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## Dietary restraint: adaptation and validation of the flexible and rigid control of eating behaviour subscales

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Dietary restraint behaviour implies conscious attempts to reduce food intake in order to control body weight. Nevertheless, restrained eating is not clearly associated with lower body weight. The association between dietary restraint and weight may be further clarified by considering different characteristics of eating behaviour control. Two types of restriction may be considered: flexible and rigid control of eating behaviour. Rigid control involves dichotomous attitudes regarding which foods to exclude, and is related to higher disinhibition and higher food consumption after preload. The self-imposed norms that define flexible control are less strict, and therefore associated to lower disinhibition

To our knowledge there are no instruments validated for the Portuguese population to assess these two types of restraint. Therefore, our aim was to adapt and validate the flexible and rigid control subscales proposed by Westenhoefer et al. (1999) for the Portuguese adult population and to analyse the re-

lationship of the two types of control with socio-demographic and anthropometric variables.

Two samples were evaluated, one from the general population ( $n=231$ ) and the other composed by higher education students ( $n=257$ ). The adaptation of the subscales involved their translation, back translation and cultural adaptation.

The analysis led to the exclusion of three items. After exclusion of these items, both subscales showed unifactorial structure and acceptable internal consistency in any of the samples (Cronbach's alpha between 0,750 and 0,817). Women had higher levels of both types of control. For men age was positively associated with flexible control, and for women education was positively associated with both types of restraint. In the students' sample, rigid control significantly predicted BMI (positive association) while in the general population's sample none of the restraint types showed significant effect.

The present study supplies an instrument to assess flexible and rigid control of eating behaviour adapted to the Portuguese population. The relations with socio-demographic variables and BMI will be useful to plan future research and public health interventions. \*

