Cross cultural adaptation and validation of the ‘9-item patient health questionnaire’

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Background
Quality of life must be studied as a determinant of health. Depressive state must be measured with culturally adapted and population-validated instruments specially in times of COVID19 pandemics in undergraduate health students to avoid future health damages. The European Quality of Life 5 Dimensions (EQ5-D-3L) is validated but the ‘9-Item Patient Health Questionaire’ (PHQ-9) still needed validation for university population, which this study intended to do.

Methods
With original authors authorization and after cross-cultural adaptation, a cross sectional, observational study, applying the PHQ-9 and EQ-5D-3L to Faculty of Medicine and Faculty Pharmacy of the University of Coimbra (FMUC and FFUC) students, along with an epidemiological survey in a convenience sample using student’s social networks in november 2020. Descriptive, inferential and correlational statistics were performed.

Results
A size representative sample of 126 participants was studied, of which 72 from FMUC (57.1%) and 54 from FFUC (42.9%). For PHQ-9 (reliability cronbach’s alfa of 0.815, and F test = 38.786, P<0.001) were found and global score FFUC students and females was higher, P=0.014 and P=0.034, respectively. Females also scored worse for item 5 of EQ5D, P<0.001. PHQ9 and EQ5D correlation of ρ=-0.588, P<0.001 and PHQ9 and question 5 of EQ5D-3L with PHQ9 of ρ=+0.484, P<0.001 were found.

Conclusions
The cultural adaptation and validation of the ‘9-Item Patient Health Questionaire’ (PHQ-9) with the European Quality of Life 5 Dimensions (EQ5-D-3L) scale, in FMUC and FFUC students population, verified that the PHQ-9 allows to adequately assess the existence of depressive symptoms and that male individuals were in better mental health.

Keywords: PHQ-9, EQ5D-3L, students, Health sciences.