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# Awareness On Intermittent Fasting Plan Among College Students - A Survey

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#### Abstract

Intermittent Fasting (If) Is A Dietary Strategy In Which Periods Of Normal Food And Drink Consumption Are Punctuated By Periods Of Energy Restriction Or Fasting. The Objective Of If Is To Create A Net Reduction In Energy Intake That Causes It To Fall Below Energy Expenditure, Thereby Creating A State Of Negative Energy Balance And Inducing Weight Loss. The Aim Of Our Study Is To Create Awareness Of Intermittent Fasting Plan Among College Students. This Was A Cross - Sectional Questionnaire Based Study Which Was Conducted Among College Students. The Study Was Approved By Institutional Review Board, Saveetha Dental College. A Validated And Structured Questionnaire Containing 10 Questions Was Framed And It Was Circulated Through An Online Forum. The Sample Size Was 100 People And The Results Were Tabulated In The Excel Sheet And Analysed Using Spss Software. This Study Reveals That 78% Of Total Participants Were Aware Of Intermittent Fasting And 22% Of The Participants Were Not Aware And The Association Was Statistically Not Significant; P Value: 0.284 (P>0.05). 39% Of Total Participants Are Aware That Intermittent Fasting Can Reduce Insulin Resistance And 61% Of The Participants Are Not Aware And The Association Was Statistically Significant; P Value: 0.012 (P<0.05). Within The Limitation In This Study Reveals That Females Have Better Knowledge And Awareness About Intermittent Fasting. The Findings Of The Study Suggests That The Awareness Of Intermittent Fasting Was Low Among The College Students. Due To The Increasing Prevalence Of Overweight And Obesity It Is Important To Share The Knowledge And Awareness On If Among People.

Keywords: Obesity; Insulin Resistance; Survey Planet; Time Restricted Feeding; Intermittent Fasting.

#### Introduction

In Recent Years, People Worldwide Have Developed An Increased Popularity For Weight Loss Programs, Diet Plans And Weight Maintenance Programs With Little Research Done On The Effectiveness Of Those Programs. Meanwhile, Obesity Has Been Increasing In Prevalence Due To Many Social Determinants Such As Easy Access To Various Fast Foods, And Lack Of Physical Activity. Obesity Is A Worldwide Epidemic Due To The Availability Of Many Unhealthy Food Options And Limited Physical Exercise. Obesity Is A Public Health Problem That Has Raised Concern Worldwide. Obesity Can Be Defined As A Condition Of Abnormal Or Excess Fat Accumulation In Adipose Tissue, To The Extent That Health May Be Impaired (Ulijaszek, 2003). According To The World Health Organization (Who), There Will Be About 2.3 Billion Overweight People Aged 15 Years And Above, And Over 700 Million Obese People Worldwide In 2015 (Lerouge *Et Al.*, 2020). Although A Few Developed Countries Such As The United Kingdom And Germany Experienced A Drop In The Prevalence Rate Of Obesity In The Past Decade, The Prevalence Of Obesity Continues To Rise In Many Parts Of The World, Especially In The Asia Pacific Region (Yoshiike, Kaneda And Takimoto, 2002; Chew *Et Al.*, 2018).

There Is A Wealth Of Evidence To Show That Excess Weight Is An Important Risk Factor In The Development Of Illness Like Cardiovascular Diseases, Diabetes Mellitus, Respiratory Diseases (Murugan And Sharma, 2008), Chronic Kidney Diseases (Ting *Et Al.*, 2009), Musculoskeletal Disorders (Wearing *Et Al.*, 2006; Medina, 2016), Gastrointestinal And Hepatic Disorders (Tsai *Et Al.*, 2004; Batty *Et Al.*, 2008), Lower Physical Functioning Performance (Woo, Leung And Kwok, 2007) And Psychological Problems. The Etiology Of Obesity Is Multifactorial, Involving Complex Interactions Among The Genetic Background, Hormones And Different Social And Environmental Factors, Such As Sedentary Lifestyle And Unhealthy Dietary Habits (Ulijaszek, 2003).

Fasting, Called "The Next Big Weight Loss Fad", Has Long Been Integral To Many Religious And Ethnic Cultures (Golbidi *Et Al.*, 2017). Intermittent Fasting (If) Is A Dietary Strategy In Which Periods Of Normal Food And Drink Consumption Are Punctuated By Periods Of Energy Restriction Or Fasting. The Objective Of If Is To Create A Net Reduction In Energy Intake That Causes It To Fall Below Energy Expenditure, Thereby Creating A State Of Negative Energy Balance And Inducing Weight Loss. Intermittent Fasting (If) Has Many Forms; The Basic Premise Involves Taking Periodic Breaks From Eating. Common Forms Of If Include Fasting For Up To 24 Hours Once Or Twice A Week Food Intake For The Remaining Days, Which Is Known As Periodic Prolonged Fasting (Pf) Or Intermittent Calorie Restriction (Icr) (Fairburn, 2008); Time-Restricted Feeding (Trf), Such As Eating For Only 8 Hours Then Fasting For The Other 16 Hours Of The Day; And Alternate-Day Fasting (Adf). Most Adf Programs Involve Alternating Feast And Fast Days With Some Protocols Allowing No Caloric Intake On Fast Days.

In 2007, Varady And Hellerstein Reviewed Alternate Day Fasting Studies In Animals And Concluded That This Fasting Regimen Was As Effective As Simple Caloric Restriction In Decreasing Fasting Insulin And Glucose Concentration. Alternate Day Fasting In Animals Also Reduced Total Plasma Cholesterol And Triglyceride (Tg) Concentrations, And Had Beneficial Effects On Cancer Risk Factors Such As Cell Proliferation. Rothschild Et Al Recently Reviewed The Animal Literature On Time-Restricted Feeding. Twelve Studies Were Identified With Daily Fasting Intervals Ranging From 12 To 20 Hours, In Numerous Mouse Models, With Variability In Coordination With Light/Dark Phases . In Spite Of The Heterogeneity Of These Studies, The Authors Concluded That In Mice, Time-Restricted Feeding Was Associated With Reductions In Body Weight, Total Cholesterol, Tgs, Glucose, Insulin, Interleukin-6 (Il-6), And Tnf-A; As Well As Improvements In Insulin Sensitivity. It Is Notable That These Health Outcomes Occurred Despite Variable Effects Of Intermittent Fasting On Weight Loss (Varady Et Al., 2009; Collier, 2013). Previously Our Team Has A Rich Experience In Working On Various Research Projects Across Multiple Disciplines The (Somasundaram Et Al., 2015; Hafeez And Others, 2016; Krishnan Et Al., 2018)(Choudhari And Thenmozhi, 2016; Dhinesh Et Al., 2016; Gurunathan And Shanmugaavel, 2016; Sneha And Others, 2016; Govindaraju And Gurunathan, 2017; Kumar And Rahman, 2017; Felicita And Sumathi Felicita, 2018; Saravanan Et Al., 2018; Vijayakumar Jain Et Al., 2019; Wu Et Al., 2019; Palati Et Al., 2020; Paramasivam, Vijayashree Priyadharsini And Raghunandhakumar, 2020). The Aim Of Our Study Is To Create Awareness On Intermittent Fasting Plans Among College Students.

## **Materials And Method**

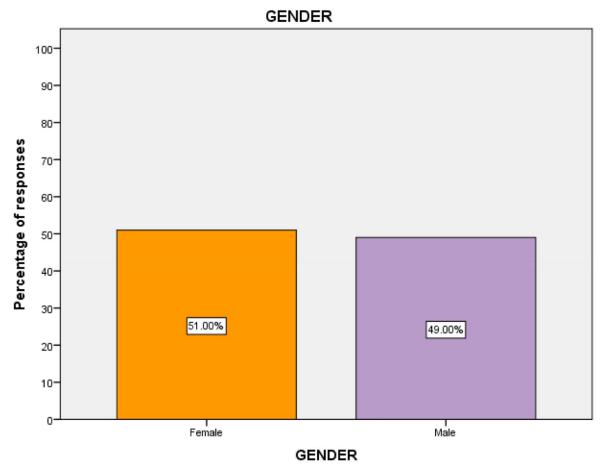
This Was A Cross - Sectional Questionnaire Based Study, Which Was Done In December 2019 Among Students Of Saveetha Dental College. Ethical Approval Was Given By The Institutional Review Board, Saveetha Dental College And A Predesigned Validated Questionnaire Was Used To Assess The Awareness Of Intermittent Fasting. A Validated And Structured Questionnaire Containing 10 Questions Was Framed And It Was Circulated Through An Online Forum. It Consisted Of Two Parts: Section I Demographic Data Of The Participants, In This Part Information Regarding Name, Gender. Section Ii Knowledge And Awareness On Intermittent Fasting Diet Plan As Assessed. The Sample Size Was 100 People And The Sampling Method Used Was A Simple Random Sampling Method. In Order To Minimise Bias All Variables Were Included (Randomisation) And No Sorting Process Was Done. Data Collection Verified By 2 Reviewers And Internal Validity Was A Pretested Questionnaire.

Data Analysis Was Done In The Statistical Product And Service Solutions (Spss) Software And The Statistical Test Used Was The Chi - Square Test. Type Of Analysis Used Was Association And The Results Were Tabulated In Excel Sheet And Transferred To Spss Software To Analyse And Represent In The Bar Graph.

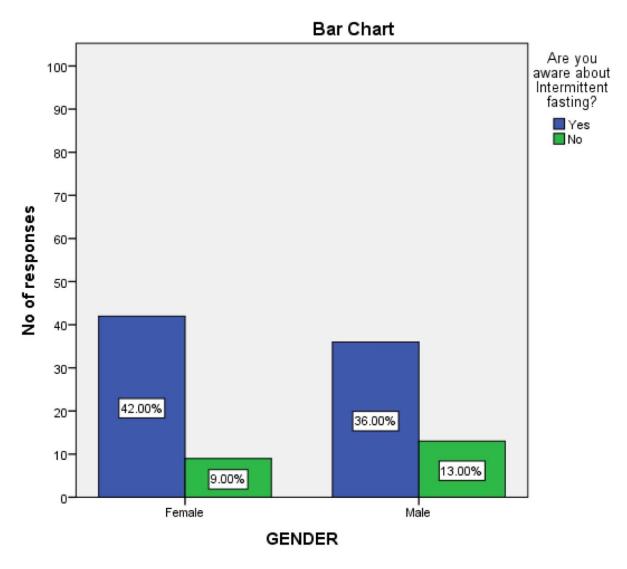
## **Results And Discussion**

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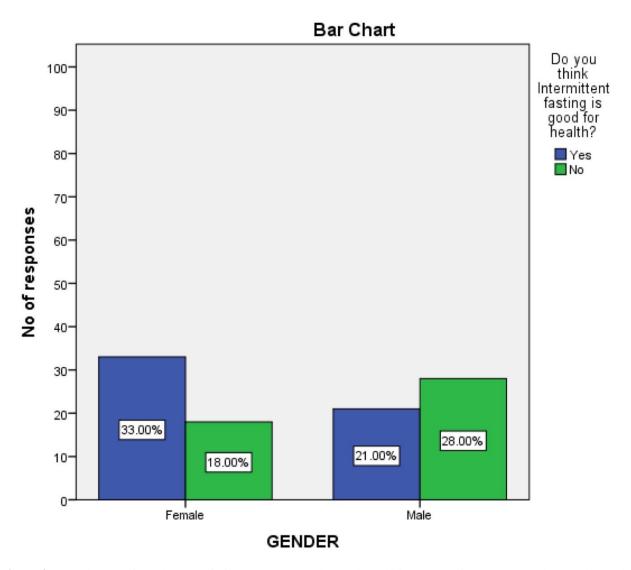
Total Of 100 College Students Participated In This Study. Among The Total Participants, The Distribution Of Females (51%) Were Slightly Higher Than Males (49%) (Figure 1). 78% Of Total Participants Were Aware Of Intermittent Fasting And 22% Of The Participants Were Not Aware And Observed That Both Males And Females Are Aware Of It Which Showed No Statistical Significant Association Of Gender With Awareness Of Intermittent Fasting (P = 0.284) (Figure 2). 54% Of Total Participants Agree That Intermittent Fasting Is Good For Health And 46% Of The Participants Disagreed And Observed That Females Are More Aware Than Males Which Showed No Statistical Significant Association Of Gender With Healthiness (P = 0.028) (Figure 3). 70% Of Total Participants Are Aware That Intermittent Fasting Is The Effective Way To Lose Weight And 30% Of The Participants Are Not Aware And Observed That Females Have More Awareness Than Males Which Showed Statistical Significant Association Of Gender With Weight Reduction (P = 0.013) (Figure 4). 39% Of Total Participants Are Aware That Intermittent Fasting Can Reduce Insulin Resistance And 61% Of The Participants Are Not Aware And Observed That Females Have Better Knowledge Than Males Which Showed Statistical Significant Association Of Gender With Insulin Resistance (P = 0.012) (Figure 5). 39% Of Total Participants Agree That Intermittent Fasting Reduces The Risk Of Cancer And 61% Of The Participants Disagreed And Observed That There Was Not Much Difference In Responses Among Males And Females Which Showed No Statistical Significant Association Of Gender With Risk Of Cancer (P = 0.649) (Figure 6). 53% Of Total Participants Agree That Intermittent Fasting Boosts The Metabolic Rate And 47% Of The Participants Disagreed And Observed That There Was Not Much Difference In Responses Among Males And Females Which Showed No Statistical Significant Association Of Gender With Metabolic Rate (P = 0.112) (Figure 7). 22% Of Total Participants Agree That Intermittent Fasting Increases Autophagy And 78% Of The Participants Disagreed And Observed That Males Have Better Knowledge Than Females Which Showed No Statistical Significant Association Of Gender With Autophagy (P = 0.284) (Figure 8). 13% Of Total Participants Agree That Intermittent Fasting Protects From The Effect Of Alzheimer's And Parkinson's Disease And 87% Of The Participants Disagreed And Observed That There Was Not Much Difference In Responses Among Males And Females Which Showed No Statistical Significant Association Of Gender With The Effect Of Alzheimer's And Parkinson's Disease (P = 0.826) (Figure 9). 37% Of Total Participants Agree That Intermittent Fasting May Extend Your Lifespan And 63% Of The Participants Are Not Aware And Observed That Females Have More Awareness Than Males Which Showed Statistical Significant Association Of Gender With Lifespan (P = 0.034) (Figure 10).



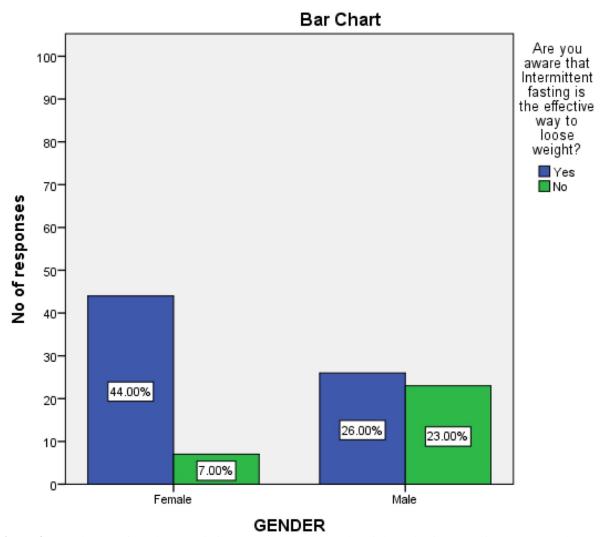
**Figure 1:** Bar Chart Depicts The Frequency Distribution Of Gender Participated In This Study. X Axis Represents Gender Of The Participants And Y Axis Represents Percentage Of Responses. This Bar Graph Shows 51% Of Females (Orange) And 49% Of Males (Violet) Participated In This Survey. Females Were Slightly Higher When Compared To Males.



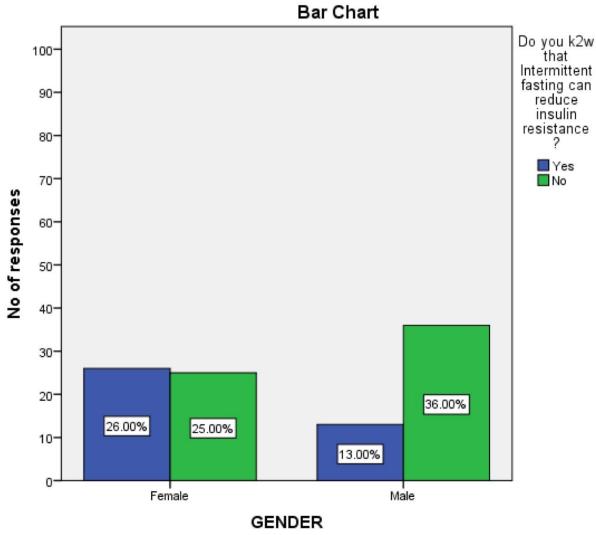
**Figure 2:** Bar Chart Depicts The Association Between Gender And Awareness On Intermittent Fasting. X Axis Represents The Gender And Y Axis Represents The Number Of Respondents. This Bar Graph Shows That 78% Of Total Participants Were Aware Of Intermittent Fasting (Blue) And 22% Of The Participants Were Not Aware (Green). Chi Square Test Was Done And Association Was Statistically Not Significant. Pearson's Chi Square Value: 1.149, P Value: 0.284 (>0.05). However Both Males And Females Are Aware Of Intermittent Fasting.



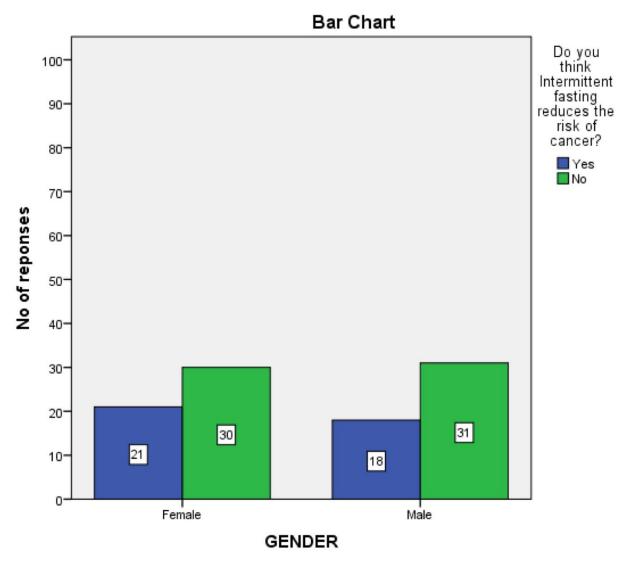
**Figure 3:** Bar Chart Depicts The Association Between Gender And Healthiness. X Axis Represents The Gender And Y Axis Represents The Number Of Respondents. This Bar Graph Shows That 54% Of Total Participants Agree That Intermittent Fasting Is Good For Health (Blue) And 46% Of The Participants Disagreed (Green). Chi Square Test Was Done And Association Was Statistically Significant. Pearson's Chi Square Value: 4.803, P Value: 0.028 (<0.05). However Females Have Better Knowledge Than Males.



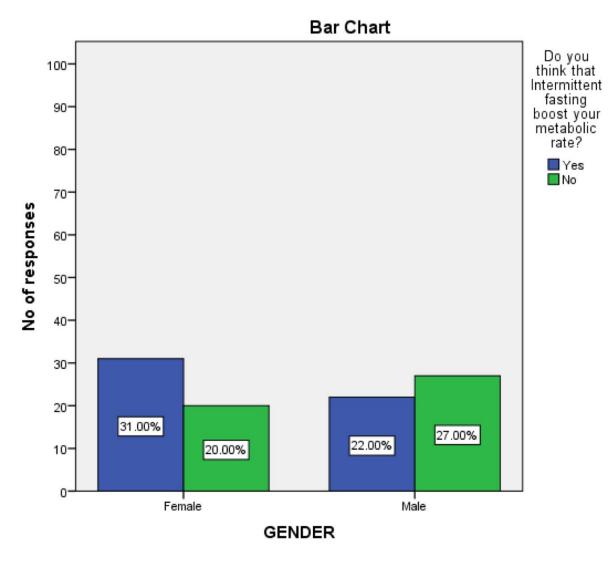
**Figure 4:** Bar Chart Depicts The Association Between Gender And Weight Reduction. X Axis Represents The Gender And Y Axis Represents The Number Of Respondents. This Bar Graph Shows That 70% Of Total Participants Are Aware That Intermittent Fasting Is The Effective Way To Lose Weight (Blue) And 30% Of The Participants Are Not Aware (Green). Chi Square Test Was Done And Association Was Statistically Significant. Pearson's Chi Square Value: 13.127, P Value: 0.013 (<0.05). However Females Were More Aware Than Males.



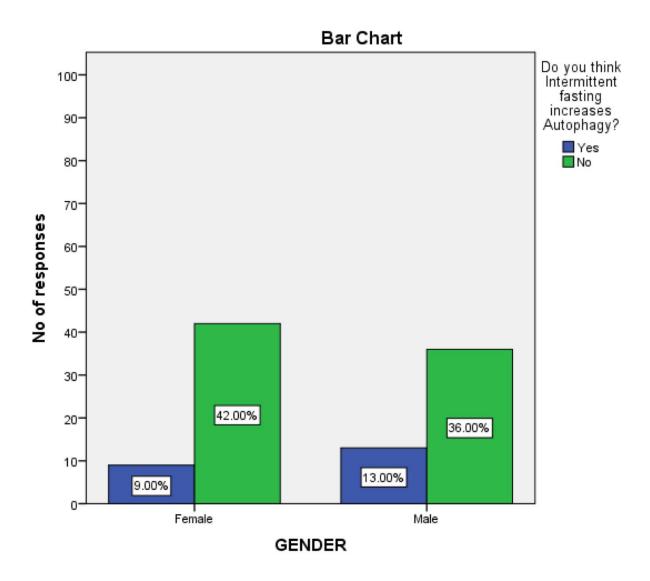
**Figure 5:** Bar Chart Depicts The Association Between Gender And Insulin Resistance. X Axis Represents The Gender And Y Axis Represents The Number Of Respondents. This Bar Graph Shows That Only 39% Of Total Participants Are Aware That Intermittent Fasting Can Reduce Insulin Resistance (Blue) And 61% Of The Participants Are Not Aware (Green). Chi Square Test Was Done And Association Was Statistically Significant. Pearson's Chi Square Value: 6.279, P Value: 0.012 (<0.05). However Females Have Better Knowledge Than Males.



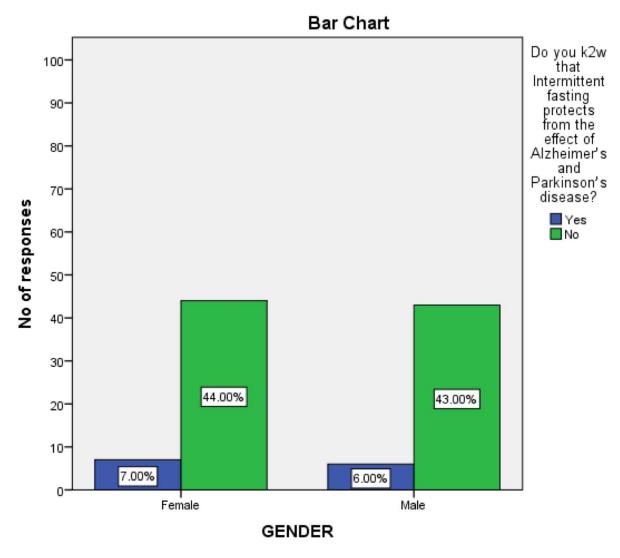
**Figure 6:** Bar Chart Depicts The Association Between Gender And Risk Of Cancer. X Axis Represents The Gender And Y Axis Represents The Number Of Respondents. This Bar Graph Shows That Only 39% Of Total Participants Agree That Intermittent Fasting Reduces The Risk Of Cancer (Blue) And 61% Of The Participants Disagreed (Green). Chi Square Test Was Done And Association Was Statistically Not Significant. Pearson's Chi Square Value: 0.207, P Value: 0.649(>0.05). Hence There Was Not Much Difference In Responses Among Males And Females.



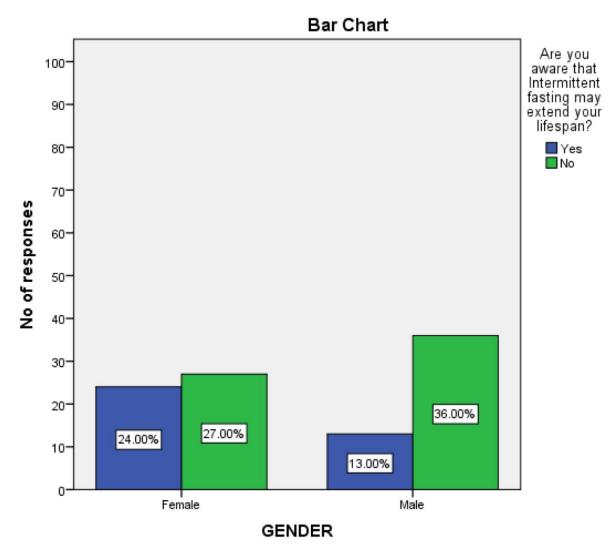
**Figure 7:** Bar Chart Depicts The Association Between Gender And Metabolic Rate. X Axis Represents The Gender And Y Axis Represents The Number Of Respondents. This Bar Graph Shows That Only 53% Of Total Participants Agree That Intermittent Fasting Boosts The Metabolic Rate (Blue) And 47% Of The Participants Disagreed (Green). Chi Square Test Was Done And Association Was Statistically Not Significant. Pearson's Chi Square Value: 2.532, P Value: 0.112 (>0.05). Hence There Was Not Much Difference In Responses Among Males And Females.



**Figure 8:** Bar Chart Depicts The Association Between Gender And Autophagy. X Axis Represents The Gender And Y Axis Represents The Number Of Respondents. This Bar Graph Shows That Only 22% Of Total Participants Agree That Intermittent Fasting Increases Autophagy (Blue) And 78% Of The Participants Disagreed (Green). Chi Square Test Was Done And Association Was Statistically Not Significant. Pearson's Chi Square Value: 1.149, P Value: 0.284 (>0.05). Males Have Better Knowledge Than Females.



**Figure 9:** Bar Chart Depicts The Association Between Gender And Effect Of Alzheimer's And Parkinson's Disease. X Axis Represents The Gender And Y Axis Represents The Number Of Respondents. This Bar Graph Shows That Only 13% Of Total Participants Agree That Intermittent Fasting Protects From The Effect Of Alzheimer's And Parkinson's Disease (Blue) And 87% Of The Participants Disagreed (Green). Chi Square Test Was Done And Association Was Statistically Not Significant. Pearson's Chi Square Value: 0.048, P Value: 0.826 (>0.05). Hence There Was Not Much Difference In Responses Among Males And Females.



**Figure 10:** Bar Chart Depicts The Association Between Gender And Lifespan. X Axis Represents The Gender And Y Axis Represents The Number Of Respondents. This Bar Graph Shows That Only 37% Of Total Participants Agree That Intermittent Fasting May Extend Your Lifespan (Blue) And 63% Of The Participants Are Not Aware (Green). Chi Square Test Was Done And Association Was Statistically Significant. Pearson's Chi Square Value: 4.518, P Value: 0.034 (<0.05). Females Have More Awareness Than Males.

The Term Intermittent Fasting, When Used For Health Reasons Or Weight Loss, Has Been Used To Describe Various Types Of Caloric Restriction. When Some People Withholds Caloric Intake For Several Consecutive Hours During The Day (Often 16 H With All Energy Intake During The Other 8 H Of The Day) (Furmli *Et Al.*, 2018), Others For A Full Day Once Or Twice A Week (Corley *Et Al.*, 2018), And Others Three Or Four Days Per Week (Harris *Et Al.*, 2018). Some Protocols Allow Protein Intake But No Carbohydrates And Still Label It Intermittent Fasting. Others Allow Carbohydrates Or Macro/Micro-Nutrients Up To A Limit That Will Still Promote Ketosis And, Although It Is Simply A Low-Calorie Diet, Due To The Popularity Of Fasting This Has Been Labeled A Diet That Mimics Fasting (Wei *Et Al.*, 2017). In All Instances, Non-Caloric Fluid Intake Is Permitted And Therefore Significantly Reduces The Risk Of Dehydration And Hypotension, A Prominent Consideration In Religious Fasting. The Potential Impact On Intermittent Fasting On The Human Microbiome, The Human Growth Hormone/Insulin-Like Growth Factor-1 Axis, Mitochondriogenesis, Immune System Efficiency, And Autophagy. Autophagy Regulates The Amino Acid Supply, And This Was Recently Reported To Be Controlled In Specific Patterns During Water-Only Fasting In Humans (Horne *Et Al.*, 2013; Paoli *Et Al.*, 2019; Washburn *Et Al.*, 2019).

Insulin Resistance, The Most Prominent Feature Of Type 2 Diabetes, Has Long Been Known To Improve With Caloric Restriction (Weindruch And Walford, 1988). After A Period Of Fasting, Insulin Sensitivity Rises And Insulin Levels Fall (Varady, 2011; Klempel Et Al., 2012). These Result In Improved Fasting And Postprandial Glucose Levels. In Addition, As Insulin Induces Adipose Tissue Growth, There Is Less Propensity To Weight Gain And Potentially Even Weight Loss. Furmli Et.Al. (Furmli Et Al., 2018) Reported On Three Patients Who Were Able To Discontinue Insulin Treatment 5-18 Days After Beginning Intermittent Fasting, During Which They Ate Dinner But Skipped Breakfast And Lunch On Either Alternate Days Or 3 Days Per Week. Intermittent Fasting Decreased Skin Temperature And Fat Mass, And Improved Glucose Tolerance With Decreasing Food Intake. Intermittent Fasting Also Prevented Memory Loss: Short-Term And Special Memory Loss. Therefore, Intermittent Fasting May Prevent Some Of The Metabolic Pathologies Associated With Menopause And Protect Against Age-Related Memory Decline (Montasser Et Al., 2015; Au Et Al., 2016). Future Scope Of The Study Is To Conduct The Study In A Larger Population, Particularly For A Certain Speciality/Age/Experience Group Should Be Studied.Our Institution Is Passionate About High Quality Evidence Based Research And Has Excelled In Various Fields ( (Pc, Marimuthu And Devadoss, 2018; Ramesh Et Al., 2018; Vijayashree Priyadharsini, Smiline Girija And Paramasivam, 2018; Ezhilarasan, Apoorva And Ashok Vardhan, 2019; Ramadurai Et Al., 2019; Sridharan Et Al., 2019; Vijayashree Priyadharsini, 2019; Chandrasekar Et Al., 2020; Mathew Et Al., 2020; R Et Al., 2020; Samuel, 2021).

#### Conclusion

Within The Limitation, This Study Reveals That Females Have Better Knowledge And Awareness About Intermittent Fasting. The Findings Of The Study Suggests That The Awareness Of Intermittent Fasting Was Low Among The College Students. It Is Well Known That In Humans, Even A Single Fasting Interval (E.G., Overnight) Can Reduce Basal Concentrations Of Metabolic Biomarkers Associated With Chronic Disease Such As Insulin And Glucose. Due To The Increasing Prevalence Of Overweight And Obesity It Is Important To Share Knowledge And Awareness On If Among People. Further Studies Are Needed To Address The Intermittent Fasting Diet Plans In Different Population. Intermittent Fasting May Prove To Be A Promising Approach To Improving Health Once It Is Determined Which Individuals Will Best Benefit And Be Able To Sustain It.

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### **Conflict Of Interest: Nil**

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