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Food Choice and Weight Management Behavior Among Farmers' Children

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ABSTRACT

Appropriate nutrition plays a critical role in maintaining overall health, yet many individuals face challenges in managing their weight due to unhealthy eating habits, which can elevate the risk of various health conditions, including mental health disorders. This study investigates the food choices and weight management behaviors of children from farming families residing in Davao City, examining the potential relationship between these variables. Employing a correlational research design, the study surveyed 100 students from farming backgrounds who relocated to Davao City for educational purposes. The Food Choice Questionnaire was utilized to evaluate their weight management behaviors. Results revealed that sensory appeal, health considerations, and price were the predominant factors influencing food choices, whereas ethical concerns and weight control were less impactful. Participants demonstrated strong weight management behaviors, with perceived benefits and exercise self-efficacy receiving the highest scores, and perceived barriers rated the lowest. A significant correlation was identified between food choices and body weight management, suggesting that healthier food selections contribute positively to weight management, although other factors such as physical activity, genetics, and lifestyle also play influential roles.

INTRODUCTION

People's health depends on proper nutrition, but some consumers have food choices and weight management dilemmas. According to the World Health Organization (2024), nearly 890 million adults worldwide struggled with weight management in 2022, and data shows that one of the main factors of poor weight management is the unhealthy food choices of the consumer. Dietary behaviors among children are significantly influenced by nutrition knowledge and environmental factors, highlighting the importance of informed food choices in managing health outcomes (Issaka *et al.*, 2026). An expanded study from the Department of Science and Technology – Food and Nutrition Research Institute, conducted by Javier *et al.* (2024), reported that nearly one in 10 children aged 5 to 10 years old and 10 to 19 years old, respectively, struggle with weight management. Weight management involves adopting sustainable lifestyle practices, such as balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, and behavioral changes, to achieve and maintain a healthy weight, which is vital for reducing the risk of chronic diseases, improving mental and physical well-being, enhancing quality of life, and lowering healthcare costs (Mechanick, & Kushner 2019; Puhl *et al.*, 2020; WHO, 2021). Poor weight management can have a profound impact on mental health, such as depression, anxiety, and diminished self-esteem. According to Jones *et al.* (2020a), there is a strong relationship between poor weight management and depression, with poor weight management increasing the likelihood of depression due to systemic inflammation, hormonal changes, and social factors. In turn, depression can lead to behaviors such as

overeating and physical inactivity. It was also emphasized that unhealthy diet consumption can lead to risks of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and cancer (Al-Jawaldeh & Abbass, 2022).

A study in California, USA, has revealed that engaging children in food preparation, particularly within a farm environment, can effectively enhance their food choice preference for vegetables among those aged 8 to 10 (Crary *et al.*, 2021). Involving children in preparing nutritious meals at home is also recommended. These strategies will likely be more successful in promoting healthier eating habits among younger children than older ones. A study in Hong Kong has shown that students tended to eat more unhealthy foods to gain weight (Huang *et al.*, 2024). Such issues may involve how they view their appearance or how much they want to excel in sports. Researchers found that kids who go to bed late tend to eat more soft drinks and junk food. Research shows that young people do not prioritize weight control because they think other health issues are more important than poor weight management (Whiteley *et al.*, 2020). The school food environment (availability, pricing, portion sizes, vending/snack options, and canteen policies) strongly shapes adolescents' food choices (Kezelee *et al.*, 2024).

It was found by Dela Luna and Talavera (2021) that a major issue in the Philippines is under nutrition for school-aged children in farming families. Also, poor dietary diversity affected the relationship between socioeconomic status and underwent and stunting, but not wasting. Another study by Andriamparany *et al.* (2021) showed that children from wealthier socioeconomic backgrounds consumed various foods. However, regardless of wealth status,

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rice remained the most significant contributor to energy intake across all age groups. Stunting was more prevalent among Filipino children from the poorest socioeconomic backgrounds, while children from middle and wealthier backgrounds showed higher rates of poor weight management behavior. Malnutrition is a significant public health concern in the Philippines.

The researchers aim to address a significant gap in the study of farmers' children's food choices and weight management behavior. The lack of local research in Davao City creates a research gap. Although Davao is one of the major cities in the Philippines, there is little to no study about how farmers' children in this region make food choices and manage their weight. This study aims to investigate an often-overlooked topic: the eating habits and weight control techniques of children from agricultural households in Davao City. By concentrating on this demographic, the study intends to shed light on trends that may impact their health and well-being, providing valuable information for educators and community leaders seeking to encourage healthier living practices. The significance of this study stems from expanding public health problems, particularly those associated with poor eating and inefficient weight management, which appear to be becoming more serious among rural students, including farmer's children.

The primary purpose of this study is to determine what kind of foods farmers' children generally eat and how they control their weight. It addresses three fundamental questions: (a) How do these youngsters select their food? (b) How do they manage their weight? (c) Is there a relationship between their ability to pick foods and how they manage their weight? The study's goal in analyzing these features is to better understand the link between food choices and weight-related practices among this specific population of young people.

This study aligns with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically, SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being focuses on improving health through better weight management behaviors, which can reduce diet-related diseases and encourage healthier lifestyles among farmers' children. Additionally, SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production is closely connected, as the study emphasizes the importance of sustainable food choices, promoting locally sourced foods, and fostering responsible consumption habits within farming communities (United Nations, 2021a).

Investigating children's food choices and weight management behaviors could provide valuable insights for farmers' children, non-government organizations, government agencies, and future researchers. Farmers' children could benefit from the study as it may help them become more aware of their dietary habits and the impact of those habits on their health and well-being. In the community, this study may help non-government organizations implement strategies promoting healthy lifestyles to lead a healthier community. The result of this study may also benefit government agencies by

offering various programs that support healthy eating environments, such as establishing regulations that promote healthy food options and improving food availability. Future researchers may explore and expand more on the diverse nature of food choices and weight management behavior.

Understanding the factors influencing food choices and weight management behaviors is critical for promoting healthier lifestyles, particularly among children in agricultural communities. In this study, the Health Belief Model is applied. This theory, invented by the U.S. Public Health Services social scientists in the 1950s, says that if a person thinks a disease may affect them and that the prescribed actions can help, they are more likely to try the behavior. Researchers use the theory in their work to learn about what influences children's and teenagers' diets and weight, which helps create programs that support healthier habits. The Food Choice Theory by Furst, *et al.* (1996) is another useful theory related to the study. With this theory, it is easier to understand what influences a person's diet, which helps explain the nutrition and weight management habits of children from farming families. Living on a farm as a child usually means seeing and eating local foods. Parents can shape their children's food interests and attitudes by introducing foods early and often to children. Eating lots of homegrown foods can help children learn healthy habits and manage their weight better as time passes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This section presents the methods that were used in this study. It focused on the design, procedure, participants, materials, and instruments.

Design and Procedure

The study aims to explore the link between people's food options and their efforts to manage their weight. They conducted their study using the correlational approach described by Bhandari (2021). This way, you can assess how well children's eating habits relate to weight control without influencing the children. In Eckel's (2024) view, it is more common for correlational research to monitor similarities rather than try to change those relationships. Using this approach, the researchers aimed to discover the link between food choices and healthy weight management in Davao City students from farming families.

To ensure ethics and a consistent approach, the researchers stuck to a set of actions when collecting data. Approval was granted by getting authorization letters from the Dean for the research researchers sought to undertake. The researchers handed out survey questionnaires connected to their study and completed the questions only after all the requirements were fulfilled. Experts asked the survey participants to provide information about their gender, age, sex, and place of origin. Information was collected through face-to-face surveys, and surveys carried out over the Internet. Before the survey, participants were

told about the informed consent, and they gave it. Prior to the study, all participants were given accurate and straightforward details, such as its goals, possible advantages or dangers, how privacy was being protected, and the right to withdraw themselves at any point without facing any problems. Because of this, nobody involved in the study was sure of their responsibilities and did not feel safe. To check the quality of the research instrument, the researchers tested it on a small group with qualities similar to the study population. They made changes to the questionnaire following feedback given in the pilot test. Following the pilot test, the groundwork for the main data collection was done with the recruited subjects. All the data collected was accurate and private because ethics were upheld throughout the work. After the respondents finished the questionnaires, the researchers gathered their data. Both sets of data were studied to check the students' answers. Once the data were collected, the researchers started to study the results. After gathering the results, the statistician reviewed the data to ensure the findings were right. To interpret the data, the scientists applied statistical techniques like the mean, the standard deviation, and Pearson's r .

An overview of the participants' responses was formed using the mean. Using the standard deviation, researchers could determine how much every response varied from the average. Determining the square root of the variance was the method used (Hargrave, 2024). Using this item allowed the researchers to assess how dependable the answers given by participants were. A smaller standard deviation implies that many responses were near the mean, while a bigger one indicates more variability in the answers. Using this technique, the researchers found out how much the participants' responses from each group varied.

The researchers gained informed consent from the participants. Informed consent guaranteed that participants would willfully agree to participate in the study after knowing its objectives and possible risks and benefits. The procedure of getting permission from the participants consisted of two important steps: first, the participants were given complete information about the study, and second, the researchers obtained the participants' voluntary consent to participate.

To ensure maximum privacy of the participants, all personal details were kept confidential. As for the data itself, it was securely stored and could only be retrieved by individuals with the necessary authorization. Confidentiality in this context means a researcher's ethical responsibility to safeguard participants' private information from unauthorized access or disclosure. This entails protective measures such as anonymization of data and secure storage of records (Iphofen, 2020). In this case, confidentiality was always key; however, participants had to be informed that complete confidentiality could not be guaranteed. Certain situations, such as legal implications or the possibility of being able to tell who is in small sample sizes, limit options. These limitations were

provided during the informed consent session, during which participants were fully aware of these restrictions. At all times in the study, the researchers put in a lot of effort to reduce all possible risks; in this case, it was complex for the children regarding their emotional state, so great was their sensitivity that including them in the study meant that they were not abused in any way. There was consistency in the study process. Many additional measures were put in place to protect the privacy of participants. All sensitive information was anonymized by the allocation of unique numbers known as pseudonyms, which made it impossible to identify individual responses.

Respondents

The researchers obtained data from one hundred (100) students from a school within Davao City. Quota sampling was employed as the primary technique by ensuring the sample represented the population that was intended to be studied. This design allowed the researchers to obtain a fixed number of students whose parents were in rural areas and were farmers' students who moved to Davao City for schooling. In this study, quota sampling is defined as ensuring defined quotas (Iliyasu & Etikan, 2021). In this case, specific survey instruments were employed to capture the information from the selected respondents which was done purposefully to ensure that the participants were representative of the population under study.

The respondents attained some requirements for the researchers to gather insightful information about food choices and body weight management. The following were the qualifications for the study: (1) Students who were enrolled in a higher education institution in Davao City; (2) Aged 18 and above to align with the demographic focus of the study; (3) Students originating from rural provinces with agricultural backgrounds who pursued their education in Davao City and; (4) Whose parents were engaged in agricultural work, specifically in farming, as a primary occupation. These selection criteria aided in collecting relevant information for the research. Researchers excluded individuals not enrolled in any schools in Davao City, those who did not live in the province, and those whose parents did not practice farming. Furthermore, researchers envisioned a practical and ethical evaluation of farmers' children's food choices and weight management.

Materials and Instruments

The materials and instruments used in this research were the Food Choice Questionnaire and the Health Belief Model Questionnaire for Body Weight Management Behavior. The Food Choice Questionnaire by Steptoe, Pollard, and Wardle (1995) measured an individual's food choices regarding mood, health, convenience, sensory appeal, natural content, price, weight control, familiarity, and ethical concern. The Food Choice Questionnaire measured an individual's choices of food in terms of mood, health, convenience, sensory appeal, natural

content, price, weight control, familiarity, and ethical concern (Głabska & Guzek, 2021).

Table 1 presents the rating scale for Food Choices Among Farmers' Children. This categorized the responses from "Very Low" to "Very High" based on the numerical scale of 1.00 being the lowest and 4.00 being the highest.

This provided clear and concise interpretations that reflect the frequency and importance of healthy eating in considering their food choices, which offers insights into nutritional awareness and habit.

The Health Belief Model Questionnaire for Body Weight Management Behavior (HBM-QBWM) was used to

Table 1: Rating Scale for Food Choice

Scale Limit	Descriptive Level	Interpretation
3.25 – 4.00	Very High	Best food choice behavior among farmers' children. Shows that the respondent frequently considers healthy foods in their food choices.
2.50 – 3.24	High	Average food choice behavior among farmers' children. Indicates that the respondent occasionally considers healthy foods, but it does not consistently influence their food choices.
1.75 – 2.49	Low	Below-average food choice factors among farmers' children. Suggests that the respondent considers or practices eating healthy foods infrequently, with minimal importance or impact on their food choices.
1.00 – 1.74	Very Low	The worst imaginable food choice behavior among farmer's children. This indicates that the respondent does not consider eating healthy foods in their food choice.

measure how students manage their weight in terms of their perceived severity, susceptibility, barriers, self-efficacy in dieting and exercise, behavioral intention of weight management, and cue to action.

Table 2 shows the rating scale for assessing Body Weight Management Among Farmers' Children, with a scale ranging from 1.00 being the lowest and 5.00 being the highest. The table was classified into five descriptive

levels, "Very Low" to "Very High", based on the degree of effective weight management practices. The scale helped interpret the farmers' children's behavior, from the worst imaginable to outstanding weight management habits

The scales underwent a comprehensive validation process to guarantee their reliability and precision in assessing the targeted variables. This process encompassed

Table 2: Rating Scale for Weight Management Behavior

Scale Limit	Descriptive Level	Interpretatio
4.21 – 5.00	Very High	Outstanding weight management behavior among farmers' children.
3.41 – 4.20	High	Best imaginable weight management behavior among farmers' children.
2.61 – 3.40	Moderate	Average weight management among farmers' children.
1.81 – 2.60	Low	Below-average weight management among Farmers' children.
1.00 – 1.80	Very Low	The worst imaginable weight management among farmers' children.

both content and construct validation, ensuring the instrument's relevance to the study's context and its capacity to yield robust and high-quality data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section analyzes the findings of this study. This section tackled the interpretation of the student's food choices regarding Health, Mood, Convenience, Sensory Appeal, Natural Content, Price, Weight Control, Familiarity, and Ethical Concern. Moreover, this section also interpreted the students' Perceived Severity, Perceived Susceptibility, Perceived Barriers, Perceived Benefits, Cue to Action, Perceived Self-Efficacy in Dieting, Perceived Self-Efficacy in Exercise, and Behavioral Intention to Weight Management. Furthermore, the section of this study discussed the students' body weight management and food choices.

Level of Food Choice Among Farmers' Children

Table 3 presents a descriptive analysis of the factors influencing food choices among farmers' children

based on their mean scores, standard deviations, and corresponding descriptive levels.

Table 3 presents the levels of food choice among farmers' children, demonstrating the various factors that influence their decision-making. The health predictor has a mean of 3.51 and a standard deviation of 0.52, which is interpreted as extremely high. This indicates that farmers' children's health considerations play a significant role in food selection. A high mean score indicates that the farmers' children consider vitamins, minerals, and overall well-being when selecting food. Understanding people's nutritional choices is important for promoting healthy and sustainable consumption habits (Szalunka *et al.*, 2021). According to Gustafson (2022), people who considered the long-term impact of food on their health used about one more piece of nutritional information per food category when making food choices than those who did not think about future health effects.

The mean of the mood factor is 3.53, and the standard deviation is 0.57, which is predicted to be very high. Mood represents an emotional state and shows that

Table 3: Levels of Food Choice Among Farmers' Children

Food Choice	Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Level
Heath	3.51	0.52	Very High
Mood	3.53	0.57	Very High
Convenience	3.41	0.57	Very High
Sensory Appeal	3.62	0.42	Very High
Natural Content	3.16	0.64	High
Price	3.47	0.57	Very High
Weight Control	3.11	0.79	High
Familiarity	3.22	0.65	Very High
Ethical Concern	3.11	0.83	High
Overall	3.35	0.39	Very High

it also influences the farmers' children's food choices. They select food based on feelings, choosing comfort foods when sad or light and fresh foods when happy. Social context, with whom and where the food is eaten, access to fresh foods, and memories of foods shared with loved ones all impact their mood (Lee *et al.*, 2023). In contrast to Ljubičić *et al.* (2023), emotions might provoke emotional eating behavior, which may be a factor in the risk of developing chronic diseases, such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, and other health problems.

The convenience has a mean of 3.41, a standard deviation of 0.57, and a descriptive level of remarkably high. This refers to the ease of preparation and consumption of food. A high mean score indicates that farmers' children prefer ready-to-eat meals, snacks, or food requiring less effort to prepare. A study by Fernandez *et al.* (2021) found that accessibility and affordability are significant considerations, particularly for people with constrained financial resources or limited time for meal preparation.

The sensory appeal factor was among the highest-rated, with a mean of 3.62 and a standard deviation of 0.42, which indicates that food taste, texture, aroma, and visual appeal strongly influence farmers' children's choices. Having the highest mean score indicates that farmers' children prioritize how food looks and tastes. This is consistent with studies highlighting how sensory characteristics significantly impact food preferences, particularly among younger populations (Lahne *et al.*, 2020).

The natural content factor has a mean of 3.16, a standard deviation of 0.64, and is described as high. Natural content refers to organic, minimally processed, and free from artificial ingredients foods. A high score suggests that although farmers' children consider this aspect, they are not concerned about the content or the ingredients inside the food they purchase. Saraiva *et al.* (2020) supported the idea that people are aware of what they eat; consumers and the food industry are interested in natural foods.

The price factor has a mean of 3.47, showing a very high descriptive level and a standard deviation of 0.57. The price factor represents the affordability of food and how it influences decision-making. A very high descriptive

level suggests that the cost of food choices is a significant factor, likely due to financial considerations in farming households. Adolescents often have limited financial resources, and affordability plays a key role in food decisions (Daly *et al.*, 2021). Many people, significantly younger individuals or those in low-income groups, are concerned about their financial futures, directly impacting their decisions about what food they buy or consume (Shen *et al.*, 2020).

The weight control predictor has a mean of 3.11, an SD of 0.79, and a high weight control level. Farmers' children choose food based on its effect on weight and fitness. A lower mean suggests that some farmers' children consider this factor; however, it is not as dominant as the other factors, such as taste and convenience. Weight control is associated with improved nutritional quality, indicating that people who engaged in weight management successfully adhered to their goals by regulating their food intake (Marty *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, a study by Mbarushimana *et al.* (2021) suggests that individuals overestimate their weight and often go on a diet.

The familiarity has a mean of 3.22, a standard deviation of 0.65, and an impressively high familiarity factor. Familiarity represents the tendency to choose the food that the farmers' children are familiar with and have tried before. The high mean indicates that farmers' children prefer familiar foods over trying new ones. Consumers favor familiar dishes, whether traditional dishes from their own culture or adopted ethnic dishes (Frez-Muñoz *et al.*, 2024).

The ethical concern predictor has a mean of 3.11, a standard deviation of 0.83, and a high descriptive level. Ethical concerns include sustainability, environmental impact, and fair trade in food selection. A high score suggests these issues are less influential in farmers' children's decision-making. Ethical decisions in food selection ensure the integrity of food consumption and broaden global health and well-being (Varzakas & Antoniadou, 2024). Furthermore, Spagnuolo (2021) suggested that public policy regarding food consumption must be addressed to tackle the root cause and ensure everyone is served within the food system.

Lastly, the overall mean score of 3.35, with a standard

deviation of 0.39, is interpreted as high. This suggests that the respondents consider multiple aspects when selecting food. The nutritional knowledge and dietary practices led to significant improvements that construct the framework's effectiveness in promoting dietary behaviors. A study by Diddana *et al.* (2023) assessed the impact of nutrition education based on the Food Choice Theory on nutritional knowledge and dietary practices. Furthermore, the results align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production. This emphasizes the importance of sustainable food choices, promotes local foods, and promotes responsible food consumption in farming communities (United Nations, 2021b).

Level of Body Weight Management Among Farmers' Children

The table below presents a descriptive statistical analysis of body weight management behaviors among farmers' children, the indicators based on their mean score and standard deviation, and the descriptive level score per indicator. The overall mean score, which is classified as very high, suggests that farmers' children are highly engaged in body weight management based on multiple factors, with a particular emphasis on sensory and convenience-related aspects.

Table 4 represents the body weight management among farmers' children and the factors that affect them in terms of mean and standard deviation. The high level

Table 4: Levels of Body Weight Management Behavior Among Farmers' Children

Body Weight Management	Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Level
Perceived Severity	3.63	0.75	High
Perceived Susceptibility	3.53	0.83	High
Perceived Barriers	3.24	0.76	Moderate
Perceived Benefits	4.31	0.55	Very High
Cue to Action	3.86	0.62	High
Perceived Self-Efficacy in Dieting	3.43	0.73	High

of perceived severity can be explained by its factors. A mean of 3.63 defines a person's belief about the seriousness of a health condition or its consequences. It involves how severely they think of the effects of being overweight or obese, such as the risk of diabetes, heart disease, or reduced quality of life. A high severity level means they recognize the negative consequences of poor weight management, which may encourage them to act. A similar research study by Kebede *et al.* (2023a) indicated that higher perceived severity of weight-related health conditions significantly increased the desire to participate in weight control practices.

Furthermore, students noticed that there were possible negative psychological and physical consequences of being obese, such as chronic diseases, mental health problems, and relationship problems (Saghafi-Asl *et al.*, 2020a). According to Guan and Chen (2024), with proper parental nutrition knowledge, the perceived severity may mediate overweight and obesity. Furthermore, hereditary or childbirth hindered achieving a typical weight figure (Agyapong *et al.*, 2020).

The high level of perceived susceptibility, with a mean of 3.53, shows that farmers' children acknowledged that weight issues might affect them personally, which increases the motivation to take preventive action. Farmers' children also feel at risk of experiencing health problems, especially weight problems. The data defines the individual's belief about their risk of developing a health issue. Weight management involves how likely they think they are to suffer health problems due to their weight, such as believing they are at high risk of developing heart disease if they do not manage their weight. These findings align with a similar study from Kebede *et al.*

(2023b), which indicated that individuals who recognized the severe consequences of obesity, such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and reduced quality of life, were more motivated to adopt weight management strategies.

The perceived barrier has a mean of 3.24, indicating a moderate level. The moderate level suggests that barriers may not be essential enough to prevent weight management behaviors completely. Respondents also faced challenges managing their weight, such as a lack of time, motivation, financial constraints, or difficulty maintaining a healthy diet/exercise. A study from Kebede *et al.* (2023c) suggests that higher perceived barriers were associated with lower intentions to engage in weight management behaviors, which means beliefs about the tangible and psychological costs of the advised action.

The study found that perceived weight management benefits had a high mean score of 3.24 with a standard deviation of 0.55, suggesting that respondents strongly believe in its positive health outcomes, such as improved well-being, disease prevention, and enhanced physical appearance. This indicates that individuals recognize the advantages of maintaining a healthy weight, which may influence their motivation to adopt weight control behaviors. Raman *et al.* (2024) support this notion, highlighting that understanding the benefits of weight management enhances self-efficacy and encourages healthier weight-related behaviors. However, weight management behaviors may affect subjective factors such as perception of body image and perception of one's weight and objective factors like parents' guidance, peer pressure, social culture, and social media (Song *et al.*, 2022a).

The result of the study under the cue-to-action factor had

a mean average of 3.86 and a standard deviation of 0.62, which was interpreted as high. The data shows that the respondents experience external or internal motivators that push them toward weight management behaviors, such as doctor's advice, social media awareness, or personal health concerns. A high cue-to-action result indicates that individuals receive enough signals to consider addressing their weight. Cues to action, like health campaigns or advice from healthcare professionals, significantly influenced students' weight management behaviors (Saghafi-Asl *et al.*, 2020b). However, a study by Song *et al.* (2022b) about bad weight-related habits has focused more on suppressing unwanted impulses or avoiding signals.

The perceived self-efficacy in dieting was predicted, and the score was 3.43 in mean average and 0.73 in standard deviation, which was interpreted as high. This means that farmers' children believe that having a healthy diet is crucial in their daily routine; they also experience external or internal motivators that push them toward weight management behaviors, such as doctors' advice, social media awareness, or personal health concerns. According to research, early increases in self-efficacy, specifically in managing eating habits, during digital weight reduction programs are associated with increased involvement in dietary self-monitoring (Cleare *et al.*, 2024). Furthermore, body image and self-esteem influence how efficiently people control their weight. These characteristics can have a major impact on the success of health coaching, regardless of whether a person perceives their body positively or negatively (Ayala & Bernstein, 2020). In the current study, the participants' perceived self-efficacy connected to exercise had a mean score of 3.74 with a standard deviation of 0.79, placing it in the high category. This indicates that many respondents are confident they can include physical exercise in their everyday routines. Their replies suggest a conviction in their ability to be active regularly, especially in the face of frequent obstacles such as time limits and a lack of enthusiasm.

Lastly, behavioral intention toward weight management has a mean of 3.34, a standard deviation of 0.98, and is interpreted as moderate. Specifically, the farmers' children

indicate an aim to manage their weight, such as eating healthier or exercising more. Students intended to manage their weight by exercising rather than dieting (Saghafi-Asl *et al.*, 2020c). Furthermore, respondents show some intention to manage their weight, such as planning to eat healthier or exercise more. On top of that, a study by Jones *et al.* (2020b) shows an improvement in depression, mental health-related quality of life, satisfaction with life, and exercise self-efficacy with behavioral weight loss interventions. The overall body weight management yielded an average of 3.64, which was interpreted as an outstanding level of weight management. This indicates that the children of farmers exhibit a high level of weight management following the Health Belief Model theory (Champion & Skinner 2008). The results varied from moderate to extremely high, with the lowest level of perceived barriers in body weight management, with an average of 3.24, and the highest factor perceived benefits, with an average of 4.31. Furthermore, the result of the study aligns with Sustainable Development Goal number 3, specifically, Good Health and Well-being, which focuses on improving health through healthier weight management, which in turn also reduces diet-related diseases and encourages a healthy lifestyle among farmers' children (United Nations, 2021c).

Correlations Between Food Choice and Body Weight Management Behavior

Based on the above data, the analysis shows the relationship between food choice and farmers' children's body weight management behavior, which is indicated by its significance level. The results suggest that children who make healthier food choices are more likely to engage in effective body weight management behaviors.

The table shows the relationship between food choices and body weight management behavior among children of farmers. The analysis is grounded on Pearson's correlation coefficient and significance values to determine the strength of the relationship between the two variables. The results show a moderate positive correlation ($r = .351$, $p = .000$) between food choice scores and body weight management scores. The study

Table 5: Correlation Between Food Choice and Body Weight Management Behavior

		Food Choice Score	Body Weight Management Score
Food Choice Score	Pearson Correlation	1	.351**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
Body Weight Management	Pearson Correlation	.351**	1
Score	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

shows a statistically meaningful link between meal choices and weight control activities ($p < 0.01$). This research implies that how younger individuals choose their diet is significantly related to how they control their weight.

The results show that weight control practices tend to improve when people make healthier eating choices. Poor eating choices are likely to lead to less successful weight control. The study also exposed a slight positive

correlation between the two variables, suggesting that, while not too strong, the correlation is coefficient and significant among farmers' children. The result implies that interventions to improve dietary decisions may positively influence weight management outcomes.

The magnitude and relationship of the data show a correlation of 0.351, which in turn suggests a reasonable connection rather than a strong one. The result means that while food selection plays a significant role in weight management, other factors such as physical activity, metabolism, and other lifestyle habits will contribute. The positive correlation implies that the farmers' children with a higher food choice score tend to have better body weight management scores. However, since the correlation is not close to 1, this implies that food selection alone does not fully determine the outcomes of body weight management. Food choices influence weight control and interact with physiological and psychological variables (Sabbah *et al.*, 2024b).

The findings of this study align with Furst, *et al.* (1996) food choice theory, which suggests that sensory appeal, health considerations, convenience, and social factors highly influence food selection. A recent report by Brown (2025) found that nearly half of Australians see the cost of living as a significant obstacle to eating healthy, with more than 60% struggling to afford fresh produce. Food choices with a high score may reflect an awareness of healthy eating and lifestyle, supporting better weight management. Furthermore, Martinho *et al.* (2021) suggest that economic motivation also plays an important role, with convenience and quality concerns being essential. On top of that, the results can be interpreted by the scientists from the U.S. Public Health Office; the Health Belief Model (HBM) from the 1950s explains that health behaviors are based on perceived benefits, barriers, susceptibility, and self-efficacy. People who understand the benefits of good eating frequently assume they have more control over their weight because of their food choices. This perception can lead to more constant involvement in weight management practices. However, financial restrictions can substantially impact dietary choices, restricting some people's access to healthier options. Supporting this, Natour *et al.* (2022) discovered that those aware of the benefits of healthy eating are more likely to make educated and nutritious meal choices. These findings demonstrate the significant link between health awareness and behavior, emphasizing the need to promote healthy eating as an essential component of public health efforts for effective weight control.

CONCLUSION

This study evaluated the food selection patterns and weight management behaviors of farmers' children in Davao City, exploring the relationship between these factors through statistical analyses. Results showed that these children are highly aware and thoughtful about their food choices, influenced mainly by health concerns, but also by emotions, convenience, and affordability.

Natural food content was less prioritized. Their approach reflects substantial knowledge and mindfulness about diet. Regarding weight management, participants showed moderate to very high engagement, recognizing health risks and adopting preventive measures despite challenges like time and financial constraints. They favored exercise over dieting, indicating a proactive health attitude. A moderate positive correlation was found between food choices and weight management, though this relationship is complex and affected by other factors such as physical activity and lifestyle. The study highlights the importance of a holistic approach integrating nutrition, exercise, and lifestyle for effective weight management.

Recommendation

Recommendations include encouraging farmers' children to participate in educational programs promoting healthy lifestyles and regular physical activity. NGOs should lead community efforts to improve nutritional literacy and access to healthy foods. Governments are urged to implement policies that increase availability and affordability of nutritious options and improve ready-to-eat food quality. Future research should expand to diverse populations and explore additional factors like psychological well-being and technology's role in supporting healthy behaviors.

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