

Developing a cooperative multicenter study in Latin America: issues and difficulties (ELANS Project)

ELANS
ENCUESTA LATINOAMERICANA
DE NUTRICIÓN Y SALUD

Mauro Fisberg^{1,2*}, Irina Kovalskys³, Georgina Gómez Salas⁴, Attilio Rigotti⁵, Lilia Yadira Cortés Sanabria⁶, Martha Cecilia Yépez García⁷, Rossina Gabriela Pareja Torres⁸, Marianella Herrera-Cuenca⁹, Ioná Zalcman Zimberg¹⁰, Viviana Guajardo³, on behalf of the ELANS Study Group

1 Instituto Pensi - Hospital Infantil Sabara,, Brazil; 2 Departamento de Pediatría - Universidade Federal de São Paulo -Brazil; 3 International Life Science Institute (ILSI) - Argentina; 4 Departamento de Bioquímica - Universidad de Costa Rica; 5 Departamento de Nutrición, Diabetes y Metabolismo, Centro de Nutrición Molecular y Enfermedades Crónicas - Pontificia Universidad Católica - Chile; 6 Departamento de Nutrición y Bioquímica - Pontificia Universidad Javeriana -Colombia; 7 Universidad San Francisco de Quito -Ecuador; 8 Instituto de Investigación Nutricional - Peru; 9 Centro de Estudios do Desenvolvimento da Universidade Central da Venezuela)/Fundación Bengoa - Venezuela; 10 Departamento de Psicobiología - Universidade Federal de São Paulo -Brazil

* **E-mail:** mauro.fisberg@gmail.com, ikovalskys@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Utilizing a multicenter approach in cross-sectional studies of obesity allows for improved generalizability of the results, a larger sample size, and, consequently, planning of health policies and programs.

OBJECTIVES

This study aims to highlight important issues regarding the organization of multicenter observational studies on nutrition research at institutional, researchers and support/sponsoring level among countries with diverse culture.

METHODS

- ELANS is a household-based multi-national cross-sectional survey to be conducted in 8 Latin American countries;
- Study protocol was designed to investigate anthropometric profile, nutritional intake, and physical activity of 8,000 subjects aged 15 to 65 years;**
- The study was based on complex, multistage sample design, stratified by conglomerates, being all regions of each country represented, and random selection of main cities within each region according to probability proportional to size method.**



RESULTS

Planning the Conduct of Multicenter Research

- Assure standardization
- Uniformity of procedures
- Important outcome measures
- Ethical approval by international and local IRB
- Sponsor role in the study

Selection of the sites and team

- Coordinating Center and External Advisors Committee responsibility
- Cooperation between institutions
- Develop infrastructure
- Funding

Data Quality

- Preparatory meetings
- Manual of operation
- Site visits
- Technical visits to participating centers
- Close monitoring of data collection and data entry
- Inconsistency checks

Dissemination of findings

- Plan of analysis
- Plan of communication
- Plan of publication

CONCLUSION

Multicenter cooperative studies require vigilance to detail, comprehensive planning, and collaboration between study sites. While challenging, such studies offer great potential for building a scientific base for studies on nutrition and health.

General coordinators: Mauro Fisberg and Irina Kovalskys

Regional chairs: Attilio Rigotti, Lilia Yadira Cortés Sanabria, Georgina Gómez Salas, Martha Cecilia Yépez García, Rossina Gabriella Pareja Torres, Marianella Herrera-Cuenca

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



This research is funded by The Coca-Cola Company