

Perception of Older Adults About Mala Mogodu Preparation and Consumption: A Case of Louis Trichardt, South Africa

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Abstract

Mala mogodu is a combination of chopped serobe (tripe) and mala (intestines) traditionally served as a stew often with hot pap or dumplings. The proportion of older adults with knowledge and skills of traditional preparation of mala mogodu is significantly diminishing in African countries. There is a lack of inter-generational transfer of knowledge and skills on methods of preparation and cooking traditional foodstuffs. This has an influence on the modern consumers' willingness and preference to consume mala mogodu. An exploratory qualitative study aimed at exploring and describing traditional preparation and consumption of mala mogodu was conducted among traditional mala mogodu preparers.

Interviews with eight key informants (100% females, 50% Tsonga 50 %Venda, 51 – 80 years) were conducted in Louis Trichardt, Limpopo province, South Africa. The interview transcripts were coded, analysed by descriptive statistics, thematically interpreted with the word cloud technique. The basic methods of cooking and preparing mala mogodu, cultural significance, and preferred sensory aspects were described. Mala mogodu is distinguished and known because of its sensory properties such as its appearance, aroma, flavour and texture.

All participants pointed out that they were exposed to mala mogodu with specific sensory attributes at an early age. The traditional mala mogodu key informants all pointed out that sensory and cultural perceptions are a fundamental part of a region's cultural heritage as they reinforce a people's identity and food sovereignty. Findings highlight that all of the informants preferred black cattle tripe because it is easily available in butcheries and supermarkets. Mala mogodu cooked on open fire using cast iron pots and wooden spoons was perceived by the preparers as healthy and affordable. The honeycomb tripe that is black and dirty is perceived as an important part of traditional mala mogodu.

The study described the basic traditional methods of cooking and preparing mala mogodu, the cultural significance, and preferred sensory properties from the perspective of the older generation. Follow up research is planned to understand the perceptions of young urban adults in order to strategize on ways to incorporate cultural food heritage in their diets.