Interviewer: what do you understand by being healthy?

Response: when somebody is fit enough and is okay enough to do anything. I don’t know how to put it. When someone is healthy and the person is perfectly okay

Interviewer: What do you understand by healthy eating?

Response: Maybe by eating ermmm, when you say someone is healthy, by eating healthy food like protein. Do you mean during the pregnancy?

Interviewer: anytime,

Response: by eating healthy food.

Interviewer: so what do you call healthy food?

Response: like protein (laughs)

Interviewer: okay in your own word tell me what you mean by healthy food?

Response : ermmmm long pause

Interviewer: okay so what food do you call protein?

Response: okay like fish, meat. Healthy food is eating any type of various foods that will give you nutrients and that will maintain your health.

Interviewer: okay, for instance, So which part of Nigeria are you from?

Response: Yoruba, Kwara State

Interviewer: so using foods from your place, can you define what you mean by eating healthy? If you say that you want to eat healthy today, what do you mean by that?

Response: By eating various foods that you know will give you nutrients. Like Amala in my home country, iyon, ewedu

Interviewer: so apart from protein, is there any other nutrient that you know?

Response: just protein

Interviewer: okay

Response: (long pause) apart from protein, carbohydrate, water, fats.

Interviewer: okay, so has your eating habits changed since you became pregnant?

Response: yeah, since ive became pregnant, ive not been able to eat very well like I do before and sometimes when I feel like eating something I need it immediately. When I want to eat something I have to eat it immediately.

Interviewer: okay so when you say you have not been able to eat very well, can you tell me what you mean by that? Before you became pregnant, how often did you eat in a day and in what quantity

Response: before I became pregnant, you know in the UK it depends on the weather. I used to eat a lot before I became pregnant. Maybe like 3 times a day but now im not able to eat very well. So if I know im hungry and I don’t know what to eat. I will have to go for fruits. So I prefer to eat fruits if I don’t find anything to eat. And sometimes I don’t feel hungry. Like this is to 1 and I have not eaten morning food, ive not put anything into my mouth today

Interviewer: so can you talk about portion sizes, when you used to eat, how big or how small were your portion sizes?

Response: Before I became pregnant (cupping hand, like 2 hands of food) but now one hand is enough for me with a drink.

Interviewer: So what has caused your inability to eat well , do you have any physical symptoms like vomiting and nausea

Response: No

Interviewer: so you just don’t feel like eating ?

Response: yeah

Interviewer: So, what would you say has caused this change

Response: The pregnancy, because before I got pregnant I was eating very well and I complained at the hospital, the midwife said its nothing

Interviewer: the national institute of health and care excellence maternal and child nutrition guidelines state that pregnant women attending antenatal and health visitor appointments are given advice on how to eat healthily. With this in mind, what kind of healthy eating advice have you been offered before?

Response: (long pause) no. nothing

Interviewer: No healthy eating advice? No one has talked to you about food before?.

Response: No, you know like my first baby, I brought the pregnancy from Nigeria. So I was not able to attend antenatal from the beginning. I came into the country when the pregnancy was 8 months, I’ve not been able to …

Interviewer: What of this second pregnancy

Response: yeah, this is the second pregnancy that I am having here

Interviewer: and you haven’t attended antenatal service here?

Response: I have attended

Interviewer: and no-one has talked to you about food?

Response: They talked to me about the normal food they eat here in the UK but im not used to it, I prefer to get my own African food

Interviewer: was the advice spoken or written

Response: spoken, like what we can eat during pregnancy, what we can do to help the baby. I was advised to eat a lot of fruits and veg and by doing little exercise, because my first baby is caesarean so I said I want to give birth normally this time around, I don’t want C.S, so I was advised on some exercise. They asked me to join zoom the other day but I’ve not been able to join it because of my baby appointment then.

Interviewer: so is this zoom antenatal classes

Response: no its not antenatal classes. I think it’s the people that have given birth via cs before and now want to give birth normally. That’s what its for

Interviewer: can you mention a few of the fruits and vegetables advised by the midwife

Response: like grapes, banana, apple and for the vegetables (long pause)

Interviewer: How useful was this advice to you?

Response: In terms of the fruits, yes it was useful but there are some vegetables that are eaten here that I don’t know how to eat so I prefer to go for my own country vegetable. You know what I mean. I prefer my cultural vegetable.

Interviewer: with the first pregnancy, were you given healthy eating advice in Nigeria?

Response: No not in the hospital but from our parents. My parents advised on the kind of foods to eat in pregnancy. You know.

Interviewer: how useful was the advice to you within the social context of the UK?

Response: yes it was useful

Interviewer: What about your beliefs? Does your belief prohibit eating some of the foods that they asked you to eat.

Response: my belief prohibits me to eat pineapple

Interviewer: what do you consider important to you when you are choosing food, is it distance, time for preparation, culture, taste/preference, availability and finance

Response: what is important to me is what I am used to before I came into this country. There are a lot of foods available on the street that I live on and as such I can get them whenever I want but I will stick with what I am used to for instance for fruits like grapes, apple, banana, melon. I also have access to my cultural foods here in the UK, I get it from Peckham, so I can go and get it not minding the distance because that is what I am comfortable with.

Interviewer: okay

Response: however, if there is food and I taste it and like it, then I can eat it but if I don’t like the taste then I won’t eat it.

Interviewer: what other sources of nutrition advice have you used? Like social media, internet, friends and family?

Response: In my first pregnancy, I was given advice by friends and family. On fruits to eat and even fish. One titus fish in Nigeria, the doctor said it was good in pregnancy

Interviewer: were there also foods that you were told not to eat in pregnancy?

Response: Yeah, there were some foods that I was asked not to eat in pregnancy. But I used to eat them. Because anything that I feel like eating in pregnancy, if I don’t eat it I wont feel comfortable so I will go for it and nothing happened to the baby. For example, I was told not to eat crab in pregnancy. I was also told not to eat okra and snail in pregnancy. With the snail I was told that when I give birth to the baby, the baby would be spitting.

Interviewer: okay

Response: I was told okra is not good for a baby boy

Interviewer: You still went ahead and ate the foods, were there any consequences to the baby?

Response: (shows the little boy to me) nothing, he’s sitting right here

Interviewer: which one do you regard as the most relevant and trusted form of advice?

Response: the midwife

Interviewer: were you given any pamphlet/ leaflet in pregnancy?

Response: yes I was, I haven’t even checked it (brings out the pregnancy leaflet and reads it, week by week pregnancy guide including health and wellbeing.

Interviewer: Have they talked about food in it?

Response:

Interviewer: Do you know anything about obesity?

Response: I don’t know

Interviewer: Being extra fat

Response: yes

Interviewer: Do you think that it has any health effect?

Response: No, I don’t think it has any effect. It depends on your background, because even if you aren’t eating, if you are meant to gain weight, you will still gain weight. It depends on your background.

Interviewer: does this mean in your own opinion that there are some people that will be fat no matter what they do?

Response: yes

Interviewer: Do you think that the pandemic has had an effect on the frequency of antenatal care services

Response: yes, although I am perfectly fine at the moment but yes

Interviewer: has the pandemic had an effect on your mental health

Response: yeah, it has affected my going out. When I want to go out and I remember that there is covid 19 and I have a little one as well. So I have to protect him, if you know that what’s taking you out isn’t important enough then you need to stay back. We haven’t been able to go out like before to the park and playgrounds. That’s just the effect.

Interviewer: do you have social support in the UK?

Response: no

Interviewer: does that make life difficult?

Response: yes (laughs). You know when I first came to the UK, back then in Nigeria I’ve never been bored. There were always people but here just you alone and thank God I brought pregnancy to the country otherwise it would have been really tough. My little one keeps me company. Before Covid there used to be support from salvation army, they used to help a lot. We used to go there every Friday to have fun and they helped a lot. But now with covid, the meetings are on zoom and the if you need support you would have to book appointments on zoom. I also go to food bank and I’m also under universal credit as well.

Interviewer: thank you for your time, the interview has really been amazing.