

## **A Cross-Sectional Study on the Correlation between Body Mass Index and Self-Esteem among Children Ages 9-12 Years Old in a Public Elementary School in Makati, Philippines**

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**Abstract :** Malnutrition is one of the rapidly growing health problems affecting the world at present. Children affected are not only at risk for significant health problems, but are also faced with psychological and social consequences, including low self-esteem. School-age children are specifically vulnerable to develop poor self-esteem especially when their peers find them physically unattractive. Thus, malnutrition, whether obesity or undernourishment, contributes a significant role to a developing child's health and behavior. This research aims to determine if there is a significant difference on the level of self-esteem among Filipino children ages 9-12 years old with abnormal body mass index (BMI) and those children with desirable BMI. Using a cross-sectional study design, the correlation between body mass index (BMI) and self-esteem was observed among children ages 9-12 years old. Participants took the Hare self esteem questionnaire, which is specifically designed to measure self-esteem in school age children. The lowest possible score is 15 and the highest possible score is 45. A total of 1140 students with ages 9-12 years old from Cembo Elementary School (public school) participated in the study. Among the participants, 239 out of the 1140 have desirable body mass index, 878 are underweight, and 23 are overweight. Using the test questionnaire, the computed mean scores were 36.599, 36.045 and 36.583 for normal, underweight and overweight categories respectively. Using Pearson's Correlation Test and Spearman's Correlation Coefficient Test, the study showed positive correlation (p value of 0.047 and 0.004 respectively) between BMI and Self-esteem scores which indicates that the higher the BMI, the higher the self-esteem of the participants.

**Keywords :** body mass index, malnutrition, school-age children, self-esteem

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