

Adherence to the Mediterranean Dietary Pattern

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Introduction

Adherence to the Mediterranean Dietary Pattern (MDP) has been decreasing in Mediterranean countries. This fact can be explained by changes in the lifestyle of Westernized populations, including the reduction in time available for preparing meals and easy access to processed and pre-cooked foods [1]. The Mediterranean diet (MD) is widely acknowledged as an exemplary model of sustainable food practices, closely linked to an improved quality of life. Moreover, adopting this diet can serve as a potent strategy for curbing healthcare expenses, substantially reducing mortality rates, and positively impacting various health conditions. The MD offers a range of benefits that include enhanced glycemic control, reduced blood pressure, healthier lipid profiles, and decreased levels of inflammatory markers. These advantages collectively contribute to the diet's effective management of cardiovascular risk factors and its role in addressing type II diabetes [2,3].

Objetive

The objective of this work was to evaluate adherence to the Mediterranean Dietary Pattern (MDP) in young people.

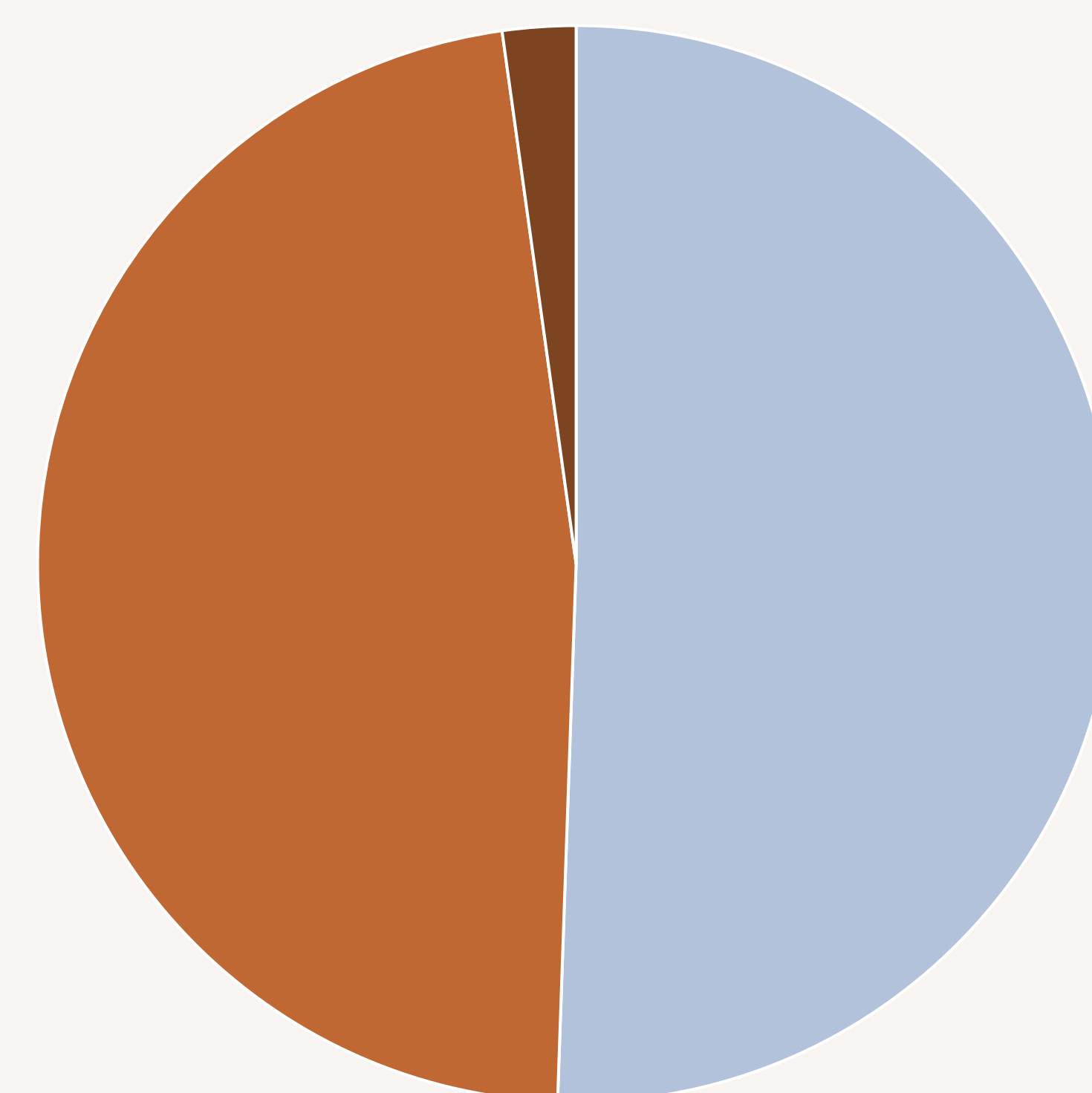
Methodology

The collection of data used in the present work was carried out using the previously developed MEDAS (Mediterranean Diet Adherence Screener) questionnaire [4]. The questionnaire was distributed online, via the Google Forms platform, to institutional and private contacts for a month and was completed anonymously online. 100 questionnaires were completed, of which 91 individuals of Portuguese nationality, adults (aged 18 to 30 years), and residing in Portugal, were eligible for analysis. Sociodemographic, lifestyle and eating habits data were collected. According to the MEDAS questionnaire, the MDP adherence categories were: weak adherence (≤ 5.0 points); moderate to fair adherence [6.0; 9.0 points]; good or very good adherence (≥ 10.0 points).

Results

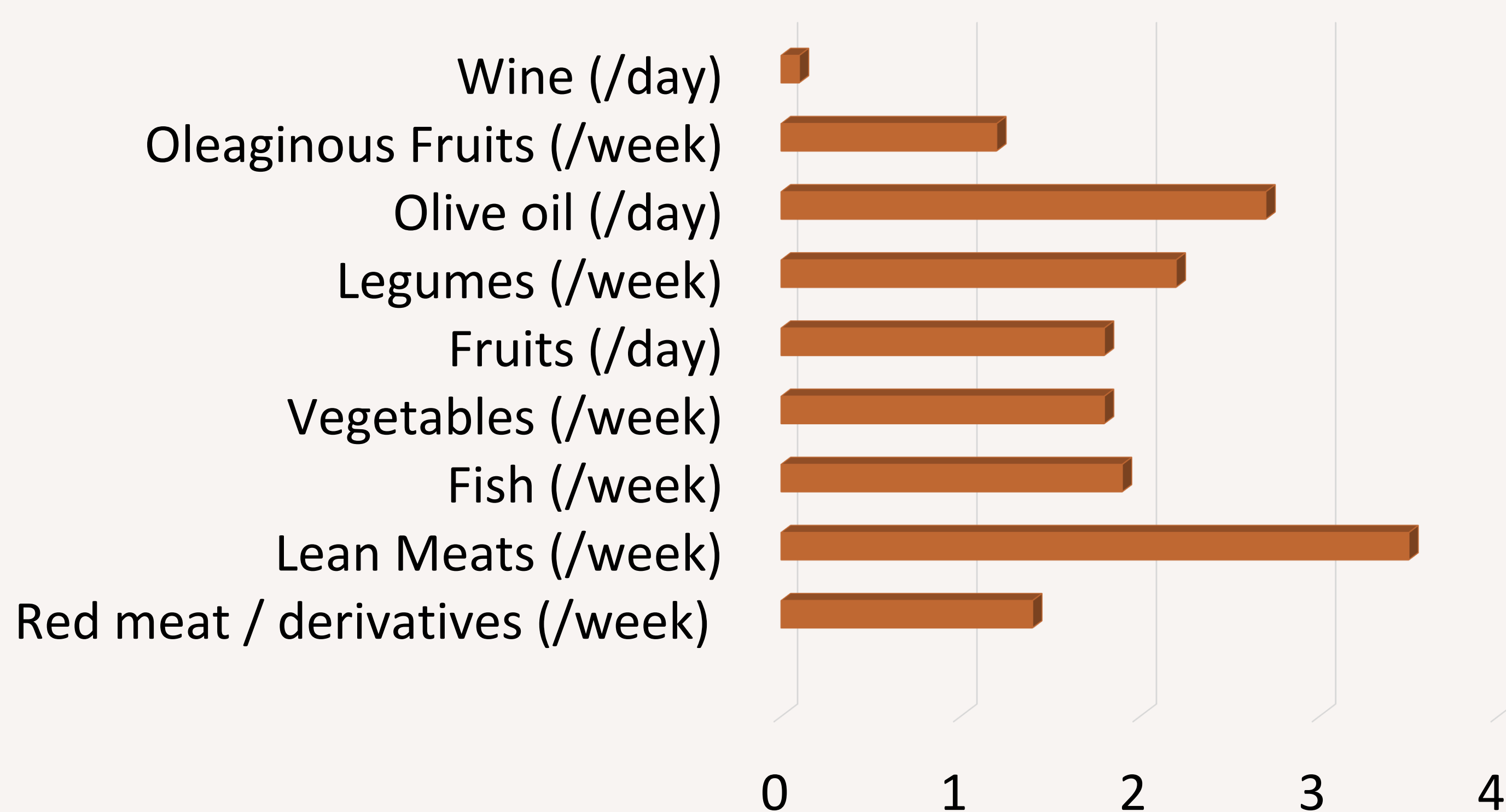
	N		Total
	Male	Female	
Nº	18	73	91
Age	21,9	21,7	21,8
Smokers	3	5	8
Active	15	38	53
Sedentary	3	35	38
With pathology	3	16	19
Students	9	50	59
Workers	5	11	16
Student worker	4	12	16

Table 1 – Sample characterization



■ moderate ■ weak ■ good

Graphic 2 – MDP adherence



Graphic 1 – Average portion consumption

	Male	Female
Weak adherence	8	34
Moderate to fair adherence	10	37
Good or very good adherence	0	2

Table 2 – MDP adherence according to sex

Conclusions

In this study, we can observe that there is low adherence to the Mediterranean dietary pattern among the young population. Given the characteristics of this pattern, there was a very reduced intake of fruits, vegetables, legumes and fish. We also highlight that there is a higher consumption of lean meats compared to red meats, which is one of the principles of this diet.

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