex-smokers, those who after smoking have stopped smoking for at least a month; and those who never smoked or were smoking for less than one month were considered to be nonsmokers.¹²

As for physical activity, a student who did not practice at least 30 minutes of mild or moderate activity for at least five days of the week was considered as sedentary; Or 20 minutes daily of vigorous activity on three or more days of the week. Light or moderate activities are considered: walking; trekking; bodybuilding; water aerobics; general gymnastics; swimming; soft arts; cycling and volleyball. Vigorous activities are: running; treadmill running; aerobics; soccer; basketball and tennis.¹³

Data were collected from January to March 2013. The invitation to participate in the survey was formulated when the students were in the classroom. At the time, the

objectives of the research were explained and that they should respond to a form. The research was divulged in the murals of the courses, aiming at the information and the possibility of participation of those who were not in the classroom at the time of the explanations.

The sampling method used was stratified sampling, since there is a characteristic of the individual members of the population that can be used before data collection to standardize the sample, dividing the population into subgroups: current semester in the course.¹⁴

The data were analyzed and processed in the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)*, version 20.0. In the descriptive analysis, absolute and relative frequency measurements were calculated. In analytical inference, we verified the association between the variables by means of the Chi-square test and measured their effect through the *Odds Ratio*. For all inferential statistical analyzes, those with $p < 0.05$ were considered as statistically significant.

The project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Piauí - UFPI, through the Certificate of Presentation for Ethical Appreciation of 0408.0.045.000-11. The university students who agreed to participate signed a Free and Informed Consent Term.¹⁵ The study was funded by the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development / Foundation for Research Support of the State of Piauí (CNPq / FAPPEPI).

RESULTS

The research was carried out with 550 university students, distributed among the courses of Health sciences: Nursing (15.8%), Nutrition (13.3%) and Biology (11.5%); and in the courses of Exact sciences and Humanities: Administration (18.2%), Information Systems (7.5%), Mathematics (9.1%), Pedagogy (7.1%), Literature (5.6%) And History (12.0%).

Regarding the characterization of the sample, in what comprises the socioeconomic data, the majority of university students belonged to the female sex (66.2%). The age ranged from 18 to 51 years, with a mean of 22.6 years, with the predominant age group being between 18 and 25 years old (85.1%). Regarding the self-reported color, 51.6% declared themselves to be brown. With regard to economic class, it was noticed that the majority (64.2%) belonged to classes C-D-E, with average income of R\$ 1.629.00. It was also observed that 69.3% only studied, 86.7% were unmarried and the majority of participants (39.6%) lived with their parents.

Regarding the lifestyle, it was observed that 48.5% of the university students belonged to Zone II - Medium Risk for alcoholism; 91.8% were classified as non-smokers; and, 71.6% are sedentary (Table 1).

Table 1. Ethics, smoking, and physical activity among academics of a Public University. Picos (PI), Brazil, 2013.

Variables	n	%
Drinking		
Zone I - Low risk	197	35.8
Zone II - Average risk	267	48.5
Zone III - High risk	63	11.5
Zone IV - Probable dependence	23	4.2
Smoking		
Daily smoker	10	1.8
Occasional smoker	32	5.8
Ex smoker	3	0.5
Non smoker	505	91.8
Physical activity		
Active	156	28.4
Sedentary	394	71.6

For statistical analysis, aiming at a better understanding of the results, the categories related to alcoholism and smoking were unified. From this perspective, it can be seen from table 2 that the high-risk drinking pattern and the likely dependence, Zones III and IV, were more frequent among males ($p = 0.000$) of Humanities and Exact science ($p =$

0.009). In addition, men presented 7,083 (4,236-11,844) times more chances of adopting a pattern of alcohol consumption harmful to the human body, while university students in the Humanities and Exact science areas presented 1,940 (1,170-3,217) times more chances of this same condition.

Table 2. Distribution of ethnicity by sex, age group and economic class, among academics of a public university. Picos - PI, 2013.

Variables	Drinking Zone III e IV		Zone I e II		p*	OR (IC95%)**	
	N	%	N	%			
Sex					0.000		
Female	24	6.6	340	93.4			
Male	62	33.3	124	66.7		7.083	(4.236-11.844)
Age group					0.548		
18-25	75	16.0	393	84.0		1.232	(0.623-2.435)
26-51	11	13.4	71	86.6			
Economic class					0.434		
A-B	34	17.3	163	82.7		1.207	(0.753-1.937)
C-D-E	52	14.7	301	85.3			
Course					0.009		
Health sciences	24	10.8	199	89.2			
Exact sciences and Human sciences	62	19.0	265	81.0		1.940	(1.170-3.217)

* Pearson's chi-square.
** Odds Ratio (95% confidence interval)

As to smoking, it can be observed, in Table 3, that the odds of being a daily or casual smoker were 2,079 (1,104-3,914) times higher among male university students. Among those who study in courses of the Humanities and

Exact science, this chance was 2,311 (1,112-4,802) times. For both cases, there was statistical significance (p = 0.021 and p = 0.022, in this order).

Table 3. Stratification of smoking according to sex, age group and economic class, among academics of a public university. Picos - PI, 2013.

Variables		Smoking				p*	OR (IC95%)**
		Daily or occasional smoker		Ex smoker/ Non Smoker			
		n	%	n	%		
Sex						0.021	
	Female	21	5.8	343	94.2		
	Male	21	11.3	165	88.7		2.079 (1.104-3.914)
Age group						0.433	
	18-25	34	7.3	434	92.7		
	26-51	8	9.8	74	90.2		1.380 (0.615-3.098)
Economic class						0.176	
	A-B	11	5.6	186	94.4		
	C-D-E	31	8.8	322	91.2		1.628 (0.799-3.315)
Course						0.022	
	Health sciences	10	4.5	213	95.5		
	Exact sciences and Human sciences	32	9.8	295	90.2		2.311 (1.112-4.802)

* Pearson's chi-square.
** Odds Ratio (95% confidence interval)

Regarding the practice of physical activity, a greater proportion of sedentary women, the age group of 26 to 51 years, the CDE economic classes and the students of the Humanities and Exact science courses were evidenced, but there was only statistically significant

result for The association with sex (p = 0.000) and the economic class (p = 0.028). In addition, women have 2,187 (1,491-3,207) and lower economic classes have 1,529 (1,045-2,236) times more likely to be physically inactive.

Table 4. Distribution of the practice of physical activity according to sex, age group and economic class, among academics of a public university. Picos - PI, 2013.

Variables	Practice of physical activities				p*	OR (IC95%)**
	Sedentary		Active			
	N	%	N	%		
Sex					0.000	
Female	281	77.2	83	22.8		2.187 (1.491-3.207)
Male	113	60.8	73	39.2		
Age group					0.738	
18-25	334	71.4	134	28.6		
26-51	60	73.2	22	26.8		1.094 (0.645-1.855)
Economic class					0.028	
A-B	130	66.0	67	34.0		
C-D-E	264	74.8	89	25.2		1.529 (1.045-2.236)
Course					0.162	
Health sciences	56	25.1	167	74.9		
Exact sciences and Human sciences	100	30.6	227	69.4		1.314 (0.895-1.927)

* Pearson's chi-square.
** Odds Ratio (95% confidence interval)

DISCUSSION

The results of this study are related to the cross-sectional design and presented in order to verify associations between the variables as to their proportions. Thus, not infer cause and effect in the discussions.

Considering the gender variable, it was observed that the female sex was prevalent. Such a finding may be associated with the fact that women represent a majority in society. In addition, the literature shows that the female audience is the most frequent in surveys involving university students.¹⁶⁻²⁰

Admission to the university is seen as a passport to individual freedom, such as the exploration of the new, where new friendship groups and new routines are formed. These changes may contribute to the use of alcohol and other drugs, since these youngsters tend to copy the behavior of their group, as reported in a study that sought to analyze alcohol consumption at the University of Rio Grande / RS.²¹

Regarding alcohol consumption, it was observed that males consumed more alcohol than females, and although the frequency was high, the majority of those who consumed alcoholic drinks were between low and medium risk areas, that is, zones I And II. The results of this research are inferior to those obtained in a study carried out at the University of Salgado, Goiânia, showing that 53% of university students used alcohol.

Regarding the predominant age group, related to alcoholism, this study shows that these two factors are inversely proportional, that is, younger people had more frequent habits of drinking than the elderly. Similarly, several studies,^{20,21} show these same results, highlighting as a very worrying factor, since young people suffer more with emotional and mental health problems due to alcohol abuse.

Concerning smoking, it was observed that 91.8% of the students did not smoke. The result found here is similar to a study conducted at the University of Pelotas / RS, which aimed to verify the prevalence of smoking and alcohol consumption among students, in which the majority (65.5%) of their sample never smoked.²³

In relation to the sex that presents greater prevalence of smoking, this study points to the male sex. Similarly, a study comparing drug use among Brazilian and American university students indicates that men use this practice more than women, and also exceed women in relation to alcoholism.²⁴

In agreement with the results found in this study, related to smoking, other studies show that university students from the courses in the Humanities and Exact science area present prevalence above 10%, when compared to Health courses, and this data can be attributed to the fact that Health science academics are in the future the basis and dissemination of information on the harmful effects of tobacco use.²⁵

Regarding the practice of physical activities, significant values of sedentarism were evidenced, so that physical inactivity is observed as an important predictive index of cardiovascular diseases.

The prevalence of sedentarism in this study was 71.6%. This surpasses the findings of the study conducted at the Federal University of Paraná, which found a proportion of sedentary lifestyle of 54.5% .¹⁶ Gender, age, employment status, economic characteristics (Monthly income, social class and who they live with) and life habits are characteristics that may be associated with low level of physical activity.

It was also observed that the female sex is significantly associated, and with great chance, to sedentarism. Thus, the results

found in this research are in line with those of the current literature.²⁶

As for the socioeconomic factor, the lower economic classes presented association and high chances of physical inactivity. A similar result was found in a study carried out with students from Londrina-PR, who analyzed reasons for the practice of physical exercise, and pointed out the need to control body weight, mainly due to physical appearance, as the main motivating factor for People of the highest economic classes.²⁷

Concerning the level of physical activity between areas of knowledge, there was a predominance of sedentarism among students of the Humanities and Exact science areas. Corroborating with this finding, a study carried out in Florianópolis-SC, involving 198 university students, showed that the academics of the Humanities area present higher values of moderate physical activity practice; On the other hand, those in the health area practice more vigorous activities. For the authors of the work in question, the fact that these students are more closely related to extension projects developed by Health courses, explains the difference found.²⁸

CONCLUSION

From the students' lifestyle analysis, the prevalence of alcohol and tobacco abuse at alert levels was verified, as well as the sedentary lifestyle was extremely high. Both conditions put this population at risk of damage to health, compromising their quality of life.

The factors associated with each case should be analyzed in detail, in order to promote an effective approach in these individuals. In view of this, it is necessary that intervention measures be performed, considering that the age group is young and that the sooner they are thought and introduced, the greater the chances of improvement in health in the long term, positively influencing the decline of Rates of morbidity and mortality from diseases related to inadequate lifestyle.

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