

1 **PERCEPTIONS OF THE HOST COUNTRY'S FOOD CULTURE AMONG FEMALE**
2 **IMMIGRANTS FROM AFRICA AND ASIA: ASPECTS RELEVANT FOR CULTURE**
3 **SENSITIVITY IN NUTRITION COMMUNICATION**

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INTRODUCTION

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8 Migration to a Western country is often associated with the adoption of less healthy
9 dietary habits, higher risk of obesity and related disorders.^{1,2} Changes in dietary
10 composition, described as the nutrition transition, happen worldwide driven by a
11 range of factors, including urbanization, economic growth and new technology.³
12 Migration can be a situation where the nutrition transition happens very quickly. The
13 process whereby immigrants adopt the host country's dietary practices is called
14 dietary acculturation.⁴

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16 The development of increasingly multicultural societies creates new challenges for
17 health promotion initiatives. Most health promotion activities include some elements
18 of information, education and communication. A review paper on theory and health
19 promotion strategies used among immigrant women emphasizes that health
20 promotion programs should be tailored to be consistent with immigrants'
21 characteristics, needs and cultural beliefs.⁵ There is a growing recognition that
22 effective health communication must be culturally sensitive.⁶ Attributes of cultural
23 sensitivity have been described as knowledge, consideration, understanding,
24 respect, and tailoring.⁷ Intercultural communication involves more than language
25 issues,⁸ and particularly differences in cultural values have been identified as

26 important predictors of culture-related communication difficulties.⁹ Culture shapes
27 perceptions and practices relevant to health and may mediate responses to health
28 education.¹⁰

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30 Furthermore, efforts to promote healthy diets must focus on more than simply
31 education about the relationship between diet and health.¹¹ Preliminary evidence
32 from systematic reviews indicates that socio-cultural environmental factors, defining
33 what is socially acceptable, desirable and appropriate to eat, might be more
34 important in shaping dietary behavior than the physical environments that define the
35 availability and accessibility of foods.¹² Food is central to individual identity,^{13,14} and
36 cultures are highly selective in what they define as food.¹⁵ No food is appropriate for
37 everyone, at all times, in all circumstances and quantities.¹³ Several authors argue
38 that dietary changes are more likely to be acceptable if nutrition communication and
39 interventions are offered within a culturally sensitive context.¹⁶⁻¹⁸

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41 This research had three aims: to explore how female immigrants from Africa and Asia
42 perceived the host country's food culture in relation to their original food culture, to
43 identify aspects of their original food culture which they considered important to
44 preserve after immigration, and to describe how they pursued to preserve them. The
45 findings were discussed in relation to attributes of cultural sensitivity relevant for
46 nutrition communication.

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METHODS

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Participants

Researchers conducted in-depth interviews with 21 female immigrants from 11 African and Asian countries living in Oslo, Norway. This study was carried out among women only, because they often are responsible for food preparation and because health promotion activities aimed at families tend to target women. Study participants, aged 25 to 60 years, varied in terms of country of origin, years of residence, and employment and marital status. The term “immigrant” was used to denote women born to two foreign-born parents and who had moved to Norway. Ethnicity was defined as self-reported country of birth. To investigate the study’s aim, participants from many countries were included, with priority given to the largest African and Asian immigrant groups in Norway.

Participants resided in areas of Oslo with a population having a predominantly low to middle socioeconomic status and a high proportion of immigrants. Table 1 shows some characteristics of the participants. The majority was either in (part-time) employment, conducting an internship related to language training or in education. Most of the participants had children and were married. Reasons for migration and years of residence in Norway varied (2 to 35 years). Approximately half the participants had lived in Norway for less than ten years. Many had arrived after their husbands. Although information on socioeconomic status was not collected,

73 participants were considered to be typical of the immigrant population in Oslo based
74 on place of residence and employment status.¹⁹

75 (Table 1 approximately here)

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77 **Data Collection**

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79 The data collection had elements of a phenomenological approach, which aims to
80 explore the subjective lived experience of individuals and to understand individual
81 perceptions.²⁰ In-depth interviews were used to encourage participants to reflect on a
82 phenomenon based on their everyday experiences. A convenience sampling strategy
83 was followed for the early recruitment stages. Later on, the characteristics of already
84 included participants guided further recruitment throughout the study enrollment. To
85 ensure a high variation in experiences reported, purposive sampling was applied to
86 include women from the largest African and Asian immigrant groups and to achieve
87 variation in years of residence, and occupational and marital status. The participants
88 were recruited through women's centers run by non-governmental organizations or at
89 kindergartens. Recruitment continued until the interviews achieved replication of
90 response. The researchers identified predominant themes in the first 12 interviews,
91 and subsequent interviews focused on these themes. The language used during the
92 interviews was Norwegian. Participants' oral Norwegian language skills ranged from
93 low to high fluency. If language difficulties arose, questions were rephrased or
94 translated into English. The researchers decided not to use an interpreter, because
95 this could cause methodological challenges when collecting and interpreting
96 qualitative data.²¹

97

98 The interviews (lasting from 30 to 53 minutes) were conducted between June 2010
99 and February 2011, and followed a semi-structured interview guide. The interview
100 guide was pilot tested prior to the study and was adjusted and further developed
101 throughout the data collection. The participants were told that the study aimed to
102 explore their experiences of food from two cultures. The themes in the interview
103 script relevant for this article were: 1) Description of current food habits, shopping
104 routines and everyday meal preparation; 2) Description of food habits, shopping
105 routines and everyday meal preparation prior to migration; 3) Perceptions of
106 Norwegian food and their memories of their first encounter with it; 4) Similarities and
107 dissimilarities between their original food culture and Norway's; 5) Food items, meals
108 and food habits which were important to preserve. The researchers asked
109 participants directly about what they considered as typical Norwegian food, or their
110 ideas on this subject emerged gradually during their narratives. The participants were
111 not specifically asked about healthy food, but when they introduced this issue, the
112 researchers asked follow-up questions. Two researchers, a sociologist, experienced
113 in qualitative research and a public health nutritionist, were involved in the data
114 collection and analysis. The interview guide reflected their different educational
115 backgrounds and strengthened the data interpretation. Both researchers are
116 themselves immigrants from European countries. The Norwegian Social Science
117 Data Services (NSD) approved the study, and participants gave their informed
118 consent.

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120 **Analysis**

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122 Data collection and analysis proceeded in parallel. The interviews were tape-
123 recorded. One of the two researchers involved in the data collection and analysis
124 transcribed the interviews. The second researcher carefully read the transcripts to
125 ensure their accuracy. The majority of the analysis was conducted in schemes in
126 digital text documents. A qualitative software program, Atlas.ti (version 6.2.15,
127 ATLAS.ti Scientific Software Development GmbH, Berlin, Germany, 2011) was used
128 to manage some of the data.

129

130 The analytical procedure was guided by principles of a phenomenological method.²⁰
131 Analysis started by reading each participant's interview to get an overall impression
132 and preliminary understanding of the phenomenon of interest and its contexts. Then
133 meaning units were identified and interrogated in terms of the article's aims. The
134 coding of meaning units reflected researchers' interpretations of participants'
135 statements. Thereafter, the researchers searched for underlying or covert meanings
136 and organized codes into categories. The main categories were participants'
137 perceptions and acceptance of the host country's food culture, experienced
138 differences between the food cultures, current food habits, predisposing factors
139 related to food choice, and how participants manage the encounter of divergent food
140 cultures. The relationships between the emerging categories were repeatedly
141 examined. Some categories were redefined as data from new interviews were
142 gathered. Identified categories were discussed with the participants' peer groups at
143 the recruitment sites as a form of member check to improve credibility.²²

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RESULTS

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Participants' Perceptions of the Host Country's Food Culture in Relation to Their Original Food Culture

The interviews revealed that participants clearly compared their original food culture with the host country's and distinguished between them. When talking about their original food culture, participants used terms like "our food" or "we eat," whereas they used "their food" or "they eat" when talking about the Norwegian food culture. Participants highlighted evident differences between the two: *"My dear, there's a huge difference. African food, or Somali food, is completely different from Norwegian food"* (Somalia 3). Participants from African and Asian countries reported several analogous examples when comparing their original food culture and the host country's. Mainly, they reported these differences as relating to taste, food preparation methods and efforts, and organization of the daily meals.

Participants perceived the food of the host country as "tasteless and boring," which often was related to the absence of spices. In fact, when asked about the main differences between their original and host country's food cultures, many participants referred to the use of spices as a crucial aspect. They also attributed the lack of taste to different food preparation methods, as the following statement illustrates: *"I don't like Norwegian food. Just water. Boring food, all together, because of the spices, and it's not fried, just boiled"* (Somalia 4).

170 Another characteristic association regarding the host country's food culture was that
171 participants perceived it as "simple" and "time-saving" compared to their original food
172 culture, as the following statement illustrates: "*We don't have time when we work. To*
173 *prepare our [Somali] food takes time... That is why I prepare Norwegian food,*
174 *because it does not take much time... It is difficult to organize your time around meal*
175 *times and other routines*" (Somalia 1). Thus, using Norwegian dishes could make it
176 possible for the participants to serve a warm meal on busy days. Before migrating,
177 many participants did not work outside the home. Often other relatives helped them
178 to prepare meals and to perform other household tasks. Therefore, they had more
179 time to prepare food. Now, they complained about lack of time and help. Participants
180 still found it very important to prepare meals from scratch, and several reported
181 struggling to both work outside the home and prepare meals from scratch. Although
182 many participants stated that it takes less time to prepare Norwegian dishes and
183 seemed interested in learning how to prepare them, a possible lack of necessary
184 skills was observed.

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186 Some participants described the host country's food culture as "healthy" and
187 sometimes even "healthier" than their original food because it was less "heavy",
188 containing less oil and sugar. On the other hand, some participants described the
189 food of the host country as being poor in nutrients. For example, they felt that boiling
190 vegetables made them less nutritious and watery. Instead, they preferred to fry
191 vegetables to maintain their nutritional value and crispness.

192

193 The analysis of the interviews indicated that participants considered Norwegian food
194 as not very filling or proper meals. For instance, when asked about what she ate for

195 breakfast, a Lebanese woman replied, *“I did not have breakfast this morning. I just*
196 *ate some slices of bread with spreads”* (Lebanon 1). She defined breakfast as a
197 warm meal that she now only ate at weekends when she had sufficient time to
198 prepare it. Participants also said that their husbands did not feel full after eating
199 Norwegian food: *“If you like Somali food, Norwegian or other food isn’t that good. So*
200 *he [Somali ex-husband] felt that he didn’t feel full by Norwegian food”* (Somali 3).

201
202 When exploring the participant’s perceptions of Norwegian food it emerged that they
203 tended to have an unclear picture of what dishes were typical Norwegian. When
204 asked about the host country’s food culture, participants often mentioned food items
205 that could be classified as globalized and westernized cuisine, in addition to some
206 more traditional Norwegian dishes. Thus, pizza, spaghetti, and chicken nuggets, on
207 one hand, and poached fish, boiled potatoes and meatballs on the other, became
208 part of a wide definition of the host country’s food culture. Participants seemed to
209 characterize any food items deviating from their original food culture as part of the
210 host country’s food culture, as a Pakistani woman’s statement illustrates: *“Pizza was*
211 *Norwegian for us, because I hadn’t tasted it before I came to Norway”* (Pakistani, 3).

212
213 Another recurrent theme was adherence to religious dietary rules. Many participants,
214 particularly Muslims and Hindus, followed religious dietary rules. Muslims frequently
215 mentioned the importance of eating halal food or of avoiding pork. Some participants
216 expressed uncertainty about whether the food available to them was properly halal.
217 For instance, they wondered if it contained remnants of meat (like gelatin), or whether
218 halal labels could be trusted. Thus, some participants were confused about what was
219 “safe” for them to eat.

220

221 Food Habits: Between Continuity and Change

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223 Most participants emphasized that continuity with their original food culture was of
224 utmost importance. Participants explained that they maintained, to varying degrees,
225 certain values and practices of their original food culture. No participants stated that
226 they had completely adopted the host country's food culture.

227

228 Based on the participants' narratives, three possible patterns of dietary acculturation
229 were conceptualized: Strict continuity, flexible continuity and limited continuity of the
230 original food culture. The first pattern, strict continuity, pertained when participants
231 preserved their original food culture at every eating event, irrespective of time of day,
232 day of week or special occasions, as the following statement exemplifies: "*I do not*
233 *eat Norwegian food. I always eat Egyptian food*" (Egyptian 1).

234

235 Participants following flexible continuity, the second pattern, adhered less strictly to
236 their original food culture while simultaneously adopting some of the host country's
237 food culture, for instance: "*It varies. We can also prepare Norwegian food. If I prepare*
238 *Pakistani food for several days, then it's time to vary*" (Pakistani 3). Such participants
239 seemed to maintain their original food culture particularly for dinner. Breakfast and
240 lunch, on the other hand, often contained elements typically associated with
241 Norwegian food culture, especially sandwiches with spreads for both of these meals.
242 Some participants even described combining their original food culture and the host
243 country's food culture in the same meal: They served meatballs with rice instead of
244 potatoes, which would be typical for the Norwegian food culture.

245

246 The third pattern, limited continuity, implied adoption of the host country's food
247 culture and maintenance of their original only for special meals served for special
248 occasions. In this context, participants continued with their original food culture at
249 religious festivals and social gatherings, as the following illustrates: "*At Ramadan,*
250 *only, we prepare our food from our home country*" (Iraqi 1).

251

252 This study did not analyze in-depth the factors influencing variations in the degree of
253 continuity or change. However, some aspects relevant for further research can be
254 mentioned, such as the influence of family members' preferences on the degree of
255 continuity with the original food culture. Many participants reported that their
256 husbands refused to eat dishes associated with the host country's food culture,
257 although children often preferred such food. They gave examples of how they felt
258 they had to cook different meals for the men and the children. Increased time of
259 residence did not necessarily enhance the adoption of the host country's food
260 culture. Some participants who had lived in Norway several years stated that their
261 food habits were now more in line with their original food habits than in the first years
262 after migration, mainly due to increased availability of ethnic food items.

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264 **How Participants Pursued Continuity of Their Original Food Culture**

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266 Participants had found strategies to preserve important aspects of their original food
267 culture. Findings indicated that participants searched in the new food culture for
268 foods similar to those in their original food culture, for instance, by using food items
269 comparable to ones familiar to them: "*I like rice pudding. It is similar to our kiribat*" (Sri

270 Lankan 1). When asked about shopping routines, many participants reported going to
271 ethnic food stores to buy foods from their country of origin. As already mentioned,
272 increased availability of ethnic food stores enabled continuity of their original food
273 culture. For example, when a woman was asked what kind of food items she missed
274 the most from her country of origin, she answered: *“Oh, nothing. I prepare everything*
275 *here as well”* (Iraqi 2).

276

277 Despite the increased availability of ethnic food, concern about whether food was halal
278 was a recurrent theme for several participants. One strategy mentioned to cope with
279 this concern was to use only foods that were not affected by religious rules. Some
280 participants cited this coping strategy to explain why they, for instance, ate more jam,
281 sweet bread-spreads and fish, because these foods are always halal.

282

283 Some participants mentioned adopting elements from the host country’s food culture,
284 but modifying it in their own way. Many participants had increased their consumption
285 of fish, particularly salmon, after migration. They reported eating fish several times a
286 week. However, to achieve cultural appropriateness of their meals, participants said
287 that they prepared fish and fish products “in their own way.” This often implied adding
288 spices and, for instance, frying it instead of “the Norwegian way of just poaching.” For
289 example, a Pakistani woman said that she had to “cheat a bit” when she prepared
290 fish cakes or salmon, which implied that she added Pakistani spices. This practice
291 illustrates a very common way to pursue continuity: Participants transformed novel
292 ingredients or unknown dishes into culturally appropriate meals by using spices or
293 familiar preparation methods.

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DISCUSSION

The present study highlighted that immigrants try to preserve their original food habits. Strict, flexible and limited continuity with the original food culture were observed. Participants' perceptions of the host country's food culture and their narratives about present food habits revealed aspects of culturally appropriate meals.

In discussing the results, the limitations of this study must be considered. As with other qualitative studies, the gathering of data and the interpretation of results are somewhat shaped by the researchers' orientations and experiences. Results of this study cannot be generalized. During the research process, the researchers sought to include participants whose length of residency varied. Participants had good reminiscence of their original food culture and of their food habits prior to migration. Many participants with long residency reported frequent visits to their country of birth. All participants had basic knowledge skills of the Norwegian language; however, in some interviews the participants struggled to express themselves. Although during in-depth interviews the interviewer could clear up confusion by rewording questions, language difficulties might nevertheless have influenced some of the participants' responses. One of the strengths of qualitative research designs is that it can lead to important insights into how cultural factors are associated with food habits as well as into the importance of ethnic identity in the food choice process. Indeed, this strength is supported by other studies.²³⁻²⁵

320 Previous research has been conducted on dietary acculturation and dietary changes
321 of several immigrant populations in different countries.^{1,26} In Norway, such prior
322 research focused on the Pakistani immigrant population. Our study is unique in
323 sampling a group with a heterogeneous ethnic background and investigating
324 similarities regarding their encounter with a divergent food culture.

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326 **Continuity of Cultural Identity through Culturally Appropriate Meals**

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328 The results of this study demonstrated how participants, to varying degrees and in
329 different ways, preserved continuity of their original food culture after migration.
330 Participants' accounts confirm findings from previous studies which highlight that food
331 is an important marker for identity, ethnicity and cultural belonging among
332 immigrants.²⁷⁻³¹ When describing the process of dietary acculturation, Satia-Abouta
333 states that immigrants either maintain their original eating patterns, develop bicultural
334 eating patterns, or completely adopt eating patterns of the host country.⁴ Koctürk
335 argues, on the other hand, that it is impossible to strictly adhere to old food habits in
336 a foreign environment.³² None of the participants in our study reported to have fully
337 adopted food habits of the host country. A study involving South Asians settled in
338 Oslo had similar findings: Most participants reported a bicultural food pattern with
339 heavy reliance on dishes from their original food culture.³³ Our study indicated that
340 some meals, like dinner on weekends or at religious celebrations, are more culturally
341 loaded than others, which is in accordance with previous research.^{33,34}

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343 Our results were also in line with studies that describe dietary acculturation as being
344 a dynamic process whereby people do not necessarily move linearly from one end of

345 the acculturation continuum to the other.⁴ Perceptions of the host country's food
346 culture, availability of ethnic food items, religious dietary rules and family members'
347 preferences may possible have more influence on the degree of continuity of the
348 original food culture than years of residence in the new country. Many study
349 participants mentioned the increase in availability of foods from their country of origin.
350 According to a study conducted in London, the growing Ghanaian community led to
351 more confidence and pride in the black cultural heritage, which in turn led to
352 Ghanaian food's becoming more available.²⁹

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354 In our study, taste, food preparation effort and method, as well as religious dietary
355 rules were identified as important aspects of a culturally appropriate meal.
356 Participants often considered meals associated with the host food culture as not
357 filling or proper meals. These findings are similar to previous findings among Hmong
358 migrants who perceived American food as not filling.³⁵ In another study, Hmong
359 immigrants considered American foods served without rice as snacks, which
360 potentially doubled the amount of food they consumed.³⁶

361

362 The participants emphasized (strong) taste as being an essential aspect to preserve
363 from the original food culture. They used spices to transform unfamiliar ingredients
364 into culturally appropriate meals. Evidence for cultural appropriation through spices
365 exists in previous studies among immigrants in Sweden²⁸ and Norway.³⁷ Taste has
366 also been discussed by others as an important factor influencing immigrant's food
367 choices.^{37,38}

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369 The importance of spices as markers of food culture contradicts Koctürk's model
370 regarding the process of adapting to a new dietary pattern.³² She argues that
371 immigrants' use of accessory foods, like fats, herbs and spices, sweets, nuts, fruits
372 and drinks, changes quite easily after immigration. Moreover, Koctürk states that
373 composing a culture-specific dish is impossible without the appropriate staple, which
374 is, in her view, most resistant to change. Our findings were more in accordance with
375 those of Rozin and Rozin.³⁹ They argue that cuisines can be described by certain
376 typical combinations of smells and tastes, and introduce the concept of flavor
377 principles. The attachment to these traditional flavorings, they argue, may be stronger
378 than the attachment to the traditional staple foods. Flavors make a dish recognizable
379 and therefore acceptable even if some ingredients are alien to the consumer.
380 Guerrero states that "tradition is tasteful" and that distinct tastes are one of the
381 strongest characteristics of traditional food products.⁴⁰

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383 Furthermore, our study emphasized preparation effort and method as markers of a
384 proper meal. Goode states that the mode of food preparation rather than the food
385 items differentiates cuisines.⁴¹ Given that Western food often is associated with "fast
386 food," the concepts of time and preparation effort may differentiate the original food
387 culture from that of the host country's. According to Ritzer, the efficiency of a fast
388 food meal fits with the demands of the modern, dual-career family.⁴² For most of the
389 study participants, immigration to a Western country implied taking on work outside
390 the home while still being the person mainly responsible for food preparation. Less
391 time available to prepare a family meal may be associated with a feeling of loss in the
392 new situation. Role expectations for women have changed over time; indeed, limited

393 time available for food preparation may be a challenge also for women of the host
394 country.⁴³

395

396 **Possible Nutritional Outcomes of Dietary Acculturation**

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398 Exposure to the host country's food culture is a complex and dynamic process
399 influenced by socioeconomic, demographic and cultural factors.³² A systematic
400 review on the changing dietary habits of ethnic groups in Europe found that most
401 ethnic groups alter their eating habits, combining parts of their original diet with some
402 of the less healthy elements of a Western diet.¹ In many cases, migration involves
403 westernization and urbanization. The nutrition transition associated with these
404 phenomena, emerging in low-income as well as in high-income societies, changes
405 the diet towards more processed foods, with more fat and added sugar. Part of this
406 transition is thought to be due to increasing purchasing power.³ Surprisingly, none of
407 the participants in our study mentioned price as influencing their food choices in a
408 new country.

409

410 Although there has been more focus on unhealthful dietary changes after migration,
411 our study revealed that acculturation-associated dietary changes may also lead to
412 some healthy adoptions. For example, many participants reported a higher
413 consumption of fish. Participants who improved the palatability of an unfamiliar type
414 of fish with familiar spices may exemplify a healthy encounter between two food
415 cultures.

416

417 In this study, participants emphasized that they try to pursue their original food
418 culture. However, several studies report that immigrants tend to make significant
419 changes in the relative amounts of different ingredients in a dish and in the types of
420 food items consumed in a new food environment.^{29,33,34} Thus, cultural continuity of
421 food habits may still be compatible with changes in the nutritional content of the
422 diet.⁴⁴ To the extent that the traditional meals are already healthy, resistance to
423 change may also be an advantage.⁴⁵

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425 **Cultural Sensitivity in Nutrition Communication**

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427 An important finding of this study is that immigrants valued preserving aspects of
428 their original food habits. Therefore, nutrition communication may be more effective if
429 it takes into account aspects of cultural sensitivity. Based on a concept analysis
430 study, Foronda defined cultural sensitivity as follows: "Cultural sensitivity is employing
431 one's knowledge, consideration, understanding, respect, and tailoring after realizing
432 awareness of self and others and encountering a diverse group or individual."⁷
433 Although the five attributes of cultural sensitivity identified have distinct meanings,
434 they cannot be considered independently. For dietitians and other health care
435 professionals, knowledge about, understanding of and respect for a person's cultural
436 values and food practices may be core components in culturally sensitive nutrition
437 communication.

438

439 According to a review of the literature, health promotion communication is more
440 efficacious when messages are tailored.⁵ In a previous Norwegian study, Pakistani
441 immigrants experienced that nutritional advice from doctors and nutritionists was

442 diffuse and not in accordance with their original food culture, values and meal
443 habits.⁴⁶ While this study indicates a lack of tailoring to individual food habits, our
444 findings also point to the possibility that nutrition-related advice based on the host
445 country's food culture may suggest food perceived as tasteless, boring and
446 insufficiently filling.

447

448 Our findings indicated that cultural sensitivity in nutrition communication may imply
449 that dietitians and other health care professionals must take into account a wide
450 range of factors related to individual identity, background, religious beliefs and
451 context. Resnicow distinguishes two structural levels of cultural sensitivity: Surface
452 structure involves matching materials and messages to the target population. Deep
453 structure involves incorporating cultural, social and historical influences. Whereas
454 surface structure generally increases receptivity or acceptance of messages, deep
455 structure conveys salience.¹⁸

456

457 Strategies mentioned by our study participants to enhance cultural palatability of
458 meals, like making unfamiliar food more familiar through spices or combinations of
459 food items from both cultures, may also be useful aspects for nutrition
460 communication. Focusing on substituting ingredients and cooking methods with
461 healthier ones while maintaining similar tastes, flavors, and familiar dishes may be
462 another useful approach to culturally sensitive promotion of healthy diets. Providing
463 immigrants with nutrition-related advice which is compatible with their cultural values
464 may prevent the development of unhealthy westernized food habits after migration.

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IMPLICATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

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Results from this study support the importance of cultural sensitivity in nutrition communication. To achieve efficient nutrition communication with a multicultural audience, providers of nutrition-related advice should be aware of and implement the concept of cultural sensitivity. Nutrition communication can become more effective by increased knowledge, understanding of and respect for the audience's food culture. Further studies should investigate how differences in knowledge, values and cultural beliefs influence nutrition communication in a multicultural setting. Responses of immigrants to nutrition-related advice based on the host country's food culture should be evaluated, and different methods and approaches to achieving cultural sensitivity should be developed and tested.

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