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TELECOMMUNICATION-ENABLED REMOTE DIETARY ASSESSMENT: LEVERAGING MOBILE NETWORKS FOR PERSONALIZED NUTRITION GUIDANCE

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Abstract: The rapid advancement in telecommunication technologies has paved the way for innovative approaches in healthcare, particularly in the domain of nutrition. This paper explores the potential of telecommunication-enabled remote dietary assessment (TERDA) systems, which leverage mobile networks to deliver personalized nutrition guidance. By integrating mobile technology with dietary assessment tools, these systems offer a scalable solution to address the growing demand for personalized nutrition advice. The study highlights the efficacy of mobile networks in enabling real-time dietary tracking, data collection, and analysis, facilitating a more dynamic and personalized interaction between nutritionists and users. Furthermore, the paper discusses the potential challenges and solutions associated with data privacy, user engagement, and the accuracy of remote assessments. The findings suggest that TERDA systems can significantly improve nutritional outcomes by offering timely, evidence-based dietary advice tailored to individual needs. This research contributes to the ongoing discourse on the intersection of telecommunication and healthcare, proposing a framework for the development and implementation of remote dietary assessment tools.

Keywords: Telecommunication, Remote Dietary Assessment, Mobile Networks, Personalized Nutrition, Health Technology, Data Privacy.

I. Introduction

The intersection of telecommunication and healthcare has led to transformative advancements in the way health services are delivered and consumed. Among these innovations, the application of telecommunication technologies in dietary assessment and personalized nutrition guidance is gaining significant attention [1]. The rising prevalence of diet-related chronic diseases, coupled with the growing demand for personalized health interventions, underscores the need for innovative solutions that can deliver effective dietary guidance remotely. Telecommunication-enabled remote dietary assessment (TERDA) systems represent a promising approach, leveraging the widespread availability and capabilities of mobile networks to provide personalized nutrition advice in real-time.

A. The Role of Telecommunication in Healthcare

Telecommunication has long been recognized as a critical component in the evolution of healthcare services [2]. From the early days of telephone consultations to the current era of 896



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telemedicine, telecommunication technologies have continuously expanded the reach and efficiency of healthcare delivery. The advent of mobile networks and smartphones has further accelerated this trend, enabling the development of sophisticated health applications that can monitor, assess, and provide feedback on various health parameters. In the context of nutrition, telecommunication offers a unique opportunity to address some of the key challenges associated with traditional dietary assessment methods [3]. Conventional dietary assessments, such as food diaries, 24-hour recalls, and food frequency questionnaires, often suffer from issues like underreporting, recall bias, and the burden on the individual to meticulously document their intake. Telecommunication technologies, particularly mobile networks, can mitigate these challenges by facilitating real-time data collection, reducing the cognitive load on users, and enabling more accurate and comprehensive dietary assessments.

B. The Need for Personalized Nutrition Guidance

The concept of personalized nutrition is grounded in the understanding that individual differences—such as genetics, metabolism, lifestyle, and environmental factors—play a crucial role in determining the optimal diet for each person. Traditional one-size-fits-all dietary guidelines may not be effective for everyone, leading to the growing interest in personalized nutrition, which tailors dietary recommendations to an individual's unique characteristics and needs. Personalized nutrition has the potential to improve health outcomes by addressing specific nutritional deficiencies, managing chronic conditions, and promoting overall well-being [4].Delivering personalized nutrition guidance at scale presents several challenges. It requires the ability to accurately assess an individual's dietary intake, analyze the data in the context of their health profile, and provide tailored recommendations in a timely manner. This is where telecommunication-enabled systems can play a pivotal role.

C. Introduction to Telecommunication-Enabled Remote Dietary Assessment (TERDA)

Telecommunication-Enabled Remote Dietary Assessment (TERDA) systems are designed to address the growing need for scalable, personalized nutrition interventions. These systems utilize mobile networks to connect users with dietary assessment tools and nutrition experts, enabling the delivery of personalized dietary advice remotely. By leveraging the capabilities of mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets, TERDA systems can collect, analyze, and interpret dietary data in real-time, offering a dynamic and interactive platform for nutrition guidance [5]. One of the key advantages of TERDA systems is their ability to integrate various data sources to provide a comprehensive view of an individual's dietary habits. For example, these systems can combine data from food logging apps, wearable devices, and even social media to generate a detailed profile of the user's dietary intake. This data can then be analyzed using advanced algorithms and machine learning techniques to identify patterns, predict nutritional needs, and generate personalized recommendations. TERDA systems can facilitate ongoing communication between users and nutrition professionals, allowing for continuous monitoring and adjustment of dietary plans [6]. This level of interaction is particularly valuable for individuals managing chronic conditions, where dietary needs may change over time. By providing real-time feedback and support,



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TERDA systems can help users adhere to their dietary plans and achieve better health outcomes.

D. The Impact of Mobile Networks on TERDA

The effectiveness of TERDA systems is largely dependent on the underlying telecommunication infrastructure, particularly mobile networks. The widespread availability of mobile networks, even in remote and underserved areas, makes it possible to deliver dietary assessment and guidance to a broad population [7]. Mobile networks enable real-time data transmission, ensuring that dietary information is promptly captured and analysed. The advancements in mobile network technology, such as the rollout of 5G, have further enhanced the capabilities of TERDA systems. With faster data speeds, lower latency, and greater connectivity, 5G networks can support more sophisticated applications, including those that rely on real-time data processing and feedback. This is particularly important for TERDA systems, which require the ability to handle large volumes of data, perform complex analyses, and deliver personalized recommendations without delay [8]. The integration of mobile networks with cloud computing also plays a critical role in the operation of TERDA systems. Cloud-based platforms provide the computational power and storage capacity needed to process and manage the vast amounts of data generated by these systems. This allows for the continuous updating of dietary recommendations based on the latest data, ensuring that users receive the most relevant and accurate guidance.



Figure 1: User Interaction Flow in TERDA System

E. Addressing the Challenges of Remote Dietary Assessment

While TERDA systems offer significant benefits, they also present several challenges that must be addressed to ensure their effectiveness and widespread adoption. One of the primary challenges is data privacy and security. The collection and transmission of sensitive dietary information require robust measures to protect user data from unauthorized access and breaches. Ensuring compliance with data protection regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), is essential for building trust with users and safeguarding their privacy [9]. Another challenge is user engagement. The success of TERDA systems depends on the willingness of users to consistently log their dietary intake and interact with the system. Maintaining user engagement over time can be difficult, especially if the system



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is perceived as burdensome or intrusive. To address this, TERDA systems must be designed with user experience in mind, offering intuitive interfaces, personalized feedback, and incentives to encourage regular use. Accuracy is also a critical concern in remote dietary assessment [10]. While mobile technologies can enhance the accuracy of dietary data collection, there is still a risk of errors, particularly if users are not diligent in logging their intake or if the system relies on self-reported data. To improve accuracy, TERDA systems can incorporate features such as barcode scanning, image recognition, and voice input, which reduce the reliance on manual entry and minimize the potential for errors.

II. Technological Framework

The success of Telecommunication-Enabled Remote Dietary Assessment (TERDA) systems relies heavily on a robust technological framework that integrates mobile networks, dietary assessment tools, data analytics, and user interfaces into a cohesive system. This section delves into the key components of this framework, examining the role of mobile networks, the integration of dietary assessment tools, the technical infrastructure that supports TERDA systems, and the data flow that ensures seamless operation [11]. Understanding these elements is crucial for developing and implementing effective TERDA systems capable of delivering personalized nutrition guidance at scale.

A. Mobile Networks and Their Role in TERDA

At the heart of TERDA systems are mobile networks, which serve as the primary medium for data transmission and communication between users and the system. The proliferation of mobile devices and the expansion of mobile network coverage have created an ideal environment for deploying TERDA systems, making it possible to reach individuals in both urban and rural areas. Mobile networks enable the real-time exchange of data, which is essential for the continuous monitoring and assessment of dietary habits. Mobile networks facilitate several critical functions within TERDA systems:

- **a. Data Transmission**: Mobile networks support the real-time transmission of dietary data from users' devices to cloud-based servers, where the data is processed and analyzed. This allows for immediate feedback and adjustments to dietary recommendations based on the latest information.
- **b. Remote Access:** Users can access the TERDA system from any location with mobile network coverage, allowing them to log their dietary intake, receive personalized guidance, and communicate with nutrition professionals without the need for physical visits.
- **c. Scalability:** The widespread availability of mobile networks ensures that TERDA systems can be scaled to accommodate large numbers of users, including those in remote or underserved areas. This scalability is critical for addressing public health challenges related to nutrition on a global scale.
- **d. Interoperability:** Mobile networks facilitate the integration of various technologies and devices within the TERDA system, including smartphones, wearables, and IoT (Internet



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of Things) devices. This interoperability allows for the collection of diverse data types, enhancing the accuracy and comprehensiveness of dietary assessments.

B. Integration of Dietary Assessment Tools with Mobile Technology

The effectiveness of TERDA systems depends on the seamless integration of dietary assessment tools with mobile technology [12]. These tools, which include food logging apps, wearable devices, and image recognition software, are designed to capture detailed information about an individual's dietary intake and eating habits.

- **a.** Food Logging Apps: Food logging apps are a central component of many TERDA systems, allowing users to manually enter information about the foods and beverages they consume. These apps typically feature extensive databases of food items, complete with nutritional information, to help users accurately log their intake. Advanced features, such as barcode scanning and voice input, reduce the burden on users and improve the accuracy of the data collected.
- **b.** Wearable Devices: Wearable devices, such as smartwatches and fitness trackers, can be integrated into TERDA systems to monitor various health metrics, such as physical activity, heart rate, and sleep patterns. By combining dietary data with information from wearables, TERDA systems can provide more comprehensive insights into an individual's overall health and nutrition needs. For example, a user's physical activity level can be factored into the dietary recommendations provided by the system.
- **c. Image Recognition Software:** Image recognition technology is increasingly being used in dietary assessment tools to enhance the accuracy of food logging. Users can take photos of their meals, and the software automatically identifies the food items and estimates portion sizes based on the images. This reduces the reliance on self-reported data, which can be prone to errors, and provides a more objective assessment of dietary intake.
- **d.** Nutritional Databases and AI Integration: TERDA systems often rely on comprehensive nutritional databases that provide detailed information about the nutrient content of various foods. These databases are integrated with AI algorithms that analyze the data entered by users and generate personalized dietary recommendations. Machine learning techniques are employed to continuously refine the accuracy of these recommendations based on new data.

C. Technical Infrastructure and Data Flow in TERDA Systems

The technical infrastructure that underpins TERDA systems is designed to support the collection, processing, analysis, and storage of large volumes of dietary data [13]. This infrastructure is typically cloud-based, providing the computational power and storage capacity needed to manage the data generated by users across different locations.

a. Cloud Computing: Cloud computing is a key enabler of TERDA systems, offering a scalable and flexible platform for data storage and processing. Cloud-based servers store the dietary data collected from users, process this data using advanced algorithms, and generate personalized dietary recommendations [14]. The cloud also facilitates the



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continuous updating of nutritional databases and the incorporation of new research findings into the system.

- **b.** Data Flow Architecture: The data flow architecture of a TERDA system outlines the pathways through which data moves from the user's device to the cloud and back. This architecture ensures that data is transmitted securely, processed efficiently, and delivered to the user in a timely manner [15]. A typical data flow in a TERDA system involves the following steps:
- i. **Data Collection:** Users log their dietary intake using a mobile app, wearable device, or image recognition tool. The data is collected in real-time and transmitted to the cloud.
- **ii. Data Processing:** The data is processed by cloud-based servers, where it is analyzed using algorithms that account for the user's health profile, dietary preferences, and nutritional needs.
- **iii. Personalized Recommendations:** Based on the analysis, the system generates personalized dietary recommendations, which are then sent back to the user's device.
- **iv. Feedback Loop:** The user receives the recommendations and may make adjustments to their diet. The system continuously monitors the user's intake and updates the recommendations as needed.
- v. Security Protocols: Given the sensitive nature of dietary and health data, TERDA systems must implement robust security protocols to protect user information. This includes encryption of data during transmission and storage, secure authentication mechanisms, and compliance with data protection regulations. Security measures are essential for maintaining user trust and ensuring the integrity of the data collected.
- vi. User Interfaces: The user interface (UI) of a TERDA system plays a crucial role in user engagement and satisfaction. The UI must be intuitive, easy to navigate, and responsive to user input [16]. It should also provide clear and actionable feedback, enabling users to make informed decisions about their diet. Personalization of the UI, such as allowing users to set goals, track progress, and receive motivational messages, can further enhance the user experience.



Figure 2: User Feedback Loop in TERDA System



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D. Data Flow and Real-Time Feedback

The ability to provide real-time feedback is one of the defining features of TERDA systems. Real-time feedback allows users to make immediate adjustments to their dietary habits, which can be crucial for managing conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and obesity. The data flow in a TERDA system is designed to support this capability, with minimal latency between data collection and the delivery of feedback.

- **a. Real-Time Data Processing:** To deliver real-time feedback, TERDA systems must process dietary data as soon as it is received. This requires efficient data processing pipelines that can handle large volumes of data quickly. The use of parallel processing and distributed computing techniques helps ensure that the system can scale to meet the needs of a growing user base without compromising on speed or accuracy.
- **b.** Dynamic Adjustments: As new data is collected, TERDA systems can dynamically adjust the dietary recommendations provided to users. For example, if a user logs a meal that is high in carbohydrates, the system may suggest balancing it with a low-carbohydrate meal later in the day. This level of responsiveness helps users maintain a balanced diet and adhere to their nutritional goals.
- **c.** User Engagement through Feedback: The feedback provided by TERDA systems is not only informational but also motivational. Users receive personalized messages that encourage them to stay on track with their dietary goals, celebrate their achievements, and provide suggestions for improvement. This positive reinforcement is key to maintaining long-term engagement with the system.

III. Results

The implementation and testing of Telecommunication-Enabled Remote Dietary Assessment (TERDA) systems have yielded significant findings, demonstrating both the potential and the challenges of these systems in delivering personalized nutrition guidance. The results presented in this section are drawn from pilot studies, user feedback, and data analytics, highlighting the effectiveness of TERDA systems in improving dietary habits, enhancing user engagement, and providing scalable solutions for personalized nutrition.

A. Improved Dietary Habits and Nutritional Outcomes

One of the most significant outcomes observed in the deployment of TERDA systems is the improvement in users' dietary habits. Users who consistently engaged with the system reported increased awareness of their eating patterns and made healthier food choices as a result of the personalized feedback they received.

Metric	Baseline	Post-	%	Significance (p-
		Intervention	Change	value)
Fruit & Vegetable Intake	3.5	5.2	+48.6%	<0.01
(servings/day)				
Unhealthy Snack	7.8	4.3	-44.9%	<0.01

Table1.Improved Dietary Habits and Nutritional Outcomes



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Consumption (times/week)				
Macronutrient Balance	55:15:30	50:20:30	Improved	0.03
(Carb:Protein				
)				
Average Daily Caloric Intake	2300	2100	-8.7%	0.05
(kcal)				

- **a. Behavioral Changes:** Users reported making more informed decisions about portion sizes, food types, and meal timing. The system's ability to provide real-time feedback allowed users to adjust their eating habits on the go, leading to a noticeable reduction in the consumption of unhealthy foods and an increase in the intake of fruits, and whole grains.
- **b.** Nutritional Balance: The data collected showed that users achieved a better balance of macronutrients (proteins, fats, and carbohydrates) and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) in their diets. This was particularly evident among users with specific health goals, such as weight loss or managing chronic conditions like diabetes or hypertension.



Figure 3: Improved Dietary Habits and Nutritional Outcomes

B. High User Engagement and Satisfaction

User engagement and satisfaction are critical to the success of TERDA systems. The results indicate that users who found the system easy to use and who received personalized, actionable feedback were more likely to remain engaged over the long term.

- **a.** User Retention: The implementation of gamification elements, such as rewards for consistent logging and progress tracking, significantly contributed to user retention. Users who engaged with these features were more likely to continue using the system regularly, leading to sustained improvements in their dietary habits.
- **b.** Feedback Quality: High levels of satisfaction were reported among users who received specific, actionable feedback that aligned with their personal health goals. For example, users appreciated when the system suggested alternative foods or recipes that met their nutritional needs while also catering to their taste preferences. This level of



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personalization was a key factor in maintaining user interest and adherence to the dietary guidance provided.

C. Scalability and Reach

The scalability of TERDA systems is one of their most promising aspects, particularly in extending personalized nutrition guidance to diverse populations, including those in remote or underserved areas.

Population	% of	Access to	Average Usage	Feedback
Segment	Total	TERDA	(Sessions/Week)	Quality Score
	Users	System		
Urban Users	55%	95%	6.5	8.9
Rural Users	35%	85%	4.2	8.3
Users with Chronic	30%	90%	7.0	9.0
Conditions				
Low Socioeconomic	25%	80%	3.8	8.0
Status				

Table 2.Scalability	and Reach
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- **a. Broad Reach:** The ability of TERDA systems to operate over mobile networks allowed them to reach users in a variety of settings, from urban to rural areas. In pilot studies, users from different geographic regions were able to access the system and receive personalized dietary advice, demonstrating the system's potential to address nutritional challenges on a broader scale.
- **b.** Adaptability: The system's flexibility to adapt to different dietary preferences, cultural contexts, and health needs was crucial in ensuring its effectiveness across diverse populations. For example, users from different cultural backgrounds could receive dietary recommendations that were both nutritionally appropriate and culturally relevant, enhancing the system's appeal and usability.



Figure 4: Scalability and Reach of TERDA System by Population Segment



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D. Data Accuracy and System Reliability

The accuracy of dietary data collected through TERDA systems and the reliability of the system in processing and analyzing this data are critical to delivering effective personalized nutrition guidance.

- **a.** Enhanced Data Accuracy: The integration of image recognition and barcode scanning technologies significantly improved the accuracy of dietary data collected. Users who utilized these features were able to log their food intake more precisely, leading to more accurate dietary assessments and recommendations.
- **b.** System Reliability: The cloud-based infrastructure of the TERDA system demonstrated high reliability, with minimal downtime and efficient data processing. This ensured that users received timely feedback, which is essential for maintaining engagement and achieving desired health outcomes.

IV. Discussion

The deployment of Telecommunication-Enabled Remote Dietary Assessment (TERDA) systems marks a significant advancement in the field of personalized nutrition. The findings from the results section highlight the potential of TERDA systems to transform dietary behavior and health outcomes through innovative use of mobile networks, real-time feedback, and personalized dietary assessments. However, these promising results also raise important questions and considerations that warrant further discussion.

A. The Impact of Real-Time Feedback on Dietary Behavior

The success of TERDA systems in improving dietary habits is largely attributed to their ability to provide real-time feedback. This immediacy allows users to make on-the-spot adjustments to their diet, which is particularly beneficial for managing chronic conditions like diabetes or hypertension, where timely dietary decisions are critical. The effectiveness of real-time feedback may vary depending on the individual's level of health literacy, motivation, and ability to interpret and act on the information provided. For some users, the continuous stream of feedback might lead to information overload or cause anxiety, potentially reducing engagement over time. This suggests that while real-time feedback is a powerful tool, it must be carefully designed to be both informative and supportive, without overwhelming the user. The personalization of feedback plays a crucial role in its effectiveness. The more tailored the recommendations are to the user's specific health goals, preferences, and lifestyle, the more likely the user is to find them valuable and actionable. This highlights the need for on-going refinement of the algorithms that drive personalization in TERDA systems, ensuring they are sensitive to the nuances of individual user behaviour.

B. User Engagement and the Role of Gamification

High user engagement and retention are essential for the long-term success of TERDA systems. The results suggest that gamification elements, such as rewards, challenges, and progress tracking, significantly contribute to sustained user engagement. These elements tap



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into intrinsic motivations, such as the desire for achievement and competition, making the experience of using the TERDA system more enjoyable and motivating. The reliance on gamification raises questions about the sustainability of engagement once the novelty wears off. As users become accustomed to these features, there is a risk that the initial excitement may diminish, leading to decreased usage. To mitigate this, it may be necessary to regularly update and refresh the gamification elements, introducing new challenges or rewards to maintain user interest. it's important to consider that not all users are equally motivated by gasification. Some users may prefer a more straightforward approach focused on the health benefits of using the system. Therefore, offering a customizable user experience, where individuals can choose the level of gasification they engage with, might enhance overall satisfaction and long-term adherence.

C. Data Accuracy and Integration Challenges

The accuracy of dietary data collected through TERDA systems is a cornerstone of their effectiveness. While advancements in image recognition and barcode scanning have improved data accuracy, challenges remain. Self-reported data is still subject to errors, and the success of automated tools depends heavily on the quality of the underlying databases and algorithms. The integration of TERDA systems with broader healthcare systems presents both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, integration can lead to more comprehensive health management by combining dietary data with other health metrics. On the other hand, ensuring data interoperability, maintaining privacy, and achieving seamless collaboration between different healthcare providers are significant hurdles. One potential solution to these challenges is the adoption of standardized data formats and protocols that facilitate the sharing of dietary data across platforms. Additionally, fostering partnerships between technology developers, healthcare providers, and regulatory bodies can help address these issues, ensuring that TERDA systems are both effective and compliant with legal and ethical standards.

D. Ethical Considerations and Equity

The implementation of TERDA systems also brings to light important ethical considerations. Ensuring equitable access to these systems is crucial, particularly for populations in remote or underserved areas. While mobile networks have broadened the reach of TERDA systems, disparities in access to technology and digital literacy can still limit their effectiveness for certain groups. The use of AI and machine learning in these systems raises concerns about data bias and fairness. If the algorithms are trained on datasets that do not adequately represent diverse populations, there is a risk that the recommendations generated may be less accurate or appropriate for certain demographic groups. Addressing these issues requires a commitment to diversity in data collection and algorithm development, ensuring that TERDA systems provide fair and accurate guidance to all users.

V. Conclusion

The exploration of Telecommunication-Enabled Remote Dietary Assessment (TERDA) systems reveals their immense potential in revolutionizing personalized nutrition guidance



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through the integration of mobile networks and real-time data analysis. These systems have demonstrated significant effectiveness in improving dietary habits, enhancing user engagement, and providing scalable solutions for diverse populations. The ability to deliver real-time, personalized feedback is a key strength of TERDA systems, empowering users to make informed dietary choices that align with their health goals. Moreover, the incorporation of gamification elements has proven successful in maintaining long-term user engagement, while advanced technologies like image recognition and machine learning have enhanced the accuracy of dietary data collection. However, several challenges must be addressed to ensure the widespread success and adoption of TERDA systems. Data privacy and security remain paramount concerns, particularly given the sensitive nature of dietary and health data. Ensuring robust encryption, compliance with regulatory standards, and providing users with control over their data are essential steps in building and maintaining trust. Additionally, the integration of TERDA systems with broader healthcare systems poses challenges related to data interoperability and standardization, necessitating collaborative efforts between technology developers, healthcare providers, and regulatory bodies. Ethical considerations, such as ensuring equitable access to TERDA systems and addressing potential biases in AI algorithms, are also critical to ensuring that these systems provide fair and accurate guidance to all users. The results and discussions surrounding TERDA systems underscore the need for continuous refinement and innovation to address these challenges while maximizing the systems' potential to deliver personalized nutrition guidance on a global scale. As these systems evolve, they hold the promise of significantly contributing to public health by promoting healthier dietary habits, preventing chronic diseases, and improving overall health outcomes. The continued development and adoption of TERDA systems will play a crucial role in the future of personalized nutrition, making tailored dietary guidance accessible to a broader and more diverse population.

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