

CASE STUDY REPORT

Carmen Gabriela Birlogeanu (1817357)

PSYCHOLOGY FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE (BMHP4003_BIRM)

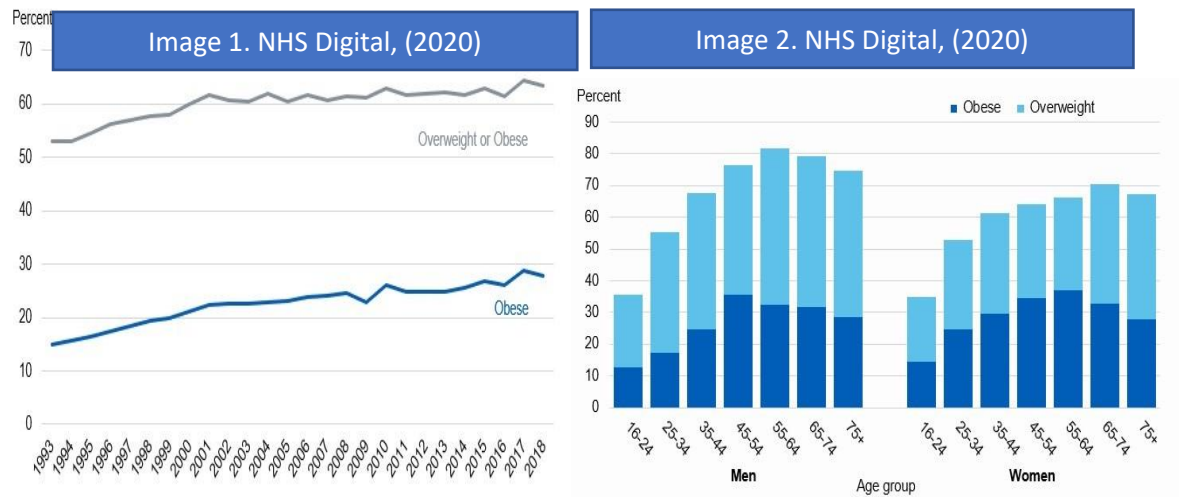
REBECCA KAVANAGH

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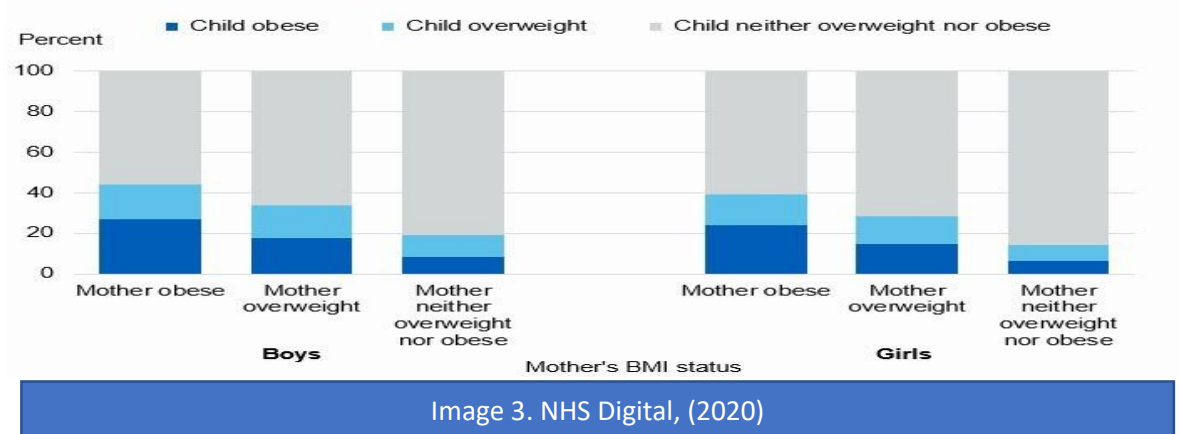
INTRODUCTION

This report is designed to outline the increase in obesity rate within UK across the lifespan development. According to NHS Digital (2020), obesity has hugely increase over the past decades, from 1993 to 2020 doubling up the number, Img1. However more research have showed that increase of obesity happens among mans and woman, Img2, as well as children, especially those who their parents are suffering overweight issues see Img3.



A discussion will be held about Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura (1986), in which Gillibrand (2016) explains how children learn from others behaviour, also how Attitudes are formed and link to behaviour. Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (1991) is designed to explain the different factors that shape attitudes and how it reflects in behaviour.

Social Learning Theory, Attitudes and Theory of Planned Behaviour plays an important role on understanding attitudes and behaviour towards unhealthy eating disorders. As well as controlling unhealthy eating habits and preventing obesity or overweight among all age groups which improves physical and mental health.



SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Social Learning Theory also called Observational Theory by Albert Bandura (1968), aim to explain that the learning process happens through observing others behaviour, especially children can be easily influenced by parent's actions or environmental factors. Gillibrand (2016) shared Bandura's experiment from 1986 involving a Bobo doll and children's watching a movie where an adult will hit and punch a Bobo doll, after he closed the children into a room full of toys and a bobo doll to see their reaction after watching others behaviour. The experiment proved that children would act violent towards the doll imitating other actions, however it is important how strong mentally is the child will reflect in their behaviour. If the child chooses not to be aggressive will develop self-efficacy, the ability to control thoughts and action.

Bandura suggest that social media, television back then, also influences individual's behaviour and he proved by another experiment involving children watching a violent movie to see how will react after to each other, just like Bandura believed, they did become violent.

Social Learning Theory includes four stages of learning, also called "Modelling", Attention, Retention, Reproduction and Motivation, as well gender development is formed, for example girls play with dolls and boys with cars.

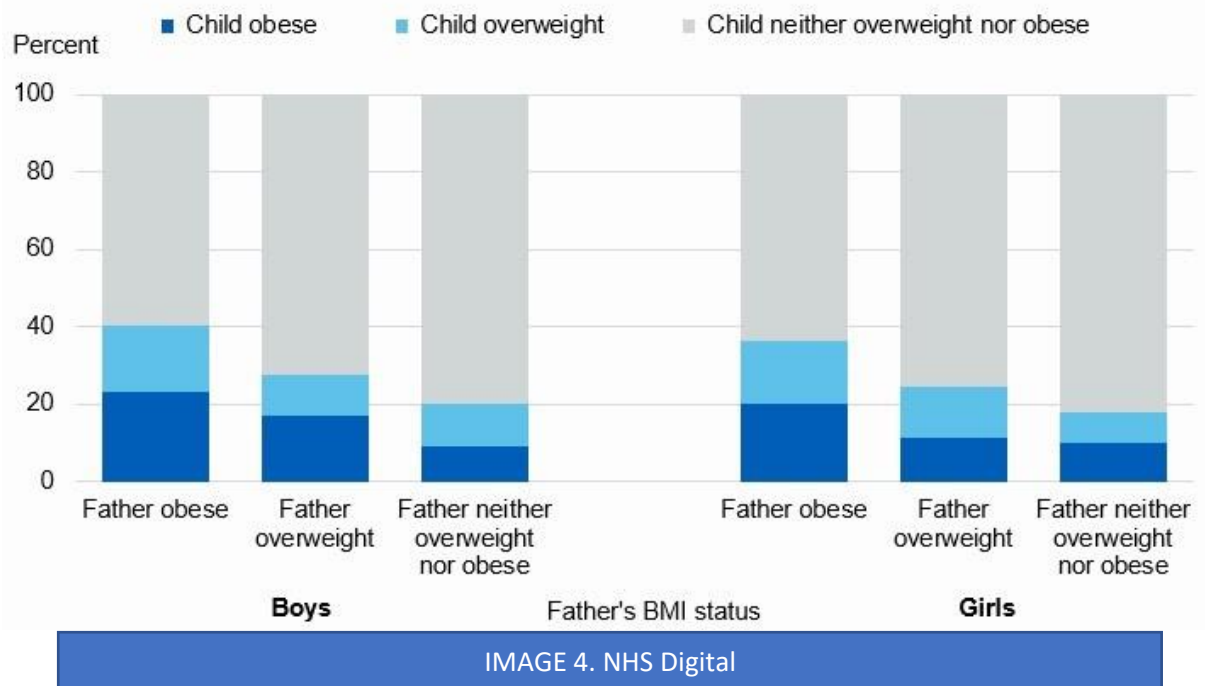
1. **Attention** explains that people cannot learn by observing unless are aware of models' performance, whatever is rewarded or punished. Paying close attention to others behaviour, action and feelings towards eating, drinking, activities memorised and reproduced by gender, influences children learning development.
2. **Retention** focuses on actions observed and remembered, in order for the child to retain the information first they will be categorised by gender. An example of observed behaviour is, girls playing with a baby doll, feeding and caring for it, while boys will learn to play football.
3. **Reproduction** stands for the action seen, retained and now put into practice, like boys watching football with their father on tv they will try to play football while girls will play with cooking, make up, behaviour observed from the mother. However, it is important to remember that violent behaviour observed by the child will lead to aggressive reaction. As well as unhealthy eating disorder, leading to obesity and overweight, which has a direct impact on heart disease, high blood sugar, high cholesterol, mental and physical health.

Social learning theory

4. **Motivation** focuses on reward and punishment, children rewarded and appreciated for their work will gain the motivation to become even better, while if they were told off or punished for their actions, they will avoid behaving that way. According to Gillibrand (2016), children observe behaviour and emotional reaction to the action taken, memorising and reproducing, such as watching violence will develop an aggressive behaviour.

Img3 and Img4 shared by NHS Digital, (2020) shows that children whose parents are obese, or overweight are more likely to develop the same way.

For example, if the parent is always eating take away, not eating regularly and not having physical activities like exercise, walking, it is obvious that the child will learn from their actions and behave the same way, leading to serious health problems along with obesity. (Kavanagh, 2021).



Social Learning Theory emphasizes on how children learn through parents' behaviour as well from social interactions and social environment, nowadays social media is the biggest influence towards every one's behaviour, creating stereotypes or models to follow. In some cases, could be a positive impact, as idolising a footballer will motivate the individual to want to become one and look at ways how to perform, including healthy eating behaviour and exercise.

ATTITUDES

Sprenger & Hartmann, (2019), emphasized with idea that “traditional descriptions” of beliefs and disbelieves form a sort of attitude towards something or someone. Attitude is formed according to environmental factors, such as background, traditions, religion, beliefs, thoughts, feelings and passed experience of individuals or relatives.

Giving an example here could be such as religion, were in some parts Christians must fast for certain days within a year, and they believe is also used to clean the body by eating only vegetables for a month, and no meat. Which is also a fact, as for a healthy lifestyle diet is essential as it change the way individuals behave, think and “feel about food”. Diet and exercise are the key factors in losing weight and maintaining a healthy lifestyle, such as Mediterranean-style diet that helps mental function preventing dementia, also lower the rate of heart disease. (Harvard Health Publishing, 2021)

Hogg & Vaughan (2018) suggests that attitude started being studied back in 1935, by Gordon Allport, who wrote Handbook of Social Psychology. Hogg & Vaughan also agree with Sprenger & Hartmann that attitude symbolise thoughts, feelings and opinion towards a behaviour. Such as cycling, not each person can cycle, and that is because they have been hurt to many times trying to learn and individuals will form a sense of fear to ride a bike, based on past painful experiences. Fear will be the attitude towards behaviour, riding a bike.

Attitude has been studied further from different writers, Katz (1960) says that there are multiple types of attitudes, each serving to different function. Such as **knowledge**, facts that individuals are aware of, **instrumentally**, stands for outcomes or goals, **Ego-defence**, defending others self-esteem and **value expressiveness** which symbolise other people unique beliefs. Attitude plays the most important role towards learning and development (Hogg & Vaughan, 2018)

However, the main function of attitude on a social level began in 20 centuries known as ABC Model.

- Affective - feelings towards an action or object.
- Behaviour - past actions and experiences.
- Cognitive – thoughts about an object or situation.

The three component functions of attitude, affective, behaviour and cognitive can be positive, neutral or negative each one of them has a unique purpose and backgrounds.

Attitudes

Affective function is based on feeling towards an object or action, for example the way individuals feel about unhealthy food, some teenagers tend to eat outside, take away or sandwiches because they feel a better taste than preparing themselves, or simply don't have the knowledge to cook it. While most of adults will have a different feeling towards take away as their goal is to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Behaviour stands for past experiences, such as anorexics that faced an eating disorder and after facing the behaviour are trying to eat regularly healthy meals. England statistics, shared by Stewart, (2020), Img.5, showing the number of hospitalisations by age diagnosed with anorexia, being an "eating disorder and a serious mental health condition" according to NHS, (2021).

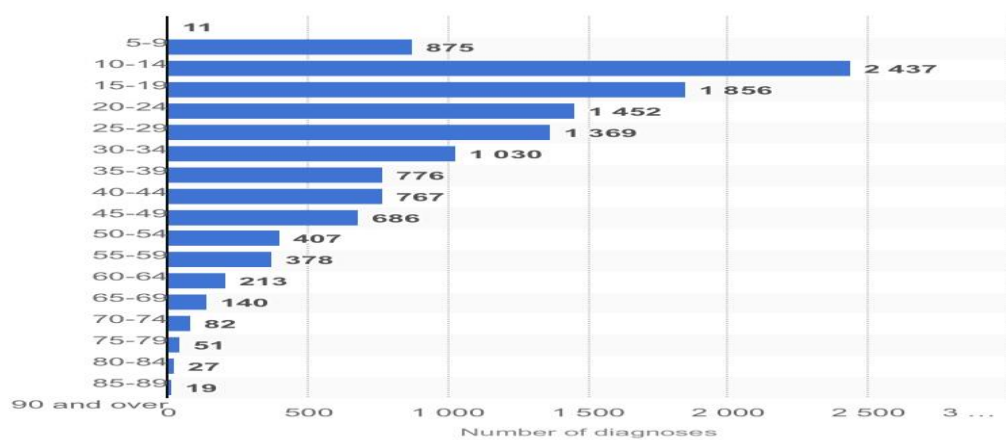


Image 5. England cases of anorexia.(Steward, 2020)

Cognitive function of attitude symbolises the thoughts, perceptions of facts. A simple example shared by Kavanagh, (2021) was eating chocolate, perceptions about chocolate differ from each person, someone may think has high nutritional values while another person may think chocolate is unhealthy.

How attitudes are formed

According to LoSchiavo, (2018), attitude is formed through direct experience, classic conditioning and observational learning.

Direct experience, such as past life, school, work or medical experiences directly influences individual way of thinking and feeling about something or someone. For example, if a person suffered from a medical neglect, will form a sense of fear towards practitioners.

Attitudes

Classic Conditioning is another way attitude is formed, such investigation took place back in 1992 by Krosnick, involving a series of images showed to participants were each person like or dislike the photo.

What Krosnick wanted to prove was that classic conditioning happens in everyday life, such as news, channels, adverts, watched also social media nowadays influences the way a person think and feel about an action or people. Classic conditioning can have either a positive or negative impact, depending on how strong mentally the individual is, as if an overweight person will watch an advert on how to lose weight, they may be influenced positively and change the way they feel about food and exercise.

Observational learning. Gerull & Rapee (2002) conducted an experiment were different toys, snakes, spider was showed to the parents of children, in order to see their reaction. Observational learning can easily influence children attitude toward an object, people or insects, where a phobia could develop based on relative's reaction towards behaviour.

This report suggests that Social Learning Theory and Observational learning link together, also there is a need of precaution on the way parents express themselves and behave in front of their children. Furthermore, will be discuss how attitude link to behaviour also Ajzen's Theory of planned behaviour (1985), Img6.

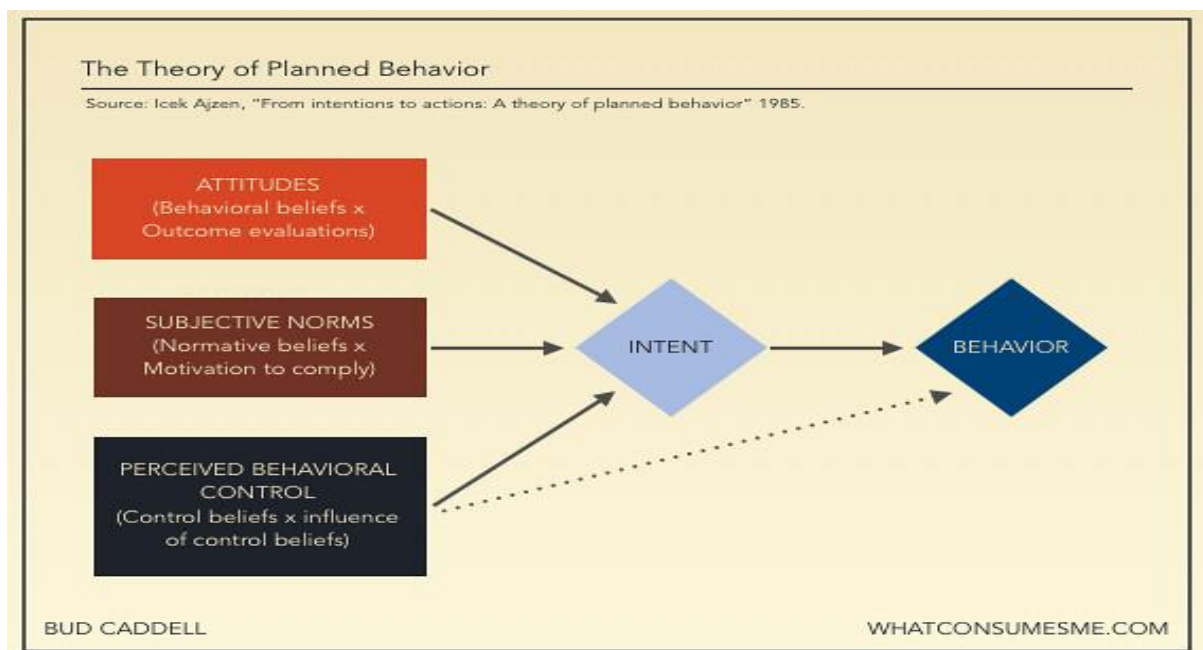


Image 6. Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (1985)

THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR

According to Gross, (2015), behaviour is the function of brain, also that nervous system produces and control actions. Attitudes are directly linked to behaviour as the way a person think or feel about an object or person is the way actions proceed. Gross also suggesting that health is connected to behaviour, Biopsychology studies the brain to understand why people behave the way they do, as beliefs about health differ to each person. Some individuals like to maintain a healthy and active life, while others smoke, drink, some are facing eating disorders being overweight or obese.

Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour.

Ajzen's Theory of planned behaviour - TPB, (1991) sustaining that there are different factors which shape attitude, and it reflects in behaviour, also known as "Theory of reasoning action". Morison & Bennett suggest that behaviour is determined by intention, as well intention is directly influenced by attitude toward a behaviour, subjective norms and perceived control.

Attitude toward a behaviour simply means the way individuals feel and think about an action, object or person. Attitude plays a crucial role as has been discussed is formed through direct experiences, classic conditioning and observational learning.

Subjective norms are the beliefs of relatives, such as family, friends, people that matter to the individual. And this can differ by backgrounds, religions, as different culture has unique beliefs, like Christian Orthodox are fasting certain days of the week across the entire year, also called detox.

Perceived control, at this point the person beliefs they have the resources to engage in behaviour. Once an attitude is formed, either from self-experiences or relatives will form a sense of control of their actions.

Intention being the one who determinates the action is based on the strength of each factor, strong or weak leading to behaviour.

Behaviour then happens according to the influences and intention of each factor, just how Img3 and Img4 shows that children of parents who are obese or overweight are more likely to develop the same way.

RECOMANDATIONS

Alzheimer Society, (2021) suggests that high cholesterol is directly connected with dementia. High cholesterol is a blood illness, which can happen by eating fat food, not exercising enough, drinking or smoking.

This report recommends that eating healthy food, avoid fat products, stop smoking and drinking, also exercise regularly can reduce the increase in obesity, which bring a long high cholesterol, hight blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and mental health, such as dementia. (Alzheimer, 2021).

As well parents should pay attention to their eating behaviour or factors that could influences the child attitude and intentions. Teenagers could also avoid eating processed food and learn to prepare their own breakfast or meals and keeping active as much as possible is recommended across all ages. More about what food is recommended can be seen in Img7.

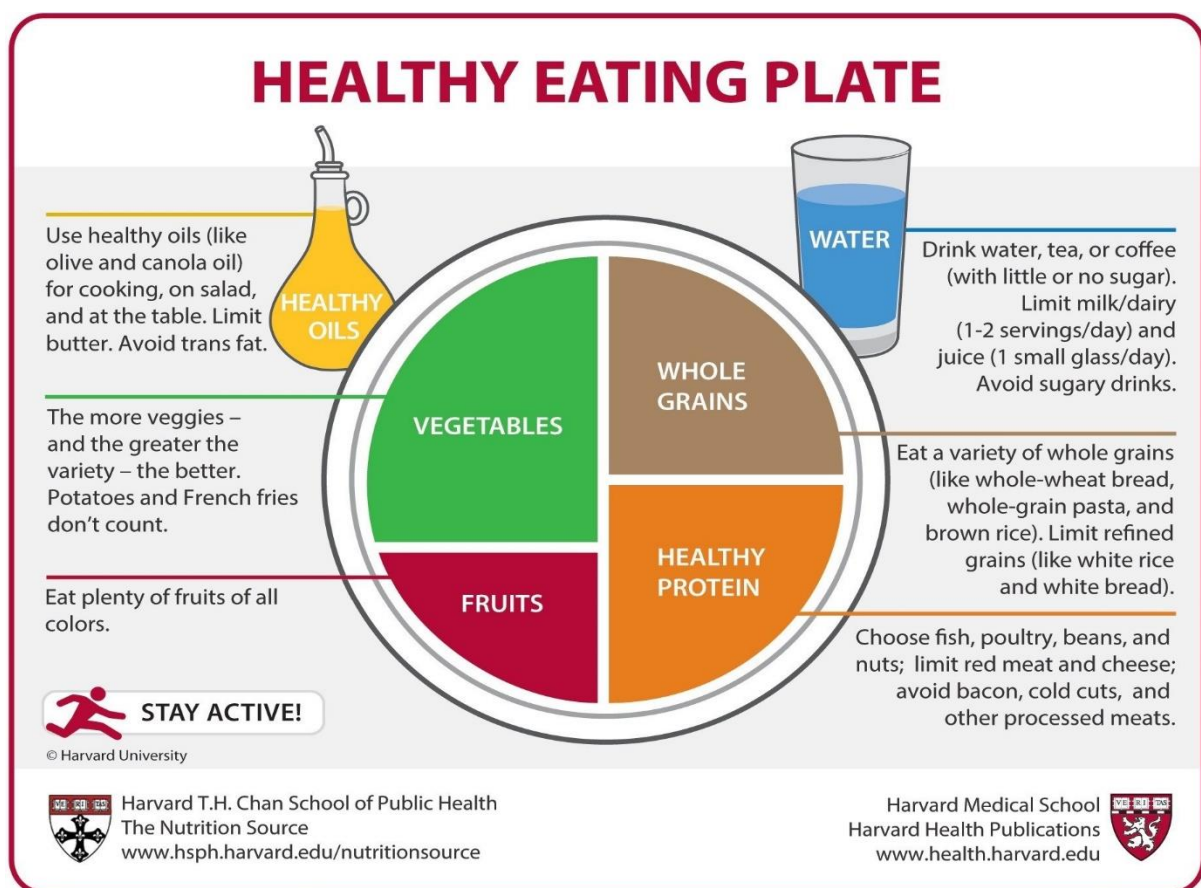


Image 7. Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health The Nutrition Source (2021).

CONCLUSION

Summarising the concepts discussed so far, such as Social Learning Theory also known as Observational Theory, which explains how children learn from observing others behaviour, shared by Gillibrand (2016). Also, more research conducted by NHS (2020), Img3 and Img4 show that children whose parents are overweight or obese are more likely to develop the same way. According to NHS (2020) obesity is the cause of many illnesses, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and mental health.

Attitudes meaning of thoughts and feelings, are also influenced by culture, environmental factors, knowledge, goals or other people beliefs. This report also suggests that attitude is formed by direct experience meaning of past experiences, classic conditioning which occurs in everyday life through social media, and observational learning. (LoSchiavo, 2018)

Finally, Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour-TPB (1991) explains how attitude toward the behaviour is formed, subjective norms which are the beliefs of relatives and perceived control meaning the knowledge accumulated leading to intention. Intention then will depend on the strength of the factors, weak or strong, in order for a good behaviour to occur.

Recommendation from Alzheimer Society, (2021) suggests that eating low fat food, exercise regularly, stop smoking and drinking can lower the increase in dementia also as obesity.

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