

Exploring the Influence of Culture on Dietary Practices and Ethnic Inequality in Health among Migrant Nigerians in the UK

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Abstract : The rate of diseases and death from preventable diseases among ethnic minority groups is high when compared with the wider white population in the UK. This can be due in part to the diet consumed and various cultural reasons. Changes in dietary practices and the health of ethnic minority groups can be caused by the adoption of food practices of the host culture after migration (acculturation) and generational differences among migrants. However, understanding how and why these changes occur is limited due to the challenges of data collection in research. This research utilizes the interpretive phenomenological approach, coupled with Bourdieu's theory used as the conceptual framework, and seeks an in-depth understanding of how adult immigrant Nigerians in the UK interpret their experience of the influence of ethnic and prevailing cultures on their dietary practice. Recruiting participants from a close-knit community, such as the Nigerian population in the UK, can be complex and problematic and is determined by the accessibility to the community. Although complex, the researcher leveraged the principles of Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) in gaining access to participants within the Nigerian community. This study emphasizes the need for a culturally tailored and community-centered approach to interventions geared toward the reduction of ethnic health inequality in the UK other than the existing practice, which focuses on better healthy eating through the improvement of skills and knowledge about food groups.

Keywords : culture, dietary practice, ethnic minority, health inequality

Conference Title : ICCPHN 2024 : International Conference on Clinical and Public Health Nutrition

Conference Location : New York, United States

Conference Dates : March 18-19, 2024