

**"VICTOR BABEȘ" UNIVERSITY OF
MEDICINE AND PHARMACY TIMIȘOARA
DOCTORAL SCHOOL
MEDICINE DOMAIN**



**UNRAVELING EATING BEHAVIORS AND OBESITY: FROM
VALIDATION TO INTERVENTION – A STRUGGLE OF GAINS AND
LOSSES**

ABSTRACT

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Abstract

Learning medical statistics during the Public Health residency and doctoral school, both held at the Victor Babeş University of Medicine and Pharmacy in Timișoara, and then deepening this tool in international courses served as my gateway to my initiation into the world of clinical research. It became the language through which I was able to articulate the meaning of my research findings and contribute substantially to the scientific discourse.

The integration of medical epidemiology and statistics into my academic journey marked a transformative turning point. It provided me with the analytical tools to navigate the complexities of clinical research, fostering a deeper understanding of the methodologies that underpin evidence-based practice. Statistics has become not just a skill, but a cornerstone in deciphering the hidden narratives in medical data.

The research journey began with an exploration of nutritional epidemiology, focusing on assessing the nutritional contributions of young adults and later expanding to include patient populations with chronic diagnoses and multimorbidity. Participating in international scientific events, I noticed the lack of validated tools in nutritional epidemiology available for the adequate assessment of the Romanian-speaking population. Thus, I dedicated an important part of my publicistic work to having in Romanian a general nutrition knowledge questionnaire, a food frequency questionnaire, and two instruments that explore the emotional side of food, respectively the mindfulness questionnaire of food consumption foods and the Emotional Eating Questionnaire. My research has also focused on investigating the associations between food intake and associated pathologies that include obesity in particular, but also metabolic syndrome, obstructive sleep apnea, but also genetic contributors to complex chronic pathologies, both in adults and children. This broad range of topics reflects a comprehensive approach to understanding the complicated interplay between nutrition and health.

As the main author, I have published 14 articles and 14 as a co-author in WOS journals until January 2024. The Hirsch index on the Web of Science platform is 6 in January 2024. On the WOS platform, there are also abstracts presented at ISI-quoted

scientific events. The full list of publications can be accessed on the ORCID website at <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4648-025X>.

I have almost 9 years of experience in the academic field, where I started as a University Assistant in the discipline of Medical Informatics and Biostatistics from September 2015 to February 2021. Initially, I started with a fixed-term contract and then continued on a permanent position. During my time in this discipline, I developed teaching materials and worked on various research projects.

I continued my academic career in the discipline of Public Health and Health Management, where I continued to work as a University Assistant for a year and a half, starting from March 2021 until September 2022. In this role, I contributed to the development of the curriculum, created materials of course, and supported the faculty in providing quality education to the students.

From October 2022 I advanced to the position of Lecturer within the discipline of Public Health and Health Management. In the new educational role, I developed materials both for the course and for practical activities on the subjects taught within the Department of Public Health and Health Management. In addition, I worked on several research projects that led to publications in prestigious journals, contributing to the scientific community.

In the immediate future, I will focus not only on updating the course materials and practical activities but also on a comprehensive revision of the content of the program in the field of public health.

In terms of research, the intention is to initiate and coordinate a study group for students who are passionate about research. This enabling environment will facilitate the rapid development of research skills and bridge the gap between theory and practice. Active involvement in the development of postgraduate courses to support scientific writing and study design skills in medical fields is also on the agenda, with a significant impact on PhD students and early career academics.

Although nutritional epidemiology, public health, and clinical genetics individually contribute to our understanding of health, they lack a coherent approach. My interdisciplinary research initiative has the potential to revolutionize public health by providing personalized, evidence-based interventions that consider genetic diversity. The

results will not only improve our scientific understanding but also inform the development of inclusive and effective public health policies, ushering in a new era of precision health tailored to individual and population needs.

In the future, I plan to continue to contribute to the field of nutritional epidemiology and expand interdisciplinary exploration. By strengthening partnerships and collaborations, I intend to address complex challenges and contribute to a holistic understanding of the impact of nutrition and lifestyle on human health. I look forward to engaging in projects that integrate my expertise across a broad spectrum of scientific fields.

In conclusion, my integrated approach to medical research reflects my commitment to contributing to scientific progress and improving medical practice. I will passionately manage and coordinate research activities based on ethics and innovation to make significant contributions to the advancement of medical knowledge and the improvement of population health.