

Designing a Microcredential-Based Ethnofood Training Curriculum: a Literature Study

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ABSTRACT

The growing adoption of microcredential programs in higher education has created new opportunities for developing flexible, competency-based training that responds to evolving cultural and professional needs. This study aims to develop a microcredential-based Ethnofood training curriculum as a conceptual framework for integrating local food culture and traditional wisdom into higher education. It employs a qualitative descriptive approach through a comprehensive literature review and documentation analysis. Various theories, curriculum models, and previous research findings are systematically examined to identify essential elements, learning principles, and suitable design strategies for Ethnofood-based training. The proposed curriculum design aligns with the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (KKNI), emphasizing a competency-based modular structure that reflects flexibility, contextual relevance, and learner-centeredness. Each learning module is crafted to showcase a specific Ethnofood theme by integrating cultural, practical, and scientific dimensions of local food systems. Consideration of philosophical, sociological, psychological, historical, and legal foundations ensures the curriculum's coherence and applicability within higher education settings. The study results in a conceptual model for an Ethnofood training curriculum that is both structured and adaptable, fostering the preservation of local wisdom, innovation, and sustainability in learning practices. Conceptually, this research advances the development of the Ethnofood training model and provides practical guidance for educational institutions seeking to create microcredential programs that strengthen cultural identity and promote reflective learning among students.

Keywords: *ethnofood, microcredential, training curriculum.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Ethnofood or what is often known as ethnic food is ethnic food, food that has a story and history behind it, is consumed today because more and more people are eating to appreciate culture, not just for survival reasons (Ting et al., 2017). Food is an identity that is inherent in human daily life. What is consumed from one region to another, from one ethnic group to another, and from one nation to another can generally differ in terms of ingredients, form and taste. This means that food is connected to collective tastes formed by the living environment and human culture. Food is not just a matter of identity, but includes various complex things and problems and is not just processed, served, enjoyed and then finished at the dinner table (Rahman, 2019).

Discussions about food cannot be separated from culture. As a cultural tourism product, the role of culinary tourism is becoming increasingly important (Wijaya, 2019). Local food can be used as a tool to differentiate one destination from other destinations because a country's cuisine shows elements of culture and national identity. Food is also used to give meaning to oneself, making food practices not only practical decisions influenced by access, environment, and nutritional needs, but also decisions that are fundamentally social, cultural, and psychological (Reddy & van Dam, 2020). Additionally, food is at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the UN's development agenda for the 21st century. The second goal of the 17 UN SDGs is "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture." To achieve this goal by 2030, major changes to the global food and agricultural system are needed.

The problem facing the world today is that changes in the world food market are so rapid that it can be observed in the mid-2000s. For two decades, leading up to the millennium, global food demand continued to rise, along with world population growth, record harvests, new technologies, rising incomes, and diversifying diets. Food prices continued to decline until 2000. However, in 2004, prices for most grains began to rise. Rising production has not kept pace with stronger demand growth. Food stocks are running low. And then, in 2005, food supplies were hampered by disappointing harvests in major food-producing countries. In 2006, world cereal production fell by 2.1 percent. In 2007, rapid increases in oil prices increased the costs of fertilizer and other food production.

As international food prices reach unprecedented levels, many countries are looking for ways to protect themselves from potential food shortages and price shocks. Several food exporting countries impose export restrictions. Certain major importers started buying grain at any price to maintain domestic supplies. However, the global economic crisis in 2008 and 2009 also had a negative impact on food security in many countries. What happens if food security is poor? If food security decreases, people tend to eat whatever is in front of them, let alone think about culture, just being able to eat is lucky. And if that happens, then the food that was previously said to be the identity of a nation could become extinct. Therefore, investment in agriculture and rural development to increase food production and nutrition is a priority for The World Bank Group. The World Bank Group works with its partners to increase food security and build food systems that can feed everyone, everywhere, every day. Activities include encouraging climate-smart farming techniques and restoring degraded farmland, developing more resilient and nutritious crops, and improving storage and supply chains to reduce food loss.

Apart from the issue of food security that needs to be considered, globalization also causes uniformity in one's lifestyle. Globalization has increased the uniformity of

lifestyles of food consumption, clothing and entertainment (food, fashion, fun) among members of different communities (Effendy et al., 2021). A manifestation of globalization is the homogenization of the lifestyle of eating fast food which is endemic to almost all of the world's population. This phenomenon is better known as McDonaldization, which was initiated by George Ritzer in 1993 as a result of his research on the management of McDonald's fast food restaurants. The results of his study, published in the monumental book entitled *The McDonaldization of Society: An Investigation Into The Changing Character of Contemporary Social Life*, describe the management of fast food restaurants based on modern scientific management rationalization such as efficiency, calculation, calculation and supervision. Similar symptoms also occur when consuming Coca Cola canned drinks, which is called Coca Colonization. The direct impact is that people will be more interested in trying to consume food at fast food restaurants because they look western and the newest, rather than tasting traditional food that looks ancient and outdated. If this continues, traditional food will be lost and eventually become difficult to find (as has been happening recently). Some traditional foods and drinks are now starting to disappear from the surface. If there are no preservation efforts for traditional food, what could happen is that people will not recognize their typical food, and the impact of this food could be recognized by other nations, and the nation itself will be more interested in food from other nations as a result of globalization.

The role of education in responding to these problems is very necessary. Education for Sustainable Development (PPB) or Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is an effort to empower everyone to be able to make decisions based on correct information to always maintain environmental integrity, economic viability and justice in social life for present and future generations, and respect all cultural diversity implemented at all levels and types of education (UNESCO, 2014). Through education, cultural diversity, including food, can be well organized and documented. Through education, learning can be designed that aims to overcome various problems related to food culture in Indonesia. For this reason, a curriculum is needed that can facilitate the introduction and preservation of this food culture.

The ethnofood curriculum was developed through a separate microcredential model, a stand-alone, independent learning program not directly linked to specific courses. This approach offers Ethnofood as a specific competency-based learning unit that can be flexibly taken by students across study programs. A microcredential is a form of mini-certification that confirms a student's attainment of specific skills, knowledge, or experience in a specific field, including the study of local food culture (Zou et al., 2023). This model allows students to gain official recognition for their ethnofood competency without having to wait for completion of a regular course. Microcredentials focus on validating competency-based learning outcomes through

measurable, transparent, and verifiable criteria, enabling students to develop practical skills and a contextual understanding of local food, which can strengthen graduate profiles and enhance job readiness in education, food, or community development (McGreal & Olcott, 2022). The development of the Ethnofood curriculum in a microcredential format is considered strategic, given its urgency in equipping students with cultural literacy and food security, as well as supporting the preservation of local knowledge through higher education.

2. METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the approach and procedures used to develop the design of an Ethnofood microcredential training curriculum through a literature review and document analysis. A qualitative approach (Suwandayani, 2018) was employed because the study focuses on exploring concepts and interpreting theoretical foundations. The methodology is organized into four main components as follows.

2.1. Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive design to describe concepts and principles relevant to curriculum development. This design allows for a systematic understanding of the phenomenon based on written sources without the need for field data collection.

2.2. Participants of the Study

The sources of data consist of scholarly literature, including books, journal articles, educational policy documents, regulations related to the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (KKNI), and references on microcredentials. All sources were selected based on relevance and credibility.

2.3. Instruments

The primary instrument in this study is the researcher, supported by a literature review guide and data recording sheets to identify, organize, and categorize information from various sources.

2.4. Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed inductively through the stages of data collection, data reduction, data display in the form of categories and themes, and conclusion drawing based on the interpretation of findings from the literature.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Curriculum development is the right and obligation of each institution/institution. The curriculum should be able to deliver participants to master certain knowledge and

skills, as well as form noble character, so that they can contribute to maintaining national values, diversity, encouraging a spirit of concern for fellow nations and humanity to improve social welfare with justice and the glory of the nation. Indonesia. Curriculum preparation should be based on a strong foundation, both philosophically, sociologically (socio-culturally), psychologically, historically and juridically. The basic basis for designing and developing this curriculum is as follows.

Philosophical foundation, providing philosophical guidance at the design, implementation and quality improvement stages of education (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018), how knowledge is assessed and studied so that participants understand the nature of life and have abilities that are able to improve the quality of their life both individually and in society (Zais, 1976).

The sociological basis provides a foundation for the development of the curriculum as an educational tool consisting of objectives, materials, learning activities and a positive learning environment for the acquisition of learner experiences that are relevant to the learner's personal and social development (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018). The curriculum must be able to pass on culture from one generation to the next amidst the influence of globalization which continues to erode the existence of local culture. There is a need to introduce aspects of local culture to protect ourselves from the influence of globalization. Indonesian society, sociologically, has a unique "character" and may be different from other societies in the world. By making the characteristics of Indonesian society the basis for curriculum development, the learners who are taught will not be alienated from their social environment. Thus, education does not actually alienate individuals from their environment (Purba, 2023).

The psychological foundation provides the foundation for the development of this curriculum, so that the curriculum is able to continuously encourage participants' curiosity and can motivate lifelong learning; curriculum that can facilitate learning participants so that they are able to realize their roles and functions in their environment; a curriculum that can cause participants to think critically, and think at a higher level (higher order thinking); a curriculum that is able to optimize the development of participants' potential to become the desired human being (Zais, 1976); a curriculum that is able to facilitate participants learning to become complete human beings, namely people who are free, responsible, self-confident, moral or have noble character, able to collaborate, be tolerant, and become well-educated human beings who are determined to contribute to achieving the ideals in the preamble to the 1945 Constitution.

Historical basis and development of society, curriculum that is able to facilitate learning according to the times; a curriculum that is able to pass on the cultural values and golden history of past nations, and transform it in the era in which one is studying; a curriculum that is able to prepare participants to live better in the 21st century, have

an active role in the era of society 5.0, and be able to read signs of development. Society continues to develop. Aspirations, hopes and demands also develop. These developments are accommodated in this curriculum, the rapid development of society must be one of the foundations.

The basis of community needs, educational institutions are actually formed by the community, supported by the community and therefore, they must provide benefits to the community. The curriculum that will be developed later will be in accordance with community needs. In other words, the curriculum being developed will have value for society.

This curriculum development uses principles that have developed in everyday life. The principle of relevance means that it contains the meaning of appropriate, commensurate, harmonious and in line. Therefore, this curriculum must be relevant to the demands of people's lives. In this case, Ethnofood is very relevant for lectures at universities. If referring to the principle of relevance, the curriculum must at least pay attention to internal and external aspects. Internally, the curriculum has relevance between curriculum components (objectives, materials, strategies, organization and evaluation). Meanwhile, externally, this component has relevance to the demands of lectures and technology (epistemological relevance), the demands and potential of students (psychological relevance), as well as the demands and needs of community development (sociological relevance) (Prasetyo & Hamami, 2020).

The principle of effectiveness means whether the education provided has achieved the stated objectives. In this principle, two aspects are considered, namely: the teaching effectiveness of lecturers and the effectiveness of student learning. In the teaching aspect of lecturers, if they are still less effective in teaching teaching materials or programs, then that becomes material in developing the curriculum in the future. Meanwhile, the aspect of student learning effectiveness is related to the learning methodology so that what has been planned can be achieved with methods that are relevant to the learning material or materials.

The principle of flexibility here means "not rigid", meaning that there is a space for movement in the curriculum that provides opportunities, possibilities and freedom of action. A good curriculum is a curriculum that contains solid things, but in its implementation it is possible to make adjustments based on regional conditions. Time and abilities and student background. This curriculum prepares students for the present and the future. This is very in line with the cultural values contained in Ethnofood as a learning resource.

Ethnofood comes from the word *ethnos* which means nation and the word *food* which means food, so Ethnofood means food belonging to a particular ethnic group or social group. Ethnofood can also be defined as processed food from a particular nation that is characteristic of it. Ethnofood or traditional processed food is food consumed by

an ethnic group in a certain area, and is indigenous knowledge possessed by an ethnic group and is local wisdom. This processed food is obtained by utilizing natural biological resources in the environment where they live (Syamsuri et al., 2023).

Traditional food or traditional food is a form of culture that has regional, specific characteristics and types that reflect the natural potential of each region, which in its function influences the behavior of the supporting community (Ardana et al., 2023). Food is useful for maintaining relationships between people and as a regional characteristic of certain community groups. According to Foster and Anderson, food has an expression of meaning related to social bonds, group solidarity, food and mental tension, as well as the symbolism of food in language. This shows that food contains aspects of strengthening social bonds and social solidarity in the community that produces it.

This food processing is indigenous knowledge or local wisdom of an ethnic group in a particular region, and is expected to be able to reduce the financial crisis (Syamsuri et al., 2022). Diversification of traditional food processing based on local wisdom is a form of knowledge that is unique to an ethnic group, which has been obtained from generation to generation, by utilizing the biodiversity that exists in the ecosystem environment where it lives. Apart from increasing value or quality, diversification of traditional food processing can also increase the durability or shelf life of processed products.

Various research on food has been carried out in various fields, such as that carried out by Nogueira et al. (2022) by developing and implementing a food literacy curriculum for elementary schools in Sintra, Portugal. The curriculum is designed to increase students' knowledge and skills in choosing and consuming healthy foods. This is different from Syamsuri & Alang (2021) who carried out an inventory of Zingiberaceae plants which have economic value as ethnomedicine, ethnocosmetics and ethnofood in North Kolaka Regency, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia.

Then Zubaidah & Nurjanah (2021) discussed the development of a curriculum based on local wisdom in the "Indonesian Food" course for prospective professional chefs. Fyfe et al. (2022) in their article discusses a framework for responsible research with Australian native plant foods. The article highlights the importance of considering social, cultural and environmental aspects in conducting research on traditional foods and native plants. Research by Niu et al. (2021) discusses a full-time Professional Master's training mode in the field of Food Processing and Safety amidst the rapid development of the food industry. This article provides an overview of the curriculum designed and training methods implemented to prepare students to become skilled and trained professionals in the fields of food processing and safety. Meanwhile, Adebayo & Mudaly (2019) created a curriculum that was decolonized (distanced itself from the influence of colonialism) to overcome food insecurity among university students.

Voinea et al. (2019) conducted research on food behavior in Romania and how it can support healthy eating habits. Taylor & Anderson (2020) researched concepts in ethnobotany, namely the conservation of culinary culture and key cultural food groups. The article explains how food is an integral part of cultural identity and why biodiversity conservation is important in maintaining cultural diversity. Hassan et al. (2021) through their research provides interesting insights into the importance of the relationship between food and culture among the indigenous people of Kashmir. In contrast to Pandey et al. (2022) which discusses biodiversity in agricultural and food systems in the Jhum Landscape in West Garo Hills, northeastern India.

Jacob & Albuquerque (2020), in their research discuss the importance of promoting a sustainable diet by utilizing the biodiversity of food plants. The author explains that maintaining the biodiversity of food plants is very important in achieving food security and maintaining a healthy environment. Gartaula et al. (2020) researched traditional food knowledge and food literacy among youth in rural areas of Nepal. The author explains how traditional knowledge and food literacy can influence people's diet and health.

The various studies above show how important food literacy is for students and the development of curriculum and learning strategies that support the development of food literacy skills. This relates to the importance of a critical approach (critical food systems pedagogy) in developing a holistic understanding of the food system and fostering analytical and critical skills in students. Apart from that, the existence of Ethnofood can highlight the responsibility of higher education institutions in helping students develop food literacy and critical skills.

The research carried out to design the micro-learning based Ethnofood curriculum will use a design and development research approach. In this research, a framework is used that refers to the characteristics of product development research. This framework involves six important stages of the research procedure model using the D&D model, which include a) identifying the problem motivating the research; b) describe the objectives; c) design and develop the artifact; d) subject the artifact to testing; e) evaluate the results of testing; and f) communicate the results (Darmawan, 2021).

4. CONCLUSION

The preparation of this curriculum will be based on a strong foundation, both philosophically, sociologically (socio-culturally), psychologically, historically and juridically, with the principles of relevance, effectiveness and flexibility. The research carried out to design the microcredential based Ethnofood curriculum will use a design and development research approach. In this research, a framework is used that refers to the characteristics of product development research. This framework involves six important stages of the research procedure model with the D&D model, namely

identifying the problem motivating the research, describing the objectives, design and developing the artifact, subject the artifact to testing, evaluate the results of testing, and communicate the results.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to express their sincere appreciation to the International Conference on Educational Research and Development (ICERD) for organizing this seminar. This invaluable opportunity has significantly contributed to the enhancement of our scholarly work.

Special gratitude is also extended to the Study Program of Curriculum Development, whose assistance and support made it possible for this article to be published in the ICERD proceedings. Their guidance and facilitation throughout the publication process have been instrumental in ensuring the quality and completion of this work. The authors deeply appreciate all parties whose contributions, directly or indirectly, have enriched the development of this research.

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