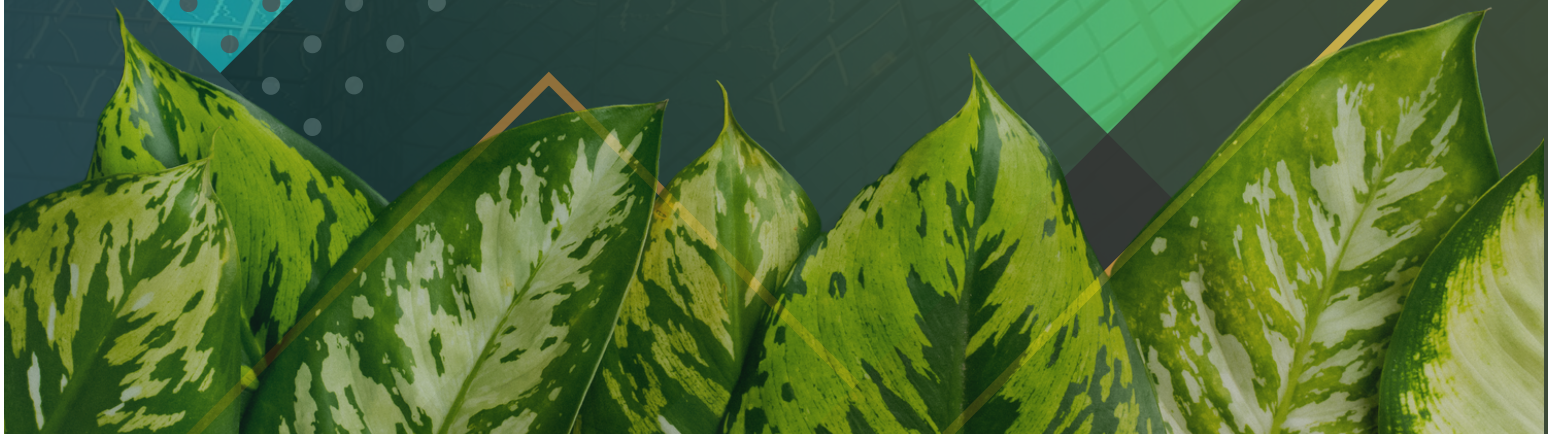UNIVERSITI
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Factors Influencing Eating Habits among Wellness Students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays a person's eating habits are influenced by a number of specific factors. It can happen either in positive or negative and problems occur if eating habits are not taken care of properly and bring harm to an individual. The study aims to investigate the factors that influence the eating habits among third year of Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK). A total of 123 respondents from third year Wellness students were surveyed based on a quantitative research design using questionnaire. The study performs the Pearson correlation analysis to see the relationships among variables and modeled the Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) to test the hypothesis in order to find the factors that influence the eating habits. The study found that physical factor ($r = 0.472$), psychological factor ($r = 0.567$) and food consumption trend ($r = 0.624$) have moderate positive significant relationship with eating habits since all the p-value is less than 0.05. However, results of MLR obtain that only two variables were significant influences on eating habits which are psychological (p-value < 0.05) and food consumption trend (p-value < 0.05). While, there is no significant influence of physical factors on eating habits among third year Wellness students at UMK (p-value > 0.05). Factor that most influence eating habits is food consumption trend ($B = 0.338$). The implication of the study is to make the community aware of the importance of maintaining healthy eating habits and to adopt healthy eating habits regardless of the circumstances. Healthy eating habits can prevent chronic diseases.

Keywords: Eating Habits, Physical Factors, Psychological Factors, Food Consumption Trends.

INTRODUCTION

Eating habits have become a concern, especially among the community, especially for university students. As a university student, there is no denying that each student has their own eating habits. However, it is very important for them to adopt proper eating habits as prescribed in the nutritional guidelines. According to the Malaysian Dietary Guidelines 2020, it is important to adopt a healthy diet to ensure the body consumes sufficient protein, fat, and carbohydrates as well as all essential vitamins and minerals. The combination of all food groups in the Malaysian Pyramid 2020 can ensure that students get the necessary nutrients based on the creation of the food pyramid. Eating habits that not only affect the physical, mental and emotional but are also decisive for the future. Healthy eating habits are the selection of balanced food and aim to maintain health. A healthy or balanced diet has sufficient nutrient content such as carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, and salt. Lack of those nutrion will lead to malnutrition. Therefore, it is important for today's society to wisely choose healthy food because there are various benefits obtained when practicing it.

However, there are also irregular eating habits. According to Dr. Christy C. Tangney, a clinical nutritionist at Rush University Medical Center, studies have shown that even individuals who do not eat breakfast and consume only a few calories that

day are more likely to have a higher body mass index or BMI. Students' eating habits are also caused by their psychology (Ganasegeran et al.Nutrition Journal, 2012). Among the respondents, almost 48.5% of students eat because they feel lonely, 62.1% feel out of control when talking about food, 53.8% eat so much that it hurts. stomach, 53% of students will eat because they feel uncomfortable or anxious, 59.1% will eat when they are bored and 80.3% will eat because they feel happy. Previous studies have shown that stress behavior can affect an individual's eating habits (Torres S & Nowson C, 2007; Adam T, & Epel E, 2007). Usually, people who are in a stressed society group will be more inclined to eat more as a way for them to overcome the stress (Gower B, Hand CE & Crooks ZK, 2008).

Eating habits are defined as "habitual behavior related to an individual's eating habits, choice of food eaten, preparation of food, and amount eaten". In addition, eating habits is an important aspect of life because it can affect long-term health outcomes due to unhealthy eating habits such as eating foods that lack nutrients, skipping meals and lack of nutrition. Everyone has different eating habits and it depends on themselves whether they have healthy or unhealthy eating habits. There are many factors that cause people's eating habits. The consumption of unhealthy food does not only occur among children, but it also occurs among teenagers and the elderly. The use of unhealthy food has a great impact on health, especially for people who smoke. Among the effects of eating unhealthy food are obesity, diabetes, and kidney disease. If the body is not healthy, all the activities to be done cannot be done well, for example, movement will be slow. Therefore, this study shows the factors influencing eating habits among third year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. There were three objectives of this research:

1. To investigate the influence of physical factors on eating habits among third year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan
2. To investigate the influence of psychological factors on eating habits among third year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan
3. To examine the influence of food consumption trends factors on eating habits among third year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan

Significance of the Study
University Students
The study will help university students know and understand about healthy and balanced food selection. In addition, it will be a reference for students to know more about the factors that cause eating habits, and it will be a new experience or knowledge in daily life. The results of this study hope to identify the factors that influence eating habits among third year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. In addition, eating snacks late at night and eating unhealthy food is also one of the factors that influence eating habits among Wellness students. By consuming unhealthy food, it will affect all student activities because it has a profound effect on a person's body such as losing focus while studying, quickly falling asleep and so on. Thus, this study can help students to prevent chronic diseases caused by students eating habits.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Physical Factors
Physical factors can affect an individual's eating habits. This is because everyone has their own eating habits. According to (Kabir A, Miah S & Islam A, 2018) there is a relationship between an individual's physical factors and their eating habits. This physical factor includes cooking skills for an individual, taste of food, food taboo, state of mind, past food habits, knowledge about food and so on. The results of the study

show that all the physical factors have a relationship with the eating habits of an individual.

However, the eating habits taken by an individual depend on themselves whether they want to choose healthy food or unhealthy food. Taste, texture, appearance, familiarity, smell, whether the food goes with other foods and how the food is prepared as important in influencing their food choice decisions (Amanda Fitzgerald, Caroline Heary, Elizabeth Nixon & Colette Kelly, 2010). Not just that, although they have knowledge about healthy eating, young people's eating preferences, especially in terms of taste, texture, and appearance, seem to prevail over this knowledge when making food decisions.

Psychological Factors

According to the study Psychological Factors are Important Correlates of Dietary Pattern in Overweight Adults which explains that adults are likely to feel depressed when they feel the demands of the environment as a burden on themselves. (Chonen, Kessler RC, Gorlon LU, 1995). This stress can cause bad things like depression and unhealthy eating habits. This can also lead to chronic diseases. (Bale TL.2006 and McEwen Bs 2005). Negative emotions are also one of the causes of changes in eating habits. Feelings of anger, fear, and sadness lead to disordered eating patterns. (Machth M, Simons G, 2000). Desire to eat foods high in fat and high in carbohydrates. This is more common in women than men. (Benton D, 2002). This shows that psychologically depressed people will have unhealthy eating habits. Stress or depression has the potential to drive a person to eat anything to get rid of the stress and depression faced. In contrast to stable emotions, where a person does not face any problems or stress in their life. They will emphasize a healthy lifestyle and balanced eating habits according to nutritional needs.

Food Consumption Trends Factors

Food consumption trend factors can also influence a person's eating habits in making food choices. This is because everyone has their own habits when choosing food. According to evaluation (Zaborkis et al. BMC Public Health 2012) there is a relationship between the factors of food consumption trends of individuals and their eating habits. The percentage of daily crude consumption of fruits, vegetables and others was calculated for each survey year. Differences in food consumption rates between years of study were significant for all foods apart from university students' daily fruit consumption, some specific trends also revealed. Compared with 2010 to 2002, the percentage of girls consuming vegetables daily increased from 24.2% to 31.0%, but the percentage of boys eating vegetables decreased from 29.3% to 23.1%. in 2006, for both sexes, there was an increase in regular consumption of sweets and chocolates, cookies and cakes, and soft drinks. However, in 2006 and 2010, the consumption of crisps and fast food also decreased significantly. This shows that the food intake trend factor has a relationship with eating habits in previous studies. This relationship is believed to depend on a person's food choices, whether healthy or unhealthy.

Eating Habits

The definition of "eating habits" is how a person eats. This can be considered in terms of the type of food eaten, how much and when. It is said that our eating habits affect our health. According to the Live Strong Foundation, healthy eating is consuming amounts of foods that provide the ideal balance of nutrition and energy to support children's growth and adult metabolism. Examples of healthy foods are those fortified with vitamins and minerals with less fat, cholesterol, sugar, and sodium. On the other hand, junk food or sometimes called junk food is defined as any food that is not

conducive to maintaining health. Basically, achieving healthy eating habits is as simple as controlling your food intake. More importantly, eating habits are formed very early. Therefore, taking care is essential to lead a healthy life. According to Juliet A. Boghossian, eating behavior expert and founder of food science, "you are how you eat." Here, he mentions that fast eaters tend to be ambitious, people who use their brains more than their hearts. While a slow eater tends to do whatever they want without worrying about others. Eating habits are also different in men and women. Therefore, differ in their eating habits. Finally, eating habits tend to reflect a person's attitudes and behaviors.

Research Hypothesis

The literature review highlighted the independent variables which is physical, psychology, food consumption trend factors that influence the eating habits. Based on the literature, the hypotheses of the study are as follow:

H_1 There is a significant influence of physical factors on eating habits among third year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

H_2 There is a significant influence of psychological factors on eating habits among third year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

H_3 There is a significant influence of food consumption trend factors on eating habits among third year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

Research Framework

Figure 1 below shows the research framework used for this study.
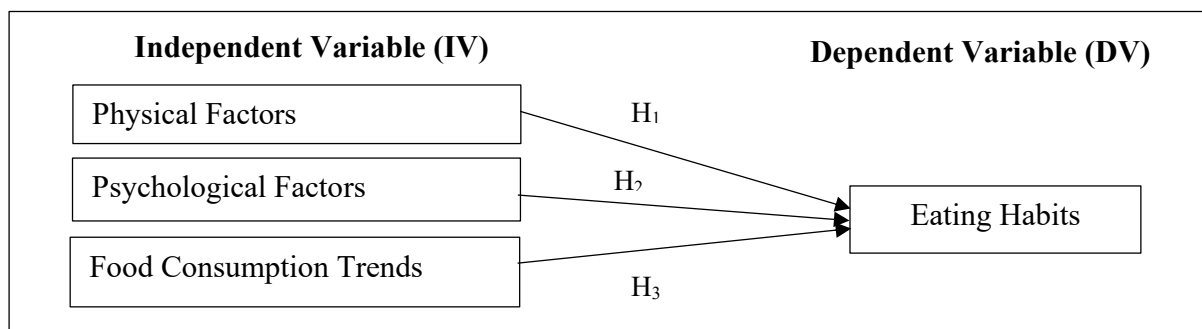
Figure 1: Research Framework

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study uses quantitative research design which involves collecting ang analysing numerical data. Moreover, the quantitative research design is ideal for identifying trends and averages, making predictions, testing relationships and generalizing results for the populations. In addition, research design is one of the frameworks of research methods and techniques chosen by researchers to conduct research. Therefore, a quantitative research approach is suitable been used to study the factors that influence

eating habits habits among third year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

Data Collection

The method used in collecting the quantitative data generates statistics using large-scale survey research, using methods such as internet surveys. All information obtained through the study is from primary sources which is the researcher collects data and information directly from the main source using self-administered questionnaire. Information on all Wellness students is obtained from Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism and Wellness (FHPK) office. With the data obtained, the researcher distributed the question to all respondents through a Google form provided online through their email. The questionnaire was created to find out in more detail about physical factors, physiological factors, and food consumption trends factors that influence the eating habits among third year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. Internet surveys such as questionnaires became a popular method of obtaining information from the public, especially their opinions on certain issues of public interest. The internet survey also doesn't take long, and respondents are free to answer at any time.

Sampling

A 123 respondents was taken from the total population which is 176 of third year Wellness students at UMK based on the Krejcie and Morgan 1970 table. The list of sampling frame was provided by the faculty. Then, the probability sampling technique which is simple random sampling using a random number generator was conducted to get the respondents. The email owners from a list of 123 numbers generated by a random number generator were respondents for the study. Furthermore, the method that has been used does not incur any costs for this research and it is not necessary to conduct the study face-to-face with the respondents.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of collecting, modeling, and analysing data to extract information to support decision-making. The researcher used the statistical software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28 to analyze the data for the study. There are five types of data analysis used which are Frequency analysis, Descriptive analysis, Reliability analysis, Correlation analysis and Multiple Linear Regression analysis. The requency analysis is used to describe respondent demographic information while Descriptive analysis is used to find out the respondent's level of agreement about the research conducted. The Reliability analysis was carried out to evaluate the survey, and the process to determine whether it provides consistent results and can be considered reliable. For the Correlation analysis, the researcher used the Pearson correlation test to measure the strength of the correlation and relationship between the independent variable (IV) and the dependent variable (DV) and carry out the Multiple Linear Regression analysis to test the hypothesis hence to determine the factors that influencing eating habits among students.

FINDINGS

Results of Frequency Analysis

Table 1 shows the results of the descriptive analysis for all respondents who are third-year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. The majority of respondents who answered this questionnaire were female with a frequency of 111 respondents (90.2%), while only 12 male respondents (8.9%) answered this questionnaire. However, all respondents are of various ages. Most of them are 23 years old which is a total of 100 respondents (81.3%), followed by respondents who are 22 years old which is a total of 17 people (13.8%), then 5 respondents who are 24 years old (4.1%) and also a respondent who is 26 years old year that recorded 0.8%. The majority of respondents are Malays, which is 115 out of 123 respondents (93.5%) followed by 6 respondents (4.9%) who are Indians, then one respondent who is Bumiputra Sabah and also Iban who recorded a percentage of 0.8% for both races. As for religion, all the Malays adhere to the Islamic religion, which is a total of 116 respondents (94.3%), the majority of Indians are also Hindu, which is 6 people (4.9) and one respondent adheres to the Christian religion, recording a percentage of 0.8%.

As for marital status, the majority of the 123 respondents are still single. It recorded a frequency of 119 respondents (96.7%) compared to respondents who are married, which is a total of 4 respondents who recorded a percentage of 3.3%. For the subject specialization of third-year Wellness students, the majority of the respondents were from the spa track, which is 81 respondents (65.9%) while the remaining 42 respondents (34.1%) were students from the gym track. There are many answer choices for the respondents who are third year Wellness students. There are 14 respondents who live in college, who recorded a percentage value of 11.4%. The majority of respondents live in rented houses which are 89 respondents (72.4%), while the total number of respondents who live with their families is 18 respondents (14.6%), then one respondent lives in a rented room and also one respondent lives alone. Both of them recorded a percentage value of 0.8%.

Table 1: Frequency Analysis

No	Socio-Demographic Characteristics	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1.	Gender	123	100
	Male	12	8.9
	Female	111	90.2
2.	Age	123	100
	22 years	17	13.8
	23 years	100	81.3
	24 years	5	4.1
	26 years	1	0.8
3.	Race	123	100
	Malay	115	93.5
	Indian	6	4.9
	Bumiputra Sabah	1	0.8
	Iban	1	0.8
4.	Religion	123	100
	Islam	116	94.3
	Christian	1	0.8
	Hindu	6	4.9

		123	100
5.	Marital status		
	Single	119	96.7
	Married	4	3.3
6.	3rd-year Wellness Subject Specialization	123	100
	Gym	42	34.1
	Spa	81	65.9
7.	**Place**	**123**	**100**
	College	**14**	**11.4**
	Rent House	**89**	**72.4**
	With Family	**18**	**14.6**
	Alone	**1**	**0.8**
	Bilik Sewa	**1**	**0.8**

Results of Descriptive Analysis

The results in Table 4.2 show the descriptive analysis for dependent variable and independent variables. By referring to the table, it can be identified that eating habits 14 (I know that a good eating habits can prevent myself from getting many types of diseases in the future) is the highest mean value (M = 4.24, SD = 0.937), while eating habits 12 (I always choose foods that are high in sugar) obtained the lowest mean value (M = 2.67, SD = 1.160). For physical factors, the physical factors 5 (Have a busy schedule can cause your meal times to be interrupted) obtained the highest mean value (M = 4.31, SD = 0.863), while physical factors 2 (Cooking skills cause the irregular eating habits of an individual) obtained the lowest mean value (M = 3.36, SD = 1.186). For psychological factors, the highest mean is psychological factors 9 (My appetite will increase when I eat with my family) with the value (M = 4.15, SD = 0.958) while for the lowest mean, there are two psychological factors that obtained the same mean which are psychological factors 11 (I tend to eat unhealthy foods when I'm sad) in mean value (M = 3.45, SD = 1.186) and psychological factors 2 (I like to eat when i feel lonely), with mean value (M = 3.45, SD = 1.223). For food consumption trends factors, the highest mean is food consumption trends factors 4 (Consuming foods that are high in calories will cause a person to get various types of diseases in a long period of time) with value (M = 4.11, SD = 1.002), while food consumption trends factors 6 (I like fizzy and sugary drinks even though I know they are not good for health) obtained the lowest mean value (M = 2.97, SD = 1.351).

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis

Variable	Questions	Mean Score	Std. Deviation
	I eat regularly every day.	3.14	1.169
	I never skip my meals.	3.00	1.215
	I always take my breakfast.	3.03	1.219
	I practice a nutritious diet.	3.46	0.994
	I limit the intake of snacks.	3.53	1.003
	I usually have fruit as a snack.	3.65	1.090
	I prefer ready meals over cooking at home.	3.25	1.135
	I like to eat late at night.	3.31	1.220
Eating Habits	I only eat fried food twice a week.	2.76	1.167
	I choose vegetables in the food I eat.	3.69	1.124
	I drink at least 1 liter mineral of water every day.	3.92	1.076
	I always choose foods that are high in sugar.	2.67	1.160
	I like to eat fast food.	3.41	1.166

	I know that a good eating habits can prevent myself from getting many types of diseases in the future.	4.28	**0.937**
	I don't take my eating habits seriously because my body mass index (BMI) is in the normal range.	3.02	**1.231**
	If my weight is at the level of 'obesity', then I will practice a nutritious diet.	4.06	**1.069**
Physical Factors	Physical factors can influence an individual's eating habits.	3.99	**0.954**
	Cooking skills cause the irregular eating habits of an individual.	3.36	**1.186**
	Delicious food can cause the unhealthy eating habits.	3.76	**1.079**
	Lack of knowledge about nutritious will affect the eating habits.	4.19	**0.920**
	Have a busy schedule can cause your meal times to be interrupted.	4.31	**0.863**
	Eating habits between different gender are not same.	3.83	**1.069**
Psychological Factors	The food i eat depends on my emotions.	3.93	**0.968**
	I like to eat when i feel lonely.	3.45	**1.223**
	I like to eat while doing something like doing an assignment.	3.75	**1.245**
	My food intake will increase when I feel happy.	3.93	**1.005**
	I will eat uncontrollably if I am under stress.	3.54	**1.230**
	The food I eat has a healthy diet.	3.47	**0.929**
	I always prioritize the nutrients of the food I take.	3.61	**0.983**
	I prioritize taste over nutrition.	3.78	**0.958**
	My appetite will increase when I eat with my family.	4.15	**0.958**
	I will eat a lot when I feel very hungry.	4.07	**1.009**
	I tend to eat unhealthy foods when I'm sad.	3.45	**1.186**
Food Consumption Trends Factors	Are current food trends affecting your eating habits?	3.81	**1.051**
	I prefer to try foods that go viral regardless of the number of calories per serving.	3.55	**1.182**
	Do you think that this unhealthy food consumption trend does not affect your health?	3.01	**1.352**
	Consuming foods that are high in calories will cause a person to get various types of diseases in a long period of time.	4.11	**1.002**
	I have become accustomed to practicing unhealthy eating habits.	3.03	**1.123**
	I like fizzy and sugary drinks even though I know they are not good for health.	2.97	**1.351**

Results of Reliability Analysis

Table 3 shows the result of the reliability coefficient alpha based on the dependent variable and each independent variable. The Cronbach's Alpha value of all variables is 0.914. The dependent variable which is eating habits with 16 questions has Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.827 which is good and acceptable. For the first independent variable, physical factors with 6 questions show Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.717 which is acceptable. The second independent variable, psychological factors which contains 11 questions shows Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.856 which is good. The third independent variable, food consumption factors with 6 questions in the questionnaire provided has Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.722 which is acceptable.

Table 3: Reliability Analysis

Variable	N	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
All Variable	123	39	**0.914**

Eating Habits	123	16	**0.827**
Physical Factors	123	6	**0.717**
Psychological Factors	123	11	**0.856**
Food Consumption Factors	123	6	**0.722**

Results of Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 4 shows the result of Pearson correlation analysis in order to see the relationship of each predictors with eating habits. According to the results, there are a moderate positive significant relationship between all predictors and eating habits. Therefore, the study performs Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) to test the hypothesis testing.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Analysis

Predictors	Pearson Correlation	P-Value
Physical factors	0.472	0.000
Psychological factors	0.567	0.000
Food consumption trend factors	0.642	0.000

Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis (MLR)

Table 5 shows the result of the multiple linear regression analysis. In multiple linear regression analysis, the interpretation is based on R-square and the result of ANOVA. All predictor variables explained 44.7% of the total variation in eating habits. While, the result of ANOVA, indicates that the model is significant since F value (32.105) is associated with a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$ and it obtain that the model fits the data well.

Table 5: Model Summary and ANOVA of MLR

R	R Square	ANOVA	
		F	P-Value
0.669	0.447	32.105	0.000

Results of Hypothesis Testing

Table 6 shows the hypothesis testing based on multiple linear regression analysis by using enter method. The study indicates that the significant influencing factors on eating habits are psychological (p-value < 0.05) and food consumption trend (p-value < 0.05). While, there is no significant influence of physical factors on eating habits among third year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (p-value > 0.05). Moreover, factors that most influence eating habits is food consumption trend (B = 0.338).

Table 6: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	RegressionCoefficients (B)	P-Value	Result (Supported/ Not Supported)
H1 - There is a significant influence of physical factors on eating habits among third year wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.	0.062	0.468	H1 is not supported
H2 - There is a significant influence of psychological factors on eating habits among third year wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.	0.239	0.006	H2 is supported
H3 - There is a significant influence of food consumption trend factors on eating habits among third year wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.	0.338	0.000	H3 is supported

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The discussion was conducted to address the research questions and research hypotheses stated in this study as in the first chapter of this study. In general, the study was conducted to extensively examine the factors that influence eating habits among third-year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. Based on findings, each student has their own eating habits, as well as male and female. From the Pearson correlation results, it can be identified that the correlation between physical factors and eating habits obtains a moderate correlation value and not significant influence on eating habits. From the questionnaire, it clearly shows that not many students practice a nutritious diet in their eating habits. Students stated that they like to eat late at night and that they will take their eating habits seriously if their weight is not in the normal range. However, they still choose vegetables in the food they eat. However, less than half of the respondents actually eat regularly every day. Among them, many skip meals and don't always eat breakfast every morning.

Not only that, students also eat fried food at least twice a week. Students who live in rented houses, prefer to buy ready-made food instead of cooking at home. One of the best options to practice healthy eating habits is to practice nutritious food in your daily diet. This is because nutritious food has many advantages contained in it. In addition, psychological factors such as emotions also affect students' eating habits. They like to eat when their emotions are at a happy level. Their appetite will also increase when eating with their family. With that, it is clear that emotions affect the eating habits of an individual. From the study, some of the students who live in rented houses only choose to cook food from home instead of food that has already been prepared outside. However, it depends on how much time they have to prepare the food. This is because, it saves their time. However, choosing healthy foods should be prioritized by balancing the intake of food based on a pyramid food chart.

Research findings are also important for the continuation of future research. The same study that can be carried out should be extended to first year and second year Wellness students or made to tourism and hospitality students. The purpose is to study the factors that influence eating habits among students by expanding the target population set by the researcher to get the best results. This is because students have learned and have knowledge about eating habits and the factors that influence them. Researchers can also use different types of survey methods to get information from respondents such as using personal interviews. Among the advantages obtained from the personal interview method, the researcher will receive a response from the

respondent quickly. Not only that, researchers can also use observation methods to choose, see the behavior and characteristics of eating habits for individuals.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study was conducted to find out the factors that influence eating habits among third year Wellness students at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. Although all three factors which are physical factors, psychological factors and food consumption trends factors have a moderate positive significant relationship with eating habits but among these three factors, there are only two factors were significant influence on eating habits which is psychological and food consumption trend while physical factors was not significant influence on eating habits. Hence, the most influence eating habits is food consumption trend.

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