



**HAL**  
open science

## Towards healthier culinary practices among Ghanaian women in the UK: a photovoice analysis

Hibbah Araba Osei-Kwasi, Robert Akparibo, S. Zakariah-Akoto, Michelle Holdsworth, Mary Nicolaou, P. Jackson, Paula Griffiths

► **To cite this version:**

Hibbah Araba Osei-Kwasi, Robert Akparibo, S. Zakariah-Akoto, Michelle Holdsworth, Mary Nicolaou, et al.. Towards healthier culinary practices among Ghanaian women in the UK: a photovoice analysis. Summer Conference 2023: Nutrition at key stages of the lifecycle, The Nutrition Society, Jul 2023, Liverpool, United Kingdom. pp.E288, 10.1017/S0029665123003877 . hal-04516135

**HAL Id: hal-04516135**

**<https://hal.inrae.fr/hal-04516135v1>**

Submitted on 22 Mar 2024

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License



Summer Conference 2023, 3–6 July 2023, Nutrition at key stages of the lifecycle

## Towards healthier culinary practices among Ghanaian women in the UK: A photovoice analysis

H. Osei-Kwasi<sup>1</sup>, R. Akparibo<sup>2</sup>, S. Zakariah-Akoto<sup>3</sup>, M. Holdsworth<sup>4</sup>, M. Nicolaou<sup>5</sup>, P. Jackson<sup>6</sup>  
and P. Griffiths<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*School of Sports, Exercise and Health Sciences, Loughborough University, UK,*

<sup>2</sup>*Public Health Section, School of Health and Related Research, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK,*

<sup>3</sup>*Department of Nutrition, Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, College of Health Sciences, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana,*

<sup>4</sup>*UMR MoISA (Montpellier Interdisciplinary centre on Sustainable Agri-food systems), Univ Montpellier, CIRAD, CIHEAM-IAMM, INRAE, Institut Agro Montpellier, IRD, Montpellier, France,*

<sup>5</sup>*Department of Public and Occupational Health, Amsterdam Public Health Research Institute, the Netherlands and*

<sup>6</sup>*Department of Geography, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK*

Foods eaten out of home foods have been positively associated with poor diet, increased body weight, obesity, and poor diet quality<sup>(1)</sup>. Comparatively, the benefits of home cooking have gained attention in recent years, resulting in the proliferation of many health promotion cooking interventions/ programmes. Although most Ghanaian immigrants are reported to maintain traditional eating behaviours following migration<sup>(2)</sup>, little is known about the healthiness of their cooking practices. This study investigated the healthiness of culinary practices of Ghanaian women living in the UK.

A photovoice study was conducted amongst Ghanaian women aged 18 years or more living in Greater Manchester (n = 31) in 2020–22. Participants were asked to take photographs to illustrate their culinary practices. Follow-up interviews focused on participants telling the ‘stories’ of their photographs to explain what, why and how they cook. The healthy cooking framework<sup>(3)</sup> was adapted, to organise participants’ photographs and accounts of culinary practices. Thematic analysis was used to identify specific themes from the photographs and interviews using *NVivo*.

Photographs taken depicted all themes across the healthy cooking framework: cooking frequency (bulk vs daily cooking); techniques/methods (tradition vs novelty); ‘minimal usage, additions/replacements (health vs indulgence)’ and ‘flavouring’ (natural vs processed). ‘Techniques and methods’ used in cooking revolved around health consciousness and convenience but also the need to maintain tradition and authenticity. Although the use of technology was perceived mainly as a positive innovation in cooking, there was also distrust in the use of specific gadgets such as microwaves. Photographs of food products perceived as unhealthy such as salted fish, certain types of oils, animal fats and sugar were discussed as minimally used in cooking following migration whilst photographs of meat, chicken and vegetables were taken to depict increased consumption following migration. Most participants discussed photographs of local herbs and processed seasonings, and other specialised ingredients (mostly obtained from Ghana through transnational connections) and participants indicated using a combination of these for flavouring to enhance meals. Novel methods identified by participants includes a health by stealth approach, where vegetables are blended into a paste and used to thicken stews and soups as a way to promote the intake of vegetables among children.

Our study highlights cooking among Ghanaian immigrant women as a routinised social practice that is influenced by many inter-related factors that revolve around health consciousness, tradition, authenticity but also innovation. The study findings increase our understanding of culinary practices and provide opportunities that may help efforts to design effective community-based nutrition intervention tailored to ethnic identity

### Acknowledgments

This research was funded by AXA Research Fund

### References

1. Bezerra IN, Curioni C & Sichieri R (2012) *Nutr Rev* **70**(2), 65–79.
2. Osei-Kwasi HA, Powell K, Nicolaou M *et al.* (2017) *Ann Hum Biol* **44**(5), 454–63.
3. Raber M, Chandra, J, Upadhyaya M *et al.* (2016) *Prev Med Rep* **4**, 23–8.