

IMPACT OF FOOD ALLERGIES ON LIFE QUALITY AND FOOD SAFETY ON ADULTS IN SPAIN.

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INTRODUCTION



- Food allergies are adverse reactions in susceptible individuals and the reactions have a verifiable immunological response.
- These reactions occur when allergens in food, by ingestion, contact or inhalation, react with the immune system.

- This pathology reduces the quality of life of allergic people, as avoiding the allergens is the only way to prevent them from having an allergic reaction.
- To prevent these reactions, adequate labelling practice plays an essential role in avoiding unnecessary exposure to allergens.

14 FOOD ALLERGENS



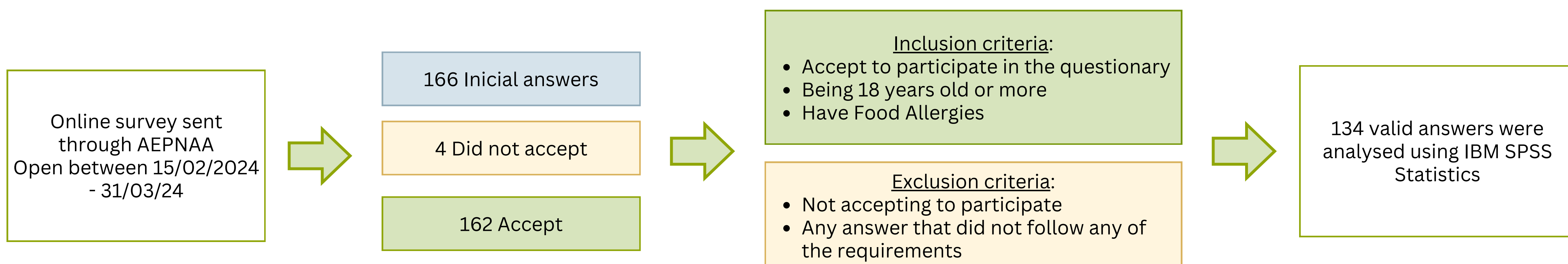
AIM

The main objective of this study is to learn the perception of how food allergies impact on life quality in Spanish adults with food allergies. The secondary objectives of this study are:

- What their perspective on food safety, food labelling and the management of allergens in collective catering.
- Discover if the answers have significant difference according to their gender or age of diagnosis.

METHOD

To investigate the impact of food allergies amongst Spanish adults, an online survey with a shortened version of the Adult Food Allergy Quality of Life Questionnaire (FAQLQ), and some complementary questions, was distributed to AEPNAA (Spanish Association of People with Food and Latex Allergies) members. Some of the questions included were about their perceptions regarding food safety and labeling, and how allergens are generally managed in restaurant businesses.



RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Who answered in the survey?

- Mainly adults between the ages of 18 and 54
- Gender wise 26.9% were man and 73.1% were women
- According to the age of diagnosis
 - Diagnosis during childhood → 56.7%
 - Diagnosis during adolescence → 12.7%
 - Diagnosis during adulthood → 12.7%
- The Spanish regions that participated the most were Madrid, Castilla y León and Comunidad Valenciana



What were the results of the survey?

- Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers establishes, among other things, the obligation to include allergens listed in its Annex II on food labelling. However, despite this regulation, consumers with food allergies surveyed (n=134) believe that the labelling is incomplete (81.3%), that there is an excessive use of the phrase "may contain traces" (66.4%), and that the inclusion of pictograms would facilitate their understanding (74.6%).
- Regarding the presentation of information on unpackaged food in restaurants, they express dissatisfaction with the lack of uniformity between establishments (76.9%), a consequence of the regulatory flexibility in this respect (Royal Decree 126/2015). This creates insecurity and has led them to change their choice at some point (84.6%).

CONCLUSIONS

- In conclusion, food allergies not only pose health risks, but also have a social and emotional impact on the quality of life of allergic individuals.
- The information provided to consumers through labelling or menus should be accurate, clear, and complete to ensure food safety and improve the perceptions that allergic consumers have of it.

FUTURE WORK / REFERENCES

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