

CLAHRC BITE

A bite-sized summary of a piece of research supported by CLAHRC for Birmingham and Black Country February 2012



'You give us Rangoli, we give you talk'

Using an art-based activity to elicit data from a seldom heard group

South Asian women's perspectives on food preparation

Background

- There is a tendency for South Asian (SA) culture to be portrayed as uniform and rigid, having a negative influence on health. SA diets in particular are believed to be implicated in causing obesity and type 2 diabetes as a result of their high sugar and fat content.
- Our research explored the relationship of faith, culture, health and food in SA communities in Birmingham, in order to generate evidence for addressing cultural difference in the design and provision of health services.
- We used the activity of Rangoli (a popular and decorative South Asian art form) with the aim to mirror food preparation and cooking, thus providing a focus for informal conversation and social interaction about food and its role in health.

Turn over to find out more

Findings

What, why and how food is prepared is a complex sociocultural phenomenon that is unlikely to be amenable to educational interventions which seek to address a biomedical knowledge deficit.

- We found that women's roles in the preparation of food were not just related to skill and duty, but also to their moral worth as women, wives and mothers in nourishing their family.
- Honouring traditions was seen as a social and moral obligation. Sometimes, these obligations were also linked to religious practice.
- The women's accounts suggested that they are enmeshed in family and social structures which define who they are and how they prepare food.
- Food and diet must be discussed in ways that not only consider health and nutrition, but also moral and sociocultural practices.

References

Redwood, S., Gale, N. and Greenfield, S. (2012) 'You give us Rangoli, we give you talk' - Using an art-based activity to elicit data from a seldom heard group. **BMC Medical Research Methodology**. 12:7
<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2288/12/7/abstract>



Recommendations for practice

“Health service interventions which are sensitive to the way women construct their identities as social and moral members of a family and community may be more likely to be successful.”

What is CLAHRC for Birmingham & Black Country?

The Collaborations for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) is a partnership between the University of Birmingham and a number of NHS organisations in Birmingham and Black Country. We are funded by the National Institute for Health Research with a mission to undertake high-quality applied health research focused on the needs of patients to improve health services locally and beyond.

For further information, visit:
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