

*Traditional Practices and Rituals Incorporated in
Preparing Maguindanaon Native Delicacies*

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Abstract

Food is a reflection of the Maguindanaon beliefs and cultures. This demonstration can be traced back from the roots of this Maguindanaon tribe where practices of food preparation is reflective of their faith in Islam. Evidently, Maguindanaon traditional dishes maker observe practices and rituals which are intertwined with their religiosity. This study employed qualitative descriptive-developmental design through in-depth interview. Ten (10) culture bearers gave consent to be interviewed, with whom an in-depth, individual, face to face interview were conducted. All questions were open-ended, and participants were asked to talk about the rituals and traditional practices in preparing Maguindanaon native delicacies. The interviews were transcribed and were subjected to data analysis. Maguindanaon traditional delicacies are among popular foodstuff throughout the history of Maguindanao before the coming of modernization and industrialization of the food supply. These foods have subsisted many generations especially among Maguindanaon natives and are still preferred by many because apart from they are exceptionally nutritious, they are free from the threat coming from additives, chemicals and they conform to Halal considerations. These foods are considered part of the Maguindanaon culture that has to be kept throughout generations. However, with the advances in technology and food preparation, these time-honored traditional delicacies have almost been losing its place in our society. Besides its unique taste and culinary uses, many anthropological data revealed that the delicacies prepared with a touch of traditions could give better health to people consuming it than those consuming modern diets.

Keywords: Maguindanaon, Native Delicacies, Maguindanaon Food

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Introduction

Maguindanaon traditional delicacies are among popular foodstuff throughout the history of Maguindanao before the coming of modernization and industrialization of the food supply. These foods have subsisted many generations especially among Maguindanaon natives and are still preferred by many because apart from they are exceptionally nutritious, they are free from the threat coming from additives, chemicals and they conform to *Halal* considerations. These foods are considered part of the Maguindanaon culture that has to be kept throughout generations. However, with the advances in technology and food preparation, these time-honored traditional delicacies have almost been losing its place in our society.

Besides its unique taste and culinary uses, many anthropological data revealed that the delicacies prepared with a touch of traditions could give better health to people consuming it than those consuming modern diets. Among the threat diseases are infertility, heart problems, diabetes, autoimmune disease, mental illness, obesity, and dental cavities. The preceding statement is manifested by the absence of the said diseases on the ancient people who resort to native diets. Another unique quality that distinguishes this foodstuff to others is that they are done with matching rituals and traditional practices which if not observed, are believed to affect the taste or deliciousness of the product (<http://wellnessmama.com/7859/deep-nutrition-review/>).

This study employed qualitative descriptive-developmental design. Using the combination of the self-selection, convenience, and snowball sampling, the researchers will contact approximately Maguindanaon native delicacies culture-bearers. In this research, ten (10) individuals who gave consent to be interviewed, with whom an in-depth, individual, face to face interview were conducted. The generation of qualitative information through in-depth interview. All questions were open-ended, and participants were asked to talk about the rituals, traditional and sanitation practices in preparing Maguindanaon delicacie

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Food is a reflection of the Maguindanaon beliefs and cultures. As Maguindanaons prepare food, beliefs, practices and rituals are inherent. This demonstration can be traced back from the roots of this Maguindanaon tribe where practices of food preparation is reflective of their faith in Islam. Evidently, the people who prepare the traditional dishes observe practices and rituals which are intertwined with their religiosity. These practices and rituals are described and discussed below.

Halal. The Maguindanaons who prepare traditional dishes ensure that they prepare food that is halal. Halal is an Arabic word which means permitted or lawful (Islamic Council of Victoria, 2020). In cooking, Maguindanaons always bear in mind that the ingredients they use are free from the content which are haram or which prohitod according to Islamic law. This can be explained by some of the verses in the Qur'an which mentioned that believers of Allah are allowed to eat all kinds of lawful food such as meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, fruits and vegetables. As observed, the food prepared by the Maguindanaons do not contain haram ingredients such alcoholic drinks, pork, gelatin, enzymes and flavours which are questionable. They also make sure that the utensils they used are cleansed according to Islamic law.

Meat in Allah's Name. When the food prepared by Maguindanaon has a meat ingredient from animals, slaughtering of the animal in Islamic process is a requirement. The Maguindanaons call this ceremonial offering of animal like chicken and cow to be slain for food as *sumbali*. In the practice of *sumbali*, a *pandita* utters the verse: "Bismillah wa Allaahu akbar, Allaahumma haadha minka wa laka, haadha 'anni. Allaahumma taqabbal min wa aali.

Begin with Bismillah. For the believers of Islamic faith, they always say the phrase, Bismillah which means in the name of Allah in every endeavor they engage. This is also demonstrated when they begin to cook. Maguindanaons always start the food preparation with saying Bismillah.

Silence Helps. Preparing food in silent environment is a must among the Maguindanaons. They believe that silence contributes to yielding best result in cooking. Informants shared that they have experienced failure in preparing the food well because young people who observed the food preparation were very noisy. This usually happens in the preparation of *panyalam* and *tinagtag* where the desired taste and shape are not achieved because of the noise. This indicates that among the Maguindanaons, food preparation requires silence as they probably think that delicacies they prepare come with spirituality.

Obscene language curses the food. Maguindanaons believe that obscene words uttered while cooking termed as *talampasa* can alter the quality of the food prepared. Informants say that when the people in the kitchen use obscene language while cooking, they will produce food which has bad taste, texture and shape. In some cases, cooking will not be successful as they believe that the talk using obscene language affected the process of cooking.

Conclusions

The findings reveal that one more reason of semantic changes such as broadening, narrowing, and shifting is that the receptor society does not get exposed only to words but also to beliefs and culture of the donor society so there was borrowing of new words along with new concepts and notions. That is mainly because words are borrowed to signify a cultural concept rather than their literal meaning in the source language, to name things by the way they are utilized or because of overgeneralizing forms that occurred in Arabic loanwords to include other words in the Maguindanaon language.

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