

Changes in Habits When Students Enter University – A Case Study of Christ (Deemed to be University)

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ABSTRACT

This research deals with the analysis of eating, sleeping, fitness, smoking, and drinking habits of metropolitan students. The population studied was the students of CHRIST (Deemed to be University), which has a large cosmopolitan environment consisting of students from various walks of life and different cultures. This makes it an ideal location and the sample chosen was 205 students from the University. The hypothesis was that the lifestyle and habits of students are bound to change once they come to a university. The aim was to find out the possible reasons for such changes and the degree of the changes while taking several factors into consideration.

Keywords: University student habits; parental supervision; lifestyle patterns.

INTRODUCTION

Christ (Deemed to be University) is situated in the city of Bengaluru, the capital of the Indian state of Karnataka. The profile of students studying here is heterogeneous with students coming from all over the world, many of them moving away from home for the first time. In addition, the transition from school to university education brings a lot of changes in the lifestyle of students, including patterns and habits of sleeping, eating, fitness and others. Thus, this study gains importance. A total of 205 students were considered for the study and analysis was done using PASW software. Statistical tools like paired t-test as well as descriptive statistics measures were applied. This study attempts to capture these by using survey method.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Significantly, a study by Jeanne L. Higbee and Patricia L. Dwinell, The University of Georgia, wellness has a positive impact and a positive relationship with the academic performance of students. The researcher raises questions like, are these changes because of the students leaving their homes, what factors influence the lifestyle changes etc. the researchers have also conducted a detailed study of various factors influencing the lifestyle of the college students like exercise, nutrition, sleeping patterns, relaxation, tobacco use, tanning etc. This research is very helpful for the developmental educators to accordingly structure their courses and inform students of the health issues⁶.

Min Qi Wang *et al.* emphasize on the smoking trends among college going students. The researchers believe that family and peer influences are the most important factors to predict an individual's smoking. Best friends were found to be the strongest social environmental risk factor for both male and female adolescent smoking throughout the 14 to 18-year-old age levels. The effect of same gender best friend smoking is noted. It is found that if an individual's best friend smokes, the individual will also smoke. However, parental influence is not as significant as peer influence. Also, family influence was restricted only to same sex older sibling⁹.

In a study by Walter C. Buboltz *et al.*, the focus was on the sleeping habits of college going students. It indicated that even if a lot of students have a good sleep, a shift in the sleep cycle leads to various other problems like depression, lack of concentration etc. A lot of changes in the sleeping habits have been found to be because of structured way of high school is replaced by college. The students in the sample were found to have sleep difficulties like, taking more than 30 minutes to fall asleep, difficulties falling asleep more than 3 times a week, morning tiredness and waking too early. The paper then also concluded that the college environment and other demand during college affected the sleep cycles².

Nicole I. Larson *et al.* studies the eating patterns among the adolescents. According to this, family meals come along with more nutritional intake and healthy eating patterns among the adolescents. This paper also tells us that with increasing age and independence, the frequency of breakfast eating decreases during adolescents. The meal frequencies according to this showed that of the young adults skipped their breakfast. Another aspect to this study was, even if a lot of the participants had seven or more family meals per week, the nutrition intake was very less than recommended⁷.

In this study, Elyse Grossman dives into the drinking habits of male and female students when they gain independence ('physical, psychological and emotional') from their parents during their time in a University (n=177; first and second year students) and the differences in the drinking habits of the genders. The study found that women who had good communication with their parents during high school were less likely to binge drink and were more likely to increase alcohol consumption if their parents exercised strict governance and discipline. These findings suggest that parents act as emotional anchors for their daughters thus reducing alcohol abuse from students during stressful times. Increased alcohol consumption in college could also be an act of rebellion against the discipline enforced in high

school as well as a reaction to the freedom that these students have been provided with. However, it was found that weekly alcohol consumption for men at college was affected by the enforcement or lack thereof of specific rules in high school³.

The paper titled, “Relationships Between The Alcohol Environment And Alcohol Behaviors Of College Students” by Mallory Marie Koenings, Doctor of Philosophy (Nutritional Sciences) explores the associations between the distance of the nearest alcohol outlet and alcohol outlet density (AOD) around the student’s (n=1491; 465 males and 982 females) residence to their self-efficacy; between self-efficacy and alcohol consumption; and between alcohol consumption and use of personal protective behaviours (PPBs). The study concluded that higher AOD 0.25 ($p<0.01$), AOD0.5 ($p<0.05$), and AOD1 ($p<0.01$), were associated with lower student alcohol self-efficacy. Student self-efficacy was inversely associated with alcohol consumption ($p<0.001$). An inverse association was observed between alcohol consumption and regular use of choosing not to drink, pacing drinks to 1 or fewer per hour, avoiding drinking games, and sticking with only 1 kind of alcohol.

A survey by Brown *et al.* explores the correlation between sleep deficiency and the deterioration of physical and emotional health of students. It also studies the extent to which it is detrimental for the students’ ability in academic and cognitive issues. From this study, it was also found that there is a relationship between sleep deficiency in college and university students and risk-taking behaviours. These behaviours include drunk driving, mental health conditions including suicidal tendencies, depression and anxiety, decreased self-efficacy, substance misuse, binge drinking and excessive caffeine consumption, smoking and high rates of social media use. The study found out that most students (around 66.5%) stated that they had insufficient sleep and 80.6% did not seek help.¹

A study by Liddiard *et al.* states that students at institutes for higher education accept sleep deficiency as a ‘job-description’ and therefore tend to negate the harmful effects it has on the overall wellbeing. Chronic sleep deprivation was high throughout the university campus. A study conducted by the University of Alberta, Canada in 2016, and an Australian replication had similar conclusions. Most students reported problems in sleeping patterns. A significant number of students were sleeping less than the recommended number of hours and were not seeking help for rectification. Due to the cultural and socio-political similarity of Canadian and Australian populations, this research is relevant and this knowledge can help to increase student sleep awareness and intervention strategies in both countries⁸.

A study by Wolfson *et al.* examines the shift of sleep schedules when students move from school to college. Students who were accepting admission into Brown University were surveyed in their final term of high school and once again after a few months of joining college on their sleeping habits. It was found that after joining college, the mid-point of their time in bed was delayed, they were more alert in the evenings but on an average, their time in bed on school nights, remained the same, while time in bed on non-school-nights increased. These changes could be explained by the greater freedom to shape daily routines¹⁰.

METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire was prepared with the sample being 205. The population for the sample was all the students of the University. The sampling technique used was simple random sampling because the study required an eclectic population. The method of collection of data was by surveying random students and sending the questionnaire through electronic medium.

The null hypothesis for testing would be

H_{0a} = Lifestyle changes in students do not occur due to moving from school to college.

H_{0b} = Lifestyle Changes in a student do not occur when they leave home/parental supervision.

DATA

The following are some of the results that were found after the responses.

How many meals do you have on a regular working day?
205 responses

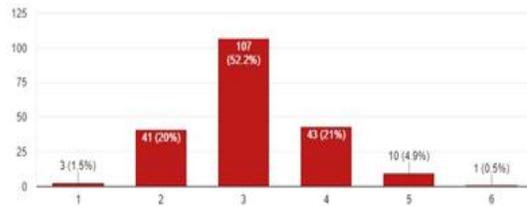


Figure No.1

How many meals did you have on a regular working day when you were in school?
205 responses

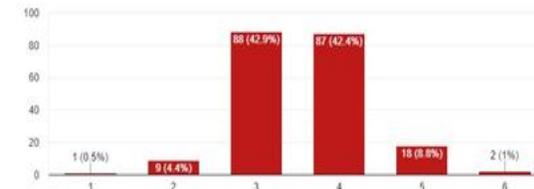


Figure No.2

How often do you eat junk food?
205 responses

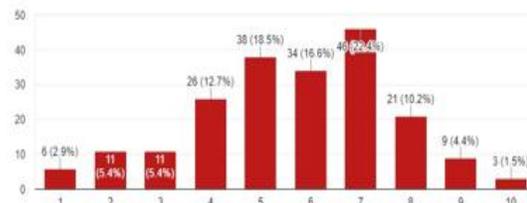


Figure No.3

How often did you eat junk food when you were in school?
205 responses

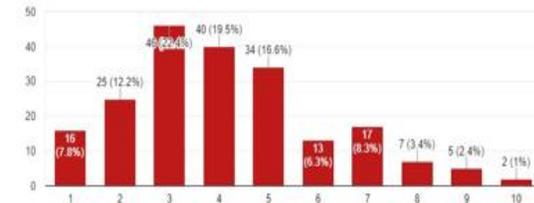


Figure No.4

How often do you deviate from your regular sleep cycle?
205 responses

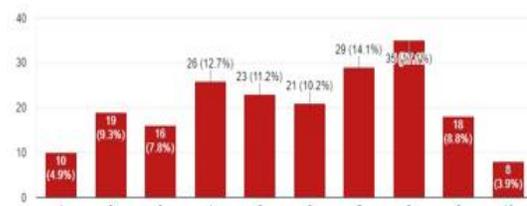


Figure No.5

How often did you deviate from your regular sleep cycle when you were in school?
205 responses

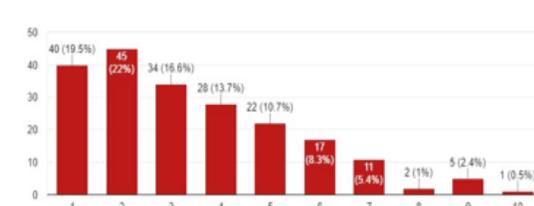


Figure No.6

How many hours do you actually sleep for?
205 responses

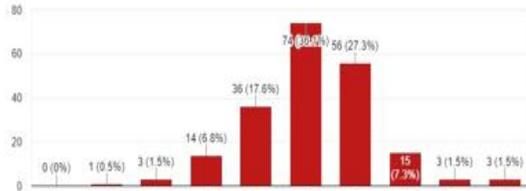


Figure No.7

How many hours did you actually sleep for when you were in school?
205 responses

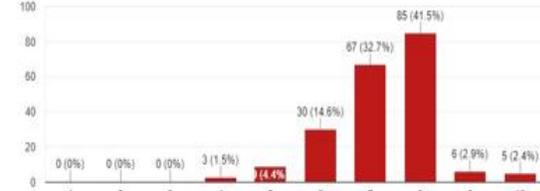


Figure No.8

How often do you exercise, workout or play sports? (in a week)
204 responses

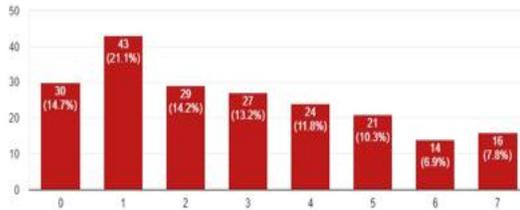


Figure No.9

How often did you exercise, workout or play sports when you were in school? (in a week)
204 responses

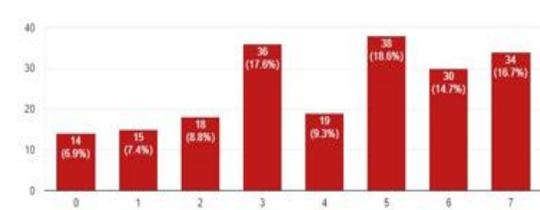


Figure No.10

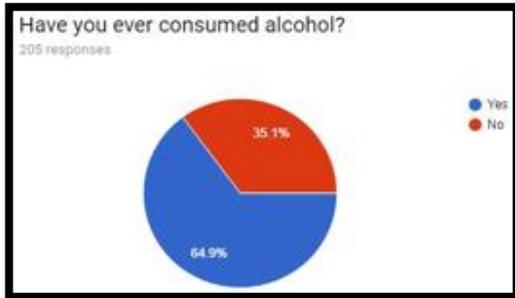


Figure No.11

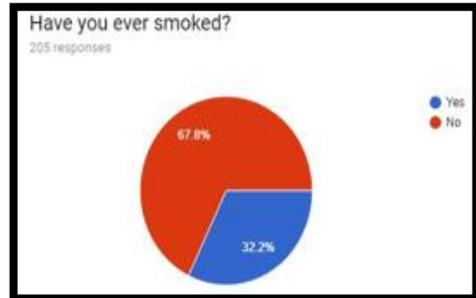


Figure No.12

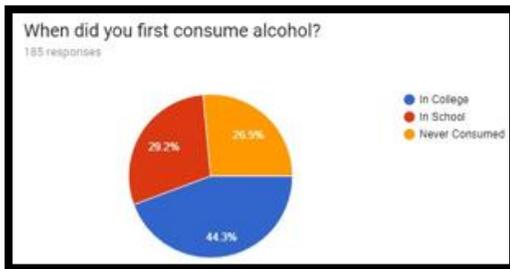


Figure No.13

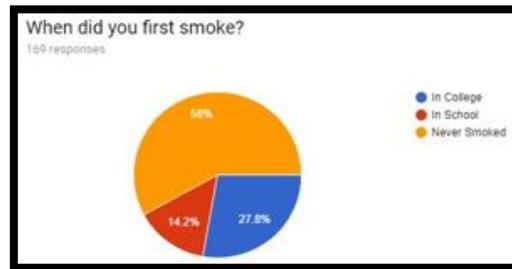


Figure No.14

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure no.	Title
1	How many meals do you have on a regular working day?
2	How many meals did you have when you were in school?
3	How often do you eat junk food?
4	How often did you eat junk food when you were in school?
5	How often do you deviate from your regular sleep cycle?
6	How often did you deviate from your regular sleep cycle when you were in school?
7	How many hours do you actually sleep for?
8	How many hours did you actually sleep for when you were in school?
9	How often do you exercise, workout, play sports (in a week)?
10	How often did you exercise, workout, play sports (in a week) when you were in school?
11	Have you ever consumed alcohol?
12	Have you ever smoked?
13	When did you first consumed alcohol?
14	When did you first smoke?

CONCLUSION

From the graphs, we observe that there is a clear change in the habits of students when they move from school to college. There could be two possible reasons for these changes:

- a) Due to the students starting college.
- b) Due to the students moving out of their homes/parental supervision.

To make a conclusion about the possible reasons for the change in each of the habits, we will use T-Test. The research design we use is, before and After with Control Groups, by considering the in-station student population to be the control group as they do not move out of their homes/parental supervision and the outstation student population to be the experimental group. The before data is collected as the memory of the habits that college students have of their school life. The after data is the current habits that these same students have.

We first use Independent Sample T-Test on the difference of each pair (College-School) for the two samples (In-station and Outstation). These tests the change in the Experimental Group against the change in the Control group. We then use Paired Sample T-Test on each pair (College and School) for the two groups (In-station and Outstation) separately. Each of these will test the change in before and after for a particular group (In-station or Outstation).

From the study that was conducted, it can be concluded that

- (1) Change in the number of meals depends both on leaving home as well as moving to college.

- (2) Change in the amount of junk depends on both leaving home as well as moving to college.
- (3) Changes in the amount of deviation in the sleeping pattern depend only on moving to college.
- (4) Changes in the amount of sleep a student gets depends only on moving to college.
- (5) Changes in the fitness pattern depend only on moving to college.
- (6) Changes in the smoking patterns of smokers (students who started smoking in school) is affected neither by moving out of home nor by moving to college.
- (7) Changes in the drinking habits of students who started drinking in school is affected by moving out of their home/parental supervision.

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