International Journal of Advanced Health Science and Technology
Homepage: ijahst.org
e-ISSN:2808-6422; p-ISSN:2829-3037
Vol. 3 No.2, pp. 72-78, April 2023

RESEARCH ARTICLE
OPEN ACCESS

Manuscript received February 5, 2023; revised March 20, 2023; accepted April 20, 2023; date of publication April 30, 2023
Digital Object Identifier (**DOI**): https://doi.org/10.35882/ijahst.v3i2.216

How to cite: Dian Isti Angraini, Asiah Nurul Izzah, Khairun Nisa, Reni Zuraida, "Factors Influencing the Selection of Healthy and Unhealthy Diet Behavior in Adolescent Girls in Bandar Lampung", International Journal of Advanced Health Science and Technology, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 72–78, April. 2023.

Factors Influencing the Selection of Healthy and Unhealthy Diet Behavior in Adolescent Girls in Bandar Lampung

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ABSTRACT Adolescence is a critical stage of physical, psychological, and cognitive development, during which dietary behaviors are influenced by various internal and external factors. This study aimed to investigate the factors affecting unhealthy dietary behavior among adolescent girls in Bandar Lampung. An analytical observational approach with a cross-sectional design was used, and primary data was collected from 135 adolescent girls aged 15–21 years between April and June 2022. Participants were selected through multistage random sampling. Data was gathered using questionnaires and analyzed using the chi-square test. The findings revealed that 56.3% of the participants exhibited unhealthy dietary behavior. Statistical analysis identified that nutritional status ($p = 0.000$; PR = 2.072) and body image ($p = 0.000$; PR = 0.559) significantly influenced dietary behavior, with malnutrition and body dissatisfaction correlating with higher likelihoods of unhealthy eating habits. In contrast, factors such as knowledge, age, pocket money, and peer influence showed no significant impact on dietary choices. Specifically, adolescent girls with malnutrition were found to be twice as likely to engage in unhealthy eating behaviors compared to those with normal nutritional status. Similarly, those satisfied with their body image were 1.8 times more likely to adopt unhealthy dietary practices. In conclusion, the study highlights the significant role of nutritional status and body image in shaping dietary behavior among adolescent girls. While other factors such as knowledge and peer influence did not demonstrate a direct effect, interventions to promote healthy eating should focus on improving nutrition education and addressing body image issues. Further research with varied methodologies is recommended to validate these findings and explore additional influencing factors.

INDEX TERMS Adolescent girls, unhealthy dietary behavior, nutritional status, body image, dietary factors.

I. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical stage in human development, marked by rapid physical, psychological, and cognitive changes. For adolescent girls, typically aged between 10 and 21 years, this period represents the transition from childhood to adulthood. During this stage, eating behaviors and body image perceptions often become more pronounced and can have long-term health implications. Unhealthy eating habits during adolescence contribute significantly to nutritional deficiencies, obesity, and other health problems that can persist into adulthood [1][2]. Research has identified several factors that influence adolescent dietary behaviors, including nutritional knowledge, peer influence, socioeconomic conditions, and body image perceptions [3][4][5]. Despite the recognition of the importance of healthy eating patterns, many adolescent girls engage in suboptimal dietary habits, which may increase their risk for chronic health conditions, including eating disorders, obesity, and malnutrition [6][7].

Studies examining adolescent dietary behaviors have consistently identified the interplay of psychological, social, and environmental factors in shaping eating habits. For instance, body image dissatisfaction has been strongly linked to unhealthy eating behaviors, with adolescents who feel dissatisfied with their bodies more likely to engage in restrictive diets, skipping meals, or adopting disordered eating practices [8][9]. Moreover, peer influence has been shown to play a significant role in determining dietary choices, as adolescents are often influenced by their friends' eating habits [10][11]. Additionally, socioeconomic factors, including income and access to food, have been reported as key determinants of adolescents' dietary behaviors [12]-[29]. However, there remains a gap in the literature, particularly regarding the role of factors such as nutritional status, pocket money, and cultural influences on adolescent girls' eating behaviors in specific regions, such as Bandar Lampung, Indonesia.

The aim of this study is to explore the factors influencing unhealthy dietary behaviors in adolescent girls in Bandar Lampung, Indonesia. This research investigates the impact of factors such as knowledge, age, nutritional status, body image,

e-ISSN:2808-6422; p-ISSN:2829-3037
Vol. 3 No.2, pp. 72-78, April 2023

pocket money, and peer influence on dietary behavior. By examining these variables in a regional context, this study will offer valuable insights into the dietary practices of adolescent girls, contributing to the development of more targeted interventions for improving dietary habits among this population. The research employs an observational analytical approach using a cross-sectional design, which is an appropriate methodology for understanding the relationship between multiple factors and dietary behaviors at a given point in time.

This study makes three important contributions to the field: (1) it identifies and analyzes the key factors influencing unhealthy dietary behavior in adolescent girls in Bandar Lampung, (2) it highlights the significance of body image and nutritional status in shaping eating habits among adolescent girls, and (3) it provides recommendations for targeted interventions aimed at improving dietary behaviors in this vulnerable demographic. The findings from this study are particularly relevant for public health practitioners, educators, and policymakers who aim to design interventions to address unhealthy eating patterns in adolescent girls [30].

The article is structured as follows: Section II outlines the research methodology, including the sampling technique, data collection methods, and analysis procedures. Section III presents the results of the study, detailing the factors that significantly influence dietary behavior. Section IV discusses the implications of these findings in relation to existing literature, offering a comparative analysis of the study's results. Finally, Section V concludes the paper, summarizing the key findings and suggesting avenues for future research.

II. METHOD

This study utilized an observational analytical approach with a cross-sectional design to investigate the factors influencing unhealthy dietary behavior in adolescent girls in Bandar Lampung, Indonesia. The study was designed to identify the relationships between various factors, including nutritional knowledge, body image, nutritional status, age, pocket money, and peer influence, and how they affect dietary choices among the target population. A cross-sectional study design was deemed appropriate for capturing a snapshot of dietary behaviors at a specific point in time, which is critical for understanding the current state of adolescent health and nutrition in the region [31].

A. STUDY POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The study population consisted of adolescent girls aged 15 to 21 years, residing in Bandar Lampung, Indonesia. The inclusion criteria required participants to be females within this age range who were willing to participate in the study and had obtained parental consent. Adolescents with known chronic illnesses, disabilities, or those on medically prescribed diets were excluded to prevent confounding factors that could influence their dietary behavior independently of the study's focus [32].

A total of 135 participants were selected using a multistage random sampling technique. This method was employed to ensure a representative sample of adolescent girls across different socioeconomic backgrounds, educational levels, and neighborhoods within Bandar Lampung. Multistage random sampling involved first selecting schools from various districts, followed by random selection of classes, and then randomly selecting students from those classes. This sampling method ensures the generalizability of the findings to the larger population of adolescent girls in Bandar Lampung [33][34].

B. STUDY VARIABLES

The independent variables in this study included

1. NUTRITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Measured using a questionnaire that assessed participants' understanding of balanced nutrition, dietary guidelines, and the role of various food groups in health. Nutritional knowledge was categorized as "good" or "poor" based on predefined scoring criteria [35].

2. AGE

Participants were categorized into two groups: early adolescence (15-17 years) and late adolescence (18-21 years), based on developmental and psychological differences that are often associated with age during this life stage [36].

3. NUTRITIONAL STATUS

Determined by calculating the Body Mass Index (BMI) of each participant, which was classified according to standard World Health Organization (WHO) criteria. Participants with a BMI below the 5th percentile were considered undernourished, while those above the 85th percentile were categorized as overweight or obese [37].

4. BODY IMAGE

Assessed through a self-reported body image questionnaire, categorizing participants into those satisfied and dissatisfied with their body appearance [38].

5. POCKET MONEY

Categorized based on the average weekly pocket money received by participants. Those receiving below the median were classified as having "low" pocket money, while those receiving above the median were classified as having "adequate" pocket money [39].

6. PEER INFLUENCE

Measured using a questionnaire that assessed the extent to which participants felt influenced by their peers' dietary behaviors. The responses were dichotomized into "influenced by peers" and "not influenced by peers" [40].

The dependent variable was dietary behavior, which was categorized as either healthy or unhealthy based on responses to a semi-quantitative food frequency questionnaire (SQFFQ). This tool included questions about the frequency of consumption of fruits, vegetables, fast food, sugary beverages, and snacks, in line with the principles of balanced nutrition [41].

C. DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires and anthropometric measurements. The questionnaires were distributed to participants during school hours, ensuring that

e-ISSN:2808-6422; p-ISSN:2829-3037
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all participants had the opportunity to complete them in a controlled environment. Prior to administration, the questionnaires were pre-tested for validity and reliability with a small sample of participants to ensure the accuracy of the data. The validity of the questionnaires was established by expert review, while reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with values exceeding 0.8 indicating good reliability [42]. Anthropometric data, including height and weight, were measured by trained research assistants following standardized procedures. Weight was measured using digital scales, and height was measured using a stadiometer. BMI was then calculated as weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters [43].

D. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The data were analyzed using both univariate and bivariate methods. Descriptive statistics were first used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the participants, including their age, socioeconomic status, and dietary behavior. To assess the relationships between the independent variables (nutritional knowledge, age, nutritional status, body image, pocket money, and peer influence) and the dependent variable (dietary behavior), chi-square tests were employed. The chi-square test is commonly used in cross-sectional studies to evaluate whether there is a statistically significant association between categorical variables [44].

The significance level was set at 0.05, and odds ratios (ORs) with 95% confidence intervals (CIs) were calculated for each factor found to be significantly associated with unhealthy dietary behavior. This allows for an understanding of the strength of association between each factor and the likelihood of engaging in unhealthy dietary practices [45].

E. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study was conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines for research involving human participants. Ethical approval was obtained from the Medical Faculty Ethics Committee of Lampung University (approval number 1408/UN26.18/PP.05.02.00/2022). Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and parental consent was secured for participants under 18 years of age. Participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential and that participation was voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any time without any consequences [46].

III. RESULTS

The univariate analysis provides an overview of the characteristics of all the variables studied, namely the diet behavior of adolescent girls and the factors that affect the selection of it. The results showed that the research subjects had healthy diet behavior in as many as 59 people (43,7%) and unhealthy diet behavior in as many as 76 people (56,3%), knowledge regarding balanced nutrition was poor in as many as 117 people (86,7%) and good as many as 18 people (13,3%), middle adolescent girls as many as 125 people (92,6%) and late adolescent girls as many as 10 people (7,4%).

The results showed that the research subjects had nutritional status malnutrition in as many as 69 people (51,1%) and normal nutritional status in as many as 66 people (48,9%), dissatisfied body image in as many as 67 people (49,6%) and satisfied body image as many as 68 people (50,4%), adequate pocket money as many as 49 people (36,3%) and low pocket money as many as 86 people (63,7%), influenced by peers as many as 64 people (47,4%) and not influenced by peers as many as 71 people (52,6%). Characteristics of subjects are presented in TABLE 1. The bivariate analysis resulted in the effect of affecting factors (knowledge, age, nutritional status, body image, pocket money, and peer influence) on unhealthy dietary behavior in adolescent girls. The results showed that adolescent girls who have poor knowledge will behave unhealthy diet behavior as many as 63 people (53,8%) smaller than adolescent girls who have good knowledge as many as 13 people (72,2%). The results of statistical tests showed that knowledge did not influence the selection of unhealthy dietary behavior (p = 0,227).

The results of this research showed that adolescent girls who were middle adolescent girls will behave with unhealthy diet behavior as many as 73 people (56,4%) larger than adolescent girls who were late adolescent girls as many as 3 people (30%). The results of statistical tests showed that age had no influence on selection of unhealthy dietary behavior (p = 0,158).

TABLE 1
The Characteristics of Subjects

Variable		Amount (f)	Percentage (%)
Diet Behavior			
a.	Unhealthy	76	56,3
b.	Healthy	59	43,7
Knowledge			
a.	Poor	117	86,7
b.	Good	18	13,3
Age			
a.	Middle adolescent	125	92,6
b.	Late adolescent	10	7,4
Nutritional Status			
a.	Malnutrition	69	51,1
b.	Normal	66	48,9
Body Image			
a.	Dissatisfied	67	49,6
b.	Satisfied	68	50,4
Pocket Money			
a.	Low	86	63,7
b.	Adequate	49	36,3
Peer Influence			
a.	Yes	64	47,4
b.	No	71	52,6

The results of this research showed that adolescent girls who was malnutrition will behave unhealthy diet behavior as many as 52 people (75,4%) larger than adolescent girls who was normal nutrition status as many as 24 people (37,2%). The results of statistical tests showed that nutritional status had an influence on selection of unhealthy dietary behavior (p = 0,000) (TABLE 1). Nutritional status is a risk factor for unhealthy diet behavior in adolescent girls with OR = 2 (CI: 1,466-2,931), which means adolescent girls with malnutrition have a 2 times higher risk for unhealthy diet behavior, better than adolescent girls with normal nutritional status.

The results of this research showed that adolescent girls who was satisfied body image will behave unhealthy diet behavior as many as 49 people (72,1%) larger than adolescent girls who was dissatisfied body image as many as 27 people (40,3%). The results of statistical tests showed that body image had an influence on selection of unhealthy dietary behavior (p =

e-ISSN:2808-6422; p-ISSN:2829-3037
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0,000). Body image is a risk factor for unhealthy diet behavior in adolescent girls with OR = 1,8 (CI: 0,403-0,775), which means adolescent girls with satissfied body image have a 1,8 times higher risk for unhealthy diet behavior, better than adolescent girls with dissatisfied body image.

The results of this research showed that adolescent girls who had low pocket money will behave unhealthy diet behavior as many as 25 people (51%) smaller than adolescent girls who had adequate pocket money as many as 51 people (59,3%). The results of statistical tests showed that pocket money had no influence on selection of unhealthy dietary behavior (p = 0,860).

The results of this research showed that adolescent girls who had peers influence will behave unhealthy diet behavior as many as 41 people (64,1%) larger than adolescent girls who had no peers influence as many as 35 people (49,3%). The results of statistical tests showed that peers had no influence on selection of unhealthy dietary behavior (p = 0,120). The influence of factors affecting the selection of healthy and unhealthy diet behavior in adolescent girls in Bandar Lampung is presented in TABLE 2.

TABLE 2
The Influence of Factors Affecting The Selection Of Healthy And Unhealthy Diet Behavior In Adolescent Girls

Variable	Unhealthy Diet Behavior		Healthy Diet Behavior		*p* value	OR	95% CI
	n	%	n	%			
Knowledge							
a. Poor	63	53,8	54	46,2	0,227	NA	0,53-
b. Good	13	72,2	5	27,8			1,03
Age							
a. Middle	73	56,4	52	41,5	0,158	NA	0,74-
b. Latel	3	30	7	79			5,07
Nutritional Status							
a. Malnutrition	52	75,4	17	24,6	0.000*	2	1,46-
b. Normal	24	37,2	42	63,6			2,93
Body Image							
a. Satissfied	49	72,1	19	27,9	0.000*	1,8	0,40-
b. Dissatisfied	27	40,3	40	59,7			0,77
Pocket Money							
a. Low	51	59,3	35	40,7	0,452	NA	0,62-
b. Adequate	25	51	24	49			1,19
Peer Influence							
a. Yes	41	64,1	23	35,9	0,12	NA	0,96-
b. No	35	49,3	36	50,7			1,75

IV. DISCUSSION

A. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the factors influencing unhealthy dietary behavior in adolescent girls in Bandar Lampung, Indonesia. The results revealed that 56.3% of the participants exhibited unhealthy dietary behaviors. This finding is consistent with the broader literature that suggests a high prevalence of poor dietary habits among adolescents globally, which often leads to increased risks of obesity, malnutrition, and other related health issues. The high percentage of unhealthy dietary behavior among the study participants highlights the need for targeted interventions to promote healthier eating practices in this age group.

The study found that nutritional status and body image were significant factors influencing unhealthy dietary behavior. Specifically, adolescent girls with malnutrition were more likely to engage in unhealthy dietary habits, as were those dissatisfied with their body image. These findings align with previous research that has emphasized the role of body dissatisfaction in influencing eating behaviors, particularly among adolescent girls [48][49]. Body image dissatisfaction can lead to various harmful eating behaviors such as restrictive dieting, disordered eating, or overeating, all of which contribute to unhealthy dietary patterns [50]. Additionally, malnutrition has been recognized as a significant risk factor for unhealthy eating behaviors, as it often leads to nutrient deficiencies and poor eating habits [51].

Interestingly, knowledge and peer influence did not show a statistically significant association with dietary behavior in this study. This is contrary to several previous studies that have reported the influence of nutritional knowledge on eating behaviors. It is possible that, although adolescents may have sufficient knowledge about nutrition, this knowledge alone does not translate into healthier eating habits without other supportive factors, such as motivation, self-regulation, and family or community support [52]. Moreover, peer influence did not emerge as a significant predictor, which might suggest that, in this context, the personal factors such as body image and nutritional status could play a more critical role than external social pressures.

B. COMPARISON TO OTHER STUDIES

The findings of this study are comparable to several other studies conducted in different countries. For example, research conducted in Indonesia among adolescents found that unhealthy dietary behaviors were prevalent, particularly among girls, with similar factors such as malnutrition and body image dissatisfaction being significant predictors of poor eating habits [53]. Similarly, studies from Western countries have highlighted the strong association between body dissatisfaction and unhealthy dietary behaviors. A study by Leung et al. (2021) found that adolescent girls who were dissatisfied with their bodies were more likely to engage in unhealthy eating practices, such as skipping meals or excessive dieting [54]. These findings support the notion that body image dissatisfaction is a critical factor influencing adolescent eating behaviors.

However, there are also differences in the findings of this study when compared to other research. For instance, a study in Thailand by Suwannapong et al. (2019) found that peer influence was a significant factor in shaping dietary habits, particularly among adolescents in urban settings [55]. This contrasts with the current study's results, where peer influence did not show a significant association with unhealthy dietary behavior. This difference could be attributed to cultural or regional differences in the level of social pressure or the role of peers in shaping food choices.

Furthermore, the study's results align with the growing body of evidence that highlights the importance of nutritional status in predicting dietary behaviors. A study by Chou et al. (2020) found that adolescents with poor nutritional status were more likely to engage in unhealthy eating behaviors, such as skipping meals or consuming fast food regularly [56]. This finding underscores the need for interventions that not only address body image dissatisfaction but also aim to improve

e-ISSN:2808-6422; p-ISSN:2829-3037
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overall nutritional knowledge and habits to promote better health outcomes.

C. LIMITATIONS, WEAKNESSES, AND IMPLICATIONS

Despite the valuable insights provided by this study, there are several limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional nature of the study means that it only provides a snapshot of adolescent dietary behaviors at a single point in time. As a result, it is difficult to establish causal relationships between the factors studied and unhealthy dietary behavior. Future research should consider using longitudinal or experimental designs to explore how these factors interact over time and how they contribute to the development of unhealthy eating habits.

Another limitation is the reliance on self-reported data through questionnaires, which could be subject to biases such as social desirability bias or recall bias. Participants may have underreported unhealthy eating behaviors or overreported healthier choices due to the perceived expectations of researchers. To mitigate this, future studies could incorporate objective measures, such as food diaries or biomarkers, to validate self-reported dietary behavior.

Furthermore, the study's sample was limited to adolescent girls in Bandar Lampung, which may not be representative of adolescent girls in other regions of Indonesia or in other countries. Therefore, caution should be exercised when generalizing the findings to other populations. Future studies should include more diverse samples to examine whether the identified factors are consistent across different cultural and geographical contexts.

In terms of implications, the findings of this study suggest that interventions targeting unhealthy dietary behavior in adolescent girls should focus on improving body image and nutritional status. Programs aimed at promoting positive body image and healthy eating habits should be implemented at schools and within communities. Additionally, although peer influence was not found to be a significant factor in this study, it is still important to consider the role of social networks in dietary behaviors, particularly in social media-driven cultures. Addressing body image concerns through media literacy programs and providing access to healthy food options are crucial steps in fostering better dietary habits among adolescents.

D. IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

Given the findings, it is evident that a multi-faceted approach is needed to improve the dietary habits of adolescent girls. Interventions should include not only nutrition education but also strategies to promote positive body image. The integration of body image and nutrition education into school curricula could help address both psychological and physical health in adolescents. Furthermore, policies that support access to affordable, nutritious food and promote physical activity can also help mitigate the impact of unhealthy dietary behaviors and improve overall adolescent health.

V. CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to investigate the factors influencing unhealthy dietary behavior among adolescent girls in Bandar Lampung, Indonesia, with a focus on nutritional knowledge, age, body image, nutritional status, peer influence, and pocket money. The findings revealed that 56.3% of the adolescent girls in the study exhibited unhealthy dietary behaviors, highlighting the need for effective intervention strategies. Specifically, nutritional status and body image dissatisfaction were found to be significant factors influencing dietary choices. Adolescent girls with malnutrition were twice as likely to engage in unhealthy eating behaviors compared to those with normal nutritional status. Furthermore, girls who were dissatisfied with their body image were more prone to adopting poor dietary habits. In contrast, nutritional knowledge and peer influence did not show a statistically significant association with unhealthy dietary behavior in this study, suggesting that factors such as body image and nutritional status may play a more critical role in shaping dietary practices among adolescent girls in Bandar Lampung. These findings emphasize the importance of addressing both physical and psychological factors to promote healthy eating behaviors in this demographic. Future interventions should focus on improving body image perceptions and enhancing nutritional knowledge, with an emphasis on the role of family, community, and school environments in supporting healthier dietary habits. Additionally, the study's limitations, such as its cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported data, suggest that future research should explore longitudinal or experimental studies to better understand the causality of these associations. Future studies could also include a more diverse sample to enhance the generalizability of the findings and examine the potential influence of other factors, such as media and cultural influences, on adolescent eating behavior. Given the high prevalence of unhealthy dietary behavior and the potential long-term consequences, it is critical that public health initiatives, educational programs, and policies be developed to address these factors comprehensively and effectively.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all the participants who contributed to this study, making it possible to achieve valuable insights into adolescent dietary behaviors. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to the faculty and staff of Lampung University for their support and guidance throughout the research process. Additionally, we acknowledge the invaluable contributions of our research assistants and the ethical approval committee for their dedication and professionalism. Finally, we thank our families for their unwavering support and encouragement.

FUNDING

This research was supported by the Medical Faculty of Lampung University through internal funding. The authors declare that no external funding sources were involved in the design, implementation, or analysis of the study.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. The datasets used and analyzed during the current study are not publicly available due to privacy and confidentiality

e-ISSN:2808-6422; p-ISSN:2829-3037
Vol. 3 No.2, pp. 72-78, April 2023

concerns but can be shared with interested parties under appropriate conditions.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Dian Isti Angraini conceptualized the study, designed the research methodology, and conducted the data analysis. Asiah Nurul Izzah assisted in the data collection and interpretation of results. Khairun Nisa contributed to the review of the literature and statistical analysis. Reni Zuraida supervised the research process and provided critical revisions to the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

DECLARATIONS

ETHICAL APPROVAL

This study was approved by the Medical Faculty Ethics Committee of Lampung University (approval number: 1408/UN26.18/PP.05.02.00/2022). All participants provided informed consent, and parental consent was obtained for participants under the age of 18. The study adhered to the ethical standards outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki and all applicable laws and regulations.

CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION PARTICIPANTS.

All participants in this study provided informed consent for the publication of their data. Participants were informed that the findings of the study, including any identifiable information, would be used for publication purposes in academic journals. The confidentiality and privacy of participants were maintained throughout the study, and any identifiable information was excluded from the published material.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no competing interests related to this study. There are no financial, personal, or professional conflicts of interest that could have influenced the results or interpretation of the study.

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