AUTHENTICITY AND UNIQUENESS OF ASINAN BOGOR AS A DISTINCTIVE CULINARY DELIGHT OF BOGOR CITY

Ardaneswara Putri1, Rafy Ramdany2, Melva Rosalia3, Fahma Faradisa Arraniri4, Insan Kurnia5, Kania Sofiantina Rahayu6

1,2,3,4,5,6Ecotourism Study Program, College of Vocational Studies, IPB University
E-mail: insankurnia@apps.ipb.ac.id

ABSTRACT
Asinan Bogor, commonly known as Bogor salty pickles, represents a traditional delicacy of Bogor, Indonesia, consisting of processed vegetables and fruits consumed raw alongside various additional ingredients. This research aims to delve into the uniqueness of Asinan Bogor. The study was conducted through surveys, interviews, and questionnaires administered to 40 Asinan Bogor sellers in Bogor City. Sellers unanimously recognize Asinan Bogor as a Bogor traditional dish. Sellers exhibit the highest level of knowledge concerning raw materials, with history being their least familiar aspect. While no main ingredients are obligatory, specific components hold priority, such as bean sprouts for vegetables pickled and mango, water guava, and jicama for fruits pickled. Mandatory seasoning ingredients include ground red chili, salt, and water. The composition of Asinan ingredients varies based on consumer preferences. Antanan is rarely utilized as a primary ingredient, whereas salted mustard green epitomizes Chinese cuisine. Currently, the serving of Asinan Bogor is predominantly in plastic packaging, deviating from on-site consumption, particularly for souvenir packaging. The paramount uniqueness of the Asinan Bogor lies in the gravy.


INTRODUCTION

Food constitutes a fundamental aspect of culture [1][2] and catalyzes shaping cultural identity [3][4]. Cuisine represents an integral component inseparable from the preservation and continuity of identity for individuals within a society [5]. Each food item can be associated with a specific culture, enabling individuals to connect themselves through food as a cultural identity. Thus, food can be viewed as a bridge between individuals and their cultural identities [6]. Food is not merely linked to the physiological and biological aspects of human beings but is perceived in a broader and holistic context within a culinary cultural system [7].

Traditional cuisine stands out as a hallmark of the cultural diversity of the archipelago. Traditional food is regularly consumed by local communities and is passed down from generation to generation [8]. The transmission of culture, including traditional cuisine, is the key to its existence and sustainability within a society, ensuring it does not fade away or get replaced by other cultures [9]. The emergence of modern cuisine is seen as one of the reasons behind the decline of traditional food.
in a culture. Identity crisis resulting from the loss of appreciation and pride in local culture due to a stronger inclination towards foreign cultures also fuels cultural changes within society [10].

Currently, traditional cuisine, as well as culinary arts in general, constitute an inseparable part of the tourism sector. Various traditional dishes from different regions in Indonesia, each with its unique characteristics, serve as attractions for tourists to visit and savor traditional cuisine [11]. Traditional food has become a destination for tourists to visit a region, not just for other tourist attractions [12]. Innovation is necessary to ensure the survival of traditional cuisine and its acceptance by a wider audience, not only locals but also visitors and tourists from outside the region [12].

Asinan Bogor is a distinctive traditional food of Bogor [13]. This traditional dish comprises a mix of raw vegetables and fruits with various additional ingredients. Asinan involves a pickling process, with the main pickling ingredient being vegetables and fruits [14]. Asinan serves as a method to preserve food, especially vegetables, due to their tendency to wilt quickly and low shelf life [15]. Although it uses salt similarly, Asinan Bogor differs from the pickling processes of other vegetables known as kimchi in Korea, sauerkraut or cabbage pickled in Europe and America, mustard green pickled in Indonesia, and others [16] [17] [18]. These differences render Asinan Bogor distinct from other similar food preparations. The main difference is that fried peanuts are finely ground for Asinan Betawi, while fried peanuts are kept whole and included in Asinan Bogor [19] [20].

The authenticity and uniqueness of Asinan Bogor as a local culinary specialty have yet to be scientifically explored, thus lacking scientific information regarding its distinctiveness. This information is crucial as foundational data prior to potential changes, especially amidst globalization, and it can catalyze cultural shifts within society [10]. Therefore, this research aims to identify the authenticity and distinctive characteristics of Asinan Bogor in the Bogor City includes general knowledge, main ingredients, sauce materials, serving, and packaging. Basic knowledge regarding the authenticity and uniqueness of Asinan Bogor can be the basis for developing this culinary delight as part of local culture and supporting urban tourism and community development in Bogor City.

METHOD

This research was conducted from January to February 2023 in Bogor, West Java Province (Figure 1). The research participants were 40 Asinan Bogor sellers distributed across all sub-districts of Bogor City. Data were collected through direct interviews and questionnaires. The questionnaire items presented various possible answers to be assessed using a 1-4 scale, ranging from the lowest to the highest value. The data were analyzed descriptively, qualitatively and quantitatively regarding the mean values of questionnaire responses.

https://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/hej/index  email: home.economics.journal@uny.ac.id
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

General Knowledge About Asinan

Asinan Bogor, whether vegetable or fruit Asinan, is regarded as a traditional dish of Bogor. Two factors support this assertion: firstly, rarely or rarely encountering the same vegetable or fruit Asinan as Asinan Bogor, and secondly, the absence of such a tradition in other regions. Asinan Bogor is perceived to possess various distinctive features compared to Asinan from different areas.

Overall, the Asinan Bogor sellers acknowledge having the highest knowledge about Asinan Bogor in terms of raw materials (\(\bar{x} = 3.3\)). While the lowest knowledge value pertains to the philosophy of Asinan Bogor (\(\bar{x} = 2.4\)) (Figure 2).

Components of Asinan Main Ingredients

None of the sellers rated any component of the main ingredients of Asinan as mandatory, but rather as priorities. The component of vegetable Asinan with the highest priority (\(\bar{x} = 3.6\)) is bean sprouts. In contrast, the main ingredient for vegetable Asinan with the lowest value (\(\bar{x} = 2.2\)) is the combination of Indian pennywort leaves, chives, and celery. The composition of the main ingredients of fruit Asinan deemed as a priority, with the highest value (\(\bar{x} = 3.4\)), includes mango, guava, and jicama. In contrast, the lowest-rated fruit Asinan main ingredient is papaya (\(\bar{x} = 1.8\)) (Figure 3). One main ingredient is used in fruit and vegetable Asinan, namely yellow noodle crackers.
The composition of the main ingredients for vegetable and fruit Asinan varies greatly and is determined by the taste preferences of each consumer. Consumer preferences are one of the factors influencing the use of vegetable and fruit compositions. The availability of main ingredients also affects the selection of main ingredients used. Most main ingredients of Asinan can be easily found in the market, with only a small portion of main ingredients becoming rare. Rare main ingredients in the market result in their infrequent or even non-existent usage, such as Indian pennywort leaves, in the local language, they called antanan (Centella asiatica), also known as pegagan. Furthermore, there are main ingredients of Asinan that are characteristic of Chinese cuisines, such as salted mustard greens.

Components of Asinan Sauce

There is no difference in the components of the sauce between vegetable and fruit Asinan. The elements of the Asinan sauce with the highest value ($\bar{x} = 4.0$) consist of ground red chili, salt, and water. A value of 4.0 indicates that these sauce components must be used. Eleven other Asinan sauce components received the lowest value ($\bar{x} = 1.0$), meaning they should not be used. The remaining sauce components are optional, ranging from 1.3 for lime and crushed peanuts to 3.4 for whole roasted peanuts (Figure 4).
Figure 4. Values of Asinan sauce components according to Asinan Bogor sellers

The components of the sauce for both fruit and vegetable Asinan are elementary as they are made from only a few main ingredients. The sauce served is red and has a distinctive flavor with three main ingredients: ground red chili, salt, and water. There are no specific regulations regarding the type of red chili used for the sauce. All sellers do not use additional ingredients such as dried shrimp. The flavor of Asinan Bogor sauce combines sour, salty, and sweet tastes. Peanuts in the Asinan Bogor sauce are fried whole and not ground. Similarly, there are no specific regulations regarding the type of peanuts used for the sauce mixture, unlike red chili.

Additional ingredients such as sea chili and lime can be used according to consumer tastes. Red chilies used to make spices are boiled briefly or soaked in hot water. Asinan sauce can last up to three days at room temperature and up to one week in a refrigerator.

**Serving and Packaging of Asinan**

The serving commonly used by sellers is plastic packaging (\(\bar{x} = 3.3\)), while the least frequently used is styrofoam (\(\bar{x} = 1.2\)) (Figure 5). Plastic is more dominant among Asinan sellers as a product packaging material. There are no special provisions regarding the plastic used by traders. They choose special food plastic that is transparent and strong enough to wrap vegetables, fruit, and sauces. Meanwhile, for outer packaging, they use a wider variety of plastic choices in color and size, depending on the number of packages purchased by the buyer.

https://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/hej/index  email: home.economics.journal@uny.ac.id
The more dominant use of plastic is due to the nature of the Asinan components, which include sauce, thus requiring water-resistant packaging. Meanwhile, styrofoam packaging is rarely used by Asinan sellers because the material cannot contain the Asinan sauce effectively. Sometimes, packaging is used, such as plastic for the sauce ingredients and microwavable or paper boxes for the main Asinan ingredients such as fruits. Vendors typically employ this combination of packaging to serve Asinan Bogor buyers to take the product home. This packaging combination is generally selected by buyers who reside relatively close to or within the city rather than for food souvenirs to be taken out of town due to the risk of diminishing the quality of Asinan Bogor during transit.

Initially, Asinan serving was dominated by the use of bowls or plates for customers to directly consume on-site. However, with the evolution of consumer demand, where Asinan is sought as a takeaway or for consumption off-site, there has been a shift towards packaging, especially plastic packaging. Plastic packaging is chosen due to its convenience, practicality, and lower cost. Street sellers still provide facilities for on-site dining, whereas sellers targeting takeaway customers no longer offer on-site dining facilities. Asinan for takeaways is usually prepared at separate production facilities dedicated solely to preparing Asinan as souvenirs, distinct from the retail outlets selling Asinan for immediate consumption.

**Uniqueness and Distinctiveness Value of Asinan**

The highest value for uniqueness and distinctiveness of Asinan, according to vendors, lies in the sauce seasoning ($\bar{x} = 3.4$), while the lowest value is attributed to the presentation method ($\bar{x} = 2.7$) (Figure 6). The sauce seasoning stands out as the highest-rated aspect among Asinan sellers because the components found in the sauce seasoning possess distinctive characteristics that differentiate Asinan Bogor from other regions.
mixed whole. The salty taste is obtained from salt and other seasonings, the sour taste is obtained from a combination of tamarind, vinegar, and lime, while the spicy taste is obtained from a combination of various types of chilies. The intensity of the red color in the sauce varies depending on the composition of the ground red chili used.

Discussion

**General Knowledge About Asinan**

The assessment of Asinan Bogor aligns with the sellers' understanding regarding various aspects of knowledge about Asinan Bogor, especially concerning the ingredients for producing Asinan Bogor, both the main ingredients and seasoning ingredients. Although the sellers perceive Asinan Bogor as a distinctive traditional dish of Bogor, historical value and philosophy aspects are minimally known. This is suspected to be linked to the discontinuity in transmitting information from previous generations.

Knowledge regarding raw materials is of high value because it is directly related to the production of Asinan Bogor products. The sellers could not produce a product effectively without a good understanding of the required raw materials. This is consistent with [21] Regarding the level of knowledge of producers regarding the selection of appropriate food additives. However, in some cases, knowledge about raw materials does not always correlate with their usage in production [22] Good knowledge of raw material quality is sometimes not accompanied by the ability to select and choose quality raw materials in the market when purchasing them.

**Components of Asinan Main Ingredients**

Yellow noodle crackers are one of the characteristics of the main ingredient in Bogor Asinan. On the other hand, yellow noodle crackers are one of the authentic snacks of the Bogor region [23]. Yellow crackers are made from simple raw materials, namely tapioca flour, water, and salt [24]. Simple raw materials and simple processing are the reasons why the price of yellow crackers is relatively cheap and affordable, making them popular among the people of Bogor for a long time. For example, some manufacturers have been producing since 1977 [23] [24]. Although yellow noodle crackers are also used in Asinan Betawi, sometimes Asinan Betawi uses red crackers, so it is different from Asinan Bogor [19].

Antanan is a primary ingredient in vegetable Asinan. Its parts include the leaves, stems, and petioles. Antanan is an herbaceous plant without a stem, with green leaves shaped like oval circles measuring approximately 2.6-4.6 cm in length and 3.3-5.2 cm in width. [25]. Currently, antanan leaves rarely found in the market, so only a few Asinan Bogor sellers use them as one of the main ingredients. The scarcity of antanan supply in the market is suspected to be related to the lack or absence of farmers cultivating it. So far, almost all antanan supply comes from directly harvested wild antanan.

An implication that needs particular attention regarding antanan is the effort to cultivate it so that it is adequately available in the market. Especially considering that antanan is known as a primary ingredient and a distinctive feature of Asinan Bogor, it even constitutes part of the local wisdom of the community [26][27][28]. This effort is made to ensure that one of the distinctive features of Asinan Bogor remains preserved and does not disappear due to the lack of supply in the market.
Another main ingredient of vegetable Asinan Bogor that characterizes it is salted mustard greens instead of dry salted mustard greens. Salted mustard greens are made from bitter mustard greens (*Brassica juncea*) processed using salt, resulting in spontaneous or natural fermentation. Natural fermentation is a process of fermentation without adding microorganisms as starters or yeast [29]. Salted mustard greens are one of the unique Chinese seasonings. This seasoning can be easily purchased from Chinese seasoning sellers [30].

The composition of Bogor pickles, both vegetables and fruit, is relatively more diverse than other pickles. The fruit used can reach 13 species, while the vegetables can also get 13 species. Meanwhile, Betawi pickles only consist of about five species of vegetables, with the difference being the use of carrots [19].

**Components of Asinan Sauce**

Whole fried peanuts are one of the differences between Asinan Bogor and other pickles such as Asinan Betawi [19] [20]. In Asinan Betawi, the peanuts are finely ground and mixed with water to make peanut sauce which is mixed into the Asinan, while in Asinan Bogor, the peanuts are kept whole and mixed into the Asinan.

The red chilies used to make the sauce are generally subjected to a brief blanching process or soaked in hot water. This process, known as blanching in food processing, aims to enhance the color produced and prevent browning [13]. The ground red chilies used in the sauce component can produce a red color in the Asinan sauce. Color is one of the indicators in determining the quality of ingredients, as it can be perceived by the senses first [31]. Food items with unappealing or deviant colors, even if they taste good and have a good texture, are deemed unfit for consumption [32].

**Serving and Packaging of Asinan**

Food packaging not only protects the products within but also acts as an attraction for buyers, especially when designed appropriately. Food packaging functions to safeguard the products from damage [33] and plays a role in attracting consumers to purchase the products [34]. Packaging can even become a popular cultural identity in small- to medium-sized industries [35] [36]. Some renowned Asinan Bogor sellers have incorporated their business logos on plastic packaging, thus creating brand recognition and adding value to their products due to more appealing packaging. Standard packaging can enhance the image of a product, provide added value in sales, and effectively protect the product [37].

**Uniqueness and Distinctiveness Value of Asinan**

In general, Asinan Bogor are a unique food that is different from similar foods in other regions. Asinan Bogor sauce is the main characteristic compared to other pickles, such as Asinan Betawi which use peanut sauce [19] [20]. Asinan is also known in Sundanese traditionalism in other regions [38], but does not use the same sauce as Asinan Bogor.

The taste of Asinan Bogor seasoning is a combination of all the ingredients used without the addition of artificial colorings, sweeteners, flavors, and preservatives. Mixing with vegetables and fruit creates a fresh taste with a variety of salty, sweet, savory, sour,
and spicy flavors, as well as the addition of whole-fried peanuts. A spicier taste is obtained by adding sesa chili sauce. In general, the seasoning for Asinan Bogor is a thin, pink-to-dark sauce.

**CONCLUSION**

Asinan Bogor is perceived as a distinctive traditional food of Bogor by the Asinan vendors. The highest level of knowledge among the vendors pertains to understanding raw materials, while knowledge about its history is rated the lowest. There are no mandatory main ingredients for Asinan. The main ingredient deemed essential, with the highest rating, is bean sprouts, while for fruit, Asinan, mango, guava, and jicama are considered crucial. The essential seasoning ingredients include ground red chili, salt, and water. The composition of both main ingredients and seasoning ingredients varies significantly depending on preference. Presently, the serving of Asinan Bogor is predominantly in plastic packaging compared to on-site consumption at the seller's stall. The primary uniqueness and distinctiveness of Asinan Bogor lie in its sauce seasoning.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

This research was not funded. Thanks to all respondents, it is a Asinan Bogor seller.

**REFERENCES**


http://https://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/hej/index email: home.economics.journal@uny.ac.id


https://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/hej/index email : home.economics.journal@uny.ac.id
Putri, Ramdany, et. al., “Authenticity and Uniqueness of Asinan Bogor”.


