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## The Effects of Transmission of Malay Daily Food Knowledge on the Generation Practices

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### Abstract

This study explored the effects of food transmission activities among the Malay ethnic's food knowledge and the generation practice. Mother and daughter in a family selected as informant in this study. All information analysed using thematic analysis. Commercialization of ingredients, convenience food products, economy, educational level and lifestyles apparently reduced the practices of Malay traditional foods among the young generations. Mothers in particular can play a significant role in preserving the practice of Malay traditional foods. Parents should ensure that the traditional food knowledge is passed down to their generations to ensure the Malay food tradition retains and evolves further.

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### 1. Introduction

Food can be seen as a midpoint of culture identity which belongs to specific society or ethnic and some elements of food preparation and consumption are the visible badges of identity (Rearick, 2009). Some argue preparation and consumption closely related to cultural of foods, the tools, techniques and ingredients for which food is prepared and its customs (Verbeke & Lopez, 2005; Vu, 2009; Thomas, 2004) and these one of the best ways to understand a culture and ethnic identity (Scholliers, 2001). Food is also act as a symbol to the society and ethnic groups (Kittler & Sucher, 2004). Crotty, I& Germov (2004)

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demystified food through its preparation and consumption symbolize and mark the class structure of individual or society. Similarly, different ethnic having their religious beliefs and food play significant in certain religious. Ing (2011) portray that food can be described as a part in the understanding of its function in terms of the religion. Murphy (2000) in the different vein articulated that food in the feasts or celebrations symbolize values and bring important meaning for cultures, ethnicity and religions.

Transferring the traditional food knowledge to the young generation is important in order to ensure the continuation of food culture evolves (Md. Nor et al., 2012; Mohd. Zahari, Kamaruddin, Muhammad, & Kutut, 2011). There is no exception for the Malay traditional food. Modernization particularly through technology and social advancement are believed to influence the deskilling cooking knowledge and practices among the young Malays. There are great concerns among nations about the potential loss in the context of traditional food knowledge and traditional food practices among the young generation. Traditional food represents the identity of ethnic culture and food tradition that developed by many generations.

The United Nations through the International Workshop on Traditional Knowledge emphasizes that traditional food knowledge should continuously be retained for future generation as they will carry out the profound spiritual and identity for self or as peoples (United Nations, 2007). Some ethnics are reported not only facing the problem of deskilling issue related to domestic cooking skills but start losing the traditional food culture owing to weakening of old generation to pass down the traditional cooking knowledge the young generations (Stringer, 2010; Bowen & Devine, 2010). In Malaysia, preserving TFK or traditional food knowledge has received greater concern among the older generation, Malaysian Cultures association and The Ministry of Information, Communication and Culture and others government agencies. The concerned of many parties on this issue raises critical questions of how the transfer of Traditional Food Knowledge occur in Malay ethnic related to common daily food and how it has been passed down to the young generation. The main objective of this study is to empirically investigate the transferable process of Malay daily food knowledge with regard to preparation, method and skills.

## **2. Literature review**

### *2.1. Malay ethnic*

Malays are an ethnic group of Austronesia people predominantly inhabiting the Malay Peninsula, including the southernmost parts of Thailand, the east coast of Sumatra, the coast of Borneo, and the smaller islands which lie between these locations (Mohamed, Mohamad, & Hussain, 2010). The Malay ethnic group is distinct from the concept of a Malay race, which encompasses a wider group of people including the descendants of Indonesians, Philippines and people of Oceania (Hutton, 2000; Jalis, Zahari, Zulkifly, & Othman, 2009). Malays traditionally had a close identification with Islam and this religion remained ever since.

### *2.2. Traditional food*

Traditional food referred as foods that have been consumed for many generations which includes all indigenous food plants found in that region or locality (European Union, 2007). In other words, traditional foods are those foods originating locally in an area with respect to the country, region, district or sub district (Ohiokpehai, 2003). Some ingredients and traditional food preparation represent an intrinsic part of the identity of regional foods and by association with the people who consume them (Fajans, 2006). Jordana (2000) stated that traditional food is a food that is differentiated through particular

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