

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background

Fermented foods have been an essential part of the human diet since 8000 BC and took for nearly a third of the world's food consumption (Xiang *et al.*, 2019). Not only for food preservation, fermentation could also enhance food quality and culinary pleasure through the generation of distinct flavors, aromas, and textures of foods; as well as being potential functional foods that exhibit health-promoting benefits (Tamang, 2014; Xiang *et al.*, 2019). Traditional fermented foods are mostly made through spontaneous fermentation that involves different beneficial microorganisms from local food ingredients and environmental conditions as home industry, in which the ingredients and procedures are suited to the cultural preferences. Indonesia, with its cultural richness and diversity, has a rich variety of indigenous traditional fermented foods that are spread throughout all regions of the country. Several examples of traditional fermented foods originated from Indonesia are tempeh, *oncom*, *tape*, *dadih*, and many others. Not only the types of the traditional fermented foods that are abundant, but also with the nutritional and health benefits, such as decreasing the incidence of flatulence and diarrhea as well as the lipid-lowering effect in tempeh (Astuti *et al.*, 2000).

However, the strikes of fast foods that are currently dominating Indonesian cuisine as well as the rapid flow of globalization could potentially lead to the degradation of interest towards Indonesian traditional fermented foods (Amalia & Marta, 2018), especially for the young people. Also, due to the fast-paced lifestyle, modern consumers prefer to have fast or convenient foods that are widely available in the market (Xiang *et al.*, 2019). It is possible for the young people to have a faded knowledge of Indonesian traditional fermented foods due

to the global trends nowadays, and if they refuse to learn more, this could lead further into the loss of existence of the indigenous traditional food knowledge that has been preserved for generations (Nor *et al.*, 2012). Sharif *et al.* (2012) also stated that there is a growing awareness about the possibility of traditional food knowledge being lost, and it would be difficult to be recreated again if the young people have no interest in learning and preserving the culture.

Indigenous traditional fermented foods are an essential part of the culture, identity, and heritage (Surono, 2016). Conserving the traditional fermented foods means conserving the local culture heritage. The future of traditional fermented foods highly depends on the action of the young people on the recent and later days, because young people are the key determinants for the presence of local culture heritage in the next generation. With their energy and passion, young people are in fact able to contribute to local development as well as being a bridge between cultures and between tradition and modernity (UN, 2013); hence are expected to ensure the longevity of local culture heritage for the generations to come. Especially for young adults, which are the key contributors to the nation's workforce and healthy development of the next generation (Stroud *et al.*, 2015). It is important for Indonesian young adults to have proper knowledge and behavior toward various types and benefits of Indonesian traditional fermented foods, because these components are the key pillars for a firm knowledge foundation about Indonesian traditional fermented foods; hence, the young adults could properly conserve the foods in the future. A good knowledge of various types of fermented foods represents a good awareness of Indonesia's cultural richness, meanwhile a good knowledge on the benefits of the fermented foods will possibly enable the young adults to contribute to the health and well-being development for the next generation; as the fermented foods contain health benefits for human body.

Approaches to lift up the young adults' interest for Indonesian traditional fermented foods have been done through public media such as news, social media platforms, community education, food festivals, and so on. However, the existing approaches were developed solely according to the general perception and behavior of the population, in which the approaches might not fit to the target population which is Indonesia's young adults. Young adulthood (within the age range of 18 to 24 years old) has been a critical period of development as well as viewed as critical windows of development and intervention for the long-lasting implications in the young adults' future life (Stroud *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, approaches, education, and intervention activities should be specifically designed in order to effectively fit the characteristics as well as give impact to the overall perception and behavior of the young adults, so that in the future the young adults continue to preserve the traditional fermented foods.

To develop well-tailored approaches that are suited to the specific behavioral characteristics of young people in Indonesia towards Indonesian traditional fermented foods, there is a need of an assessment that evaluates the knowledge and behavior level of the population. To date, there are no studies that assess the knowledge and behavior about Indonesian traditional fermented foods. Knowledge and behavior could be measured using a KAP (Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices) survey model, because KAP surveys could establish baseline information to determine the type of future approaches as well as suggest intervention strategies that are suited to specific local circumstances and the cultural factors influencing them (Monde, 2011). Through KAP surveys, well-suited approaches that are needed to educate young adults could be developed as well as provide insights to understand the behaviors of the young adults towards Indonesian traditional fermented foods.

Therefore, it is expected that this study could provide the data needed for the development of educational platforms in order to raise awareness and interest of young adults towards Indonesian traditional fermented foods.

## **1.2. Objective**

The objectives of this project are:

- a. to assess the level of knowledge, attitude, and practices of young adults specific to the types and benefits of Indonesian traditional fermented foods
- b. to determine the association among knowledge, attitude, and practices level towards Indonesian traditional fermented foods in young adults.

## **1.3. Significance of the Study**

This research could offer a baseline data about young adults' level of knowledge as well as behaviors towards the types and benefits of Indonesian traditional fermented foods for the government, organizations, and other parties that are involved in the education and cultural sectors. Moreover, the findings could be used as a supplementary literature for future research as well as to stimulate other research about Indonesian traditional fermented foods.