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ISSN (ONLINE) 2598 9928



INDONESIAN JOURNAL OF LAW AND ECONOMIC

PUBLISHED BY
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH SIDOARJO

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Indonesian Journal of Law and Economics Review

Vol 7 (2020): May

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21070/ijler.2020.V7.457>

Article type: (Tourism Management)

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Petis and Madurese Cultural Identity

Identitas Budaya Petis dan Madura

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between people with food, which can reveal a lot of information about them. The choice of food is able to expose a group or a person's belief, passion, background knowledge, assumptions and personality. food choices and eating habits understood to be related to the phenomenon of socialization and social bonding, the construction of collective identity under which to show the logic of social distinction and organization of life in society.

Published date: 2020-05-05 00:00:00

Introduction

Petis is one of the culinary specialties of the Madura region. As a coastal area, the Madura region cannot be separated from abundant marine findings. Food issues and eating habits of a cultural group indicate the identity of the people concerned.

Food studies is an emerging interdisciplinary field of study that examines the complex relationships among food, culture, and society from numerous disciplines in the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. Food studies is not the study of food itself; it is different from more traditional food-related areas of study such as agricultural science, nutrition, culinary arts, and gastronomy in that it deals with more than the simple production, consumption, and aesthetic appreciation of food. It is the study of food and its relationship to the human experience. This relationship is examined from a variety of perspectives lending a multidisciplinary aspect to this field encompassing areas such as, art, sociology, education, economics, health, social justice, literature, anthropology, and history

Food, like language, exists as a vehicle for expressing culture. It has the power of being both a biological necessity as well as a deeply symbolic cultural artifact, one that connects us to one another on several levels. Thus, we find it agreeable to say that food is a mechanism for expressing identity that also has a social purpose. Our food choices, as scholar Robin Fox argues, serve to symbolize how we define ourselves in terms of religion, ethnicity, social class and so on. That is not to say that food and identity are static, which is evidenced by the current phenomenon of globalization that has increased human interaction and the overlapping of cuisines. Additionally, food, and consequently the circumstances under which we consume it, allows us to connect and 'forge alliances' with others (Fox, 2014, pg. 2). As Fox suggests, 'Food is almost always shared; people eat together; mealtimes are events when the whole family or settlement or village comes together. Food is an occasion for sharing... for the expression of altruism' (2014, pg. 1). This powerful act of food sharing, which may involve simple everyday foods to extravagant ritual foods, is thus inherently layered with meaning for cultures throughout the globe.

How foods eaten everyday are classified as such vary across cultures, and typically offer some insight to cultural norms, tradition, easily accessible ingredients, and the influence of seasonality. For example in Madura, *petis* is one of the main components in Madurese recipes. This shows that food has become an integral part of Madurese cultural identity. Individual cultures sometimes see their everyday foods as being so commonplace as to be unworthy of study or as not particularly insightful in order to gain an understanding of that culture. Yet these foods often give not only insight into the cultures they belong to, but also to the foods and palates of outsiders of that culture.

Qualitative methodologies have been used to achieve our research objectives. This phase included in-depth interviews and discussion groups, which are the most suitable methods of analyzing preferences rather than specific practices. Personal deep and semistructured interviews are an excellent tool that has been widely tested in previous investigations on food, petis and madurese cultural identity.

Literature review

The opening literature in this issue, *Being Moroccan abroad. Objects and culinary practices in women subjectivation*, presents the process of identity construction and defining the self through the culinary practices. This article analyses the role of food in the lives of two Moroccan women, their everyday practices related to food and how they express their care and feeling for the family through the act of cooking. Keeping their Moroccan identity in a foreign environment is carried out by the help of traditional cooking methods or by Moroccan food ingredients. The author highlights the creativity of these two women's everyday food practices and positioning in the cultural environment where they live.

The second literature, *Food and cultural omnivorism: a reflexive discussion on otherness, interculturality and cosmopolitanism* proposes the connection between food and cosmopolitan experiences. The authors use the concepts of cultural omnivorism and cosmopolitanism in order to explain the food practices of young Brazilians who live in the city of São Paulo. The article presents different experiences of young people when they are living touristic experiences or as daily consumption practices. The concept of naturalization is used to express the consumption of foreign foods abroad, as well as local consumption, in people's daily activities and in leisure experiences. Omnivorism and food cultural diversity are seen as a form of cultural capital or as a cosmopolitanism stance

Cultural Identity

A long and respectable tradition of anthropological work on social and animal classification has established that food marks out cultural identities. Simple equations such as 'we eat meat, they don't', 'we eat horse, they don't', 'they eat insects, we don't', affirm, in shared patterns of consumption and shared notions of edibility, our difference from others (see, for example, Bulmer 1967, Lévi-Strauss 1962). Indeed, these prejudices and persuasions may map on to and be given further cogency by the patterning of our behaviour in other domains, from household

management through to sexual liaisons and social intimacies (Tambiah 1969, Leach 1964, Douglas 1975).

Culturally speaking, in essence, what one eats defines who one is and is not. This statement addresses the third question asked in the research, what are examples of how food and food habits contribute to the development and transmission of culture? Culture is defined as the beliefs, values, and attitudes practiced and accepted by members of a group or community. Culture is not inherited; it is learned. The food choices of different cultural groups are often connected to ethnic behaviors and religious beliefs. Kittler, P.G., Sucher, K.P., & Nelms (2012) addressed the influence of food habits on an individual's self-identity by stating, "Eating is a daily reaffirmation of [one's] cultural identity". Many people affiliate the foods from their culture, their childhood with warm, good feelings and memories. The food is part of who we are and become. It ties us to our families and holds a special worth to a person. Foods from our culture, from our family often become the comfort foods we seek as adults in times of frustration and stress.

For Madurese that food is much more than nutrients. There were emotional connections, a sense of belonging, and ethnic pride found in the food on their plate.

Cultural identity, however, is not limited by certain foods associated with certain ethnic or racial groups. A person's social class, position in the community, and profession are also cultural markers. For example, in Madura society there are norms and standards that are followed in social settings when eating. The use of food and appropriate behavior related to civilized eating habits, also known as manners or etiquette is an expression of group membership. In Madura, there is a variety of foods for a particular event or ritual. but there are times when there are only certain foods in certain traditions. **Petis** becomes a daily spice for almost every Madura food.

Result and Discussion

Petis

For the Madurese people, the name petis is no stranger because it is often used in typical culinary delicacies of Madura because it can make the food taste more delicious. Petis is one of the spices made from the main raw material of fish or shrimp stew that is cooked again until it thickens like a sauce then added sugar and various other spices. Petis has a savory and sweet taste with a jet black appearance. There are several facts about petis, namely: 1) Included in Fish Tastes Preservation Technology. The raw material for petis is fish or shrimp so that you produce a lot of petis in coastal areas such as Madura and Gresik. By the local community, petis is used as a technology to preserve fish and shrimp flavors from the catch of fishermen. It can be said that the nutrition and taste of fish and shrimp do not disappear if used as a paste. 2) Mandatory Spices in Madura Cuisine. Compared to other local communities, the Madurese are indeed more well-known as the largest producer of petis in East Java. This is because the Madura Strait has a variety of marine products, ranging from fish, shrimp, lorjuk, and so forth. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Madurese people must have a spice paste in their home kitchen. In addition to the very cheap price that is affordable for all groups of people, there are many Madurese specialties that use these spices. 3) Alternative substitutes for sauces and flavorings . Petis can be said to be included in a type of sauce made from the essence of an animal ingredient, just like oyster sauce or a sauce commonly used as ingredients for grilling meat or grilled fish so it is not surprising that the taste of dishes using spice paste will taste much more delicious and savory . So no need to use seasonings like micin as you simply add the paste in the dish to enhance the taste.

Food And Cultural Identity

Kittler, Sucher, and Nelms (2012) coined the term food habits (also known as food culture or foodways) to describe the manner in which humans use food, including everything from how it is chosen, acquired, and distributed to who prepares, serves, and eats it. They stated that the significance of the food habits process is that it is unique to human beings. They pondered why people spend so much time, energy, money, and creativity on eating.

A familiar saying that epitomizes the idea of food and identity is, "You are what you eat." This expression addresses two of the questions considered in the research: What does the food on my plate signify? and How do food practices contribute to personal identity? These questions address the concept of food as a cultural signifier and encompass fields as diverse as literature, anthropology, sociology, and history. Research shows that the relationship between the foods people eat and how others perceive them and how they see themselves is remarkable. Sadella and Burroughs (1981) surveyed individuals about their perceptions of themselves as consumers of food and how they viewed others based on their dietary habits. The researchers listed foods which were distinctive to five different diets: fast food (pizza, hamburgers, and fried chicken), synthetic food (Carnation Instant Breakfast, Cheez Whiz), health food (yogurt, protein shake, and wheat germ), vegetarian (bean sprout sandwich, broccoli quiche, avocado, and brown rice), and gourmet food (French roast coffee, caviar, oysters). They learned participants in the study associated different personality types with the food choices made for each of the five diets.

People who eat fast food and synthetic food were classified as religious conservatives who often wore polyester clothing. Health food personalities were characterized as antinuclear activists and Democrats. Vegetarians were

likely to be perceived as pacifists who drive foreign cars. Gourmet food eaters were seen as individuals who were liberal and sophisticated. These stereotypes were established through self-descriptions and personality tests which were completed by individuals whose diets fell into the five categories.

Another study examined people's perceptions of similar looking individuals based on the foods they consumed. Stein and Nemeroff (1995) asked university students to rate profiles of individuals based on their diets. The students were shown pictures of sets of two nearly identical looking people. One person in each pair was classified as the "good" food eater and the other was the "bad" food eater. Physically, all else was similar. Students judged the people who ate "good" foods in a more favorable light. They found the "good" food eaters to be thinner, active, and more fit than persons with the same physical characteristics and exercise habits who ate "bad" foods. In addition, the persons who ate "good" foods were rated as more attractive, likable, quiet, practical, methodical, and analytical than those who ate "bad" foods. Social and psychological factors have an influence on people's food habits and choices. Larson and Story (2009) examined these influences on the choices people make in food consumption. They learned that children tend to choose foods eaten by admired adults, like their teachers but not their parents. Children also chose food similar to that eaten by favorite fictional characters, peers, and especially their older brothers and sisters.

Social conscience and peer pressure impact food choices (Brown, 2011). It was found that group approval or disapproval of a given food had an impact on food choices. If the group favored the food choice, a person is more likely to accept that food as part of his or her diet. On the other hand, when the group disapproves of a food choice, the person making the selection generally rejects the food in question. This may explain why some relatively unpalatable food items such as unsweetened espresso coffee were enjoyed by the author and her colleagues at numerous coffee bars in Naples, Italy. The culture in which she and her cohorts were immersed strongly approved of coffee breaks with espresso being the coffee of choice.

Food as an expression of identity is apparent in the experience of going out to eat. McComber and Postel (1992) suggested that restaurants serve more than food. They strive to satisfy nutritional and emotional needs in their clientele. When deciding where to dine out, consumers may consider a variety of factors, such as, the menu, atmosphere, service, location, and cost or value of the meal. It was found most restaurants cater to specific types of customers and that the same diner may choose a venue based on current needs. For instance, in the parent role, a quick, inexpensive restaurant with a playground is a good choice. That same diner may choose a business club which features a conservative setting for a work-related meeting. A candle-lit bistro with soft music and bottles of wine would be appropriate for a romantic evening out with a significant other. Ethnic restaurants hold an allure to clients as well. They appeal to natives of the homeland represented by offering familiarity and authenticity in foods served. For those who do not share the ethnicity of a dining establishment, the experience allows them to explore the novelty of a different and maybe even unfamiliar culinary adventure.

Petis As Food And Identity

In his famous gastronomic essay *La Physiologie du gout*, published in 1826, Brillat-Savarin includes the following, oft-quoted aphorism: 'Tell me what you eat and I will tell you who you are.' Somewhat more recently, Fischler, among others, has also argued that food is central to our sense of identity: 'Because we are omnivores, incorporation is an act laden with meaning' (1988:277). He notes that through the principle of incorporation—'the action in which we send a food across the frontier between the world and the self, between "outside" and "inside" our body'—we become what we eat (1988:279). In recent anthropological and sociological work on food and feeding in western societies, there is a preoccupation with food as a marker of difference, including such classic sociological variables as gender, age, class and ethnicity which frequently 'make a difference' to eating patterns

Petis : Traditional Cuisine As A Symbol Of Cultural Identity

The construction of cultural identity in madurese people, mentioned sporadically was petis as traditional cuisine. The importance of traditional maduresecuisine is located in the variety of cultural dishes and how each dish exudes and epitomizes a strong cultural origin. Some of the madurese dishes in madurese culture include nasi serpang, topak ladeh, etc.

.Because of this variety, the importation of different madurese food items from various ethnic regions of madurese has also become a major source of income for them. One of my informants says that petis is an important thing in madurese food and life.

Just like clothing, food symbolizes different cultures and traditions amongst Madurese. For example, Madurese from the West region, ,bangkalan, sampang and from the east region, Pamekasan Sumenep will prefer different petis and different dishes. So food reminds me of my culture, my family meals and other things that are unique within the Madurese community in here (Informant 4)

In the same vein as clothing, informant 4 draws our attention to the cultural significance of food to Madurese . She uses food as a metaphor to showcase the cultural identity amongst Madurese, bringing the notion of cultural heterogeneity to bear on the construction of cultural identity. Also, food for her harbors and resuscitates memories of family reunions, articulating 'a ritual of belonging to a network of relations' (Monga 2006, p. 230). Thus, the

respondent reinforces the symbolic importance of petis as Madurese food as a pleasurable referent of cultural identity, as she represents it as 'a means of connection to particular places and people' (Michael 2006, p. 261). Furthermore, the strong attachment to food from Madurese emanates from the different other species and how they give the food a special flair of madurese. One respondent claimed that petis is specific species do not only make food exceptionally tasty, but also resonate a powerful sense of belonging.

I agree with you that there are all types of spices here, especially the Indonesian spices but petis as madurese spices are special and make the food taste like home-made food. I have also used other spices but the taste is not the same. I will rather go for our spices regardless of the fact they are very expensive here. Take for example, rujak is tasty because of the species and I have not seen any other species that can replace the traditional rujak spices. However, the species and other items for some of the dishes are hardly available, so we sometimes use other species or vegetables. I will give an use another but as I said, the taste can never be the same. (Informant 4)

Conclusion

Petis is an important part of the life of the Madurese community. Food is part of humanity, culture and environment. In a cultural perspective, it is an identity, representation and production of a culture that develops in society. Eating patterns and types of community food can describe the behavior of life, environmental lifestyles and social systems supporting communities. Food is culturally, describes the local identity of a supporter of culture that characterizes the environment and habits, and describes the representation, regulation, consumption and production.

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