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Eating patterns and behavioral characteristics of young adults in a collegiate recovery setting



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Introduction

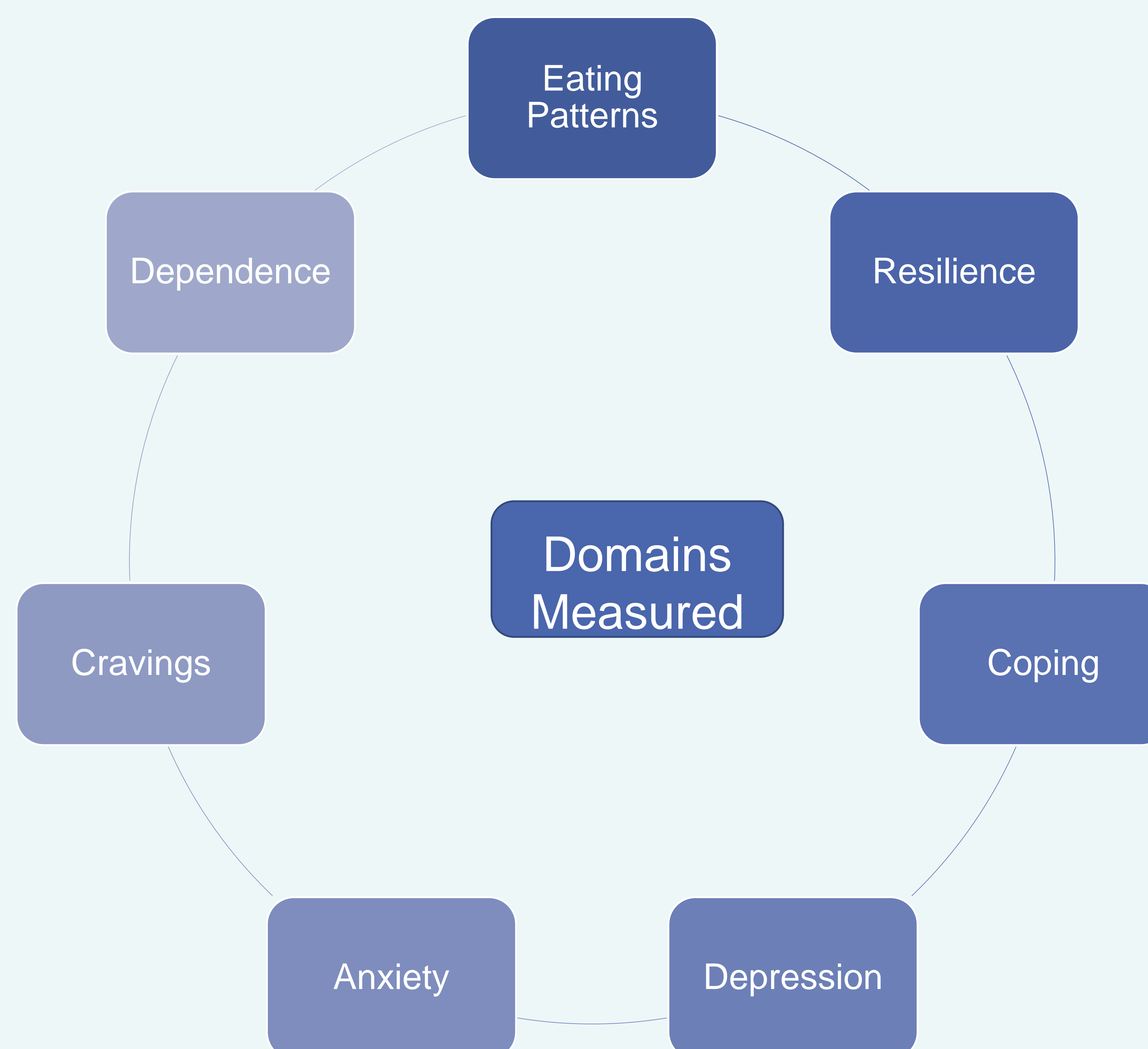
- Young adults on a college campus who are in recovery from substance use disorders face high temptation and risk for relapse.
- Collegiate recovery programs are becoming increasingly popular on campuses nationwide.
- Therapies offered in these types of programs include meditation, yoga, art, and music to build resilience and healthy coping mechanisms¹⁻⁵.
- Nutrition plays an important role in recovery and individuals in recovery have shown unhealthy eating patterns⁶⁻⁹.
- Determining the eating patterns and coping mechanisms of students in recovery is important to inform nutrition interventions.

Objective

- To describe characteristics of individuals in a collegiate recovery program and investigate correlates of mental health and eating patterns prior to a nutrition intervention.

Methods

- A 76-item survey was distributed to individuals in a Collegiate Recovery program that included:
 - Eating Pattern Questionnaire
 - Beck Anxiety Inventory
 - Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9)
 - Brief COPE
 - Severity of Dependence Scale
 - Brief Substance Craving Scale
 - Brief Resilience Score.
- Individuals were asked to report their overall health, height, and weight.
- Frequency and bivariate analyses were conducted to determine significance of variables.



Results

Mental Health Scores of Students in a Collegiate Recovery Program

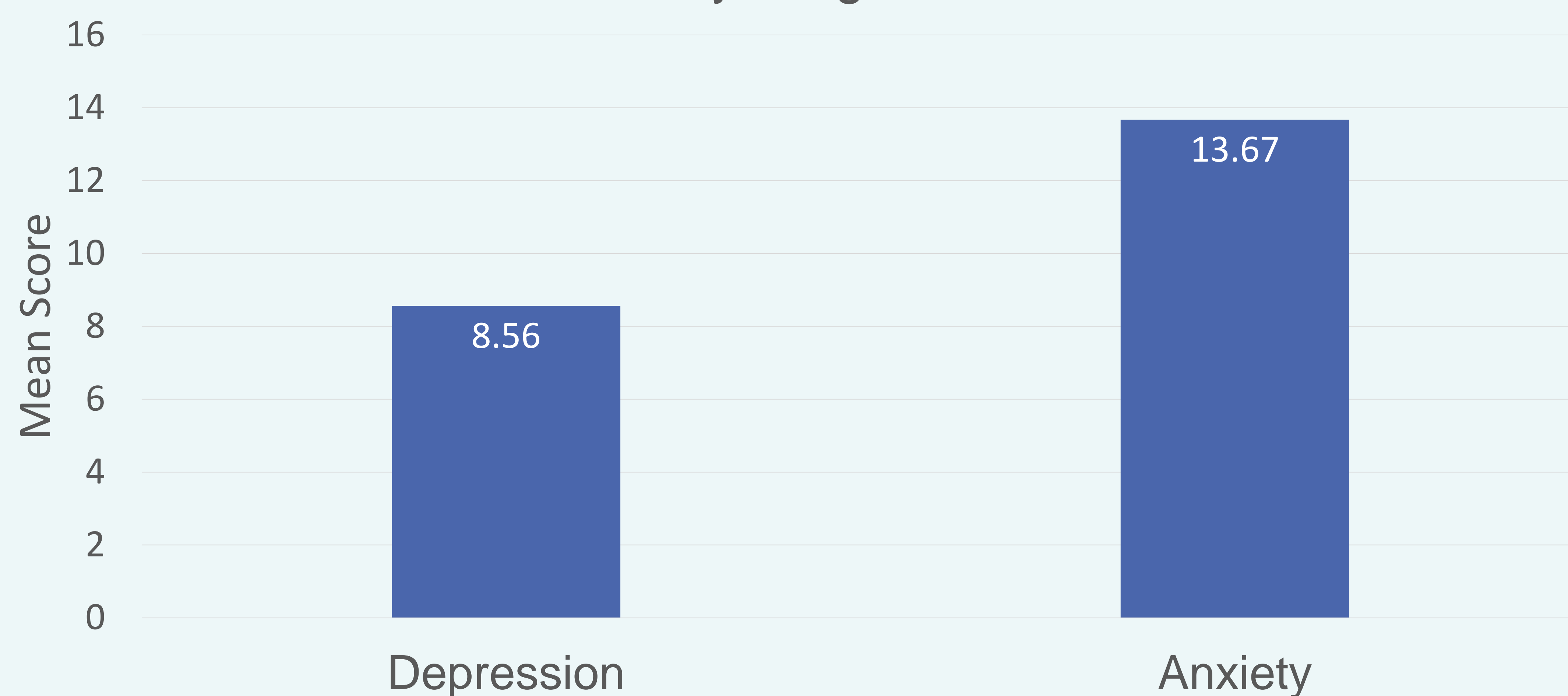


Figure 1. Mean Mental Health Scores. Depression was measured using the Patient Health Questionnaire and anxiety was measured using the Beck Anxiety Inventory. (n = 9)

Results

Unhealthier Eating Patterns	Higher Resilience Scores
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild depression symptoms (p=0.0170) • Mild to moderate anxiety symptoms (p=0.0219) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less use of denial (p=.0491) • Less substance abuse (p=0.0247) • Less behavioral disengagement (p=0.0182)
Higher Anxiety Scores	Higher Depression Scores
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher self-blame (p=.0314) • Higher behavioral disengagement (p=0.0448) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher self-blame (p=.0454)

Conclusion

- These results indicate the potential influence of eating behaviors, coping behaviors, and resilience on improving mental health disorder symptoms and recovery outcomes.
- Future work will analyze the effects of implementing a nutrition intervention to further enhance recovery.

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