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Eating Habits and Academic Performance of College Students in a Private School

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ABSTRACT: This research investigated the eating habits of college students at St. Paul University Surigao and their potential impact on academic performance. This study employs a descriptive-quantitative research design to explore the tangible effects of eating habits on the academic performance of St. Paul University College students. It encompasses approximately 70% of undergraduate students from various academic departments at the institution. To gather data, a researcher-designed questionnaire was administered, and subsequent analysis utilized methods such as Frequency Count and Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation, Analysis of Variance, and Pearson r. The most significant finding is the negative correlation between various eating habits and academic performance, indicating that students engaging in fuel, fun, fog, and storm eating habits tend to have lower academic performance. This highlights the potential impact of dietary choices on educational outcomes. The most relevant recommendation is to promote healthier eating habits among college students through comprehensive approaches that include nutrition education, increased availability of nutritious food options, and resources for stress management, as it directly addresses the negative correlation between eating habits and academic performance, impacting both students' well-being and their educational outcomes. This study underscores the significance of nourishment in enhancing the overall well-being and academic achievements of St. Paul University Surigao students.

KEYWORDS: Academic Performance, College Students, Descriptive Survey, Eating habits, Surigao, Philippines.

INTRODUCTION

Academic achievement is one of the college students' top priorities, and a variety of factors, including eating habits, may have an impact on this goal, while dietary habits can alter young adult's behavior and cognition, nutritional composition and dietary patterns can have long-term, beneficial or detrimental effects on cognition (Burrows, et. al, 2017). In order to manage the time conflicts between a healthy eating schedule, the time for academic activities, and other hectic schedules in school, college students have developed distinct eating habits, which could be beneficial to them or damaging, some students are more inclined to maintain their present eating patterns regardless of whether they could benefit from it or not since they provide them with advantages including greater time efficiency and convenience (Sogari et al., 2018).

These four eating habits that college students could potentially adopt are fuel eating, storm eating, fun eating, and fog eating. Fuel Eating is consuming food that supports your body and its needs. Eating real, whole, natural, minimally processed foods that provide you with energy and nourishment and feel good in your body, you want to eat fuel foods 80% of the time. Storm Eating is binge eating or eating out of control. This might occur when we allow ourselves to become overly hungry or when we are experiencing an intense feeling that we do not want to feel. Fun Eating is eating any foods that you love to eat that don't necessarily give you anything back. In other words, food that tastes great and you enjoy but doesn't offer any real nutritional value. Fog Eating is any time you eat without awareness. It is not enjoyable or purposeful; it's an unconscious munch that we are not even aware we are doing (Spies, 2016). Gomez (2021) emphasizes that eating is a natural and essential human activity, and it highlights how the food we eat can have a significant impact on our mental well-being for individuals. Eating Habit Scoring (EHS) according to Kristo et al. (2020) determines whether students' eating habits are beneficial or detrimental. Students' ideal growth in terms of their physical, mental, and cognitive health is largely dependent on nutrition and a healthy diet. In this context, an improved mental and cognitive state translates into a higher potential for improved academic performance ultimately leading to academic success, thus equipping

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students with more knowledge and a superior set of skills, which in turn can lead to acceptable academic status (Kristo AS et al., 2020). If students struggle in class, it demonstrates that they lack focus which can result in low academic response. More specifically, poor nutrition can shorten attention spans, hinder perception, make learning challenging, cause behavioral problems, increase absenteeism, and generally have a negative impact on academic progress (Chinyoka, 2022).

College students in the Philippines are often made up of individuals between the ages of 17 and 23. According to the Philippines' Department of Science and Technology's 8th National Nutrition Survey, 17 teenagers were underweight, and 5 were overweight for every 100 count (Tanchoco, 2011). Students in college spend a lot of time at school, where they might have a meal, a few snacks, or may not have a meal at all. In addition to supporting healthy physical development and cognitive growth during adolescence, a nutritious diet can also have an impact on these students' health and ability to function later in life (Magbuhat et al., 2011). However, no study on these health-related characteristics among Filipino college students has been published to the best of the proponents' knowledge. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the eating habits and academic performance of college students of Saint Paul University Surigao. Information about inequalities in eating behaviors on campus may help health educators tailor treatments more precisely for college students in order to improve their healthy eating habits.

Conceptual Framework

The foundation of this research was based on the theoretical framework of theory planned behavior (TPB) which attempted to comprehend food-related consumer behavior. Within the context of eating habits, TPB provides valuable insights into the decision-making processes that underlie various eating behaviors, which incorporate the terms fun eating, fuel eating, fog eating, and storm eating formulated by Brooke Castillo (2019), founder of The Life Coach School. As individuals grapple with the choices surrounding their dietary habits, this theory offers a structured lens through which to explore the intentions and motivations that drive their actions. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) can be applied to understand how various factors in the profile of college students, such as age, gender, year level, and course, may influence their academic performance (measured by General Point Average or GPA) and their eating habits (fuel eating, storm eating, fun eating, and fog eating). According to TPB, individuals' attitudes toward a behavior significantly influence their intentions to perform that behavior. Age, gender, year level, and course may shape students' attitudes toward academic performance and eating habits. To investigate the relationship between eating habits and academic performance in college students, the proponents identified an independent variable—The demographic profile of the respondents (age, sex, year level and course)—and a dependent variable—eating habits and academic performance. The Theory of Planned Behavior provides a framework for understanding how various profile variables of college students can influence their academic performance and eating habits. It highlights the importance of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control as key factors shaping intentions and behaviors in these domains. TPB explored the complex interplay between student profiles, intentions, and actual behaviors in the context of academic performance and eating habits.

Research Objectives

This study investigated the eating habits of Paulinian students at St. Paul University Surigao and its correlation with the students' academic performance. Specifically, this study determined:

1. The demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
    1.1 age;
    1.2 sex;
    1.3 year level; and
    1.4 course.
2. The academic performance of the college students as depicted by their grade point average.
3. The eating habits of the Paulinian College Students.
    3.1 fuel Eating;
    3.2 fun Eating;
    3.3 fog Eating; and
    3.4 storm Eating.
4. The significant degree of variance in the eating habits of college students when they are grouped according to their profile
5. The significant degree of correlation between Eating Habits and Academic Performance of the respondents of the study.
6. The recommendations based on the results of the study.

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METHODS

This research applied the descriptive quantitative research design employing the survey approach. 1201 Paulinian college students as respondents who belong to different departments at St. Paul University Surigao responded to the study through the simple random sampling technique. The questionnaire was modified and validated by experts and underwent reliability testing through Cronbach's alpha. The questionnaire included an informed consent section. The study used various statistical tools to analyze the eating habits and academic performance of Paulinian College students. The frequency count and percentage distribution were used to determine the respondents' profile, while mean and standard deviation were used to quantify the responses of the college students as to their perceived eating habits and academic performance. ANOVA was used to analyze significant differences in the responses with respect to the profile variables and Pearson r was employed to determine the correlation between academic performance and eating habits. Ethics in the conduct of this research were strongly considered for the academic integrity of this study. Ethical research practices in educational institutions are strongly followed since it is always the goal of educational research to contribute to the general welfare of the academic community and to generally create measurable information or data that will eventually add to the increase of human knowledge (Ederio et al., 2023) such as the essence depicted by this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

I – Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, year level, and course.

Table 1.1 Demographic Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of Age and Sex

Profile	f (n=1201)	%
Age		
18-20 years old	470	39.13
21-23 years old	684	56.95
24-26 years old	41	3.41
30-32 years old	5	0.49
33-35 years old	1	0.08
Sex		
Male	510	42.46
Female	691	57.54

In terms of age, 470 (39.13%) respondents are 18-20 years old, 684 (56.95%) are 21-23 years old, 41 (3.41%) are 24-26 years old, 5 (0.49%) are 30-32 years old, and 1 (0. 08%) are 33-35 years old. In terms of the demographic profile of the respondents, the majority of respondents (56.95%) in the survey or study fell within the age range of 21 to 23 years old, suggesting a concentration of younger individuals.

In terms of sex, both male and female college students were included. 510 (42. 46%) Male and 691 female respondents (57.54%) were considered in the survey or study, showing a slightly higher representation of female respondents.

Table 1.2 Demographic Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of Year Level and Course

Profile Variables	f (n=1201)	%
Year Level		
1st Year	446	37.14
2nd Year	253	21.07
3rd Year	383	31.89
4th Year	119	9.91
Course		
Bachelor of ARts	137	11.41

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Bachelor of Elementary Education	43	3.58
Bachelor of Library and Information Sciences	3	0.25
Bachelor of Physical Education	35	2.91
Bachelor of Science in Accounting and Info Sci	24	2.00
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration	44	3.66
Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering	104	8.66
Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering	19	1.58
Bachelor of Science in Criminology	61	5.08
Bachelor of Secondary Education	49	4.08
Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management	61	5.08
Bachelor of Science in Information Technology	40	3.33
Bachelor of Science in Mining Engineering	123	10.24
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	332	27.64
Bachelor of Science in Psychology	80	6.66
Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management	46	3.83
	1201	100%

In terms of year level and course, the study included a diverse group of students from various course levels, 446 are 1st Year students (37.14%), 253 are 2nd Year students (21.07%), 383 are 3rd Year students (31.89%), and 119 are 4th Year students (9.91%), with a significant concentration in the 1st and 3rd years. The high number of respondents in certain courses, such as BSN with 332 respondents (27.64%) and 137 BA respondents (11.41%), suggests the potential demand and interest in those fields within the respondent population.

II – Academic Performance of the College Students Under Study

Table 2 Academic Performance of College Students as depicted by their grade point average

Acad Performance	**1st Semester (A.Y 2022-2023)**		**2nd Semester (A.Y 2022-2023)**	
(GPAs)	**(f=1201)**	**(%)**	**(f=1201)**	**(%)**
Excellent (95-100)	53	4.41	23	1.92
Very Good (90-94)	460	38.30	441	36.72
Good (85-59)	510	42.46	562	46.79
Satisfactory (80-84)	102	8.49	103	8.58
Passed (75-79)	76	6.33	72	6.00
Total	**1201**	**100%**	**1201**	**100%**

In terms of the Academic Performance of College Students, as depicted by their grade point average, there was a decrease in the proportion of students achieving excellent and very good GPAs in the second semester compared to the previous semester, but there was an increase in the percentage of students who obtained Good GPAs. The percentages of students with satisfactory GPAs and those who passed with just satisfactory grades remained relatively consistent.

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The data presented in the table, which compares the academic performance of St. Paul University Surigao college students during the first and second semesters of the academic year 2022-2023 based on GPA categories, holds significant importance for the research. These findings offer a comprehensive view of academic performance trends over the course of a single academic year, enabling researchers to detect shifts and variations that may be linked to dietary habits. Moreover, they provide a foundation for a longitudinal analysis, aiding in the identification of long-term patterns in academic performance correlated with changes in eating behaviors. The data serves as a basis for potential interventions to promote healthier eating habits and informs policy and program development within the university to enhance student's overall well-being and academic success. According to Khan et al. (2022), academic performance can be defined as knowledge acquisition, acquisition of competencies and skills, getting good grades, picking a progressive career, tenacity, and intention for education. Educational attainment influences their future-related achievements, well-being, and health.

The comparative analysis of student academic performance between the first and second semesters underscores the importance of data-driven decision-making in education. It highlights the need for institutions to continually assess and adapt their strategies to support students in reaching their full academic potential. It is well-documented that the brain's performance is closely linked to the nutrients it receives, according to Roberts (2022). The table provides an overview of the academic performance of college students based on their Grade Point Average (GPA) in the last (1^{st}) semester and the latest (2^{nd}) semester. In the last semester (1st Semester), out of a total of 1201 students, 4.41% achieved an excellent GPA, with 53 students falling into this category. A significant portion of students, 38.30%, obtained a very good GPA, totaling 460 individuals. The largest group consisted of those with a good GPA, accounting for 42.46% (510 students) of the cohort. Additionally, 8.49% (102 students) received a satisfactory GPA, while 6.33% (76 students) passed but with only satisfactory grades. Shifting to the latest semester, there has been a slight decline in the percentage of students achieving an excellent GPA, which now stands at 1.92% (23 students).

What students eat normally affects how they work and think; according to Asare (2015), grains, fruits, and vegetables are high in carbohydrates. Carbohydrates are broken down into glucose (sugar), which provides energy to the brain. Carbohydrate fluctuations can create dizziness and mental disorientation, affecting cognitive ability. The percentage of students with a very good GPA decreased to 36.72%, amounting to 441 individuals. However, there was an increase in the number of students with a good GPA, rising to 46.79% (562 students). The data does not provide specific numbers for the "Good" and "Satisfactory" categories, making it impossible to determine individual changes. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the percentage of students with a satisfactory GPA remained relatively stable at 8.58% (103 students), while 6.00% (72 students) passed with a grade that was just satisfactory. Eating habits play a critical role in providing students with the energy needed for daily activities, including academic tasks. A study by Williams et al. (2018) found that Students who ate a healthy, balanced diet had more stable energy levels, which can help them focus longer and achieve higher academic results.

Overall, the data suggests that the distribution of students' academic performance varied between the last semester and the current semester. There was a decrease in the proportion of students achieving excellent and very good GPAs, with a corresponding increase in the percentage of students obtaining a good GPA. The percentages of students with satisfactory GPAs and those who passed with just satisfactory grades remained relatively consistent.

III – Eating Habits of Paulinian College Students

Table 3.1 Fuel Eating Habits of Paulinian College Students

Indicators	M	SD	Verbal Response	Interpretation
Fuel Eating				
1. I eat at least 3 meals a day punctually	3.09	0.74	Sometimes	More Likely
2. I eat my breakfast	3.09	0.78	Sometimes	More Likely
3. When I am given the choice to eat fast food or healthy food, I choose healthy food.	3.00	0.93	Sometimes	More Likely
4. I drink appropriate amount of water in a day	3.06	0.75	Sometimes	More Likely

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5.	I drink beverages that are made from natural ingredients (i.e., fruit juice, organic fresh milk, herbal plants, etc.)	2.99	0.75	Sometimes	More Likely
6.	I like to eat vegetables or fruits	3.13	0.75	Sometimes	More Likely
7.	I take my vitamins	2.92	0.85	Sometimes	More Likely
Average:		**3.04**	**0.79**	**Sometimes**	**More Likely**

Scale	Interval	Verbal Response	Interpretation
4	3.25-4.00	Always	Highly Likely
3	2.50-3.24	Sometimes	More Likely
2	1.75-2.49	Rarely	Less Likely
1	1.00-1.74	Never	Unlikely

Eating food is paramount as it provides the nutrients and energy required for our bodies to function optimally. Moreover, it is vital for the growth and development of humans and for supporting cognitive function. The questions above are designed to ascertain students' perceptions of their fuel eating habits. The answers to these questions are a portion of the reasons why students have such eating habits. The answers to these questions are a portion of the reasons why students have such eating habits. The table above provides a comprehensive view of the eating habits of the surveyed individuals across different dimensions. It suggests that while many respondents demonstrate healthy eating behaviors, occasional lapses, such as indulging in unhealthy foods, mindless snacking, and stress-related eating, are evident. These findings highlight the importance of promoting mindful and balanced eating habits among the surveyed population to support their overall health and well-being. Educational programs and interventions aimed at increasing awareness of these behaviors could help individuals make healthier food choices and develop more mindful eating habits.

In terms of fuel eating, on average, college students are reported to be eating at least 3 meals a day punctually, having breakfast, choosing healthy food over fast food, and drinking an appropriate amount of water. The practice of eating at least three meals a day punctually is indicative of a structured eating routine. Moreover, the respondents said that they are more likely to eat vegetables or fruits (M= 3.13; SD 0.75) implying that, on average, students tend to express a strong preference for eating vegetables or fruits. They are more likely to enjoy consuming these healthy foods compared to other behaviors within the "Fuel Eating" category. As to the lowest rating, when given the choice to eat fast food or healthy food, the respondents chose healthy food (M= 3.00; SD 0.93) implying that, on average, students tend to be slightly less likely to consistently choose healthy food over fast food when given the choice compared to other indicators.

The practice of eating at least three meals a day punctually is indicative of a structured eating routine. This behavior is associated with maintaining stable blood sugar levels, providing sustained energy throughout the day, and preventing overeating during subsequent meals (Hull et al., 2014). Regular meal consumption supports cognitive function and can positively impact concentration and academic performance (Kulik et al., 2015). Additionally, eating breakfast is widely recognized as a crucial dietary habit. It jumpstarts metabolism, improves attention and memory, and enhances overall cognitive function (Rampersaud et al., 2005). College students who consume breakfast are more likely to have better academic outcomes and perform well on tests and assignments (Rampersaud et al., 2005).

In a 2018 meta-analysis of observational studies, increased fruit and vegetable intake was associated with a reduced risk of cognitive impairment. A positive attitude towards fruits and vegetables indicates a diet rich in essential vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber. Consuming a variety of fruits and vegetables is associated with improved cognitive function and a reduced risk of cognitive decline in later life (Gómez-Pinilla, 2008). For some students, eating is typically a social occasion, and other eaters, including peers and siblings, as well as students' observations of the eating behavior of others, influence the development of their own preferences and eating behaviors (Birch & Fisher, 1997). Based on the research of Evans et al., modeling positive nutrition behaviors and norms can encourage emulation. This is especially valuable and important in peer settings such as schools and communities where children and adolescents can model healthy eating and active lifestyles as "peer leaders."

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Table 3.2 Fun Eating Habits of Paulinian College Students

Indicators	M	SD	VI	QD
Fun Eating				
8. I eat fast foods (i.e., burgers, fries, pizza, etc.)	3.13	0.70	Sometimes	More Likely
9. I go out with my friends to eat	2.85	0.87	Sometimes	More Likely
10. I always have my late-snack or meal	2.84	0.84	Sometimes	More Likely
11. I eat my favorite snacks	2.93	0.77	Sometimes	More Likely
12. I eat whatever I crave for	2.91	0.80	Sometimes	More Likely
13. I eat snacks whenever I am studying	2.87	0.77	Sometimes	More Likely
14. I eat any delicious food without minding what it will cause to my body	2.96	0.84	Sometimes	More Likely
Average:	**2.93**	**0.80**	**Sometimes**	**More Likely**

Scale	Interval	Verbal Response	Interpretation
4	3.25-4.00	Always	Highly Likely
3	2.50-3.24	Sometimes	More Likely
2	1.75-2.49	Rarely	Less Likely
1	1.00-1.74	Never	Unlikely

In terms of fun eating, respondents generally reported engaging in this eating habit occasionally and more likely. They also insinuated that eating snacks while studying and consuming late-night snacks or meals is a more likely practice among college students. Moreover, college students tend to eat fast foods (i.e., burgers, fries, pizza, etc.) (M= 3.13 SD 0.70) more likely or frequently compared with other fun eating habits. On the least, going out with friends to eat (M= 2.85 SD 0.87) is more likely among college students but, on average, they tend to engage in going out with friends to eat slightly less frequently compared with other fun eating habits.

Late-night eating can disrupt circadian rhythms, negatively affect sleep quality, and contribute to weight gain (Baron et al., 2017). Late-night snacks are often energy-dense and may not provide essential nutrients. They crave different types of food out of curiosity and eat whatever they find in the pantry. Craving-based eating may encourage the consumption of high-sugar and high-fat foods, which can have adverse effects on health (Weingarten & Elston, 1991). A third experiment reveals that food liking influences the amount consumed, while the presence of a character influences neither the amount consumed nor food liking (Leonard et al. 2019).

The preference for fast foods, such as burgers, fries, and pizza, is a common dietary habit among college students due to its convenience and affordability. However, frequent consumption of fast foods is linked to poor nutritional quality, increased caloric intake, and an elevated risk of obesity and chronic diseases (Bowman et al., 2004). These foods are often high in saturated fats, sodium, and added sugars, which can have adverse effects on health.

Lastly, according to Hetherington et al. (2006), going out with friends to eat is a social activity that can influence dietary choices. Shared meals often involve larger portion sizes and a greater likelihood of consuming less healthy foods. The social aspect of dining out may encourage indulgent eating, potentially leading to overconsumption and weight gain.

Table 3.3 Fog Eating Habits of Paulinian College Students

Indicators	M	SD	VI	QD
Fog Eating				
15. I have my in-between meals	2.98	0.76	Sometimes	More Likely
16. I eat snacks or random food even when I am not hungry	2.84	0.83	Sometimes	More Likely

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17.	I try to eat different kinds of food out of curiosity	2.82	0.86	Sometimes	More Likely
18.	I eat the snacks I see on our pantry/food storage	2.83	0.83	Sometimes	More Likely
19.	I eat snacks too whenever I see someone eating	2.86	0.83	Sometimes	More Likely
Average:		**2.87**	**0.82**	**Sometimes**	**More Likely**

Scale	Interval	Verbal Response	Interpretation
4	3.25-4.00	Always	Highly Likely
3	2.50-3.24	Sometimes	More Likely
2	1.75-2.49	Rarely	Less Likely
1	1.00-1.74	Never	Unlikely

In terms of fog eating, the college students expressed trying different kinds of food out of curiosity and eating snacks when they see others eating them. Among all indicators of fog eating, college students are more likely to have their in-between meals (M= 2.98 SD 0.76) or snacks. On the other hand, trying to eat different kinds of food out of curiosity (M= 2.82 SD 0.86) is common to college students but is slightly less frequent compared with other fog eating habits.

In the study conducted by Drewnowski et al. (2010), this type of eating may not directly affect a student's academic performance; having in-between meals or frequent snacks can disrupt the regular meal pattern, potentially leading to excessive calorie intake. Frequent snacking without a genuine hunger cue may contribute to weight management challenges.

Moreover, eating snacks when others are eating reflects the social aspect of food consumption. Social eating can encourage the consumption of calorie-dense foods, often leading to larger portion sizes and less healthy dietary choices (Hetherington et al., 2006).

Table 3.4 Storm Eating Habits of Paulinian College Students

Indicators		M	SD	VI	QD
Storm Eating					
20.	I binge eat after school hours alone or with my friends	2.90	0.84	Sometimes	More Likely
21.	I eat snacks whenever I am doing something (i.e. doing chores, watching movies, etc.)	2.87	0.83	Sometimes	More Likely
22.	I resort to eating when I am extremely stressed of school works	2.81	0.82	Sometimes	More Likely
23.	I eat the snacks that I like in large amounts	2.82	0.81	Sometimes	More Likely
24.	I immediately think of eating food whenever I am emotionally unstable	2.84	0.82	Sometimes	More Likely
25.	I still eat snacks even when my stomach is full	2.76	0.88	**Sometimes**	**More Likely**
Average:		2.83	0.83		

Scale	Interval	Verbal Response	Interpretation
4	3.25-4.00	Always	Highly Likely
3	2.50-3.24	Sometimes	More Likely
2	1.75-2.49	Rarely	Less Likely
1	1.00-1.74	Never	Unlikely

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In terms of storm eating, respondents reported occasionally resorting to eating when they are stressed about schoolwork, binge eating alone or with friends after school hours, and eating large amounts of preferred snacks. More likely, the respondents binge eat after school hours alone or with friends (M= 2.82 SD 0.86) implying that they are more likely to engage in the behavior of consuming a large amount of food in a short time frame, particularly after school hours with or without companions. On the least aspect, the respondents are more likely to still eat snacks even when their stomach is full (M= 2.76 SD 0.88). This behavior is maybe more likely in college students but seems to be the least normally done among all storm eating habits.

Eating preferred snacks in large quantities is associated with overindulgence and a lack of portion control. This behavior can lead to excessive calorie intake and weight-related issues (Herbert & Forman, 2011). Consuming large amounts of preferred snacks often provides a temporary sense of comfort. Unhealthy diets pose a greater risk of morbidity and mortality than unsafe sex and alcohol, drug, and tobacco use combined (Willett et al., 2019).

Food can serve as a source of comfort and distraction from emotional distress (Macht, 2008). Emotional eating is often associated with the consumption of calorie-dense comfort foods. College life can be stressful due to academic pressures and social transitions. Stress can influence eating habits, leading students to turn to snacks for comfort. Research by El Ansari et al. (2014) indicates that emotional eating, including stress-induced snacking, is prevalent among college students. In other respects, Binge eating often occurs in response to emotional distress or stress (Grilo et al., 2009). It is associated with a lack of control during episodes of overeating and can lead to significant weight gain, obesity, and emotional challenges. Binge eating may serve as a coping mechanism to deal with negative emotions. Binge eating can be associated with emotional triggers and may have implications for both physical and emotional health.

In the study published by Herbert & Forman (2011) explained that continuing to eat even when the stomach is full reflects a disconnection between physical hunger and food consumption. This behavior can lead to overeating and potential weight-related problems, and eating despite fullness may be driven by emotional factors or the desire to finish a meal or snack. Research by Chaplin et al. 2011 has shown that snacks that are perceived as being unhealthy (chocolate, crisps, and biscuits-all perceived as unhealthy by over 80% of the sample) are associated with lower well-being score. The overall average across all eating behavior categories and indicators is around 2.92, with a standard deviation of 0.81. This suggests that, on average, respondents tend to exhibit these eating behaviors occasionally or "Sometimes" rather than frequently. The survey results provide an insight into various eating habits and behaviors among the respondents. In terms of fuel eating, the respondents generally reported positive practices, such as eating at least three meals a day punctually, consuming breakfast, and opting for healthy food choices. However, there is room for improvement in terms of drinking natural beverages and taking vitamins. When it comes to fun eating, the respondents indicated a tendency to occasionally indulge in fast foods and late-night snacks, often driven by social activities and cravings. Fog eating habits revealed a moderate inclination toward eating when not hungry and trying different foods out of curiosity. Lastly, storm eating behaviors demonstrated occasional episodes of binge eating and turning to food in response to stress or emotional instability. Overall, the data suggests a need for promoting healthier eating choices, particularly in the context of snack consumption and emotional eating, while acknowledging the positive aspects of meal punctuality and choosing nutritious foods.

Overall, the data indicated that college students are more likely to do fuel eating the most compared with fun, fog, and storm eating. While respondents generally exhibit positive fuel eating habits, there is a moderate level of demonstration of various fun, fog, and storm eating habits. Studies indicate that daily breakfast intake is correlated with higher intakes of healthier foods such as whole grains, dairy, and vegetables. Drewnowski A. (2018) supports the high average scores for indicators related to structured eating routines and breakfast consumption in the Fuel-eating category.

In the Fun Eating category, students tend to engage in going out with friends to eat less frequently compared to other behaviors within the "Fun Eating" category. The related literature on injurious eating habits, such as food binging and emotional eating (Fitday, 2016), aligns with the survey findings, emphasizing the occasional consumption of fast food. Research indicating that liking a particular food can influence consumption patterns and portion sizes (Leonard et al., 2019) is relevant to the trend of more frequent fast-food consumption.

In the Fog Eating category, the impact of psychological factors, particularly stress and emotional eating, on curiosity-driven eating habits, stress often leads individuals, including college students, to turn to food for comfort and experiment with various snacks as a coping mechanism. Further literature suggests that fog eating behaviors, such as eating in-between meals and trying various foods out of curiosity, may disrupt regular meal patterns and potentially lead to excessive calorie intake (Drewnowski et al., 2010). In the Storm Eating category, engagement in behaviors associated with stress eating, such as resorting to eating when stressed

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about schoolwork, binge eating alone or with friends after school hours, and consuming large amounts of preferred snacks, were reported. The observed behaviors within the Storm Eating category emphasize the potential link between stress, emotional distress, and certain eating patterns.

In summary, while respondents generally exhibit positive fuel eating habits, there is a moderate level of engagement in various fun, fog, and storm eating behaviors. The overall average score provides a comprehensive overview of the respondents' eating habits, emphasizing a need for targeted interventions to promote healthier choices and habits where necessary.

IV – Degree of Variance in College Students' Eating Habits with Respect to their Profile Variables

Table 5. Significant Degree of Variance in The Eating Habits of College Students when they are Grouped According to their Profile

Profiles	Eating Habits	p-value	Decision	Difference
Age	Fuel Eating	0.501	Do not reject H_o	Not significant
	Fun Eating	0.124	Do not reject H_o	Not significant
	Fog Eating	0.066	Do not reject H_o	Not significant
	Storm Eating	0.337	Do not reject H_o	Not significant
Sex	Fuel Eating	0.855	Do not reject H_o	Not significant
	Fun Eating	0.025	Reject H_o	Significant
	Fog Eating	0.016	Reject H_o	Significant
	Storm Eating	0.049	Reject H_o	Significant
Year Level	Fuel Eating	0.313	Do not reject H_o	Not significant
	Fun Eating	0.000	Reject H_o	Significant
	Fog Eating	0.000	Reject H_o	Significant
	Storm Eating	0.000	Reject H_o	Significant
Course	Fuel Eating	0.116	Do not reject H_o	Not significant
	Fun Eating	0.000	Reject H_o	Significant
	Fog eating	0.020	Reject H_o	Significant
	Storm eating	0.002	Reject H_o	Significant

Regardless of the college students' age, the fuel, fun, fog, and storm-eating habits do not vary implying that the respondents' age does not define or determine their eating habits in all forms. Likewise, fuel eating is not associated with sex, year levels, or course programs taken by college students.

On the other hand, there is a significant degree of difference in college students' extent of fun eating habits, fog eating habits, and storm eating habits with respect to the sex, year levels, and course programs taken. This implies that the extent of eating habits among college students significantly vary depending on their sexes, year levels, and course programs and that these variables are associated with the extent of fun, fog, and storm eating habits.

These data emphasize the need for the University to consider factors such as gender, year level, and course when designing interventions and support systems to improve students' dietary choices and ultimately enhance their academic outcomes. These findings comprehensively explain how eating habits are associated with demographic factors and academic performance among St. Paul University Surigao college students. The results underscore the importance of considering gender, year level, and course choice when addressing dietary choices and academic success. Moreover, the robust correlation between specific eating habits and lower academic performance highlights the critical role of nutrition in a student's overall well-being and educational journey, emphasizing the need for initiatives that encourage healthier eating behaviors for improved academic outcomes.

According to the World Health Organization or WHO, the youth cover the age range between 10 to 24 years old. The study conducted by Qahtani et al. (2016) explained that the students represent the youthful age population of a community and are prone to unhealthy eating habits and foods during their college years, which might affect their well-being. The age distribution revealed that the majority of college students surveyed fall within the 21 to 23 years old category, constituting 56.95% of the sample. This age group typically represents young adults in the early years of their college experience. It's important to consider that eating habits

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can undergo significant changes during this transitional phase of life. Many students may be living away from home for the first time, which can impact their dietary choices and habits. This finding highlights the importance of promoting healthy eating practices and nutritional education among this age group to establish lifelong habits. The study provides a breakdown of the respondents based on their age. The data shows that the highest percentage of respondents falls within the age group of 21-23 years old, representing the majority of the surveyed population at 56.95%. Conversely, the lowest percentage is found in the age group of 33-35 years old, with only 0.08% of respondents in this category, indicating that individuals aged 33 to 35 are a very small minority within the surveyed population, indicating that the survey or study may have focused on a younger population or targeted individuals in that particular age group.

It is of great concern that unhealthy behaviors such as failing to consume the daily recommended five or more servings of fruit and vegetables, skipping meals, frequently consuming fast foods, and failing to engage in moderate-intensity physical activity at least five times per week have been discovered to be common in young adults according to the study conducted by Caslake M. et al. (2008).

As a result of the expansion in the fast-food market and lack of appropriate food courts, students usually face meal skipping, inadequate variety of foods, and unhealthy snacking. The beginning of the university matches with more freedom and independence. It is often the first time that young people assume the responsibility of choosing and preparing food, Gazibara et al. (2013). Gender can play a role in eating habits, with research suggesting potential differences in food preferences and behaviors between males and females. Understanding these gender-specific patterns can be valuable for tailoring nutrition and wellness programs to the needs of both male and female students. In terms of gender, out of the total respondents, 42.46% identified as male, while the majority, 57.54%, identified as female. This indicates that the survey included a slightly higher proportion of female respondents than male respondents. In total, there were 1,201 respondents included in the data set, with males accounting for 510 and females accounting for 691. Both male and female perspectives were considered in the survey or study, with a slightly higher representation of female respondents. Based on the population of the enrolled college students of St. Paul University Surigao, it is stated that majority of the students are female. However, this evidence alone is not sufficient to demonstrate that females are more likely to be conscious of their eating habits.

Moreover, in the study conducted by Beardsworth et al. (2002), the food intake pattern often reflects gender-specific attitudes and behaviors toward eating. For example, compared to men, women generally tend to gravitate towards healthier food choices and are more concerned with maintaining healthy eating behaviors to stay in good physical shape. Regarding eating habits in general, women are more aware of diet and the implications of the health–diet relationship and embrace suggested dietary changes to a greater degree than men. Women also show higher dietary restraint and disinhibition levels than men (Leblanc et al., 2015). Men may view healthy eating as boring and unappetizing, leading to reluctance to adopt better dietary habits. This attitude can be influenced by societal norms, cultural factors, and traditional gender roles that may not prioritize nutrition and health as strongly for men compared to women, as stated in the study of Arganini et al. (2012). Even if men are aware of "healthy eating guidelines," they often show skepticism, lack of interest in nutrition education messages, and frequently perceive healthy eating as monotonous and unsatisfying.

The distribution of students across different year levels provides insights into how eating habits might evolve during the college journey. 1st-year students represent 37.14% of the sample, indicating a significant presence of newcomers. These students are likely adjusting to college life, potentially facing changes in their eating routines, such as adapting to cafeteria dining or preparing their meals. Understanding the dietary challenges faced by 1st-year students can help create support mechanisms to encourage healthier eating habits. In terms of year level, the data reveals that the highest percentage of students is in the 1st year, accounting for 37.14% of the total student population. Conversely, the lowest percentage of students is in the 4th Year, with only 9.91% of the total students in this academic year level. This indicates that the institution has a larger representation of students in the earlier years of their academic journey and a smaller percentage in their final year. According to data based on student enrollment, first-year students make up the majority of college students, followed by third-year, second-year, and fourth-year students. In the study of Qahtani et al. (2016) Medical students, both males and females have unhealthy dietary habits regardless of their academic level. However, higher students' academic standing improved their theoretical understanding of the advantages of healthy eating habits and the negative effects of bad habits, it had no positive impact on their actual daily eating patterns Raza et al. (2010). The distribution of students across various courses highlights diverse academic interests. The course with the highest enrollment is Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), at 27.64%. Healthcare students like those in the BSN program often have demanding

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schedules, which can impact their eating habits. Balancing coursework with maintaining a healthy diet can be challenging, making it important for educational institutions to offer convenient and nutritious food options on campus. In terms of courses, the data indicates that the highest percentage of students is enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program, representing a significant portion of the student body at 27.64%. In contrast, the lowest percentage of students is found in the Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) program, with only 0.25% of the total student population enrolled in this program, making it the least represented course among the surveyed students. The findings in relation to the aforementioned profile data suggest that college students in various departments have unique demographic profiles that can influence their eating habits. These demographics, including age, gender, year level, and course of study, all play a role in shaping how students approach food choices and dietary behaviors during their college years. To promote overall well-being and academic success, educational institutions should consider these demographic factors when designing nutrition and wellness programs tailored to their student body's needs and challenges.

In terms of the sex profile, the results show that gender differences have a significant impact on eating habits, particularly in the context of Fun Eating, Fog Eating, and Storm Eating. According to Rosaria V. et al. (2016), dietary habits and physical activity are strongly influenced by gender attitudes and behaviors that promote different patterns of healthy or unhealthy lifestyles among women and men. Female students exhibit distinct eating habits compared to their male counterparts. In general, it is commonly observed that females tend to express greater concerns about their body weight and physical appearance than males, particularly within the confines of a sociocultural environment where societal norms and expectations often exert added pressure and influence, as emphasized in the study of Ferguson C. et al. (2011). This finding underscores the importance of considering gender-specific dietary patterns when addressing academic performance and well-being. This study emphasizes that sex has a significant influence on these eating habits among college students. The study of Jackson J. et al. (2013) explained that in dietary patterns, it is notable that women tend to consume a higher quantity of fruits and vegetables compared to males, showing a heightened interest in healthier eating habits and a preference for lower-energy foods.

When considering the year level profile, while age might not be a significant factor, the year level appears to influence eating habits. Notably, there is a significant shift in eating behaviors between year levels for Fun Eating, Fog Eating, and Storm Eating. This suggests that as students progress through their academic journey, their dietary choices evolve, potentially influenced by academic stressors or lifestyle changes. Understanding these shifts is crucial for designing interventions that support healthier eating habits throughout a student's college experience. This finding aligns with previous research suggesting that students experience lifestyle adjustments and increased academic pressures as they advance in their studies (Vadeboncoeur et al., 2015). The higher prevalence of Fun Eating, Fog Eating, and Storm Eating among upper-level students could be attributed to heightened stress levels, changes in daily routines, or increased autonomy in food choices. These findings emphasize the importance of offering targeted nutritional guidance and stress management support to students at different stages of their college journey. A study by Papadaki and Scott (2002) found that college students often face dietary challenges, including a lack of time, financial constraints, and academic stress, which can lead to less healthy dietary choices. Additionally, a longitudinal study by Sogari G. et al. (2018) suggested that students' dietary habits evolve as they progress through college, potentially due to changes in living arrangements, social influences, and academic demands. Indeed, the year level of college students has a significant impact on these eating habits.

Analyzing the course profile, the findings, particularly in relation to Fun Eating, Fog Eating, and Storm Eating, strongly suggest that students' choice of academic majors influences their dietary habits. This implies that the academic field they pursue may have a significant impact on the types of foods they prefer and their overall eating behaviors. Studies by El Ansari et al. (2011) and Vadeboncoeur et al. (2015) have shown that academic stressors, such as workload and deadlines, can influence eating habits among college students. Additionally, research by Ha et al. (2011) has highlighted differences in dietary choices between students in health-related majors and those in other fields, suggesting that academic disciplines can indeed play a role in shaping eating behaviors. Conducting further research to explore how specific academic disciplines shape these dietary preferences and behaviors could yield valuable insights into how coursework demands and academic pursuits are linked to students' dietary choices. While the data does not provide direct insight into the reasons behind these associations, it aligns with previous research that highlights the influence of environmental and social factors, including peer groups and academic stressors, on eating habits (Vadeboncoeur et al., 2015; El Ansari et al., 2011).

The data above showed that age does not appear to significantly predict any of the eating behaviors. While some indicators show higher scores for certain age groups, the lack of statistical significance implies that age alone may not strongly influence eating patterns. This result suggests that individuals across different age groups exhibit similar frequencies of healthy and indulgent eating

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behaviors, indicating the need for targeted interventions to promote healthier eating choices across all age ranges. On the other hand, the analysis reveals that sex does have a significant influence on Fun Eating, Fog Eating, and Storm Eating behaviors. Male and female respondents showed distinct patterns in their eating habits for these categories. This finding highlights the importance of considering gender-specific approaches when designing nutrition and wellness programs. Strategies tailored to address the unique challenges and preferences of each gender could lead to more effective outcomes in promoting healthier eating behaviors.

The study indicates a strong relationship between year level and Fun Eating, Fog Eating, and Storm Eating behaviors. Students at different academic levels exhibited varying frequencies of these behaviors. This suggests that the academic environment and associated stress levels may impact students' eating habits differently throughout their educational journey. Addressing these variations and offering support to manage stress-related eating could be beneficial in maintaining healthier eating habits during college years. The analysis demonstrates that the course of study significantly influences Fun Eating and Fog Eating behaviors. Students pursuing different fields of study exhibited distinct patterns in their indulgent eating choices. This finding underscores the relevance of incorporating nutrition education tailored to the specific demands and challenges of each course. Implementing targeted nutritional interventions within the academic curriculum could lead to improved eating behaviors among students and contribute to their overall well-being. In summary, age does not significantly influence eating habits among college students. However, sex, year level, and course of study have a significant impact on fun eating, fog eating, and storm eating habits. This suggests that these factors play a role in determining the eating habits of college students. In summary, age does not significantly influence eating habits among college students. However, sex, year level, and course of study have a significant impact on fun eating, fog eating, and storm eating habits. This suggests that these factors play a role in determining the eating habits of college students.

V – Degree of Correlation between Eating Habits and Academic Performance of the College Students under study

Table 6. Significant Degree of Correlation Between Eating Habits and Academic Performance of the respondents of the Study

Performance	Eating Habits	r	p-value	Decision	Correlation
(1st) Last Semester (A.Y. 2022-2023)	Fuel Eating	-0.18	0.000	Reject H_o	Negative Correlation
	Fun Eating	-0.07	0.012	Reject H_o	Negative Correlation
	Fog Eating	-0.07	0.010	Reject H_o	Negative Correlation
	Storm Eating	-0.06	0.030	Reject H_o	Negative Correlation
(2nd) Current Semester (A.Y. 2022-2023)	Fuel Eating	-0.21	0.000	Reject H_o	Negative Correlation
	Fun Eating	-0.10	0.001	Reject H_o	Negative Correlation
	Fog Eating	-0.10	0.001	Reject H_o	Negative Correlation
	Storm Eating	-0.10	0.001	Reject H_o	Negative Correlation

These results highlight that students who engage in certain eating habits tend to have lower academic performance. Such a strong correlation underscores the critical role of nutrition in influencing students' academic success and emphasizes the need for targeted interventions and support programs to promote healthier eating habits among college students, potentially leading to improved academic achievements and overall well-being. The statistically significant negative correlations between eating habits (Fuel Eating, Fun Eating, Fog Eating, Storm Eating) and academic performance in both the 1st and 2nd semesters of the academic year 2022-2023 suggest a robust link between dietary choices and academic outcomes. The study by Macht (2008) stated that eating as a response to extreme stress, particularly related to schoolwork, is known as stress-induced eating. Emotional eating during stressful periods can result in unhealthy dietary choices and potentially contributes cognitively. The table presents the significant degree of correlation between eating habits and academic performance among the respondents of a study. The correlations are measured using the Pearson correlation coefficient (r), and the statistical significance is assessed using the p-value. The decision column indicates whether the null hypothesis (Ho) can be rejected based on the p-value.

In terms of the last semester's performance, there is a negative correlation between fuel eating habits and academic performance (-0.18). Breakfast is part of fuel eating, eating breakfast is widely recognized as a crucial dietary habit. It jumpstarts metabolism, improves attention and memory, and enhances overall cognitive function (Rampersaud et al., 2005). College students who consume breakfast are more likely to have better academic outcomes and perform well on tests and assignments (Rampersaud

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et al., 2005). Most college students lack the motivation and time management skills to include breakfast into their diet, thus repudiating themselves from the opportunity to be healthier and increase school performance (Duvick et al. 2018). This correlation is statistically significant ($p = 0.000$), and the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating a meaningful relationship between fuel eating habits and academic performance. These findings corroborate previous research that highlights the impact of diet on cognitive function and academic achievement (Burrows et al., 2017). Unhealthy eating habits, characterized by high consumption of energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods, may lead to cognitive impairment and reduced focus, thereby negatively affecting academic success (Taras et al., 2005).

Similarly, fun eating (-0.07), fog eating (-0.07), and storm eating (-0.06) also show statistically significant negative correlations with academic performance. In the current semester, the negative correlations between fuel eating (-0.21), fun eating (-0.10), fog eating (-0.10), and storm eating (-0.10) habits with academic performance are even stronger. These correlations are all statistically significant, with p-values of 0.000 or 0.001, suggesting that there is a meaningful relationship between these eating habits and academic performance.

Overall, there is a significant negative correlation between different types of eating habits (fuel eating, fun eating, fog eating, and storm eating) and academic performance. This implies that students who engage in these eating habits tend to have lower academic performance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the proportion of students achieving excellent and very good GPAs according to the perceived GPA of students, with a corresponding increase in the percentage of students obtaining a good GPA decreased in the second semester of school year 2022-2023. The percentages of students with satisfactory GPAs and those who passed with just satisfactory grades have slight changes. There is also a notable portion achieving good but not exceptional grades.

Mostly, the college students exhibited these eating behaviors occasionally or "Sometimes" rather than “Always”. College students mostly demonstrated the fuel eating habits among the four eating categories. This highlights a degree of variability among respondents in their adherence to these behaviors.

Moreover, the age does not significantly influence eating habits among college students. However, sex, year level, and course of study do have a significant impact on fun eating, fog eating, and storm eating habits. These factors play a role in determining the eating habits of college students.

Ultimately, the study has a significant negative correlation between different types of eating habits (fuel eating, fun eating, fog eating, and storm eating) and academic performance. Mostly, the students who engage in these eating habits have lower academic performance.

In consideration of the results and conclusions drawn from this research, it is recommended that the findings of this study will contribute to improving students’ academic performance results. Study habits and time management should be considered. Effective study habits, the time spent on studying, focus, and the use of study techniques can impact academic performance. In time management, balancing academic responsibilities with other activities is crucial for success. Moreover, the findings of this study indicate room to optimize student well-being and academic performance, it is crucial to implement holistic strategies that address both physical and mental health aspects. Prioritizing adequate sleep, proper nutrition, and regular exercise can significantly contribute to overall well-being, positively influencing cognitive function. Simultaneously, attention to emotional and psychological well-being is essential for effective concentration and stress management. Educational institutions should consider integrated approaches that promote healthy lifestyle choices and mental well-being support. Initiatives could include educational programs on sleep hygiene, nutrition counseling, and mental health resources, aiming to create a supportive environment conducive to optimal academic performance.

Enhancing academic performance among college students requires a multifaceted approach that considers the unique needs and challenges faced by individual learners. Setting goals and motivation should be practiced by students, intrinsic motivation or a genuine interest in the subject matter can positively affect learning and retention. Having specific, achievable goals can provide direction and motivation. Quiet and organized space should also be considered, as a conducive environment for studying can impact concentration and focus.

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Furthermore, to optimize academic performance, it is essential to ensure and encourage learners with equitable access to educational resources and technology. Institutions should prioritize the availability of textbooks, online materials, and other resources to enhance the depth of understanding among students. Additionally, addressing the digital divide is crucial, as access to necessary technology significantly influences research and study capabilities. Implementing initiatives that provide equal access to educational materials and technology, especially for economically disadvantaged students, will contribute to a more inclusive learning environment and foster academic success across diverse student populations.

Lastly, this study may benefit future researchers by serving as an initial basis for their research and a source of supplementary literature for their studies. The researchers recommend that future studies delve into factors related to the impact of GPA and other aspects of academic performance aside from investigating the impact of eating habits which could also help in identifying which program has the highest and lowest GPA among all departments in the school. Focus on understanding the students' study habits, time management practices, and other aspects that might influence their academic performance so that it could also. Additionally, consider variables like motivation, access to resources, and peer support within the program. This investigation could provide valuable information for designing targeted interventions and best practices that can be applied across disciplines to enhance overall academic success.

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