



Evaluating Premenstrual Hedonic Eating Patterns in College-Aged Females

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Introduction

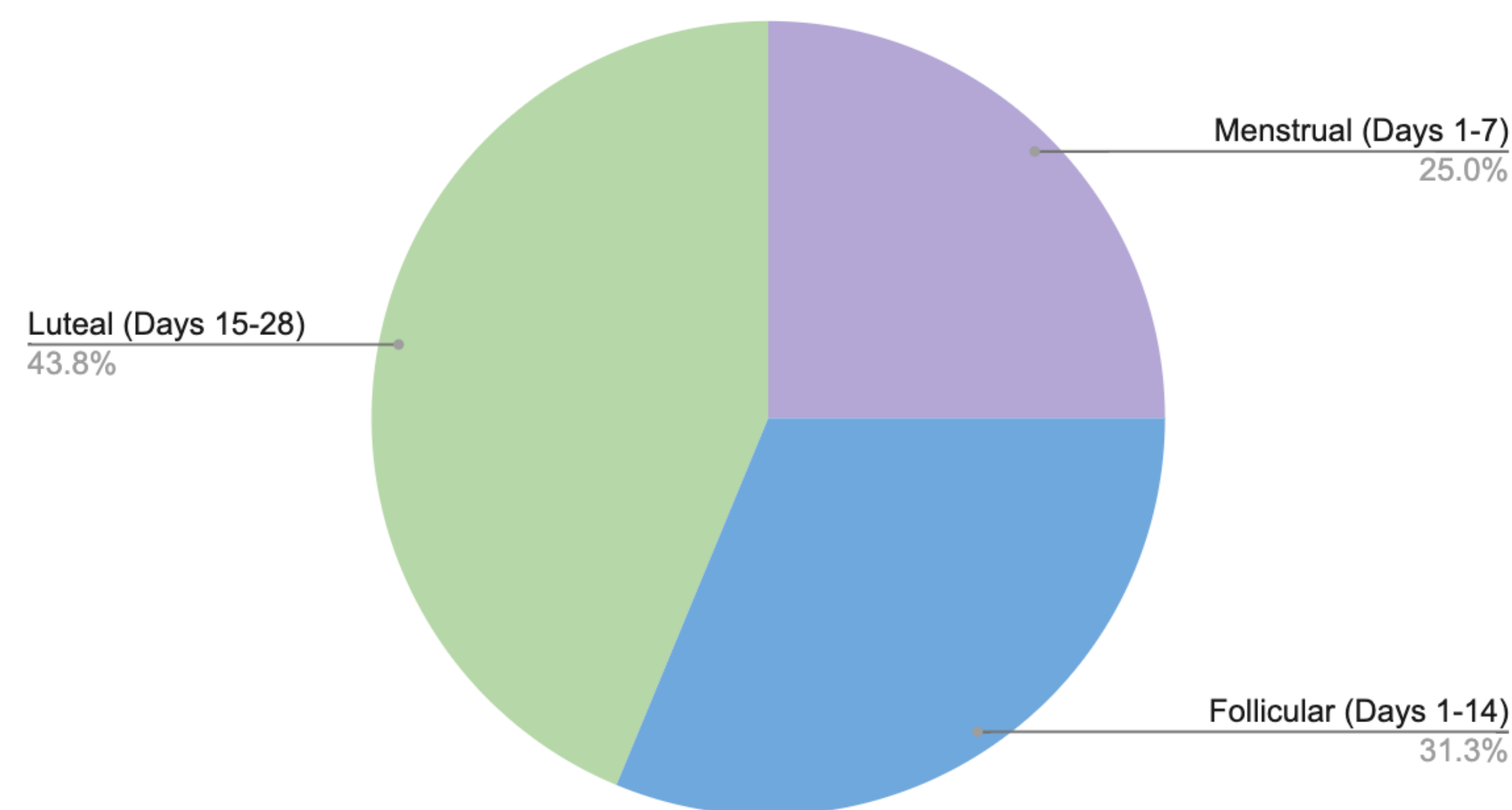
- Stress, weight gain, and sedentary behavior is common in college-aged women
- Several hormones and systems (homeostatic and endocannabinoid) regulate hunger and satiety
- Different phases of the menstrual cycle with various hormone fluctuations influence food seeking behaviors
- This association is known, but not how mindfulness strategies can help manage hedonic eating patterns in accordance with the menstrual cycle

Methodology

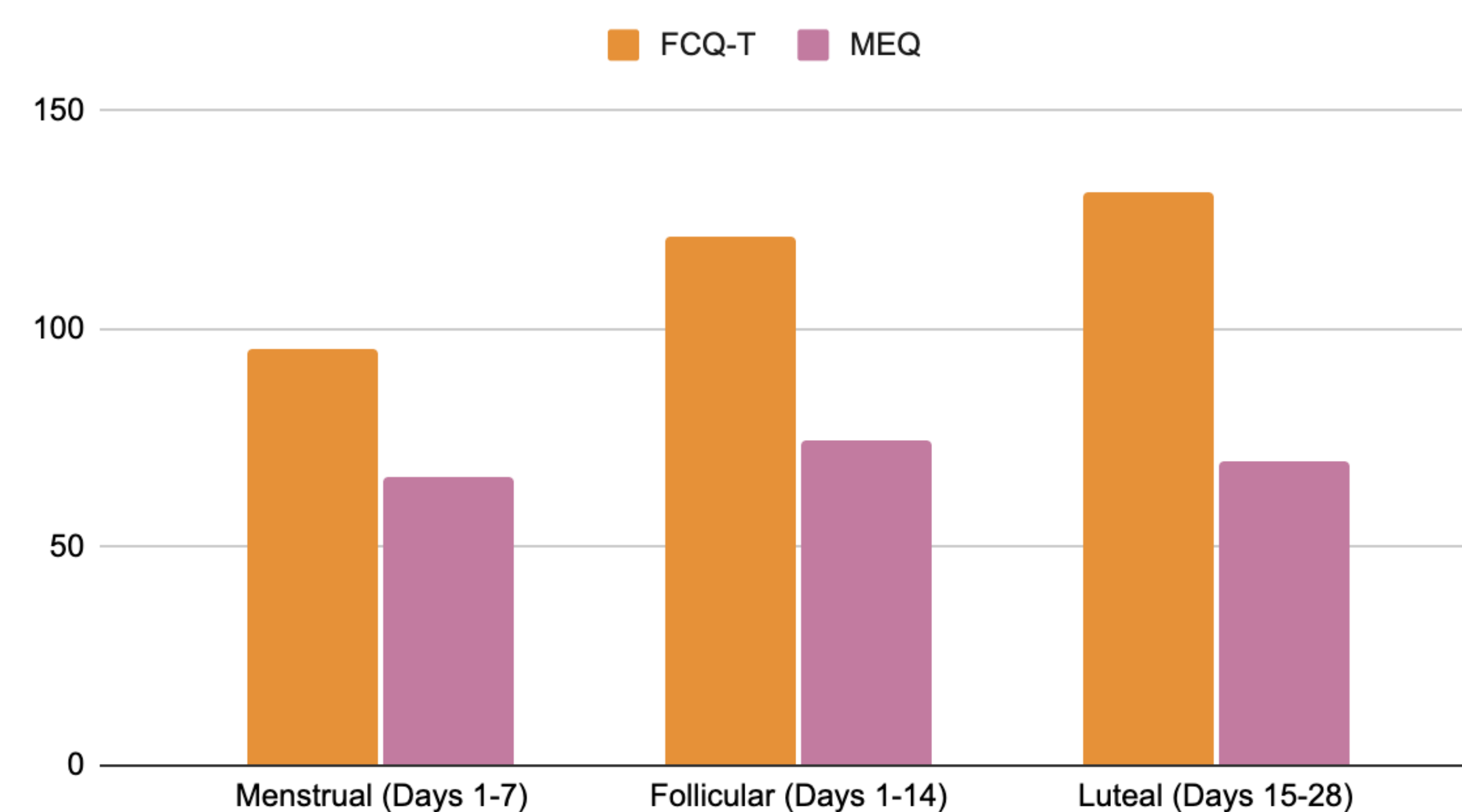
- Participants: at least 30 women at UD aged 18-24 years, experiencing a menstrual cycle
- Protocol: Qualtrics survey – 3 components:
 1. Demographics
 2. Food Cravings Questionnaire-Trait (FCQ-T) for the frequency and intensity of cravings
 - Higher score indicates more frequent and intense cravings (highest possible: 234)
 3. Mindful Eating Questionnaire (MEQ) for indications of general awareness, emotional responses, and distractions surrounding food
 - Higher score indicates more mindfulness (highest possible: 112)

Results

What Phase of Menstrual Cycle Participants Were In



Averaged Score on Questionnaires Categorized in Participants by their Current Phase



- 37 participants, 43% usable data
- Menstrual: FCQ-T of 95.5, MEQ of 66.3
- Follicular: FCQ-T of 121, MEQ of 74.2
- Luteal: FCQ-T of 131.4, MEQ of 69.9

Conclusions

- Luteal phase is correlated with higher energy intake and hedonic eating behavior
- Women succumbed to food cravings when thinking about food beforehand, feeling out of control, and receive emotional relief once craving is satisfied
- Mindfulness can help mitigate food cravings, when educated on strategies