Evaluation of Factorial Validity and Reliability of a Food Behavior Checklist for Low-Income Filipinos

Asuka Suzuki, RDN¹; So Yung Choi, MS²; Eunjung Lim, PhD²; Socorro Tauyan, MPH¹; Jinan C. Banna, PhD, RDN¹

ABSTRACT

Objective: To examine factorial validity, test-retest reliability, and internal consistency of a Tagalog-language food behavior checklist (FBC) for a low-income Filipino population.

Methods: Participants (n = 160) completed the FBC on 2 occasions 3 weeks apart. Factor structure was examined using principal component analysis. For internal consistency, Cronbach α was calculated. For test-retest reliability, Spearman correlation or intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) was calculated between scores at the 2 points.

Results: All but 1 item loaded on 6 factors: fruit and vegetable quantity, fruit and vegetable variety, fast food, sweetened beverage, healthy fat, and diet quality. Cronbach α was .75 for the total scale (range, .39–.76 for subscales). Spearman correlation was 0.78 (ICC, 0.79) for the total scale (range, 0.66–0.80 [ICC, 0.68–0.80] for subscales).

Conclusions and Implications: The FBC demonstrated adequate factorial validity, test-retest reliability, and internal consistency. With additional testing, the FBC may be used to evaluate the US Department of Agriculture's nutrition education programs for Tagalog speakers.

Key Words: survey, validity, reliability, Filipino, Tagalog, food behavior (*J Nutr Educ Behav.* 2017;49:593–598.)

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INTRODUCTION

The number of Asian American people in the US has been increasing, including Filipino individuals.^{1,2} Filipino people are the third largest ethnic group among Asian American populations and grew from 3.4 million in 2011 to 3.9 million in 2015.^{2,3} Data spanning 2009 to 2013 show that 1.6 million people speak Tagalog, the official national language of the Philippines.⁴ Of the total population of Tagalog speakers in the US, 32.8% speak English at a level classified as less than very well, which indicates that these individuals may be

helped with translation services, education, or assistance in accessing government services.⁴

A systematic review of overweight and obesity among Asian American populations between 1988 and 2009 showed that Filipino individuals had the highest body mass index, at 26.8 kg/m².⁵ A second literature review revealed that Filipino American people were at high risk for cardiovascular disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, and metabolic syndrome even at lower body mass index levels.⁶ Recent research also indicated that Filipino people were the only Asian American

group that had higher rates of hypertension than white American people.⁷ Similarly, another study showed that Filipino American people in northern California had the highest hypertension prevalence compared with other minority groups.⁸ In addition, Filipino American individuals had the second highest odds of prevalent type 2 diabetes, followed by other Asian, Chinese, and white people.⁹

Encouraging healthy dietary habits and healthy weight is the important for preventing diet-related chronic disease. Research demonstrated that community programs run by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), such as the *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education* (SNAP-Ed) and the *Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program* (EFNEP), had an effect on positive diet-related behavior changes.¹⁰ In addition, a community-based study in low-income Filipino people with cardiovascular disease risk factors in Hawai'i reported that providing a curriculum using appropriate cultural and bilingual tools improved outcomes.¹¹ Evaluation of such programs using tools appropriate for the target group is an essential step in determining program effectiveness

¹Department of Human Nutrition, Food, and Animal Sciences, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, HI

²Biostatistics Core Facility, Department of Complementary & Integrative Medicine, John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, HI

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Address for correspondence: Jinan C. Banna, PhD, RDN, Department of Human Nutrition, Food, and Animal Sciences, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Agricultural Sciences 216, 1955 East-West Rd, Honolulu, HI 96822; Phone: (808) 956-7857; Fax: (808) 956-4024; E-mail: jcbanna@hawaii.edu

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Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Low-Income Filipino People in O'ahu, Hawai'i (n = 160)

Variable	Mean $\pm$ SD (range) or n (%)
Age, y (mean $\pm$ SD [range])	56.9 $\pm$ 19.8 (18–90)
Children in house, n	
0	66 (41)
1	25 (16)
2	25 (16)
3	21 (13)
≥ 4	20 (12)
No response	3 (2)
Sex	
Male	48 (30)
Female	112 (70)
Education, y (mean $\pm$ SD [range])	11.2 $\pm$ 3.5 (1–18)
Highest level of education	
Did not complete high school	31 (19)
Completed high school	35 (22)
Completed post-high school training or some college	33 (21)
Graduated from 4-y college or university	46 (29)
Attended and/or completed graduate school	5 (3)
Other	10 (6)
Employment	
Employed for wages	68 (43)
Self-employed	9 (6)
Out of work and looking for work	19 (12)
Out of work but not currently looking for work	3 (2)
Retired	52 (33)
Other	9 (6)
Birthplace	
US	4 (3)
Philippines	156 (98)

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 owing to rounding.

in diverse populations.¹² However, valid and reliable tools in Tagalog are lacking to evaluate such programs in low-income Filipino groups.

A food behavior checklist (FBC) is a tool that may be used to evaluate the impact of nutrition education on dietary intake in low-income populations. This tool is a brief questionnaire containing items on intake of fruits and vegetables, dairy, sweetened beverages, and fried food, as well as food security and overall diet quality.^{13,14} A previous study examined the face validity of a Tagalog-language version of this tool in the Filipino population in the US. Face validity was deemed adequate based on: (1) approval of text and photographs by members of the target population via cognitive interviews; (2) approval of text and photographs by a panel of professionals

using a team-based approach; and (3) achievement of a readability score appropriate for a low-literacy audience.¹⁵

The objective of this study was to examine the factorial validity, test-retest reliability, and internal consistency of the Tagalog-language FBC for low-income Filipino people.

METHODS

The Institutional Review Board of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa provided approval for this study.

Sample

A researcher fluent in Tagalog recruited Filipino subjects in O'ahu, Hawai'i who spoke Tagalog as a first language (n = 160), were aged >18

years, and met income eligibility for SNAP-Ed¹⁶ from the Filipino Center, churches, low-income housing complexes, and other community sites.

Measures

Participants provided sociodemographic information and completed the 22-item Tagalog-language FBC on 2 occasions 3 weeks apart. Sociodemographic information included age, sex, number of children in the house, education, employment status, and birth place.

Data Analysis

The researchers performed analyses using SAS 9.4 for Windows (SAS Institute, Cary NC). All responses on the FBC were recoded on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 to 4, with higher scores indicating more desirable behavior.

For item analysis, mean responses and SDs were calculated for each item to determine potential of items to reflect behavior change as the result of an intervention. Dichotomous (yes/no) items with a mean of >2.6 and all other items with a mean of >3 were considered to have little potential to reflect behavior change.¹⁷

For factor validity, the researchers first segregated items by predetermined categories: fruits and vegetables, milk and dairy, food security, and remaining items. Factor validity was examined using principal component analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation for each category with at least 2 items at the first point. To assess the numbers of factors, Kaiser criterion (eigenvalues > 1.0), scree plot, and parallel analysis were initially used. Any item with a factor loading > 0.50 was considered to load on the given factor,¹⁸ in conjunction with review of the content of the individual items. Based on the results of the Kaiser criterion and parallel analysis, the researchers requested factor solutions with different numbers of factors and selected the solution that generated the most comprehensible factor structure.¹⁹

To assess internal consistency, Cronbach α was calculated for each subscale and total scale at the first time point. The researchers considered $\alpha > .70$ to be acceptable.²⁰

To assess test-retest reliability, Spearman correlation with 95% confidence

Table 2. Factor Validity and Item Analysis for 22 Items on Tagalog-Language Food Behavior Checklist for Low-Income Filipino People in O'ahu, Hawai'i (n = 160)

Food Behavior Item	Factor Loading	Mean Response	SD
Fruit and vegetable quantity subscale	Factor 1		
1. Cups of fruit each day	0.79	2.40	0.73
2. Servings of fruit each day	0.76	3.54	0.55
3. Cups of vegetable each day	0.53	2.60	0.74
4. Servings of vegetable each day	0.61	3.68	0.53
Fruit and vegetable variety subscale	Factor 2		
5. Fruits or vegetables as snacks	0.52	2.94	0.89
6. >1 kind of fruit each day	0.60	2.78	0.92
7. >1 kind of vegetable each day	0.90	3.31	0.79
8. ≥2 vegetables at main meal	0.89	3.13	0.90
Does not load on any factor at >0.50:			
9. Citrus fruits or citrus juice during past week	0.45 on factor 1 0.01 on factor 2	3.34	1.24
Milk/dairy subscale			
10. Drink milk	N/A	2.56	1.06
11. Drank milk or used milk on cereal in past week	N/A	2.74	1.48
Food security item			
12. Run out of food before end of month	N/A	3.44	0.72
Fast food subscale	Factor 3		
13. Fried snacks yesterday	0.61	2.48	1.50
14. Fried food yesterday	0.62	1.94	1.39
15. Fast food yesterday	0.74	3.14	1.36
16. Red meat or pork yesterday	0.57	1.88	1.37
Sweetened beverage subscale	Factor 4		
17. Drink fruit drinks, sport drinks, or punch	0.86	3.18	0.79
18. Drink regular soda	0.81	3.19	0.82
Healthy fat subscale	Factor 5		
19. Fish during past week	0.77	3.81	0.73
20. Take skin off chicken	0.71	2.78	1.48
Diet quality subscale	Factor 6		
21. Use label when food shopping	0.85	2.67	1.50
22. Rate eating habits	0.62	2.70	0.59

N/A indicates Not applicable.

Notes: Factor structures were not examined for factors with ≤2 items. Analyses were performed using responses to the food behavior checklist at the first time point.

interval or intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) was calculated between scores at the 2 time points for each item, each subscale, and the total scale. These are the 2 most commonly used methods to assess test-retest reliability.^{21,22} In addition, kappa (κ) coefficients were computed, either unweighted or weighted, depending on the number of categories in the responses. The following standards for strength of agreement for κ coefficients were used: 0 or lower = poor; 0.01–0.20 = slight; 0.21–0.40 = fair; 0.41–0.60 = moderate; 0.61–0.80 = substantial; and 0.80–1.0 = almost

perfect.²³ Items referring to *yesterday* or *the past week* were excluded from test-retest reliability analysis owing to the reference to a specific period of time.

RESULTS

Average age of participants was 57 years (SD, 20 years); 70% of participants were female. Most participants (98%) were born in the Philippines and 41% had completed high school or less as the highest level of education. Table 1 lists demographic characteristics of participants.

Results of the PCA with varimax rotation are displayed in Table 2, as well as mean and SD of each item. Six factors were identified: (1) fruit and vegetable quantity, (2) fruit and vegetable variety, (3) fast food, (4) sweetened beverage, (5) healthy fat, and (6) diet quality. Eighteen items loaded on a factor except for the item on citrus fruit and juice consumption. The predetermined milk and dairy subscale and food security item, which were not included in the PCA, are included in Table 2.

Table 3 presents internal consistency and test-retest reliability. Cronbach α 's for internal consistency of subscales ranged from .39 (diet quality subscale) to .76 (fruit and vegetable variety subscale) and α for the total scale was .75. Spearman correlations for test-retest reliability for individual items ranged from 0.48 to 0.78 (ICC, 0.50–0.78) whereas correlations for each subscale ranged from 0.66 to 0.80 (ICC, 0.68–0.80). The correlation for test-retest reliability for the total scale was 0.78 (ICC, 0.79). All items and subscales and the total scale met the criterion for acceptability ($P < .05$) using Spearman correlation coefficients. The κ coefficient values ranged from 0.48 to 0.74, indicating moderate to substantial strength of agreement between the test and retest.

DISCUSSION

The current study indicated that the Tagalog-language FBC had adequate factorial validity, test-retest reliability, and internal consistency.

The PCA revealed that all but 1 item loaded on identified factors. The citrus item did not load on any factor and had a high mean response value. This item did not perform well when a Spanish-language version of the questionnaire was tested in low-income Spanish speakers and was selected for deletion.¹⁷ If it is found not to correlate with nutrient intake in future studies, this item may be modified and tested further, or may be considered for deletion.

With regard to test-retest reliability, all items and subscales and the total scale were found to be acceptable. Regarding internal consistency, Cronbach α of >0.70 was considered acceptable.²⁰ Based on this criterion, internal consistency was low

Table 3. Internal Consistency and Test-Retest Reliability of Tagalog-Language Food Behavior Checklist Completed by Low-Income Filipino People in O'ahu, Hawai'i (n = 160)

Food Behavior Item	Test-Retest Reliability				
	α	ρ^a	95% Confidence Interval	Internal Correlation Coefficient	Weighted Kappa (95% Confidence Interval)
Factor 1: fruit and vegetable quantity subscale	.70	0.67	0.58–0.75	0.71	0.54 (0.46–0.63)
1. Cups of fruit each day		0.60	0.49–0.69	0.62	0.48 (0.38–0.58)
2. Servings of fruit each day		0.57	0.45–0.67	0.55	0.51 (0.39–0.63)
3. Cups of vegetable each day		0.59	0.48–0.68	0.56	0.46 (0.36–0.56)
4. Servings of vegetable each day		0.58	0.46–0.67	0.63	0.57 (0.44–0.71)
Factor 2: fruit and vegetable variety subscale	.76	0.69	0.60–0.76	0.71	0.59 (0.51–0.68)
5. Fruit or vegetables as snacks		0.48	0.36–0.59	0.50	0.49 (0.37–0.61)
6. >1 kind of fruit each day		0.61	0.50–0.70	0.59	0.52 (0.41–0.62)
7. >1 kind of vegetable each day		0.64	0.54–0.72	0.63	0.58 (0.47–0.69)
8. ≥ 2 vegetables at main meal		0.64	0.53–0.72	0.65	0.57 (0.47–0.68)
Does not load on any factor at >0.50 :					
9. Citrus fruits or citrus juice during past week		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Milk/dairy subscale	.45				
10. Drink milk		0.72	0.64–0.79	0.72	0.66 (0.56–0.75)
11. Drank milk or used milk on cereal in past week		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Food security item	N/A				
12. Run out of food before end of month		0.78	0.71–0.84	0.74	0.72 (0.62–0.82)
Factor 3: fast food subscale	.57				
13. Fried snacks yesterday		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
14. Fried food yesterday		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
15. Fast food yesterday		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
16. Red meat or pork yesterday		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Factor 4: sweetened beverage subscale	.68	0.80	0.73–0.85	0.80	0.70 (0.62–0.78)
17. Drink fruit drinks, sport drinks, or punch		0.71	0.63–0.78	0.74	0.68 (0.59–0.78)
18. Drink regular soda		0.78	0.71–0.83	0.78	0.74 (0.65–0.83)
Factor 5: healthy fat subscale	.41	0.69	0.60–0.76	0.69	0.69 (0.57–0.80) ^b
19. Fish during past week		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
20. Take skin off chicken		0.69	0.60–0.76	0.69	0.69 (0.57–0.80) ^b
Factor 6: diet quality subscale	.39	0.66	0.56–0.74	0.68	0.61 (0.52–0.71)
21. Use label when food shopping		0.66	0.57–0.74	0.65	0.65 (0.53–0.77) ^b
22. Rate eating habits		0.59	0.48–0.68	0.57	0.53 (0.42–0.63)
Total scale	.75	0.78	0.71–0.83	0.79	

^aRho (ρ) is the Spearman's correlation; ^bSimple kappa (κ) coefficient. Weighted κ coefficient was not available because this κ statistic was based on the 2×2 table.

for the fast-food subscale containing 4 items. Internal consistency was also low for other subscales containing only 2 items, namely diet quality, healthy fat, sweetened beverage, and milk and dairy. However, this was expected given the low number of items these subscales contained, because the coefficient increases with the number of items in the scale.²⁴ The ideal number of items for a scale to achieve solid internal consistency reliability is ≥ 5 ¹⁸; there were fewer items in the scales in the current study because this was a brief tool for use in the community. Furthermore, the low values indicate

that the items in the subscales may have reflected different behaviors within each construct, allowing for evaluation of important dietary practices. Given this, all items in these subscales may be considered for the final tool. Similar results were found in a previous study evaluating a Spanish-language FBC, in which the correlation coefficient for the 2 milk and dairy items was also low.¹⁷ This low correlation may have indicated that the 2 items reflected different behaviors within the dairy domain construct. None of the subscales had Cronbach $\alpha \geq .90$, which suggests redundancies of items.²⁰

The item analysis showed that 12 items (eg, eat more than 1 kind of vegetable each day, eat fast food yesterday) of 22 had a mean response exceeding the cutoff with regard to the potential to reflect behavior change. If participants were already performing the behavior in question, there would be little opportunity for improvement through nutrition education. In further testing the questionnaire, it may be possible to consider featuring other relevant behaviors. For example, previous studies pointed to the possibility of higher consumption of high-caloric foods

reserved for celebration in the home country among Filipino people in the US.^{25,26} For example, because the item that focused on the consumption of fast food had a high mean response, it may be more appropriate to focus on the consumption of ceremonial foods such as *lechón* (roasted pig) as a source of fat.²⁷

Additional testing of the tool is needed to assess convergent and criterion validity. Previous studies evaluating the validity of the English and Spanish versions of the FBC involved collection of 24-hour dietary recalls to evaluate convergent validity, and serum carotenoids as a marker of fruit and vegetable intake to assess criterion validity.^{13,17} Similar procedures may be followed for further testing of the Tagalog FBC to compare nutrient intake with questionnaire responses. In addition, confirmatory factor analysis may be conducted to confirm the factor structure of the tool in the Filipino population. Based on additional data to be collected, it will be possible to determine which items should be eliminated from the tool. After testing is completed, the FBC may be used to evaluate the USDA's nutrition education programs.

Findings of the current study may not be generalized beyond the population of low-income Filipino individuals participating in this study, because a convenience sample was used. In addition, the timing of when the questionnaire was administered was not considered in this study, and responses may have been affected by factors such as when food aid was received or when food aid ran out. Furthermore, the questionnaire presented items only in the Tagalog language and did not include other regional languages such as Ilocano, which is commonly spoken among Filipino people in Hawai'i. However, because Tagalog is the official national language of the Philippines, the researchers anticipate that the questionnaire may be widely useful in the Filipino population in the US.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

The Tagalog-language FBC is a brief tool with 8 subscales that is reliable

for use in the low-income Filipino population. After further testing, this tool may be used to evaluate the effects of the USDA's nutrition education programs, as well as an assessment tool to set program goals. Because brief evaluation tools in the language of the target population are needed to evaluate nutrition education programs in a time-efficient manner, this questionnaire may prove useful for improving and planning programs. A future study is planned to examine the convergent and criterion validity of the tool.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have not stated any conflicts of interest.