



Daffodil
International
University

**ASSESSING THE EATING BEHAVIOR IN DAILY LIFE OF
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

A PROJECT REPORT

BY

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Submitted to the Department of Nutrition and Food Engineering in the partial fulfilment of
B.Sc. in Nutrition and Food Engineering

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APPROVAL

This Project titled “**Assessing the Eating Behavior in Daily Life of University Students**”, submitted by **Israt Jahan Imu (Id no:201-34-1072)** to the Department of Nutrition and Food Engineering, Daffodil International University, has been accepted as satisfactory for the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of B.Sc. in Nutrition and Food Engineering and approved as to its style and contents.

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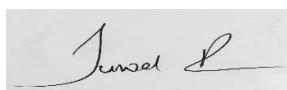
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DECLARATION

We hereby declare that this project has been done by us under the supervision of **Mr. Juwel Rana**, Assistant Professor, Department of Nutrition and Food Engineering, Daffodil International University. We also declare that neither this project nor any part of this project has been submitted elsewhere for award of any degree.

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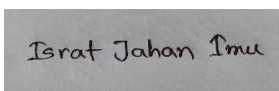
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Lastly, I cannot overlook the constant support and patience of my parents, to whom I extend my sincere acknowledgment and respect.

ABSTRACT

Eating behavior in university students is a complex phenomenon affected by many social, psychological and environmental factors. Individuals within this group face major transitions in their eating habits with the move from home to university life. Some of the more typical challenges may include non-regular meal eating patterns, greater consumption of fast food and convenience meals, and a natural taste for snacking (in many cases due to the easy access or relatively low price of these products). Not only that, with stress and academic pressures eating behaviors get more complicated having case records of overeating as well as under-eating due to following multiple reasons. In addition, social interactions and peer effects are very important. Many students will sit together to eat for mutual exchanges or be adversely influenced by some irresponsible eating habits of their peers. In a nutshell, the nutritional knowledge and awareness of university students are mostly diverse which eventually leads to varying dietary practices. While some of the students are particularly trying to have a well-balanced diet, mainly influenced by health and fitness objectives, others do not either have enough information to do so or want to eat appropriately. The study explores the eating habits of varsity students, focusing on demographic variables like gender, age, education level, budget, food costs, and affordability. Results show that gender norms and nutritional information influence eating habits, with older students adopting healthier habits. Living arrangements also impact food choices, with a larger percentage living at home or in rental houses. Lifestyle factors like pricing, social contacts, time, and convenience also influence students' food choices. The study emphasizes the need for students to balance convenience and health, particularly in dietary choices. Universities can provide affordable, healthy alternatives through campus canteens or free meal plans, and nutritional education can raise awareness of potential health risks.

Key Words: Eating behavior, University students, Social-factors, Environmental factors, Nutritional knowledge.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NAME OF CONTENTS	PAGE NO
Approval	i
Declaration	ii
Acknowledgement	iii
Abstract	iv
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1-2
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Study objectives	2
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW	3-5
2.1 Eating behavior among university students in Bangladesh	3
2.2 Eating behavior among university students in various countries	4
2.3 Factors influencing eating behavior of university students	5
CHAPTER III: MATERIALS AND METHODS	6-8
3.1 Conceptual framework	6
3.2 Hypothesis	6
3.3 Study design	6
3.3.1 Study population	7
3.3.2 Study site and area	7
3.3.3 Study Procedure	7
3.3.4 Questionnaire development	7
3.3.5 Data collection	7
3.3.6 Sample size calculation	7
3.3.7 Inclusion and Exclusion criteria	8
3.3.8 Data analysis	8
3.9 Ethical consideration	8
CHAPTER IV: RESULT AND DISCUSSION	9-25
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	26
REFERENCES	27-28
APPENDIX	29-36

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES	PAGE NO
Figure 4.1.1 Education level of university students	9
Figure 4.1.2 Gender	10
Figure 4.1.3 Living arrangements	10
Figure 4.2.1 Maintenance of food frequency	11
Figure 4.2.2 Food consume sources	12
Figure 4.2.3 Breakfast frequency	12
Figure 4.2.4: Maintenance of time frequency	13
Figure 4.2.5: Snacks consumption during daytime	14
Figure 4.2.6 Consumption rate of late-night snacks	15
Figure 4.3 Preferable food types	16
Figure 4.6.1 Gastrointestinal issues on health	18
Figure 4.7.1 Avoiding meals while busy	20
Figure 4.7.2 Overeating after feeling full	21
Figure 4.7.3 Percentage of liking or disliking street food	22
Figure 4.7.4 Eating habits of students affects their mood or not	23
Figure 4.8 Control of food on student's life	24

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES	PAGE NO
Table 4.2.7 Satisfaction about overall health	16
Table 4.4 Consumption rate of fruits/week	17
Table 4.5 Frequency of eating vegetables/week	17
Table 4.6.2 Food related disorder	18
Table 4.6.3 Reasons Associated with Eating Disorder	19

CHAPTER- I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

When young adults begin their university studies, their dietary habits often take a turn for the worse, impacting their long-term health and lifestyle decisions. This phase is significant as they gain independence and face challenges in maintaining a balanced diet. University students, whether living at home or in dormitories, frequently find it difficult to make healthy food choices, highlighting the need for targeted support to enhance their eating behaviors. The varsity lifestyle leads to shifts in eating patterns, meal timings, and preferences. For many, this stage signifies a move toward autonomy where they determine what, when, and how much to eat, which can have both beneficial and detrimental effects on their health (Lupi et al., 2015).

Various factors influence eating habits, such as gender, age, and lifestyle. Those with limited financial resources often develop unhealthy eating practices, although regular physical activity can help manage emotions and curb hunger, potentially reducing instances of overeating. Eating habits are crucial since they can have lasting effects on health; poor choices like eating low-nutrient foods, skipping meals, and inconsistent eating schedules are known to lead to numerous health issues and nutritional deficits. Young adults living independently tend to be vulnerable to unhealthy eating patterns, which might contribute to eating disorders and weight concerns. However, research on this subject in Poland is sparse, and existing studies provide mixed results regarding the connections between eating habits and other influencing factors (Kowalkowska & Póinhos, 2021).

Fast food is changing the eating habits of young people leading to less nutritious that include fewer fruits vegetables, increased fats and sugars, and a rise in obesity—a significant health issue globally. Students' dietary choices are influenced by their class schedules and the food options available near their universities, which can result in missed meals, limited food selections, and unhealthy snacks, even for those living away from home. Starting university often signifies a new sense of freedom and independence, as young individuals take on the responsibility of choosing and preparing their meals (Genena & Salama, 2017).

Nevertheless, proper nutrition is crucial during this stage to support good physical and mental well-being, foster healthy cognitive and intellectual growth, and ensure optimal academic success. Academic pressures, such as exams and assignments, can affect students' eating habits. Many students end up skipping meals, choosing quick but often less nourishing foods, or resorting to comfort foods during stressful periods, which may lead to dietary imbalances (Kabir, Miah & Islam, 2018).

A separate study investigates the unhealthy eating behaviors of university students in Lebanon while focusing on the relationships among gender and BMI. These habits are significant risk factors for serious health issues, particularly in early adulthood (Salameh et al., 2014).

In early adulthood, there are noticeable differences in food choices and consumption between sexes. Generally, females tend to eat more fruits and vegetables, incorporate dietary fiber into their diets, and steer clear of high-fat meals. They also prioritize healthy eating and are often

motivated by weight management and dieting. Compared to men, women typically feel more dissatisfied with their weight and body shape and emphasize the importance of proper nutrition (Nmor, Nwaka & Nmor, 2014).

University students experience a significant transitional phase characterized by physical and social changes, as well as shifts in their lifestyles and eating habits due to increased exposure to new experiences. Research indicates that during the transition from high school to college, many students adopt unhealthy eating patterns and have inadequate nutritional intake (El-Mani et al., 2020).

Issues like obesity, smoking, and lack of physical activity can elevate the risk of chronic diseases. Many university students are becoming overweight due to their erratic eating routines, which often include low-nutritional-value and junk foods. Educating them about proper nutrition could help curb the trend of fast-food consumption and encourage healthier eating practices, thus alleviating obesity among young individuals (Karmakar et al., 2016).

1.2 Study Objectives

The study focuses into varsity students' daily eating habits to better understand their nutritional habits, meal choices frequency, snacking, timing, and sociocultural and external factors.

- Identifying frequency, types, and nutritional content of student meals.
- Investigating factors influencing eating habits: Social, economic, cultural, psychological.
- Identifying issues affecting healthy food choices: Financial, time, accessibility.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Eating behavior among university students in Bangladesh

A study aims to examine the factors that influence the eating habits and nutritional intake of resident students at a public university in Bangladesh Utilizing a qualitative approach, this research explores what affects students' eating behaviors and food choices in this university setting. Involving 25 students and 13 focus groups, the findings revealed that male students tend to rely more on food courts, shops, and mobile vendors, primarily due to a lack of cooking skills and limited resources. Financial challenges also resulted in many students skipping meals, including breakfast. Additionally, food preferences and family eating habits emerged as significant factors in food choices. Although the study has some limitations, the insights gathered could provide a comprehensive understanding of the elements affecting students' eating behaviors and nutritional intake (Kabir, Miah & Islam, 2018).

A study of Bangladesh reveals that 37.6% undergraduate university students are at risk for developing an eating disorder, with factors such as late adolescence, strong religious participation, overweight body image, low body appreciation, cosmetic surgery, and current binge drinking contributing to this risk, emphasizing the need for improved awareness and initiatives (Pengpid, Peltzer & Ahsan, 2015).

A research study conducted in Bangladesh indicates that 37.6% of undergraduate university students face a heightened risk of developing an eating disorder. This is influenced by several factors, including late adolescence, high levels of religious involvement, negative body image perceptions, low body appreciation, interest in cosmetic surgery, and current binge drinking habits. This underscores the urgent necessity for enhanced awareness and supportive initiatives (Khan et al., 2024).

Additionally, the investigation highlights that 63.5% of university students in Bangladesh skip breakfast, which can adversely affect their health, performance, mood, and numerous physiological and psychological aspects. Female students are particularly prone to breakfast omission. Furthermore, students who smoke, those experiencing night eating syndrome, and individuals with poor sleep quality are three times more likely to forgo this crucial meal. Interestingly, overweight or obese students are less inclined to skip breakfast. The findings call for focused interventions and educational programs designed to promote healthy breakfast habits among university students, as addressing these risk factors can lead to better dietary practices and improved overall health (Mohammad et al., 2021).

2.2 Eating behavior among university students in various countries

A study aimed to analyze university students' baseline dietary intake, identify any possible barriers to healthy eating, and investigate potential changes in their eating habit across Germany. The sample consisted of 689 university students aged 16 to 29 from more than 40 universities. Results carried out that a nutritious meal is vital for preventing obesity and noncommunicable illnesses such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease. It should include plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, along with minimal amounts of saturated fat, salt, and processed carbs. The transition from adolescent to early adulthood serves as crucial for health promotion programs since many health habits emerge during this time. However, bad eating habits are frequent among this age group, including excessive fast-food consumption, an inadequate intake of fruits and vegetables, and missing breakfast. Excessive weight gain has been seen among young people, particularly university students. Few studies have examined potential changes in eating behavior (Hilger, Loerbroks & Diehl, 2017).

A study was to investigate the variables affecting the eating habits of Belgian university students and gather suggestions for intervention initiatives to enhance a healthy diet. The study utilized a qualitative research design, specifically focus group discussions, to explore the determinants of eating behavior in university students. Five focus groups with both male and female students participated in the study, and an inductive theme method was used to analyze the data. With a mean age of 20.6 years, the sample was made up of 21 female and 14 male students. The results showed that students have difficulties choosing healthful foods after they enter college. These difficulties are caused by a variety of variables, including personal preferences, social networks, the physical environment, and the larger macroenvironment. Exams, student groups, and living situations were some of the other university features that affected the interactions between determinants and eating behavior. University administrators and researchers are advised to improve self-discipline and time management skills, change the campus dining environment, and disseminate knowledge and guidance via social media (Deliens et al., 2014).

Another study highlights the importance of university microenvironments on eating behaviors in university student populations and Religion as a mediator of eating behaviors is a novel finding. University student populations are known to engage in health risking lifestyle behaviors including risky eating behaviors. The purpose of that study was to examine eating behavior patterns in a population of British university students using a two-step cluster analysis. The study found that among 345 British university students, four clusters of eating behaviors were identified, with approximately 19% having "favorable eating behaviors" and just under a third falling into the two most risky clusters. Riskier eating behavior patterns, such as consuming snack, convenience, and fast food, were more prevalent among university students living on campus and those with a Christian faith, highlighting the influence of university microenvironments and religion on eating behaviors (Tanton, Dodd & Woodfield, 2015).

Another research was conducted with students from Mendel University in Brno, located in the region of Moravia, Czech Republic. Participants in the study had to be regular undergraduate students of any degree, at least in their second year, and older than eighteen to be eligible to be chosen for participation. The study found that home environments were the most common meal places, followed by canteens, restaurants, and other less common options. The study concluded that despite people reading food labels, there is a lack of knowledge about what they should be

eating, indicating a need for improved nutrition education among university students (Hernandez, Bamwesigye & Horak, 2016).

A research of Chilean university students came to find that emotional eating, uncontrolled eating, and cognitive exclusion were the main aspects of eating behavior. Grade point average (GPA) was used to assess academic accomplishment. Women scored much higher on emotional eating, while those with higher GPAs had lower uncontrolled eating scores and higher cognitive limitation scores. Men's eating habits did not show a significant correlation with academic achievement. Further study is required to better understand the association and improve eating habits (Valladares, Duran & Matheus, 2016).

2.3 Factors influencing eating behavior of university students

A study conducted at Benghazi University revealed that after starting their university journey, 64% of students indicated changed their eating habits, with 59% admitting to engaging in unhealthy eating behaviors. Additionally, 67% of the students led a sedentary lifestyle, while most exhibited poor dietary choices. Notably, a significant portion of students (62.6%) maintained a normal weight. Contributing factors included a lack of time, difficulty accessing healthy food, emotional influences, insufficient knowledge about nutrition, and stress from exams. There was a strong connection between students' eating patterns and various influences, such as the absence of information, time limitations, stress levels, concerns about body weight, negative emotions, peer pressure, parental oversight, media influence, and social interactions (El-Mani et al., 2020).

Half of the students in Syria exhibited poor dietary habits, characterized by irregular meal times, lack of snacks, and water intake. These are significantly impacted by socioeconomic and psychological factors. Those who do not smoke, maintain physical activity, and live with their families tend to have healthier diets. Gaining insights into these habits can aid in creating nutritional education and intervention strategies for students (Alolabi et al., 2022).

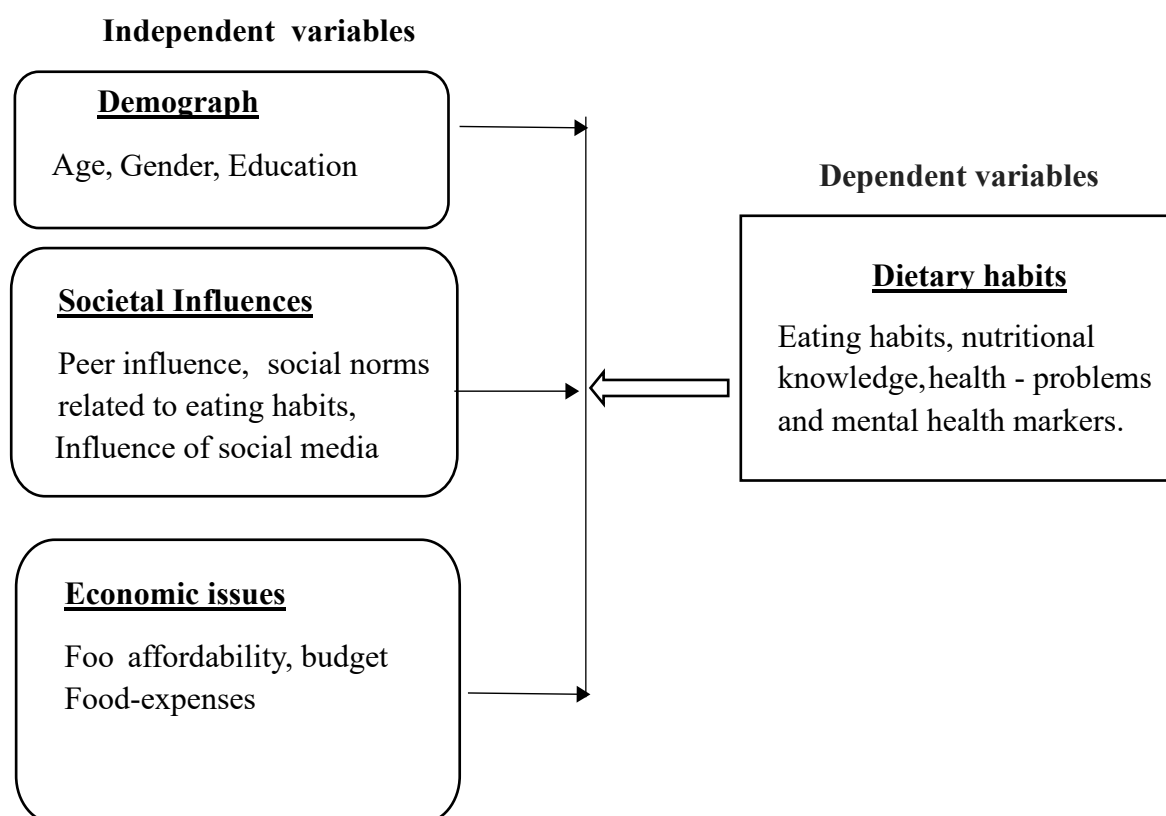
A hierarchical multiple regression analysis conducted among Korean university students examined two main variables alongside seven covariates related to their overall characteristics. The results indicated that eating behavior issues were more prevalent among women and individuals on restrictive diets compared to those not dieting. Additionally, eating alone resulted in more eating behavior problems than dining with friends. Overall, eating habits and attitudes accounted for 27.4% of the variance in these issues (Cho, Kim & Shin, 2021).

CHAPTER- III

MATERIALS & METHOD

3.1 Conceptual framework:

This framework for survey the eating behavior in daily life of university students, can help to identify the influencing factors for their choices, dietary patterns and the outcome related to their physical and mental health.



3.2 Hypothesis

There is a significant relationship between various factors influencing eating behavior of varsity students, such as academic stress, peer influence, accessibility of healthy food options, financial constraints, emotional state, cultural background, nutritional knowledge, living arrangements, body image perception, and physical activity level, which can inform the development of interventions promoting healthier dietary habits and overall well-being among varsity students.

3.3 Study design

It's a qualitative survey which was conducted with a subgroup of participants to look into factors that influence eating behaviors, such as time constraints, stress, and access to healthier options. The data was analyzed through thematic analysis.

3.3.1 Study population

Study population was university students those who study in different universities.

3.3.2 Study site and area

This study was conducted in different universities which is situated in Dhaka city.

3.3.3 Study procedure

This qualitative study carried out at different universities in Dhaka city. Participants will monitor with survey questionnaire. Ethical factors such participant privacy, confidentiality, and well-being will be given top priority during the whole study. The study's findings will advance knowledge of how students on campuses eat and provide guidance for initiatives aimed at improving general wellbeing, nutrition, and healthy eating among campus community members.

3.3.4 Questionnaire Development

In order to evaluate their nutritional knowledge and lifestyle, the secondary document will be studied before the initial questionnaire is created. Participants will be asked about their regular eating habits and elements that are connected to eating patterns despite their possibility of recollection bias. All the elements will be taken into account before finalizing the questionnaires. The responder will provide variable permission for the purpose of the interview. It will be guaranteed to all participants that their information will be kept private and utilized only for research.

3.3.5 Data collection

Simple random selection (SRS), which provides representation of genders, living situations, and academic disciplines will be used for the selection of the study. Utilizing questionnaire, data on daily basis dietary pattern of students while they're in campus including kinds and frequency will be gathered. Also get information about demographic including age, gender, socio-economic status. The data was collected around April 21, 2024 to May 16, 2024.

3.3.6 Sample size calculation

Formula For Sample Size Calculation;

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \times P(1 - P)}{E^2}$$

Here,

n= required sample size

Z= Z-score corresponding to the desired level of confidence (e.g., 1.96 for 95% confidence level)

P= estimated prevalence or proportion of the population exhibiting the characteristic of interest (if unknown, typically set at 0.5 for maximum variability)

E= desired margin of error (expressed as a proportion)

So that,

$n = 384.16$

Round up to the nearest whole number

$n = 385$

Consequently, for this study, a sample size approximately 385 people would be required.

3.3.7 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria:

- i) Only include those who are enrolled in a college or university currently in this survey.
- ii) Identify the participants' age range, which is frequently around the ages of 18 and 25 years old.
- iii) To obtain a thorough knowledge of eating patterns, make sure that demographics like gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, and academic majors are diverse.
- iv) Include only those individuals who give informed permission for taking a part in the study.
- v) Information on the eating habits and behaviors of participants should be willingly provided.

Exclusion criteria:

- i) People who are not enrolled at a university or college at this time should be excluded.
- ii) People who are older than the stated age range should be excluded.
- iii) People who won't participate or provide details about their eating habits should be left out.
- iv) People who don't speak the language used for the study should be excluded.

3.3.8 Data analysis

MS Excel was used to analyze the data which is collected from students. The information was cross checked again to avoid any error and estimate the outcome. To satisfy the study goals, the data analysis focused on summarizing and interpreting findings.

3.9 Ethical consideration

This study will follow ethical standards, including informed consent and maintaining participant confidentiality. Prior to data collection, I obtained ethical permission from the relevant institutional review board.

CHAPTER- IV

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

This study was conducted among 385 university students those are from different varsities. This study was aimed for learn about the variables influencing varsity students eating habits in order to spot patterns trends and asse nutritional knowledge among university students in Bangladesh. Data was collected by pre- tested semi-structured interviewer administered questionnaire and managed through MS Excel. Result were compiled in graphical and tabular format.

4.1 Demographic Information

4.1.1 Education level

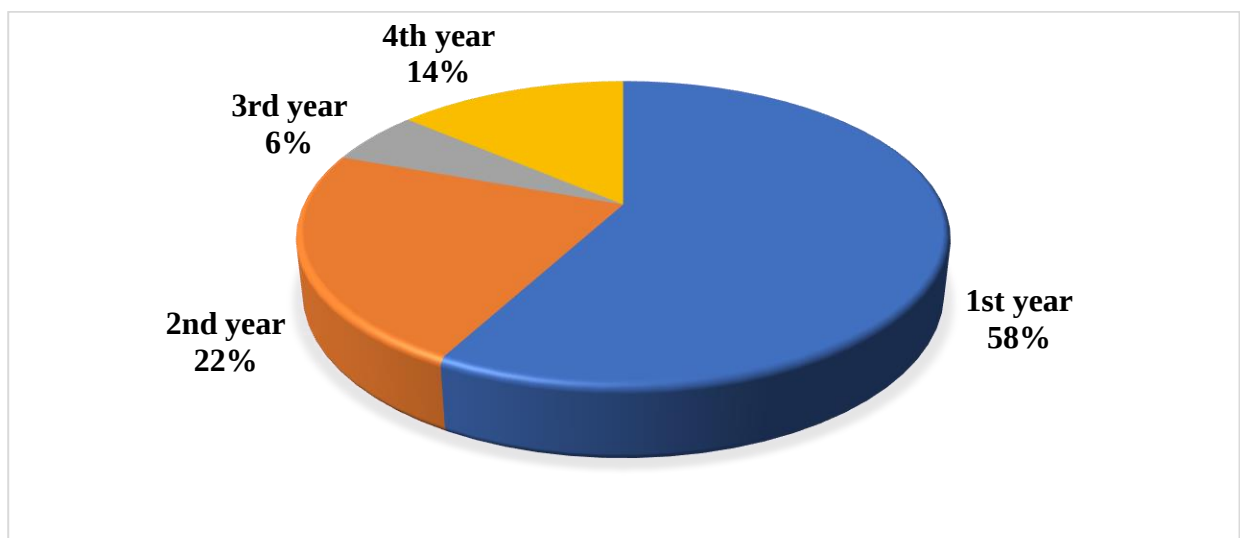


Figure 4.1.1: Education level of university students

This pie chart shows the distribution of individuals across four different years of study. In this study the targeted age group was 18-25 years where the major proportion of respondents was in age group between 20-23 years of age. Education level of the respondents found as 57.8% of the total, are in their first year of study (223). The second-largest group consists of individuals in their second year, accounting for 22.6% of the total (87). Meanwhile, those in their third year represent 5.7% (22), and individuals in their fourth year make up 13.7% (53).

4.1.2 Gender

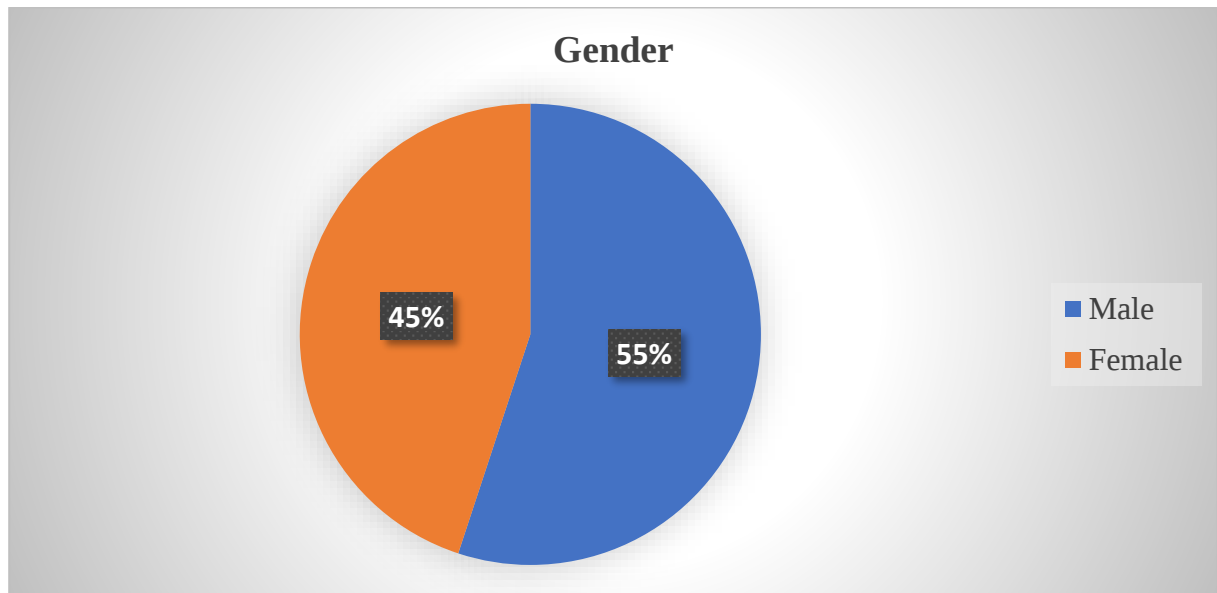


Figure 4.1.2: Gender

This survey suggests that the dataset contains a somewhat higher proportion of male respondents than female respondents. The study shows that about 55.06% (212) of the respondents are men and 44.94% (173) of the respondents are women which indicates that there are actually somewhat larger numbers of men in the overall population than female respondents.

From this data, we can see that, varsity students' eating habits are influenced by their age, gender, and educational attainment. Higher educated and older pupils could show more knowledge about nutrition and adopt healthier eating practices. Male and female varsity students have significant differences in eating behavior.

4.1.3 Living arrangements

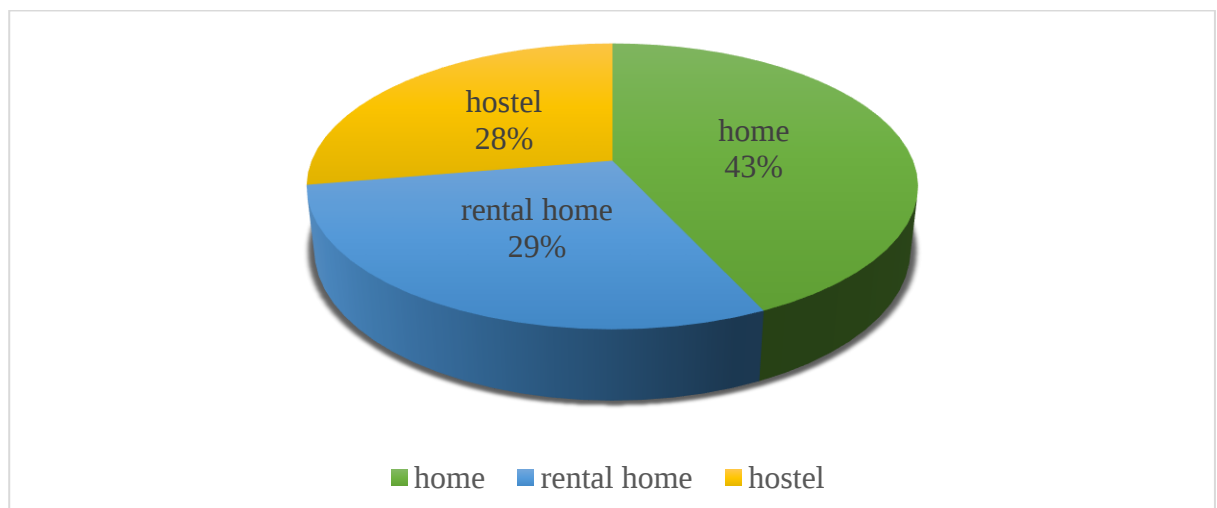


Figure 4.1.3: Living arrangements

This data shows that maximum portion of the respondents 165 (43.7%) reside in their own homes, which may be either their own or their relatives' properties. The fact that a sizeable portion of the population 112 people, or 29.6% live in rental units suggests that a sizeable portion of the population may be living alone or with roommates.

A smaller percentage, 106 (28.1%), claimed to live in shared housing, suggesting that they were either other people or students living in dorms.

4.2 Food frequency of campus students

4.2.1 Maintenance of Food Frequency

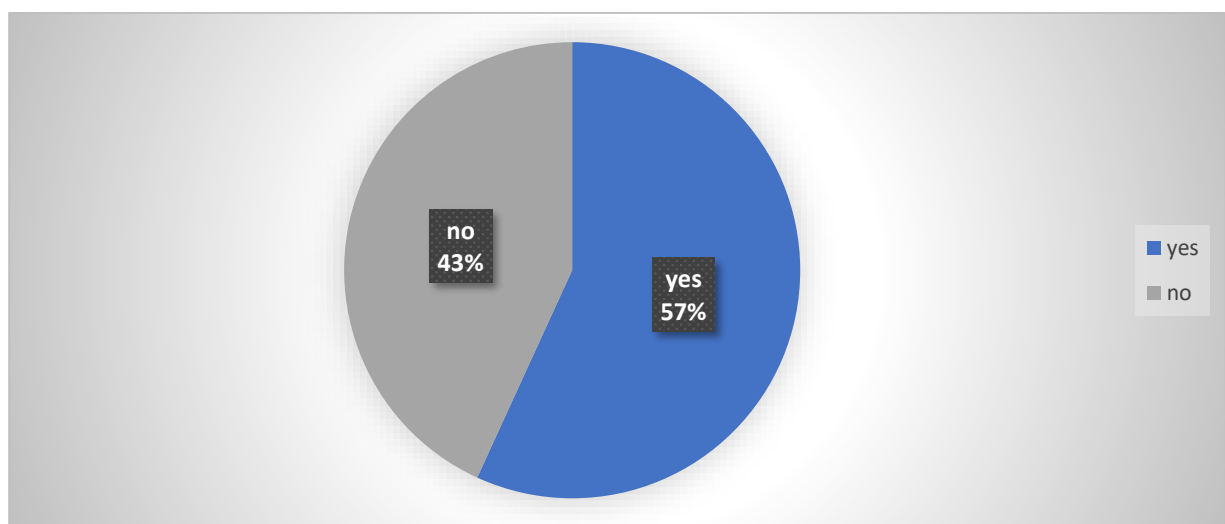


Figure 4.2.1: Maintenance of food frequency

This data demonstrates with more than half 222 (55.7%) giving a favorable response, they agreed with the maintenance of food frequency, indicating a recognition of the importance of regular and balanced meals for health and well-being.

On the other hand, a sizable minority 163 (42.3%) expressed dissatisfaction or a negative viewpoint.

The alignment with the concept of food frequency maintenance may be influenced by cultural norms, health education initiatives, personal experiences, and perceived benefits associated with healthy eating habits.

4.2.2 Food consume sources

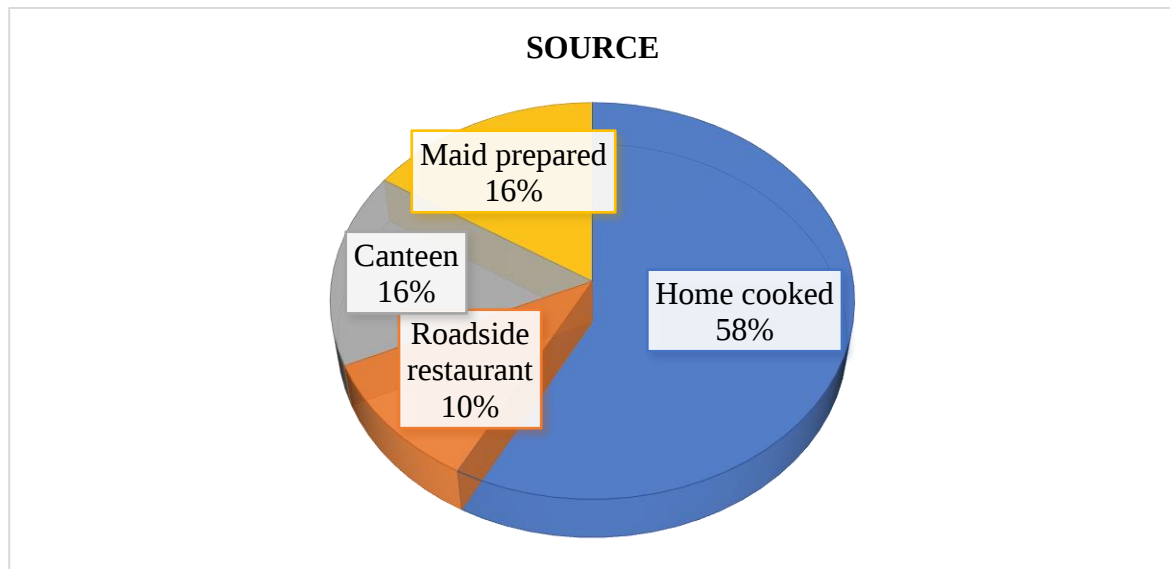


Figure 4.2.2: Food consume sources

The majority 57.7% (222) of respondents prefer home-cooked meals due to factors such as comfort, control over ingredients, social bonding, convenience, and cost-effectiveness. 10.6% (40) of respondents prefer roadside restaurants for informal and quick meals due to time constraints, convenience, and affordable food options. 15.8% (61) of respondents choose canteens for accessible and affordable meal options, catering to diverse dietary needs, and providing a social dining experience. 15.8% (61) of respondents opt for maid-prepared services for customized home-cooked meals, saving time and effort in meal preparation.

4.2.3 Frequency of breakfast in a week

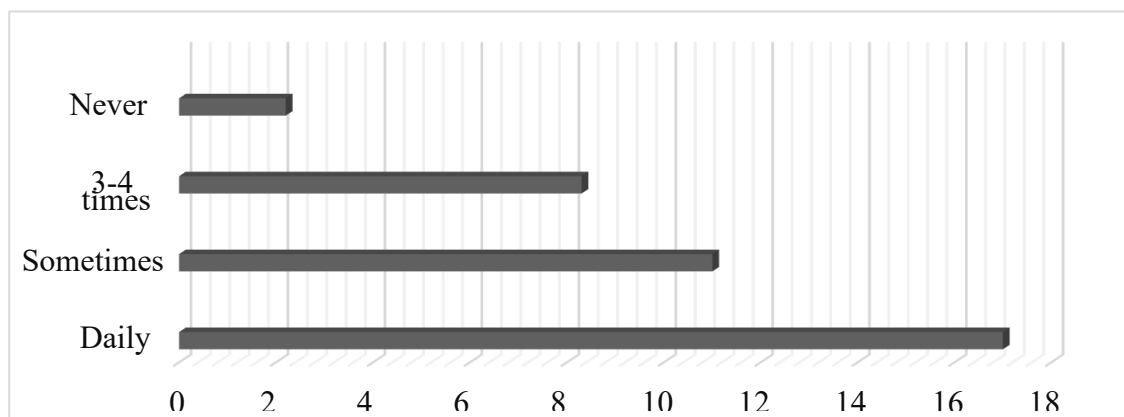


Figure 4.2.3: Breakfast frequency

This data represents that the majority of respondents (170) reported eating breakfast daily, which aligns with recommendations from nutritionists and health experts, while occasional breakfast consumption suggests a potential area for improvement in establishing more regular eating patterns and reaping the associated health benefits. The group of respondents (83) who have breakfast 3-4 times a week and others of respondents (22) reported never consuming breakfast, highlighting the potential benefits and adverse effects including increased risk of weight gain, impaired cognitive function, and disrupted metabolism due to skipping breakfast.

Regular breakfast consumption is important for promoting healthy eating habits and overall wellbeing, and encouraging individuals to prioritize breakfast and addressing barriers to its consumption can help improve dietary habits and contribute to better health outcomes.

4.2.4 Timeliness of meals

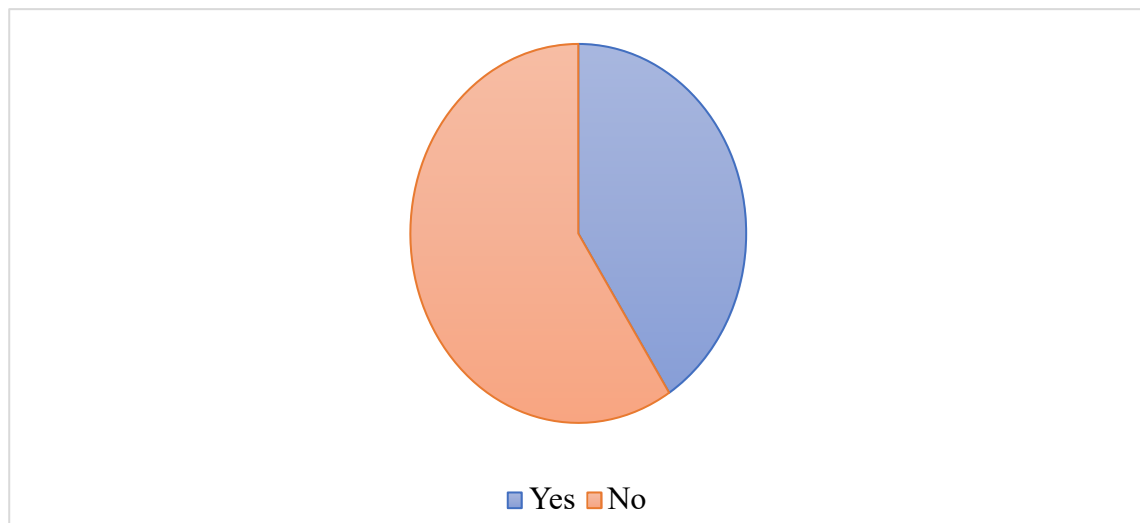


Figure 4.2.4: Maintenance of time frequency (consuming meal on time)

Besides that, this research emphasizes the need of identifying and resolving this variability in order to promote healthy behaviors and general well-being. This pie chart illustrates a significant distinction between those who maintain a set meal routine and those who do not.

Despite the majority of the measured population does not follow a consistent eating schedule, 40.9% do, which may lead to improved digestion, nutritional absorption, and overall health results. A large majority of survey respondents do not adhere to a steady meal schedule, which can cause disturbances in digestion, energy levels, and nutritional intake.

4.2.5 Frequency of daytime snacks consumption

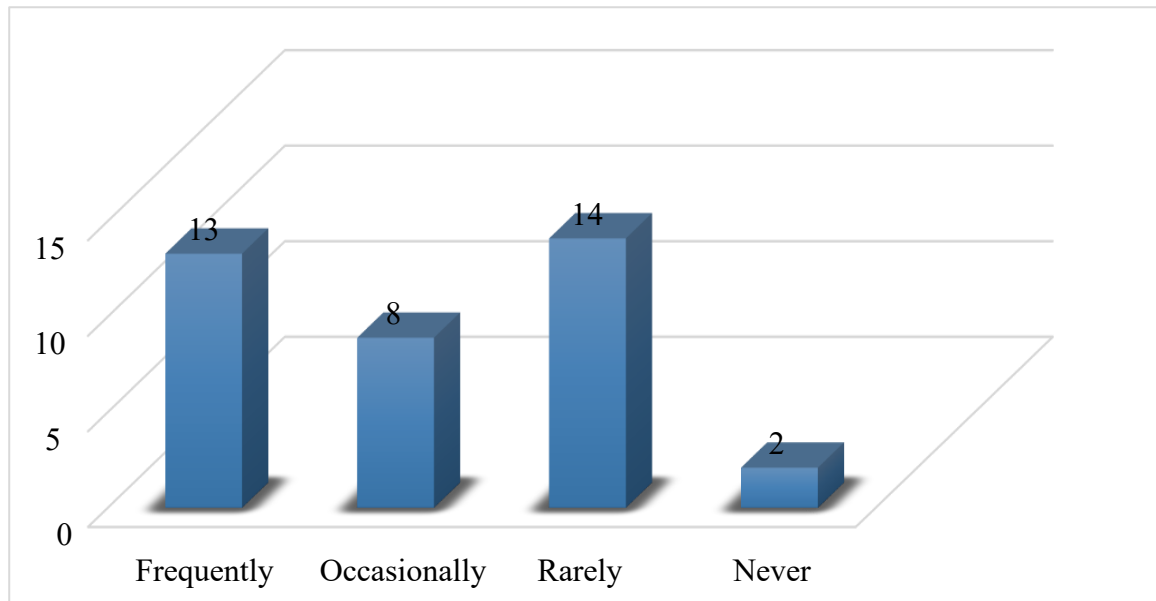


Figure 4.2.5: Snacks consumption during daytime

Our results show that the study population eats snacks often, with most participants (133 out of 385) reporting frequent snacking during the day. This is consistent with other studies showing how common snacking is as a dietary practice, especially in contemporary lifestyles marked by hectic schedules and on-the-go eating behaviors. A significant number of participants in our study reported consuming snacks during the day on an occasional or infrequent basis (89 out of 141 participants). This variation in the frequency of snacks implies that although snacking is widespread, not everyone may do it every day.

The frequency with which people consume snacks is probably influenced by a variety of factors, including cultural norms, personal preferences, accessibility to snacks, and specific health objectives. Social and environmental influences, nutritional awareness, stress and emotional eating, routine and habit building, can all have an impact on snack intake behaviors. Overindulgence in unhealthy or snack foods can result in poor nutrition, weight gain, and a higher chance of developing chronic illnesses. Gaining knowledge about snack intake might support dietary decisions that are well-informed and better snacking habits.

4.2.6 Late night snacks

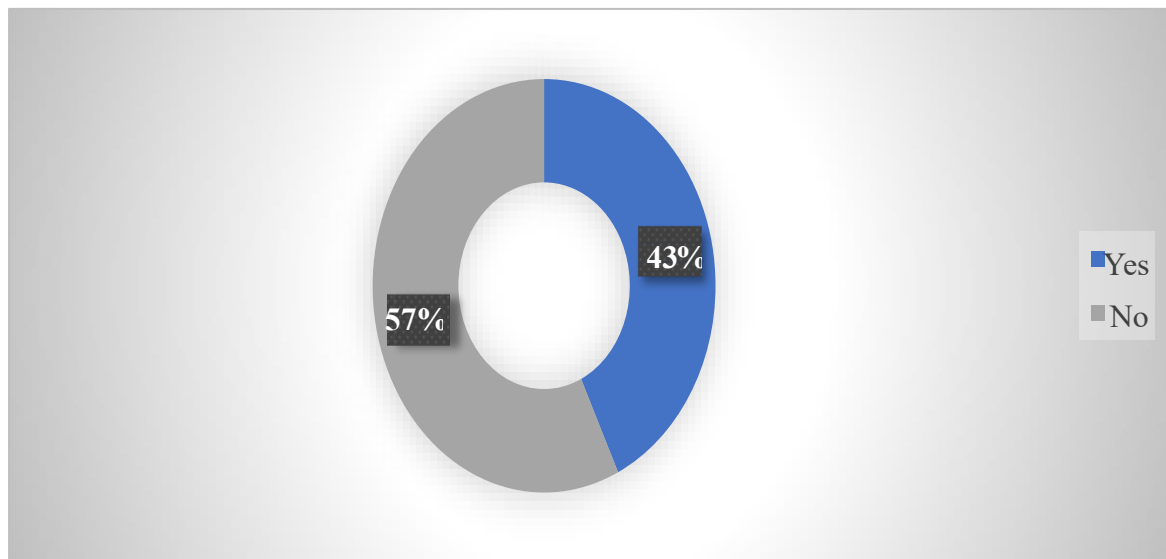


Figure 4.2.6: Consumption rate of late-night snacks

In this study, we examined the habit of late-night eating in a sample population. Of the respondents, 43% stated they often grab late at night, while 57% responded they don't. The discovery that 43% of participants admitted to indulging in late-night munchies implies that this conduct is comparatively prevalent among the representative group. Previous studies have shown that a variety of factors, including dietary habits, lifestyle choices, and psychological issues like stress and emotional eating, might affect late-night snacking.

The study's findings on the incidence of late-night eating are consistent with other studies, indicating the pervasiveness of this activity. The pattern of late-night eating in the sample group might be explained by a number of reasons. These elements might consist of- People who feel hungry or who have an increased appetite at night may snack, particularly if they did not eat enough throughout the day. Emotional eating such as stress, boredom, or loneliness are examples of emotional issues that might lead to late-night munching as a coping method to control emotions or lessen unpleasant feelings.

Regular late-night eating raises the risk of obesity, cardiovascular disease, and metabolic disorders by causing weight gain, disrupting sleep patterns, and resulting in poor food quality.

Table 4.2.7: Satisfaction about overall health

Satisfaction Level	No. of People (%)
Strongly Dissatisfied	19 (5%)
Dissatisfied	96 (25%)
Neutral	158 (41%)
Satisfied	96 (25%)
Strongly Satisfied	15 (4%)

The distribution of satisfaction in overall health among the 385 people in the population is displayed in this chart where the majority of respondents had a neutral opinion of their general health, with a smaller percentage expressing satisfaction or dissatisfaction and a smaller percentage expressing great satisfaction or dissatisfaction. In here, several factors may influence individuals' satisfaction including as one's physical and mental health, access to healthcare, socioeconomic standing, and personal expectations and beliefs, can affect one's level of happiness with their general health.

4.3 Food preferences while staying on campus

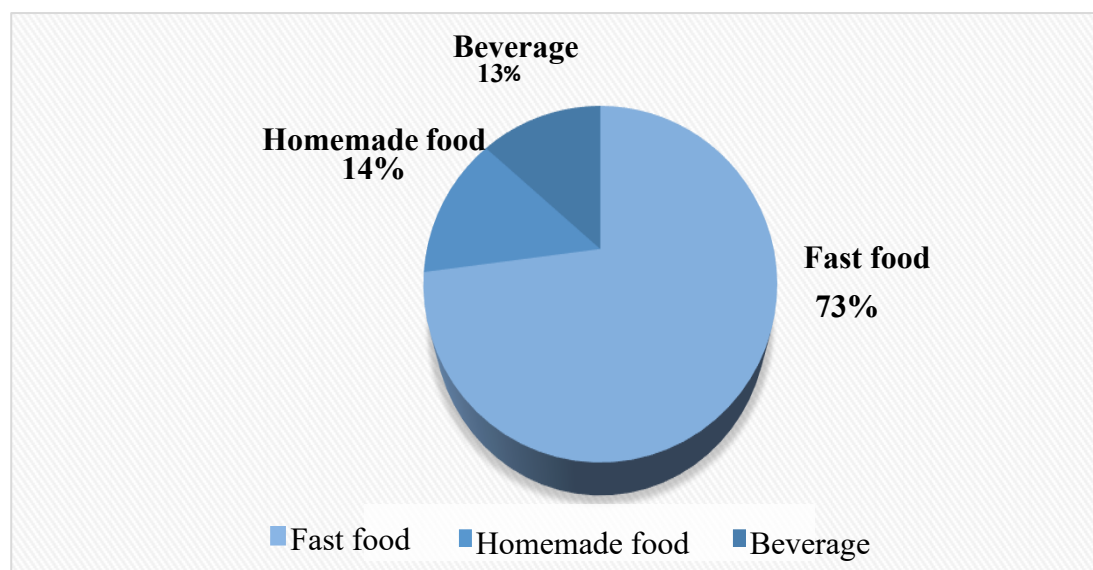


Figure 4.3: Preferable food types

Students who took the survey showed a strong tendency towards consuming fast food, with the majority choosing it for its flavor, accessibility and convenience and the remaining students prefer homemade food or beverages. It shows that about three-quarters of the students 73% (281) preferred fast food over homemade food 14% (54) and beverages 13% (50), indicating an extensive a preference for it.

Table 4.4: Consumption rate of fruits/week

Frequency of Eating Fruits	Number of People (%)
Daily	38 (9.8%)
2-3 days	131 (34.2%)
Rarely	194 (50.5%)
Never	21 (5.5%)

Among 385 students, the majority of respondents 50.5% (194) only infrequently eats fruits in a week. A sizeable fraction 34.2% (131) eats fruits once every two to three days, suggesting some degree of regularity. Merely 9.8% (38) of the population consume it on a daily basis, while an even smaller portion 5.5% (21) never takes. This implies that although the practice is widespread, people engage in it at varying degrees, with occasional engagement being the most typical.

Table 4.5: Frequency of eating vegetables/week

Frequency	Number of people (%)
Daily	165 (42.5%)
2-3 days/week	162 (42%)
Rarely	47 (12.2%)
Never	11 (2.9%)

From this study we can see sample of 385 students, 165 (42.8%) reported eating vegetables every day, 162 (42%), eating vegetables two to three days a week, and 47 (12.2%) reporting they ate vegetables seldom. Vegetables are never eaten by 11 pupils (2.9%).

This data presents that a sizable part of students (84.8%) incorporate vegetables in their diets on a regular basis, either daily or a few times per week, whereas a smaller portion eats vegetables infrequently or never.

4.6 Health related problem

4.6.1 Gastrointestinal diseases

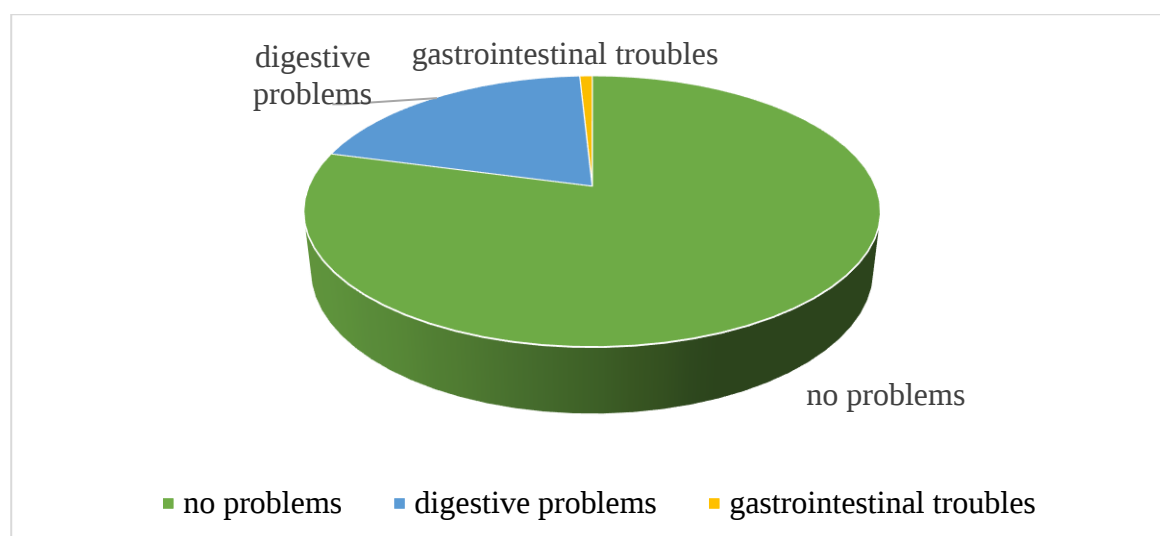


Figure 4.6.1: Gastrointestinal issues on health

In this survey, Students' food-related health problems were thoroughly outlined, with percentages and counts of those who experienced constipation, digestive troubles, food poisoning, vomiting, nausea, stomach problems, and those who did not have any food-related illnesses. The findings showed that only a tiny number of students had gastrointestinal troubles (0.6%) or no problems at all (1.8%), while a considerable fraction of students (14.3%) reported having digestive problems and the majority (56.6%) claimed not having any food-related ailments. These results show that the students who were polled had a variety of food-related health problems; nevertheless, the majority did not report any problems.

Nonetheless, a considerable proportion of pupils mentioned encountering issues with digestion, food poisoning, constipation, and additional symptoms, underscoring the need of upholding a nutritious diet and way of life.

Table 4.6.2: Food related disorder

Condition/Disorder	Number of people (%)
No	269 (69.8%)
If yes	47 (12.2%)
-Compulsive eating	14 (3.6%)
-Night eating syndrome	38 (9.8%)

-Exercise Addiction	10 (2.5%)
-Anxiety	49 (12.7%)
-Others	33 (8.5%)

Table 4.6.3: Reasons Associated with Eating Disorder (multiple responds)

Reasons Associated with Eating Disorder	No. of people (%)
-Academic pressure	173 (44.9%)
-Mental stress	163 (42.4%)
-Personal issues	136 (35.2%)
-Health issues	89 (23.2%)
-Travelling	28 (7.2%)
-Others	93 (24.1%)

From this study we found that, roughly 50% of the students stated that their eating issues were a result of their academic stress. This is comparable to about 173 students. 42.4% of students said that their eating issues were brought on by mental stress. This is about equivalent to 163 students. A total of 35.2% of students cited personal issues as the cause of their eating disorders. This computation would involve about 136 students. About 89 young people, or 23.2% of the total, stated that their eating disorder development was influenced by health difficulties. Merely 7.2% of students stated that their eating issues were worse by travel. This is comparable to about 28 students. Of the students, 24.1% identified "Others" as the cause of their eating problems. A total of 93 students (24.1%) gave "Others" as the cause of their eating problems. These results imply that the most often mentioned causes of eating disorders among the students polled were pressure from their studies, mental stress, and personal problems. Travel and health problems show a less correlation, but many students selected "Others," indicating a wide range of unidentified factors that contributed to their eating disorders.

4.7 Eating behavior

4.7.1 Eating Habits While Busy (skip meals or not)

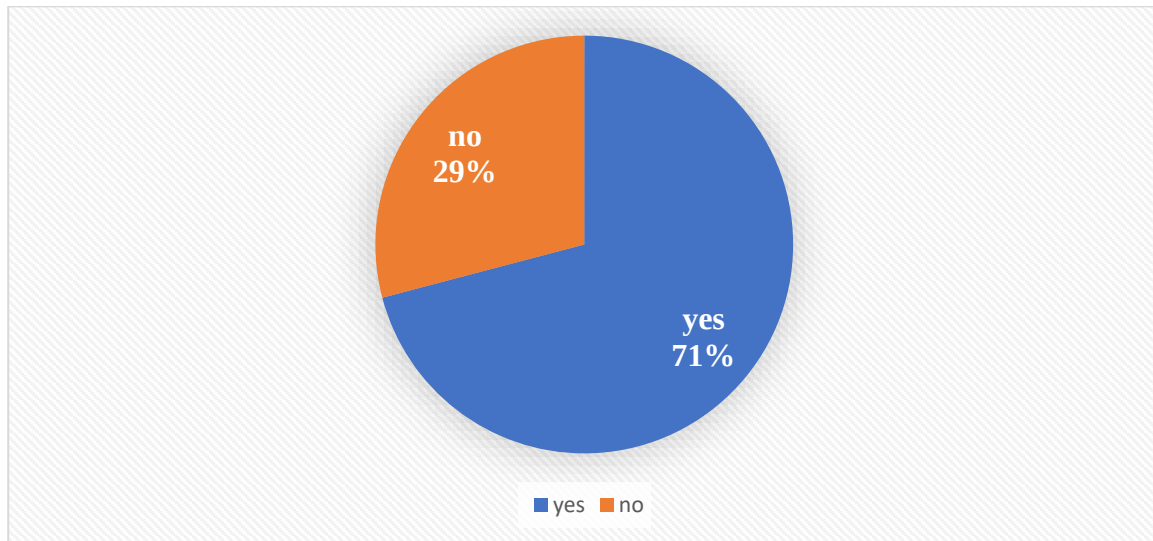


Figure 4.7.1: Avoiding meals while busy

From this pie chart, we can see that, majority of respondents avoid eating when they are hungry often and the percentage of students who skip eating is 70.9% (273) where 29.1% (112) students doesn't avoid eating while they're hungry. We've asked students why they frequently skip meals and they said, owing to stress, poor time management, and a preference for academics over self-care. Also, they've time restrictions, such as balancing classes, assignments, tests, and employment, might result in insufficient time for adequate meal preparation. Stress can impair appetite, resulting in increased desires for harmful foods or repressed hunger.

Students may also prioritize academic work or extracurricular activities above meals, seeing eating breaks as secondary to their objectives. As a consequence, students may ignore hunger indicators and prioritize urgent responsibilities over appropriate meal preparation. And the others, they maintain their time for taking their meal.

4.7.2 Overeating

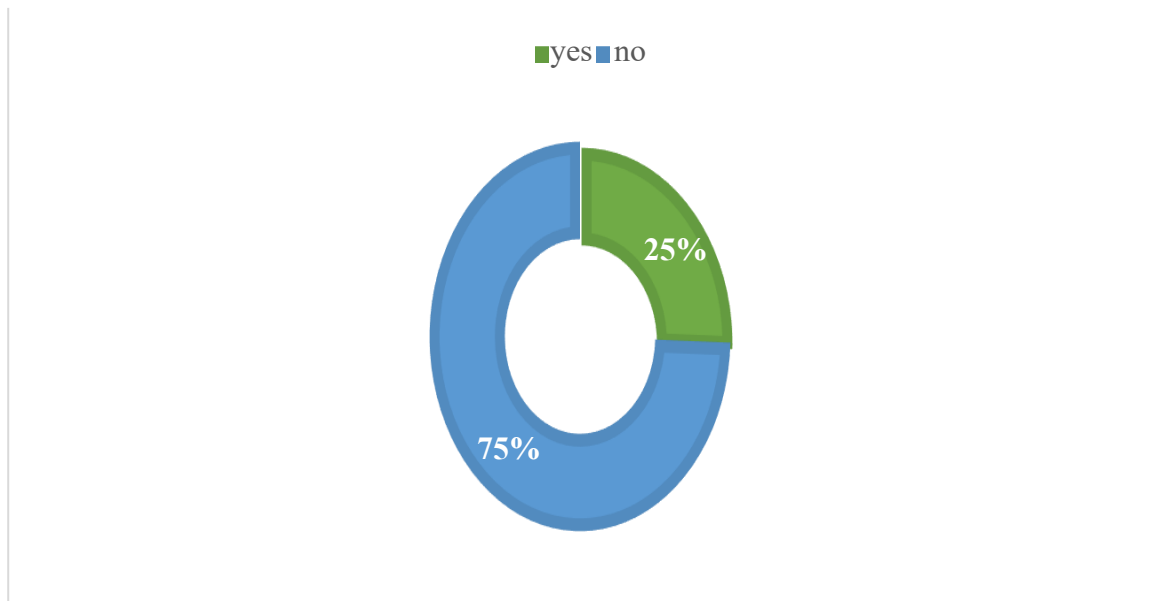


Figure 4.7.2: Overeating after feeling full

In this chart we can see that, a significant portion of the population, 25%, enjoys overeating even after feeling full, indicating difficulty in regulating food intake and potential overeating despite physical cues of fullness, highlighting the need for understanding contributing factors and promoting mindful eating strategies for healthier habits and well-being.

The students who overeat even when they are full for a variety of reasons. we've asked their what are the reasons and they replied including stress, irregular eating habits, social eating, access to high-calorie, easy meals, food as a reward, mindless eating, and sleep deprivation. Their Regular eating behavior result in acute hunger later on, leading to overeating. Social eating can lead to excess in students due to social situations, while sleep deprivation can increase hunger and cravings for high-calorie foods. Factors such as stress, irregular eating patterns, social eating, availability of high-calorie meals, food as a reward, mindless eating, and sleep deprivation can contribute to overeating. Regular eating patterns can cause intense hunger, while access to high-calorie meals can override fullness signals.

4.7.3 Street Food (Like or Dislike)

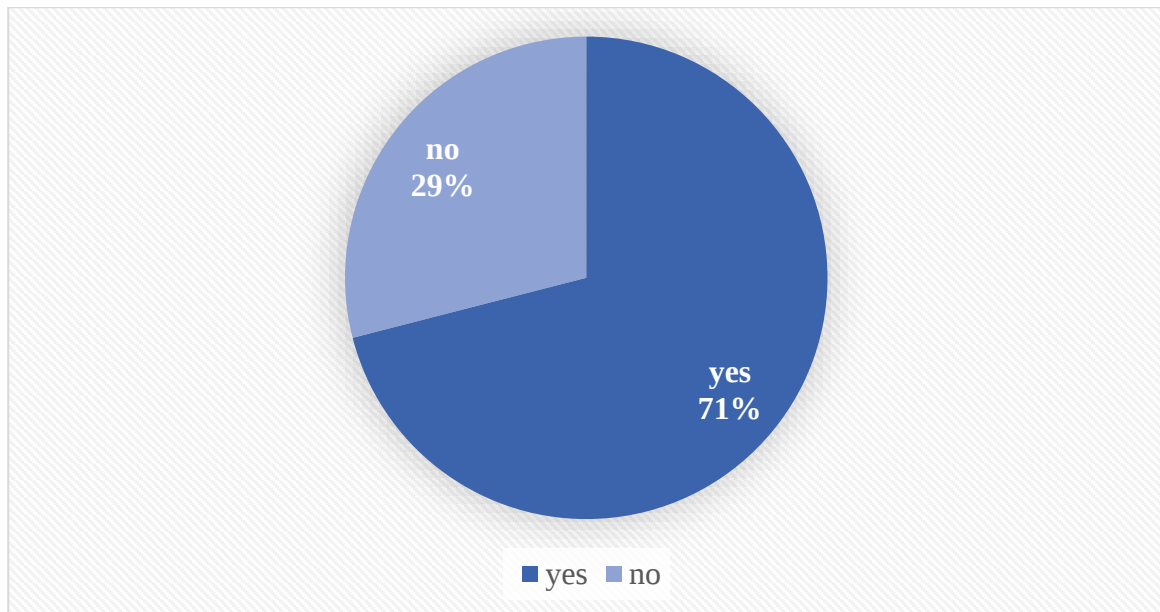


Figure 4.7.3: Percentage of liking or disliking street food

The percentage of people who like to consume street food more frequently (71%) compared to those who do not (29%), is shown graphically in this pie chart. We asked those who love street food why. They think that Street food provides affordable choices for young adults, particularly students. Its convenience and unique local tastes make it an excellent alternative for those leading a fast-paced existence.

Street food markets serve a variety of classic and modern cuisines, making them appealing to adventurous diners. The lively surroundings of street food establishments also create a more relaxing social atmosphere than formal eating. On the other hand, People who do not like street food think that such food is harmful and unhealthy for the body.

4.7.4 Effects of eating habit on mood

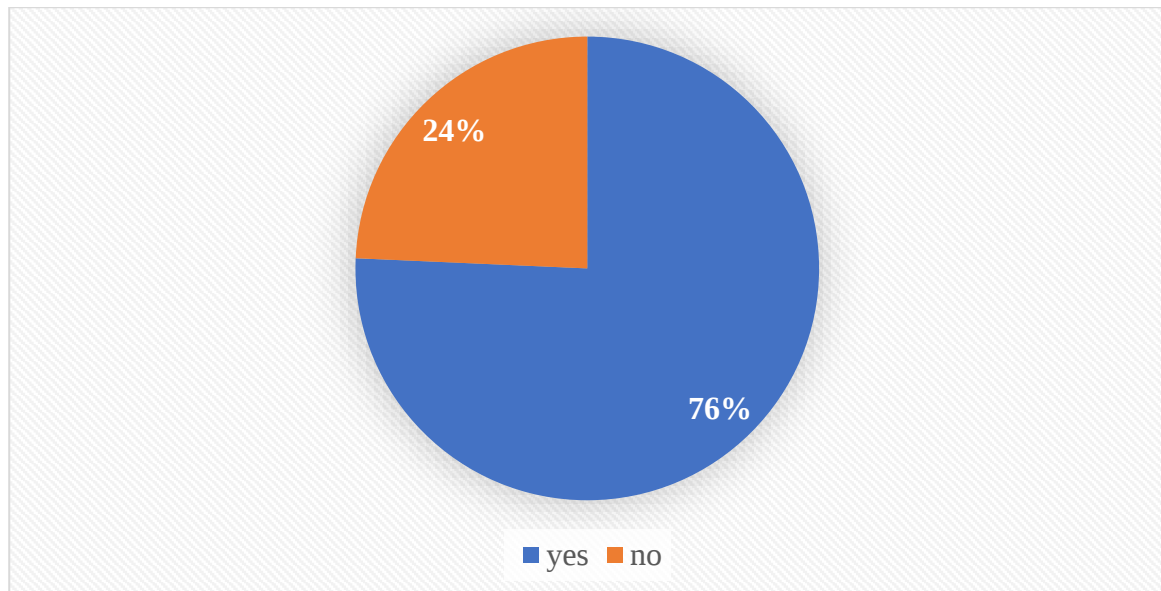


Figure 4.7.4: Eating habits of students affects their mood or not

We asked the pupils that if mood affect their eating habit and we found a significant amount of students said yes which is around 75.7% and 24.3% students said no.

Those students who said yes they face the mood instability problem due to poor eating habits and irregular dietary habits which may increase their stress. This majority believes that diet and nutrition are essential factors in students' emotional and mental health. Healthy eating habits are likely to improve mood stability and mental health, whereas poor or irregular eating might lead to bad emotions, tension, or weariness. Recognizing the connection could encourage students to adopt healthier food habits that benefit both their physical and mental well-being.

They think that eating habits have a substantial impact on students' moods because they influence brain function, energy levels, and emotional stability. Maintaining frequent, balanced meals made from whole foods helps boost mood, attention, and resilience to stress.

4.8 Control of food on life

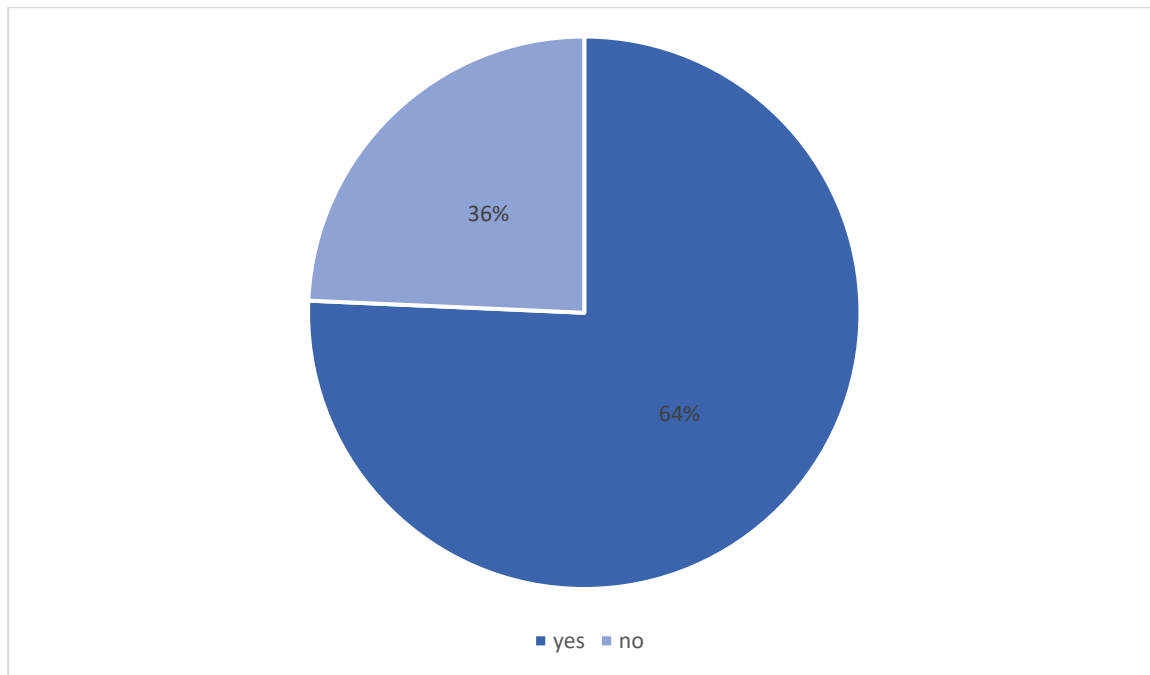


Figure 4.8: Control of food on student's life

A majority of the surveyed population (64%) feels that food controls their lives, indicating potential struggles with food-related behaviors, emotions, or attitudes, highlighting the need to address these perceptions for promoting healthier relationships with food and overall well-being. According to them, their eating habits influences physical health, emotional well-being, academic achievement, and social connections. Poor eating habits can cause weariness, decreased attention, and worse academic performance. Balanced meals increase their attention span and cognitive performance. Nutrient-dense diets such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains promote emotional stability and decrease anxiety and sadness.

Food is fundamental to social interactions, fostering a sense of belonging and support. Poor food choices can cause weight gain, vitamin shortages, and intestinal problems. Regular meals give structure, which boosts productivity and reduces stress.

DISCUSSIONS

This study examines the eating habits of varsity students, focusing on demographic variables like gender, age, education level, budget, food costs, and affordability. Previous research has related demographic and psychographic variables to college students' food habits. However, where a student lives influences their food patterns and diet-related health. Students who live off campus have increased protein consumption, blood triglyceride levels, and cholesterol ratios. Gender inequalities exist, with female students consuming more fatty

meals than males. Internal and external cues, budget, health, and neither factor all have an impact on students' eating habits. Males are evenly distributed throughout all four groups, but females are more driven by convenience, pleasure, price, and weight worries (Deshpande, Basil & Basil, 2009). Our study results show that gender norms and nutritional information influence eating habits, with older students and those in advanced academic years adopting healthier habits. Living arrangements also impact food choices, with a larger percentage living at home or in rental houses. Understanding these interactions is crucial for promoting healthy lifestyles and addressing nutritional issues. The study also reveals that lifestyle factors like pricing, social contacts, time, and convenience influence students' food choices. Addressing these preferences can help promote healthy eating habits. The disparity in breakfast intake suggests obstacles like convenience, lack of knowledge, and time restrictions. Only 40.9% of participants follow a regular meal plan, affecting digestion and health. Focused interventions are needed to encourage regular eating behaviors, especially among students. Snacking is common among the sample group, but unhealthy snacks can lead to weight gain, poor nutrition, and chronic illnesses. The survey reveals a high prevalence of late-night eating among students, linked to stress, emotional eating, insufficient daytime eating, hunger, and lifestyle choices. This can lead to metabolic problems, weight gain, and disturbed sleep. The study emphasizes the need for students to balance convenience and health, particularly in dietary choices. Universities can provide affordable, healthy alternatives to fast food through campus canteens or free meal plans, and nutritional education can raise awareness of potential health risks. The research reveals that students' eating habits are influenced by various factors, including budgetary constraints, lifestyle, and external influences. The study highlights the need for healthier food options, including meal prep facilities and fresh, affordable food on campus. The preference for fast food and street food over healthy options is a significant issue, driven by convenience and flavor.

Furthermore, Poor eating habits among college students are often associated with stress, low self-esteem, and a lack of nutrition knowledge, which often results by reliance on insufficient resources (Deshpande, Basil & Basil, 2009). From this study, we can see that stress from university and the mind also plays a role in students' eating habits, with over 50% of participants identifying eating disorders as a result of stress. The study also highlights the need for better water intake and digestion-friendly alternatives. The report suggests that students face challenges in managing their diets due to the demands of the classroom, financial situation, and emotional needs.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

University students' eating habits are influenced by various factors such as stress, social interactions, convenience, and personal nutrition knowledge. Transitioning into university life often disrupts established eating patterns, leading to irregular times, increased snacking, and consumption of fast food and convenience meals. Academic pressures can worsen these behaviors, while social settings and peer influence can encourage unhealthy food consumption. However, some students, driven by personal health and fitness goals, desire healthy eating habits. However, the limited healthy food options on campus and the dominating influence of convenience food culture pose major obstacles. Nutritional knowledge varies among students, with better dietary choices seen in those with greater awareness. Cultural and family backgrounds also significantly influence students' eating behaviors.

Recommendation

The range of factors is extensive and these all could add to the general inadequate/unreasonable/undesirable diets among college students. Hence, to resolve these issues, universities must also work on such a multi-faceted approach. They should prioritize the following measures:

- **Improving Nutrition Education:** Universities should include compulsory nutrition courses or workshops for freshmen. These should cover nutritional basics, staple food preparation, and the lifelong value of a balanced diet.
- **Expanding Access:** Universities should increase on-campus availability of affordable, healthy food options, including fresh fruit and vegetables.
- **Promoting Stress Management:** Universities should offer resources for managing stress, such as counseling, mindfulness workshops, and recreational activities promoting mental wellbeing.

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APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire

Assessing The Eating Behavior in Daily Life of University Students

Principle investigator: Israt Jahan Imu

ID no: 201-34-1072

Questionnaire

SL No.	Questions	Options
01	Education Level	. 1st year----- 1 . 2 nd year----- 2 . 3 rd year----- 3 . 4 th year----- 4
02	Gender	. Male----- 1 . Female----- 2
03	Where do you live?	1. Hostel----- 1 2. Home----- 2 3. Rental home----- 3 4. Others_____ 4
04	Do you maintain your food frequency?	. Yes----- 1 . No----- - 2
05	From where do you complete your meal?	. Canteen----- 1 . Roadside restaurant----- 2 . Home----- 3 . Maid prepared service----- 4
06	How often do you eat breakfast in weekly?	. Daily ----- 1 . Sometimes----- 2 . ___ times in week----- 3 . Never----- 4
07	Do you take your meal timely?	. Yes----- 1 . No----- 2

08	Do you eat snacks during the daytime?	. Frequently----- 1 . Occasionally----- 2 . Rarely----- 3 . Never----- 4
09	Do you eat snacks at late night?	. Yes----- 1 . No----- 2
10	How satisfied are you with your overall health?	. Strongly dissatisfied----- 1 . Dissatisfied----- 2 . Neutral----- 3 . Satisfied----- 4 . Strongly Satisfied----- 5
11	On average, how much money do you spend on food daily on average?	Answer: _____ Taka. ----- - 1
12	What type of food you eat when you're on campus?	. Fast food: _____ 1 . Homemade food: _____ 2 . Beverage: _____ 3
13	What type of protein source do you prefer in your meal? (You could choose more than one) (Give ✓)	. Broiler chicken ----- 1 . Layer chicken ----- 2 . Pakistani chicken ----- 3 . Local chicken ----- 4 . Beef ----- 5 . Mutton ----- 6 . Duck ----- 7

		. Fish ----- 8 . Egg ----- 9 0. Dal----- 10
14	How many times you eat fruits in a week?	. Daily----- 1 . _____ days----- 2 . Rarely----- 3 . Never----- 4
15	How many times you eat vegetables in a week?	. Daily----- 1 . _____ days----- 2 . Rarely----- 3 . Never----- 4
16	For which reason, you can't take healthy food? (You could choose more than one) (Give ✓)	. Less facility of good food---- 1 . High price----- 2 . Bad quality of foods----- 3 . Lacking's of good restaurants-----4 . No facilities in hostel----- 5
17	How many bottles of water you drink regularly? (500 ml per bottle)	Answer: ____ -----1
18	Do you have any food diseases?	. Constipation----- 1 . Digestion problem----- 2 . Food poisoning----- 3 . Vomiting----- 4 . Nausea----- 5 . Other (____) ----- 6
19	Do you have food related condition or disorder? (You could choose more than one) (Give ✓)	. No----- 1 . If yes----- - 2 . Compulsive reading----- 3 . Night eating syndrome----- 4 . Exercise addiction----- 5

		. Anxiety----- 6
		. Others----- 7
20	What do you think, which reasons are? Associated with your eating disorder? (You could choose more than one) (Give ✓)	. Academic pressure----- 1 . Mental stress----- 2 . Personal issues----- 3 . Health issues ----- 4 . Travelling ----- 5 . Others----- 6
21	Do you avoid eating even when you feel hungry whether you're busy with work?	. Yes----- 1 . No----- 2
22	Do you enjoy overeating even after you feel full?	. Yes----- 1 . No----- 2
23	Do you like to eat street food more often?	. Yes----- 1 . No----- 2
24	Do you think, your mood affect your eating habit?	. Yes----- 1 . No----- 2
25	Do you feel, food can control your life?	. Yes----- 1 . No----- 2

APPENDIX 2: Synopsis of Project



Department of Nutrition and Food Engineering

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Daffodil International University

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Student's Name: Israt Jahan Imu

Id no: 201-34-1072

Section: 201-B

Title: Assessing The Eating Behavior in Daily Life of University Students

Introduction

When young adults start university, their eating habits often change negatively, affecting their long-term health and lifestyle choices. This period is crucial as young people grow independence and meet obstacles to maintaining nutritious meals. University students, whether at home or away, struggle to make suitable food choices, emphasizing the need for focused help to improve their eating habits. Changes in eating behavior, meal schedules, and eating habits preferences are the main impacts of the varsity lifestyle. For many students, varsity life is a period of transition to independence when they decide their own what, when, and how much to eat. This may result in a positive as well as a negative impact on their health (Lupi et al., 2015). However, adequate nutrition is fundamental at this age in order to maintain good physical and mental health, ensure healthy cognitive and intellectual development, and achieve optimum academic performance. Due to their academic pressure such as exams, assignments and busy schedules can influence eating behavior. Many students find themselves in situations where they skip meals, opt for quick and often less nutritious options, or turn to comfort foods during stressful times, potentially leading to imbalances in their diet (Kabir, Miah & Islam, 2018). University students go through a

crucial transition time marked by physical and social changes, lifestyle changes, and changes in eating habits as a result of greater exposure to new influences. Globally, the literature suggests that during the transitional period from secondary level to graduate level, students often engaged in unhealthy dietary habits and had poor nutritional intake (El-Mani et al., 2020).

Objective

- Examine university students' eating patterns and actions.
- Examining frequency, types, and nutritional content of student meals.
- Identifying issues affecting healthy food choices: financial, time, accessibility.
- Identifying factors influencing eating habits: social, economic, cultural, psychological.
- Assessing nutritional knowledge among students.

Methodology:

Study subject and design of the study: A cross-sectional study will conduct to assess and understand university students eating behavior, including patterns and determining factors, and nutritional knowledge. Mix- methods design will be applicable for this research which employ both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Data Collection:

- **Survey Administration:** Distribute the questionnaire online or via paper questionnaires.
- **Data Collection Period:** Conduct the survey over a specific time period to capture variations in eating behavior.

Sampling

- **Target audience:** University students from various fields.
- **Sampling method:** Stratified random sampling by academic departments or faculties. Sample size will be 350-400 for this project.

Data analysis

Thematic Analysis: MS Excel will be used to examine interview transcripts for new concepts about eating behavior, factors affecting choices, and options for change.

Ethical Considerations

This research will follow ethical criteria, including obtaining informed permission from participants and protecting anonymity. Prior to data collection, get ethical approval from the applicable institutional review board.

Expected outcomes

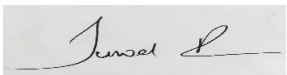
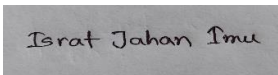
This study explores eating behavior among university students to understand factors influencing their dietary choices. It aims to identify common eating patterns, understand demographic parameters like age, gender, and academic year, evaluate nutritional awareness, investigate social and peer influences, and understand the impact of academic stress on eating habits. The research aims to provide insights into students' eating habits.

Conclusion

The proposed study project aims to address the pressing problem of eating behavior of university students. Understanding this association enables focused interventions to promote healthy eating habits and improve the well-being of this cohort.

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 Signature of supervisor Name: Mr. Juwel Rana Assistant Professor Department of Nutrition and Food Engineering Daffodil International University Faculty of Health and Life Sciences	 Signature of researcher Name: Israt Jahan Imu Id No: 201-34-1072 Department of Nutrition and Food Engineering Daffodil International University Faculty of Health and Life Sciences
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APPENDIX 3

ASSESSING THE EATING BEHAVIOR IN DAILY LIFE OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

ORIGINALITY REPORT

20%	18%	11%	15%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

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2	openrepository.aut.ac.nz Internet Source	1%
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