



# *Mindless Eating Mini-Experiment*

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# Topic & Methods

- ▶ I used 5 of my sisters in an observational study with Chick-Fil-A nuggets.
- ▶ I asked each of my sisters to take as many nuggets as they wanted and recorded the number they took.
- ▶ When they had finished as many as they wanted/their plate, I asked them at what point they had felt full.

# Relevance to General Population

- ▶ Longwood students are subject to a buffet-style dining hall every day. Because of this, we need to be able to understand our limits food-wise and know to stop consuming food once we are full.
- ▶ Many students and people in general have a subconscious need to clean their plate; this is unhealthy and a cycle that leads to over-eating and weight gain. This study and those like it allows people to understand their stopping point to make positive changes in their lives.



# Subjects

- ▶ 1. Female College Student age 19
- ▶ 2. Female College Student age 19
- ▶ 3. Female College Student age 21
- ▶ 4. Female College Student age 20
- ▶ 5. Female College Student age 23



# Hypothesis

- ▶ If a Chick-Fil-A nugget tray is offered, subjects will take more than they need.
- ▶ Subjects will still eat all the nuggets they took despite being full at an earlier point.

# Methods

- ▶ I purchased a 64 count nugget tray from Chick-fil-a and told my 5 subjects to take as many as they wanted.
- ▶ Before they started eating I asked them to count how many they had and recorded the data.
- ▶ When each was finished (either with the entire plate or as many as they ultimately ate) I recorded how many had finished plates/how many nuggets were left on their plate.
- ▶ I then asked them at what point they had become full.
- ▶ I then recorded how many nuggets were left.

# Findings



- ▶ Subject 1: Took 15 nuggets. Was full at 8 nuggets but continued to eat the rest. No nuggets left on the plate.
- ▶ Subject 2: Took 10 nuggets. Was full at 5 nuggets, finished 2 more and left 3 on her plate.
- ▶ Subject 3: Took 14 nuggets. Was full at 10 nuggets and stopped there. 4 nuggets left on the plate.
- ▶ Subject 4: Took 12 nuggets. Was still hungry after all 12 nuggets. No nuggets left on the plate.
- ▶ Subject 5: Took 11 nuggets. Was full at 10 nuggets but finished the remaining nugget. No nuggets left on the plate.
- ▶ Leftover Nuggets: 2

# Findings v. Hypothesis

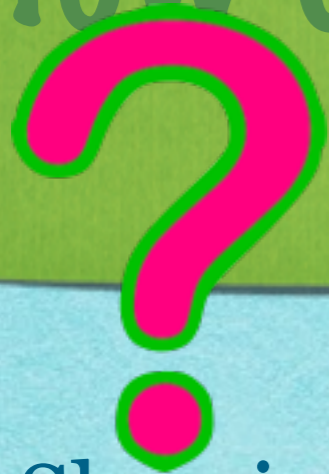
- ▶ For the most part, the findings matched the hypothesis. Despite being full, 3 of the subjects continued eating. One was still not full despite eating more than a serving size.
- ▶ The findings matched because of the aforementioned subconscious need many people feel to finish their plate. In some cases, people want to continue eating something delicious (like Chick-Fil-A) and will continue eating for that reason.



# Observations/Opinions

- ▶ Most students will take far more food than they can eat because it is available to them — this is true in the case of a nugget tray and can be translated especially to the buffet-style availability of food in D-Hall. This can be dangerous because students are given free range of as much food as they want/can eat while swiped into D-Hall, which can lead to a lot of over-eating.
- ▶ Because the food is available many students will eat just because it is there.

# How Can This Change “Mindless Eating”?



- ▶ Showing students that they often eat just because food is in front of them can help them to realize the need to stop once they are full.
- ▶ Students who can recognize when they are full can begin training themselves to stop consuming food when they reach the point they have found to be their “full point” which can help them to change their diet and eating habits to maintain a healthier lifestyle.