**Peer Review Remarks for Submission Entitled “A Critical Analysis of Young Children’s Feeding Practices in Cape Coast (Ghana)**

Clarity of writing

In the ‘Population Sample’ section, say more about what type of person would be most likely to respond to the flyer or be accessed through the early care providers. As this is not a representative sample, say a bit more here about who the respondents were. What can we tell from how they were recruited and from their demographic characteristics that will help us understand the study findings better? (I know you mention respondents’ demographic characteristics later on, but a bit more explanation in this section would still be useful.)

How were codes and themes verified?

There is both quantitative and qualitative data that was collected. It’s not clear what was collected as quantitative data and what was collected as qualitative. Please explain further regarding the study design.

In the discussion, you said the results suggest that feeding recommendations are widely misunderstood. Why have you come to this conclusion? Is it because they don’t understand that a balanced diet includes green leafy vegetables, etc.? Can you just elaborate on this point a little bit?

Study Design

You said criteria for study participation was being a parent. Later on, you mention that some parents were recalling how they fed their children years ago when their children were small. This recall bias seems a serious limitation of the study. The study should have only targeted parents of small children. Many things about context could have changed over time, such that children today are fed differently than children in the past.

There doesn’t seem any assessment of whether the children in question are malnourished or not. Did you target parents in communities where there is a high rate of malnourished children? Did you target your study to parents of malnourished children specifically? For all we know, these findings may reflect parents of children who are well-fed. The fact that the respondents are so well-educated suggests they are less likely to come from families with problems with malnourishment.

You do mention in the limitations that you did not look at parents’ socio-economic status. This is a serious limitation, however, as parents apparently were not asked if they could access and afford the right foods if they wanted to. An assessment of income plus how much money tends to go into the family food budget would have been great. Or, alternatively, a direct assessment of whether certain foods are available in the local markets, followed by questioning parents as to whether the local market prices are affordable for them.

Study Conclusions

There might be other reasons besides not feeding a child properly for not giving them breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Maybe the children are fed ad hoc whenever they are hungry, so it’s not exactly three meals a day. If the children in question are less than 9 months old, that would make sense (because the child cries and you feed the child as much as he/she will eat whenever you think he/she is hungry – this would not correspond with three discrete meals a day, but may not mean the child is malnourished).

Overall, the study conclusions seem a bit stronger and more decisive than the study design actually warrants.