

Apr 23rd, 10:45 AM

The Influence of Stress and Gender on Eating Habits

Valerie Canet
Northeastern Illinois University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://neiudc.neiu.edu/srcas>

Canet, Valerie, "The Influence of Stress and Gender on Eating Habits" (2021). *NEIU Student Research and Creative Activities Symposium*. 3.
<https://neiudc.neiu.edu/srcas/2021/s11/3>

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences and Symposia at NEIU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in NEIU Student Research and Creative Activities Symposium by an authorized administrator of NEIU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact h-owen3@neiu.edu, wallis@neiu.edu.

The Influence of Stress and Gender on Eating Habits

Valerie Canet
Psychology

Stress is defined as a state of emotional tension in response to a difficult experience that also results in expected physiological and behavioral changes. Stress refers to a specific relationship between the individual and the environment assessed by the individual as taxing or exceeding his or her resources. Studies have demonstrated that women typically show a preference for high calorie food during stressful times. Whereas, research has shown that men decrease their food consumption in response to stress. An informed consent form will be provided which will contain information about the study. Participants will then be randomly assigned to one of two separate writing prompts (i.e., participants will be asked to recall a *stressful* or a *happy memory*) conditions. Participants will then be given 10 minutes to complete the writing prompt. Participants will be asked to answer a 10-item questionnaire about their food cravings (e.g., “At the moment, how much are you craving a salad?”) using a rating scale of 1 (*not at all*) through 5 (*very much*). Lastly, participants will be asked demographic questions. A 2 (writing prompt: happy versus stressful) x 2 (gender: male versus female) ANOVA will be conducted to assess the influence of gender and type of writing prompt on the food craving scores. With inconsistent research on the stress-eating relationship and difference between genders, it is essential to see how individuals cope with stress. Research has shown that stress-eating can lead to health complications later in life, such as developing eating disorders or suffering from obesity. Researchers have explained the importance for clinicians to identify management strategies for individuals to reduce stress and unhealthy eating due to stress to promote health and well-being.