

## **B19 Depression, anxiety, stress and eating habits of UniSZA students during Covid-19 pandemic**

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This cross-sectional study was conducted to determine the association between depression, anxiety, stress, and eating habits among UniSZA students. This study was conducted using an online questionnaire that was distributed using social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram. The questionnaire consists of sociodemographic data, eating habits (Eating Habits and Lifestyle Changes in COVID-19 lockdown), and psychological status (21-item Depression Anxiety Stress Scale). A total of 283 UniSZA students were involved in this study. The mean age of the participants in this study was  $20.99 \pm 1.61$  years old and majority of them were females; 88.3%. A total of 71.4% of participants experienced changes in their eating habits, and 56.2% of them had gained weight during the COVID-19 lockdown. From 283 participants, majority of them had normal depression (41.3%), normal anxiety (27.2%), and normal stress (49.1%). The present study found that stress had a significant association with changes in eating habits,  $\chi^2(1)=4.385$ ,  $p=0.036$ , while anxiety was found to have a significant association with skipping meals,  $\chi^2(1)=6.587$ ,  $p=0.010$ , but not for depression and stress. Moreover, depression, anxiety, and stress were revealed to have significant associations with fruits intake [ $\chi^2(2)=10.112$ ,  $p=0.006$ ;  $\chi^2(2)=7.033$ ,  $p=0.030$ ;  $\chi^2(2)=18.382$ ,  $p<0.001$ , respectively] while depression and stress were shown to be significantly associated with vegetables and sweet drinks intake. Conclusively, the findings suggest that most of the students indeed experienced a change in their eating habits during this pandemic. Thus, the findings of this study provide essential information on the depression, anxiety, stress, and eating habits of university students that might be useful for institutions to maintain the health of students during the COVID-19 lockdown.