


# Infusing sub-Saharan culinary heritage in university learning for a delectable academic journey

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African culture and tradition, deeply rooted in our community, encompass a rich tapestry of values, rituals, festivals, and literary treasures. Among the vibrant facets of this cultural heritage is African cuisine. Indigenous dishes exhibit delicate flavours, while others manifest a symphonic richness forged from basic ingredients with skilled artistry. The diversity in African cuisines is remarkable, with each country boasting distinctive culinary traditions. Unfortunately, the spectre of colonisation has led to Eurocentric dominance in culinary education. A decolonised approach in catering management education is needed to celebrate our culture and tradition, emphasising the commonalities and differences in African cuisines. This complex endeavour involves implementing decolonisation while incorporating indigenous African ingredients. Harnessing African knowledge is pivotal in revitalising regional culinary traditions and inspiring potential entrepreneurial ventures. This qualitative study explores the role of African food festivals in driving the decolonisation of culinary education in the departments offering food service-related courses. In addition, a comprehensive literature analysis on African cuisines using a structured search methodology sheds light on the subject.

**Contribution:** This article introduces a framework for decolonisation within African universities that provide culinary education to promote traditional African food culture. It emphasises the crucial role played by African food festivals in preserving the authenticity of African cuisine and culinary techniques. In addition, the article explores the importance of gastronomy tourism in sub-Saharan Africa, with the potential to cultivate cultural understanding and deepen the appreciation of African traditions among Africans themselves.

**Keywords:** curriculum; decolonisation; culture; tradition; African indigenous cuisine; gastronomy tourism; food festivals.

## Introduction

Food plays an important role in enhancing cultural identity and connecting African people with their communities and fellowship. Despite serving the fundamental goal of nourishing life, the cuisine also has a direct impact on every society, culture, and legacy in myriad visible and invisible ways, including the literature and stories of each region. There are many cultures on the African continent, yet almost all of them have had their cuisines altered by trade and commerce, slavery, and colonisation. The preservation of local knowledge and traditional technologies play a crucial role in maintaining cultural heritage. African narratives span centuries and the numerous cultures highlight the unique characteristics of their food (Highfield 2017). This article explores theoretical research based on an extensive literature review to explore the need to incorporate sub-Saharan cuisine into the university curriculum.

In the prior century, Asante (1991) defined Africology as the 'Afrocentric study of phenomena, events, ideas, and personalities related to Africa' that is sustained by the cultural voices of the composite African people. Shujaa (2015) details the components of African culture, emphasising the importance of preserving African cultural attributes. These elements encompass spiritual traditions, healing practices, beliefs, values, socialisation, kinship, and culinary traditions. Culture also relates to cuisine that includes major crops and food traditions such as the preparation of stews, greens, and rice dishes. African-centred education should affirm the cultural and intellectual legitimacy of African people and their knowledge. Such an approach can offer holistic education, supporting social, spiritual, and academic development, and promote values such as interdependence, community, and reciprocity.

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Cultural festivals have a marketplace, food vendors, entertainment, and a commitment to community development. A cultural revival is a resurgence of a particular cultural practice with a significant increase in the intensity of practice, awareness, and influence of culture. A revival is the spirit of Africans cultural nationalism, Africans together as a people or race. It ensures unity of purpose and destiny among Africans in Africa. Shared languages, histories, beliefs, behaviours, and symbols bind members together while separating them from 'others'. African language is the primary vehicle by which culture is transmitted intergenerationally. Therefore, the acquisition of African languages serves as a powerful exemplar of African cultural continuity.

Professor Kenneth Vickery (2006) asserts Africa's unique and ancient history, highlighting its significance as the birthplace of humanity. He challenges Eurocentric misrepresentations of African culture as lacking intrinsic beliefs and values. In contrast, Wainaina (2006) satirically advises writers to treat Africa as a single entity in their works, portraying Africans as exotic and their culture as needing outside intervention. This sarcastic tone underscores the problematic Eurocentric narratives that have often dominated perceptions of Africa, either portraying it as pitiable, in need of worship, or subject to domination. Both authors critique such simplistic and biased portrayals of the continent.

Koot (2023) examines the historical pattern of positioning Southern Africa's indigenous Bushmen (San) as an inferior group, tracing it from pre-colonial paternalist relationships to contemporary post-colonial paternalism. Although unintentionally, tourism, development programmes, and the global discourse on 'indigeneity' contribute to perpetuating the inferior status of the Bushmen. Youth belonging to historically marginalised racial and ethnic groups frequently encounter discrimination, oppression, prejudice, racism, and segregation (DOPRS), leading to adverse effects on their psychological well-being (Singh & Gudiño 2023). Why is knowledge about African cultural beliefs and behaviours among African descendants and their cultural continuity marginalised? The concept of cultural continuity represents the knowledge transmitted across time and space through which African culture is learned and expressed (Asante 1991). The concept of cultural continuity, thus represents the ongoing processes through which African culture is learned and expressed.

Williams-Forson (2016) emphasises the need to complicate our understanding of African culinary culture, encouraging a more comprehensive exploration of food culture as a heritage practice. Ako-Adjei (2015) laments the lack of interest in African cuisines, attributing it to limited and stereotypical portrayals by food journalists and restaurant reviewers in influential publications, which shape perceptions of food. Altering the narrative in gastronomic journalism can diversify Eurocentric culinary standards.

Dorinda Hafner, a culinary anthropologist, plays a pivotal role in mediating and publicising not only black cuisines from Africa and the diaspora but also cosmopolitan cuisines

from various regions. Rita Zwane, starting as a street vendor, has successfully commercialised African food through her restaurant, 'Imbizo Shisanyama'. Her journey from poverty to entrepreneurship, as detailed in the book 'Conquering the poverty of the mind – From shipping container to busy corner', serves as a testament to her pioneering efforts in promoting indigenous recipes, making her a legendary figure in South Africa.

Williams-Forson (2016) underscores the historical significance of chicken in shaping negative perceptions of African Americans in the United States (US), from allegations of chicken theft to demeaning caricatures associated with southern food, particularly fried chicken. In contrast, Washington (2022), an African American, emphasises the importance of cultivating food that pays tribute to the past, promotes diversity, and maintains cultural traditions, symbolising a legacy of love, healing, and liberation for future generations.

Investigating the integration of sub-Saharan culinary heritage into university learning is a crucial step in filling a substantial gap in the current body of literature. Despite a rising interest in culinary education and cultural heritage, there is a clear absence of thorough examinations regarding the inclusion of sub-Saharan culinary traditions in the African academic curricula. This article aims to bridge this gap by exploring the impression of infusing sub-Saharan culinary heritage into university programmes associated with catering, hospitality, or food science.

The main objectives of this narrative are:

- to identify how introducing sub-Saharan Cuisine into the University Curriculum will help African students to revive the significance of their culture and heritage.
- to develop recommendations for integration of sub-Saharan culinary heritage into the university curriculum, ensuring cultural relevance, inclusivity, and enhancement of academic content.

These objectives can be achieved by answering the following five questions:

- Why is the decolonisation of the university curriculum important for the marginalised African community?
- How can we revive sub-Saharan culture in the African continent?
- How will the decolonisation of the Culinary Art syllabus help African students go back to their roots?
- What is the significance of African indigenous food in the current context?
- What is the role of cultural festivals and food festivals in reviving African culture and heritage?

This article is organised as follows: The initial section provides a broad overview of the concept of decolonisation of the curriculum. Subsequently, a section aims to elucidate the significance of culture and tradition in universities. Following this, the discussion delves into the foodways of

African culture, commencing with an examination of lost crops of Africa and offering insights on the African cultural cuisine. The subsequent section explores gastronomy tourism and festivals, succeeded by a discussion on how food festivals can contribute to decolonisation within a university, with a brief note on how indigenous cuisine in Hospitality and Culinary Arts course is important, ultimately concluding the article with a framework of sub-Saharan cuisine in the university curriculum.

## Methodology

The composition of this original research involved a sequential process. Initially, information sources were evaluated and resources were searched and located. Subsequently, a conceptual framework was developed, and the article was written, encompassing the identification of research subtopics and questions. This encompassed situating the research within the existing literature, understanding theoretical concepts, building a bibliography, contemplating useful research methods, and analysing and interpreting results.

The search for scholarly and research journals also involved reviewing articles that provided a comprehensive overview of recent work in the field, accompanied by a valuable bibliography for reference. Selected journal articles were relevant, up-to-date, published by reputable publishers, referenced extensive related literature, and presented in a clear, structured, and readable format. Web resources were identified through searches in standard search engines such as Google, Google Scholar and University Summons providing access to diverse information.

A Boolean search strategy was employed to extract information, utilising phrases such as 'curriculum decolonisation in Africa', 'African culture, tradition, and education', 'African indigenous crops and cuisine', 'African gastronomy tourism', and 'African food festivals'. The initial 30 articles generated in Google Scholar covered diverse themes, with each topic having between four to eight chosen articles. The 'relevant articles' link for each selected article and the examination of references in full-text journal articles led to the identification of additional relevant publications. Articles were excluded based on publication year and repetitive content after reviewing abstracts. The study incorporated approximately 55 articles and books out of 102 initially selected, and publications from Summons were excluded. In addition, more than five web pages were chosen for inclusion in the study.

Creating conceptual frameworks and employing concept mapping is a valuable method for pinpointing essential concepts within a specific research theme. In this study, a concept map played a crucial role in identifying supplementary search terms during the literature review, aiding in comprehending theories, concepts, and the interconnections among them.

## Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards for research without direct contact with human or animal subjects.

## Results and discussion

This research embarks on a comprehensive exploration, addressing the decolonisation of the curriculum, the profound significance of culture and tradition in educational settings, and the intricate foodways embedded in African culture. The narrative expands its scope to encompass gastronomy tourism and festivals, with a specific focus on the distinctive attributes of food festivals. In addition, the investigation closely examines the role and portrayal of indigenous cuisine in the fields of hospitality and culinary arts. Through an extensive analysis of these interconnected subjects, the ensuing sections will unveil nuanced discoveries, fostering a holistic comprehension of the complex interplay between education, culture, and culinary heritage in sub-Saharan Africa.

### Decolonisation of curriculum

Mheta, Lungu and Govender (2018:1) state that most South African universities including the Durban University of Technology (DUT) are founded on the Western academic organisational model and are still predominantly Eurocentric. Dealing with the aftereffects of colonisation is referred to as decolonisation. Indigenous knowledge was denigrated and severely diminished during colonialism and apartheid (Mheta et al. 2018). African people are accepting and identifying their own cultures, narrating their histories, learning from books by African authors, and managing organisations based on principles of African culture rather than Eurocentric models as a process for the decolonisation of schools and universities (Du Plessis 2021).

African knowledge traditions should not be seen as a hindrance but rather as a resource that can be used to advance higher education. A humanistic philosophical perspective should support the decolonisation of the curriculum. Mheta et al. (2018) posit that institutions can easily adopt indigenous knowledge systems once the mind has been freed. Decolonisation is not about rejecting Western and northern traditions, despite their contentious nature.

The primary objective is to centre African knowledge within the broader context of various knowledge traditions expressed in different languages. This emphasis on multilingualism holds the potential to significantly enhance the dissemination of knowledge and the encouragement of critical thinking. More than 30 years ago, Wa Thiong'o (1986) passionately championed the cause of linguistic decolonisation and actively supported the development of African languages for use in African literature and scholarly works. Two fundamental ideas underpin this effort: 'Language exists as culture' and 'language exists as communication'. Language not only serves as a reflection of a society's development but also encapsulates

its history, values, and aesthetic sensibilities (Wa Thiong'o 1986). With over 2000 languages spoken across the continent, and language being a key marker of culture, it can be said that Africa is home to nearly as many distinct cultures (Highfield 2017).

Mheta et al. (2018) contend that promoting multilingualism can aid in the development of new knowledge, particularly in the sciences, and the indigenous knowledge systems that have previously been underrepresented in the national curriculum. Institutions need to start partnering based on what they can contribute to Africa identifying African-centric elements and creating a distinctive brand of education for South Africa that is based on *ubuntu* (humanism).

Olivier (2018) criticises that without an intermediary cultural heritage, it would be difficult to access the 'original form' of African civilisations. As the African cultural tradition is currently tangled with Western and other cultural influences, accessing pre-colonial African culture is impossible. However, Naidu-Hoffmeester (2021) reports that the emphasis is on curriculum transformation, and indigenous knowledge from Africa should be recognised as a universal knowledge system in South African university curricula.

Several concepts developed in Europe may not be suitable for African children, students, and researchers. Professors from various institutions argue that the current education system is problematic as it promotes European and Western values, and they advocate for the normalisation of Africanness within the curriculum (Mohlakoane 2020). So how will Eurocentric curricula mould African students to tackle the challenges of their community?

Lecturers, as knowledge creators, are impacted by colonial power dynamics and must consider the sources and consequences of their work. To transform society, reevaluating education is the initial crucial step. African legacies, serving as a cultural foundation, hold enduring significance for both individual and collective African knowledge, and they connect culture, race, and politics (Dei 2012).

In African education, race is integral to cultural identity and knowledge creation. Knowledge generation and sharing should transpire in contexts that honour historical, heritage, and cultural elements shaping African perspectives (Nyamnjoh 2012). Dei (2012) defines indigenous education as the production, validation, and dissemination of knowledge, involving teaching and learning that incorporates available and existing knowledge, along with how African learners understand their environment and coexist socially. Mohlakoane (2020) highlights the disconnection of African university programmes from African reality and culture, raising concerns about their relevance.

Education encompasses more than formal classroom learning, extending to understanding the connections between family, community, nature, and society through daily experiences and interactions. Schools are just one part of this broader

educational context, with families and communities playing equally essential roles. Educated individuals recognise their responsibilities to the larger community and understand themselves holistically, embracing mental, spiritual, cultural, emotional, physical, and material aspects.

Ammon (2019) notes that universities often approach decolonisation through curriculum additions or Africa-centred content, resulting in only superficial changes. Achieving genuine decolonisation requires addressing underlying issues that indirectly affect the curriculum. Decolonial changes may be gradual but must lead to true epistemic openness. Successful implementation depends on diverse perspectives within the teaching team, requiring academic confidence. Decolonisation is a time-intensive and challenging process, hindered by faculty members with limited knowledge and interest in curriculum transformation.

Van der Westhuizen, Beukes and Greuel (2021:2) advocate that faculty members should actively engage in a process to drive transformation by reflecting on the availability of Africanised knowledge and skills, identifying what is needed, and acquiring such information and skills. A transdisciplinary approach is crucial for assessing the alignment of existing knowledge and practices, often rooted in Western perspectives, with the African context. Effective decolonisation should manifest in social equity and economic transformation in African communities. In contrast, Ammon (2019:46) suggests creating a comprehensive framework to define various decolonisation concepts and guide universities in evaluating their institutional processes.

Shizha (2014:11) asserts that post-colonial African education systems must reflect indigenisation in official curriculum reconstruction and teachers' resources to promote sustainable social and economic development. The culinary curriculum should enable students to practice preparing native dishes with local ingredients. However, integrating indigenous knowledge is challenging because of insufficient expertise among lecturers, despite acknowledging its importance in the culinary curriculum.

The shortage of lecturers well-versed in indigenous knowledge and native cuisine is a significant challenge. To facilitate knowledge transfer within universities, it is imperative to integrate native cuisine prominently into the curriculum and provide support for lecturers. This support should encompass attending training sessions and conferences to equip lecturers with the necessary skills to effectively pass on and document this valuable knowledge (Vandeyar 2020:2).

Teachers have the potential to become transformative academics by evolving their perspectives, beliefs, values, and worldviews over time. Encouraging brainstorming and open dialogue can dismantle polarised thinking, particularly in diverse and multicultural educational settings. Vandeyar (2020) suggests that fostering compassionate interaction with



diversity offers hope and the potential for reconciliation, leading to a redefined approach to education.

Academic identities are intricate and can change when individuals are given the opportunity to unlearn, re-learn, and embrace fundamental shifts. The means to effect such change may vary from one university to another, and can manifest through departmental initiatives, institutional efforts, or professional development programmes for staff. Dealing with disadvantaged students, particularly those affected by structural disparities related to race, ethnicity, and language, demands evidence-based pedagogical practices. Effective teaching transcends acknowledging a student's cultural background; it entails becoming culturally competent and incorporating the cultural and linguistic diversity of students into instructional materials.

Despite the existence of new policies and curricula, their practical implementation has often fallen short. Achieving true decolonisation requires all elements of the educational triad – the teacher, the learner, and the curriculum – to function in harmony. Isolated efforts to decolonise the curriculum may prove ineffective. Zwane and Mpofo (2022:47) underscore that educational leadership often grapples with comprehending and implementing decolonisation efforts. Collaborative approaches that emphasise African histories and knowledge systems are essential for effective decolonisation. For this transformation, the content of the curriculum, instructional techniques, and resource materials must align with the educational prerequisites of the community. It is crucial to prioritise the training in entrepreneurial abilities for students studying hospitality and include native African ingredients in culinary recipes. This universal strategy is indispensable for reforming the curriculum and the process of decolonisation.

### Significance of culture and tradition in educational contexts

The importance of culture and tradition in education is a central theme in discussions regarding African societies and their education systems. Shizha (2014:113) emphasises the value of cultural engagement and suggests replacing cultural alienation with a critical approach. Culture is a fundamental aspect of human experience, representing a dynamic system of shared knowledge that influences identity, history, and pedagogy. Dei (2012:104) similarly highlights the intricate impact of culture on human and social behaviour. He calls for African educators to acknowledge the significance of indigenous African cultures and their value systems in their research, writing, and teaching.

An additional significant aspect is the intersection of culture, identity, and spirituality. Indigenous and traditional knowledge systems are deeply interwoven with society and culture and are closely linked to the mind, body, and spirit. Spiritual identity is associated with the land, one's inner self, and the physical and social environment. These knowledge systems

encompass a way of knowing that emphasises emotions and underscores the pursuit of wholeness and completeness. An African-centred perspective involves the development of an African worldview (Dei 2012:106).

As pointed out by Brulotte and Di Giovine (2016), food is a vital component of cultural heritage. Food production, preparation, and communal consumption contribute to the reinforcement of social bonds, and the identification and preservation of cultural distinctions. Cultivating, preparing, and sharing food can serve as a means to assert claims of cultural heritage on various levels, ranging from local to global. African scholars can examine these practices, exploring how the origin of food can define ethnic groups as indigenous or non-native, how the meaning of ingredients changes within societies based on factors such as class and gender, and how traditions can be created to foster cultural revival.

However, it is important to observe that many existing works and case studies have predominantly focussed on Europe, Asia, and the Americas, with limited representation of African culinary culture. This highlights the need for culinary students in Africa to conduct more case studies and research on African cuisine. Likewise, Long (2004), an anthropologist and a folklorist, ignores food from African countries in her discourse on culinary tourism. However, in her later edition of 'Ethnic American food today: A cultural encyclopaedia', she discusses foodways for almost all African countries briefly.

Williams-Forsen (2016) calls for a broader perspective in examining the culinary practices of African people in the United States. She points out the selective omission of certain food habits, communities, and groups. Her work emphasises the importance of diversifying knowledge of African American and black culinary culture, while promoting a wider view of food culture as a cultural practice.

Cusack (2014:66) draws attention to the dominance of male chefs in presenting African cuisines to Western audiences, paralleling the Western dominance of male cooks in the public sphere. The critique highlights the need for more diverse representation and acknowledgement of the contributions of women in African culinary traditions. Richard Wilk's insight on how food can create a tangible connection to the past is notable. Case studies on food reveal how cuisines can unite or divide people, as culinary traditions and cultural history contribute to national, regional, and global identities.

The influence of African cultures on global culinary history is apparent. Brillat-Savarin (2009) acknowledges the contributions of ingredients from Africa to world cuisine. Carney (2003) argues that African slaves brought expertise in rice cultivation to the Americas, which may have played a significant role in the development of rice crops in America. The historical roots of food traditions have connections to African practices, demonstrating the global impact of African culinary knowledge.

The discussion about the national dish of South Africa, Bobotie, reflects the complex history of culinary influences in African countries. While it has Dutch and Indonesian roots, it has also been shaped by the gastronomic cultures of colonial European countries and has evolved into a distinct South African gastronomic tradition. Can the national dish of South Africa not have an African origin?

## Foodways of African culture

The preservation of food as cultural heritage and ancestral knowledge holds significant importance for the physical, cultural, and spiritual well-being of people. Food rituals, when performed appropriately, serve as a means of connecting individuals to their culture, communities, and the Earth itself. Food is not merely sustenance; it embodies cultural identity and carries a rich culinary history. Ethnic identity and traditional recipes contribute to the diverse tapestry of foodways. Moreover, food serves as a link in the chain of human existence and plays a vital role within ecosystems as humans interact with nature through food consumption. Highfield (2017) aptly illustrates that forgotten histories and lasting connections can be accessed through the study of food and foodways.

The Columbian Exchange, as explained by Nunn and Qian (2010:163), was a pivotal moment in history when a wide-ranging transfer of diseases, plants, animals, culture, human populations, technology, and ideas occurred between the Americas and Europe during the 15th and 16th centuries. This exchange brought forth a global dispersal of plants native to the Americas, including staples such as potatoes, maize, tomatoes, and tobacco. Other commodities, such as vanilla, cocoa, rubber, and turkey meat, also made their way to different continents. However, the African continent saw its crucial food crops, sorghum and millet, replaced by maize and cassava as part of this transformative process.

African agriculture has been misrepresented and distorted over centuries. Highfield (2017) emphasises the profound impact of ecological imperialism, which led to the transformation of traditional yam and rice-based diets into cassava and maize-oriented ones. The transatlantic trade network significantly altered the food and foodways of the Akan people in Ghana, contributing to the challenges faced by communities across Africa. Despite the incredible diversity of cultures and languages in Africa, contemporary sub-Saharan African diets exhibit remarkable similarities, regardless of the significant differences in bioregions.

Africa's rich biodiversity includes over 200 species of native grains, fruits, vegetables, and roots that are native to the continent. These indigenous crops have played a significant role in the region's traditional food systems. However, during the colonial era, imported grains took precedence, displacing many of these native species. This trend continued even after colonisation, with indigenous crops being largely ignored in agricultural initiatives at both national and international levels. Highfield (2017) asserts that Africa is home to more

native cereals than any other continent. Akinola et al. (2020) suggest that over 2000 native grains and fruits are considered 'lost' crops of Africa.

Indigenous grains were also essential to Africa's diverse food cultures. African rice was prominent from the western coast down into the Congo basin; fonio, a staple was found across the Sahel. Millets and sorghum were commonly consumed from the Bight of Benin to the Horn of Africa, and as far south as the Karoo. Perennial and annual grasses were cultivated as cereals, such as teff in the Horn of Africa, drinn in the northern Sahara, kram-kram and fonio in the Sahel, and bourgou in the Niger Delta. The continent also featured a wide array of vegetables such as amaranth and moringa, and fruits including ackee, yam, Bambara nuts, and plantains. However, the impact of colonialism and globalisation has led to shifts in African diets. Even in Ethiopia, known for its crop genetic diversity, the consumption of new world grain maize has surpassed native cereal crops such as teff and finger millet.

African cuisine is a testament to the rich tapestry of flavours and ingredients. A typical Ghanaian meal may include goat kebabs, grilled tilapia served with banku (fermented cornmeal dumplings) and peppers. Corn and peppers, products of the Columbian exchange, have been integrated into the cuisine. However, dishes such as tilapia and goat kebabs seasoned with African spices retain their African origins. Other Ghanaian favourites encompass snails prepared in the Fenti style and dishes incorporating egusi (ground squash seeds). Ethiopian cuisine exhibits influences from Indian and Javanese cooking, possibly because of extensive trade links between Cochin and the African interior. Senegalese cuisine, as highlighted by Thiam (2015), connects to griots and emphasises the role of women in cooking. Signature dishes such as Dibi Hausa (beef kebabs with spicy peanut flour) and Thiebou Jen (fish with rof, a condiment made from parsley, chili peppers, garlic, and onions, served with boiled vegetables and broken rice) showcase the rich culinary heritage. Thiam has played a pivotal role in promoting African cuisine through his restaurants in New York, Yolélé and Le Grand Dakar, which serve as cultural hubs for Africans from the continent and the diaspora. Yolélé Foods contributes to the popularisation of fonio-based products in the US, including flours, pilafs, and chips. The rise in West African food's popularity in the US is evident with companies such as Amac Foods producing ready-made West African Jollof rice since 2015. Fonio, a highly nutritious millet often referred to as 'hungry rice', has garnered attention as an important grain, particularly in Senegal. Senegalese culture embodies the value of 'Teranga', which translates to 'hospitality' and emphasises community over the individual. The cuisine also features hibiscus, red palm fruit oil, cashew fruit, taufa (fermented and dried sea snails), and sacred African rice.

Adaptability is a defining feature of African food culture, where the need to combat hunger has been a driving factor for embracing change. This flexibility is exemplified by the

revered baobab tree, often called the 'bottle tree', which symbolises Africa and holds a cherished place in African hearts. This iconic tree offers a plethora of uses, with its fruits, white fibres, black seeds (nuts), and leaves all being edible, whether fresh or dried, and frequently incorporated into soups and stews. Beyond its remarkable nutritional value, the baobab tree also serves as a crucial water source, with the capacity to store up to 10000 litres of clean, fresh water. In contemporary times, it has gained recognition as a 'superfood', further underscoring its importance. Furthermore, native trees such as *Moringa oleifera*, often referred to as the 'Miracle tree', are the subject of extensive research for cultivation and processing. Similar investigations are underway for African nightshade and the spider plant, highlighting the continent's rich botanical resources.

The displacement of native plants has disrupted traditional knowledge systems, challenging the economic competitiveness of communities. Globalisation has led to the commodification of foods once shared in times of both abundance and scarcity, resulting in a loss of communal identity and traditional practices (Ordoñez-Araque 2021).

African culinary tradition has nourished communities for countless generations, dating back to the dawn of human history. In addition, it represents a regional inheritance of genetic richness that could serve as a foundation for a sustainable food future (National Research Council 1996). Examples include the production of jams from Cape gooseberry and primroses, the use of amaranth as Terere, and the staple role of sweet potatoes (known as Gikuyu in Kenya). Traditional practices such as using Gans mis (*Avonia papyraceae*) for beer fermentation from the Karoo and leavened bread-making are integral to African foodways (Ordoñez-Araque et al. 2021). Notably, African cuisine features a diverse array of foods, including boerewors, dumplings, melktert, fermented foods such as umqombothi, amahewu, and buganu, and products based on barley such as kita, dabo, and genfo. Meat products such as melfouf, merguez, and kofta contribute to the vibrancy of African food culture (Ordoñez-Araque et al. 2021).

Fermentation, one of the oldest methods of food preservation, plays a significant role in the preparation of native foods and beverages across the globe (Johansen et al. 2019). In sub-Saharan Africa, a substantial portion of indigenous foods and beverages are produced through fermentation and they are renowned for their high nutritional value and sensory qualities (Marco et al. 2017). Besides their role in preservation and safety, fermented foods offer several additional advantages, including decreased raw material loss, shortened cooking times, extended shelf lives, improved micronutrient bioavailability, and probiotic effects (Motlhanka, Zhou & Lebani 2018).

In Southern African countries such as Swaziland and South Africa, a wide variety of products are created through

fermentation, harnessing the concentration of nutrients, removal of anti-nutritional compounds, and inhibitory effects on harmful microorganisms because of low pH levels. Among the most outstanding products is umqumboti and/or umqombothi (African beer), locally known as Zulu beer, obtained from the mixture of water with cornmeal, germinated sorghum and brown sugar that is cooked to gelatinise the starch and fermented for 72 h. Amahewu (low alcohol drink), is one of the most common drink found in African homes, made from corn and water to obtain a soft porridge that is fermented at room temperature. Buganu (marula wine), is made with the ripe fruits of the marula tree (*Sclerocarya birrea*), the pulp along with water and sugar is fermented for 3 days. All these drinks are sifted before serving (Ordoñez-Araque et al. 2021).

Tolokazi, made from pineapple, is a beer that honours the African brewing heritage as beer brewing has always been the province of women in Southern Africa. This pineapple beer is similar to a popular drink in Mexico, Tepache. Dall (2020) comments that under pandemic prohibition, South Africans resorted to pineapples with a spike in homebrewing. Mfula Mfula, a frothy beer nicknamed 'cream of tart', is a Zulu fermentation of bread, oats, sugar, and pineapple.

Rampa et al. (2020) account for a hospital in Zambia that used mabisi (traditional fermented milk product), to treat severely malnourished babies. Amasi is a traditional fermented beverage (sour milk) enjoyed by many Africans as part of their regular diet even today! A probiotic food, amasi improves digestive functions, boosts immunity and protects against cancer, allergies, parasites, infections and other illnesses.

Fermentation is used for preserving and enhancing various food products, utilising cereals, tubers, legumes, and diverse raw materials. Indigenous fermented foods are known for their simplicity in terms of ingredients and processing techniques, making them suitable for small-scale cottage industries. Despite their importance in African cuisine, the microbial ecology of locally fermented foods in sub-Saharan Africa remains an area with limited research.

Indigenous and traditional food crops play a pivotal role in Africa by serving various social functions and contributing to diversified food supplies, thereby improving food and nutrition security. Unfortunately, these native foods are often underappreciated, both by the general population and culinary students, hindering the realisation of their potential benefits. The risk of knowledge transmission loss across generations poses a significant threat to long-term sustainable food security and the preservation of indigenous food traditions. Recognising and promoting indigenous foods as valuable resources is crucial for nurturing healthy food systems across the African continent.



## Gastronomy tourism and festivals

Gastronomy, as a field that encompasses the preparation, cooking, presentation, and consumption of food, has emerged as a crucial component of tourism (Kivela & Crotts 2006). Gastronomy tourism extends beyond the mere satisfaction of hunger; it is a holistic experience that encompasses food, culture, and heritage. The gastronomic experience plays a pivotal role in tourists' decisions regarding their travel destinations. Travellers now seek distinctive and authentic culinary experiences as an integral part of their journeys, giving rise to the phenomenon of gastronomy tourism. Such experiences may include participating in cooking lessons, visiting vineyards, exploring local markets, dining at traditional eateries, and attending food festivals (Mohotloane 2017).

The connection between food and tourism is a dynamic and mutually advantageous one. Gastronomy tourism provides tourists with an opportunity to delve into local traditions, culture, and history through culinary exploration while also making valuable contributions to local economies and communities. As culinary encounters play an increasingly pivotal role in travellers' decisions regarding their destination, locales aspire to establish distinctive identities rooted in their culinary heritage. This approach not only elevates the destination's reputation but also bolsters its long-term viability (Sammells 2016:147).

A core element of gastronomy tourism revolves around the celebration of indigenous cuisine and drinks, with a strong focus on sustainability and the preservation of cultural heritage. Local foods and traditional culinary practices serve various social functions, encompassing the broadening of food resources, the enhancement of food security and nutrition, and the reinforcement of cultural bonds within communities. The endorsement of native foods can offer substantial advantages to small-scale enterprises and local farmers, ultimately resulting in lasting health benefits for urban consumers (Rampa et al. 2020:4).

Furthermore, aside from its promotion of native cuisines, gastronomy tourism serves a pivotal function in providing opportunities for tracing ancestry. The rituals and ceremonies related to food are intricately linked with cultural identity and play a role in fostering a sense of belonging and community. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's acknowledgement of French gastronomy as an intangible heritage in 2010 serves as a notable illustration of how gastronomy can symbolise belonging and cultural identity (Aulet, Mundet & Roca 2016).

Gastronomy tourism provides economic advantages to local communities by generating revenue through diverse means such as food stalls, workshops, and food-related events (Ramukumba 2019). Moreover, it fosters social integration and community engagement, leading to economic development and the safeguarding of cultural heritage. Furthermore, food festivals and culinary encounters during

cultural occasions can draw in tourists, elevating the attractiveness of the destination and ensuring its economic viability (Sio, Fraser & Fredline 2021:2).

Food taboos and the construction of gastronomic identity are noteworthy elements within the domain of gastronomy tourism. The cultural perspectives, dietary customs, and culinary heritage specific to a region can shape individuals' attitudes towards food. Each culture boasts its distinctive culinary traditions, and the perception of particular foods as unconventional, taboo, or exotic can influence the experiences and perceptions of tourists (Singh & Bhoola 2016:12).

As the popularity of gastronomy tourism continues to grow, there is an increasing demand for destinations to devise marketing strategies that spotlight their distinct culinary cultures. These approaches should account for the influence of gastronomy on a destination's reputation and recognise the importance of local foods, ingredients, and culinary traditions. Furthermore, the recognition and promotion of indigenous foods are crucial for bolstering healthy food systems not only in Africa but also on a global scale (Dixit 2021).

## Food festivals

The intersection of gastronomy, tourism, and the preservation of cultural heritage is a dynamic and multifaceted field, with far-reaching implications for various facets of a region's identity, economy, and tourism sector. The rediscovery and promotion of regional and traditional cuisines have been steadily gaining momentum, offering opportunities for conserving biodiversity, safeguarding cultural heritage, and providing immersive experiences for travellers.

Within this gastronomic journey, food festivals play a pivotal role. These events serve as not only a platform for showcasing local culinary traditions but also a means for communities to celebrate their food culture. Viljoen, Kruger and Saayman (2017) underscore the potential of food festivals in terms of biodiversity preservation, the sustenance of local identity, and the engagement of tourists in the local culture. These festivals offer a sensory experience that allows visitors to establish a connection with a place and its residents.

Comprehending the motivations that drive tourists to attend food festivals is of paramount importance for event organisers and destination marketing. Chang (2011) presents a motivation framework for festivals, highlighting general travel and leisure desires, event-specific experiences, and extrinsic motivations. These motivations can encompass everything from a curiosity about culinary delights to a craving for unique event experiences. Identifying these motivations is essential for devising effective marketing strategies for food festivals.

The resurgence of interest in regional foods and traditional cuisine has been particularly noteworthy over the past two decades, with the catering sector assuming a critical role in the rekindling of these culinary traditions. For instance, in



Kenya's Nakuru County, concerted efforts have been made to recover and promote regional culinary traditions. Zocchi and Fontefrancesco (2020) notice that the development of this trend in Europe has received significant attention, but contemporary Africa's culinary phenomena have been less explored. Popular dishes such as African leafy vegetables and local chicken, known as 'kuku kienyeji', continue to be celebrated.

Street food and pop-up stalls are integral to this movement, allowing the use of indigenous ingredients to create authentic and traditional dishes. Legendre and Baker (2021) suggest that native foods can be promoted for branding and marketing tourism destinations. Promoting food and taste education initiatives can help spread indigenous food culture and sustainability criteria. The engagement of travellers and locals in gourmet trails, farm visits, and slow food movements can further promote indigenous foods among communities and visitors. Incorporating indigenous food stalls in local markets, such as the Neighbour Goods Market in Johannesburg, provides an opportunity to familiarise South Africans with traditional ingredients, food, and drinks. Gastro Obscura (2023) describes an open-air rooftop market with over 100 speciality stalls, including gourmet food and drinks, creating an ideal setting for the promotion of indigenous foods.

Educational initiatives are critical in raising awareness about indigenous foods. Culinary events such as the African food festival organised by students at DUT in 2022 and 2023 serve as platforms for showcasing culinary skills, promoting local food culture, and networking with industry partners. Gangiah, Gunpath and Coetzee (2022) report that the menu at the festival covered a wide range of African dishes, focussing on trends in contemporary African cuisine.

The integration of indigenous food into culinary education and training can help hospitality students and chefs in Africa become familiar with these lesser-known ingredients and dishes. While some of these indigenous foods, like *Moringa oleifera*, are widespread in African communities, there is room for further awareness and education about the use and benefits of these ingredients.

Moreover, it is crucial to acknowledge the importance of indigenous foods as a potential remedy for addressing food insecurity in Africa. As highlighted by Magwede, Van Wyk and Van Wyk (2019) and the National Research Council (1996, 2006), many underutilised African plant resources could help broaden and secure the continent's food supply. These native food plants are not only nutritious but also sustainable and adaptable to local environments. Exploring and advocating for these native food sources can play a significant role in addressing malnutrition, enhancing food security, and stimulating rural development.

It is interesting to observe that many indigenous foods, currently popular in Indian cuisine, have deep roots in the food cultures of various Indian regions and are originally

African foods. Ingredients such as tamarind, bitter melon, okra, pigeon pea, cowpea, and many more are commonly featured in Indian culinary practices. This exchange of culinary elements across cultures highlights the interrelatedness of gastronomic traditions and the potential for mutual culinary appreciation between different cultures. Although maize is currently viewed as a staple of African cuisine, it is crucial to acknowledge its historical introduction and the influence of colonisation on dietary preferences. As emphasised by Highfield (2017), maize was originally brought from Mexico and introduced during the colonial period, underscoring the significance of comprehending the historical backdrop of food culture in Africa.

The dissemination of indigenous knowledge and the promotion of indigenous foods necessitates a holistic approach (Pichop et al. 2014). Efforts should focus on preserving, producing, and sustainably using these crops, developing improved cultivars, providing quality seeds, adding value to products, training farmers and extension officers, and documenting information. Collaboration with chefs, activists and the youth can help promote indigenous foods and cuisines, ensuring their preservation and integration into contemporary food culture.

### Indigenous cuisine in hospitality and culinary art

Santich (2004) initially proposed that educators face the challenge of equipping hospitality industry staff to cater to both the tangible and intangible needs of guests, thereby enhancing the overall hospitality experience and visitor well-being. To supplement the existing culinary curriculum, instructors can integrate the study of indigenous cuisine into the broader framework of hospitality education, ensuring that students are better prepared to fulfil their roles as hosts and gain a deeper understanding of the history and culture of African food and beverages.

In the context of culinary studies, an exploration of sub-Saharan cuisine can provide the necessary cultural, historical, and social context that the culinary skills module requires for a solid theoretical foundation. Simultaneously, the evolving commercial hospitality industry presents an opportunity to expedite the integration of trans-continental culinary and gastronomy studies into university programmes. Achieving this goal may involve incorporating the framework of African indigenous cuisine elements into research and teaching within the field of gastronomy as part of the hospitality curriculum. Collaboration between scholars in hospitality and catering is essential for developing strategic research initiatives that accommodate the interests of both disciplines.

The inclusion of indigenous knowledge in the culinary curriculum promises several benefits, including curriculum enhancement, increased appreciation for indigenous culinary wisdom, widespread awareness of indigenous food, accessibility to indigenous culinary knowledge, effective governance, and mainstreamed curriculum content. The practical component of culinary education focusses on

teaching students scientifically informed and skilful cooking techniques. These techniques can be effectively taught using locally sourced South African foods and dishes. Given the scarcity of academic materials on indigenous cuisines, South African cookbooks dedicated to indigenous cuisine can be coupled with French textbooks to make the French culinary context more relatable to the South African setting, facilitating better comprehension. Faculty members require the necessary tools and training to understand indigenous cuisines, enabling them to effectively impart this knowledge to students.

## Recommendations

Establishing a connection between a road map for travel and the realm of food tourism holds promise. In the future, geospatial technology could be harnessed in the planning of food trails and routes (FTR), enriching experiences and fostering local sustainable development. Food trails and routes offer travellers the opportunity to savour the finest regional specialities and local cuisine while encompassing a spectrum of food-themed activities and attractions. These routes and tours can centre around elements such as local agriculture, history, and culture (Dahl 2021).

Culinary mapping stands as a valuable tool for crafting proposed culinary routes or itineraries. It involves amalgamating information from various sources to identify authentic food experiences as a distinctive niche within tourism (Booyesen & Du Rand 2021). FOODPAT, a GIS-based inventory, is devoted to curating a gastronomic tourism database, encompassing sites of culinary interest for tourists, including food factories, wineries, breweries, food markets, farm stalls, restaurants, and culinary heritage locations. Food-related events and activities are typically developed based on existing resources, which may include wine routes and food festivals. Culinary heritage information is assembled through consultations of heritage and historical literature, recipe books, and local websites of specific regions. These data are then integrated with culinary heritage, culture, and various tourism infrastructure, attractions, and routes. The process of culinary mapping is instrumental in crafting culinary routes or itineraries, thereby transforming gastronomic tourism into a niche attraction within an African region. This approach presents numerous advantages, including the potential to engage local communities in promoting culinary resources and experiences, as well as providing the empirical data necessary for informed regional planning and policy decisions.

An interdisciplinary investment in gastronomic activities contributes to rural development by fostering gastronomy, farmers' markets, local food consumption, and community development, all of which lead to the sustainable development of FTRs. This, in turn, can support the promotion of indigenous foods and recipes. While Kiziltas et al. (2023) advocate for the integration of blockchain technology to enhance gastronomy sustainability, the

feasibility of implementing this technology at the grassroots level is a pertinent question. Can local food growers and small-scale farmers access this technology and will African governments support artisanal food producers in adopting this technology? The involvement of the food industry in indigenous foods and crops and their participation in blockchain technology is another area for exploration.

Singh and Bhoola (2016:12) propose that culinary tourism can play a pivotal role in bolstering tourist destinations and promoting cities worldwide through local cuisine. It is vital for Africa and South Africa not to squander the potential of their burgeoning tourism industry, and researchers in the realm of culinary tourism should seize the opportunity to explore this expanding research domain. The lack of specific policy guidelines focussed on culinary tourism and limited interest among South African gastronomists underscore the considerable room for growth in this field. Future research can delve into how local cuisine and indigenous food crops can be leveraged to enhance any city in Africa and fortify its appeal as a tourist destination. Failing to harness the full potential of the gastro-tourism sector could result in missed opportunities and culinary students may lose out on the burgeoning field of indigenous culinary tourism and cultural heritage.

Devoid of the interest and backing from predominantly colonial authorities and missionaries, indigenous grains struggled to compete with modern foreign cereals facilitated by advanced milling and processing techniques. These traditional grains, once essential, became relegated primarily to the diets of impoverished and rural communities. Over time, they acquired a negative reputation, surrounded by myths suggesting that they had lower yields and were more challenging to manage. Consequently, native grains were marginalised and overlooked. Table 1 indicates indigenous African crops lost to African communities. Sub-Saharan Africa possesses an untapped resource with the potential to enhance and stabilise the region's food production. Indigenous African plants, despite their significant potential as both food and cash crops, often escape the attention of researchers and policymakers. The viability of native African grains, vegetables, and fruits can address malnutrition, strengthen food security, promote rural development, and establish sustainable land management practices across Africa (National Research Council 1996).

Washington (2022) presented on 'Food justice and the importance of community' and drew on her experience in establishing food gardens and community food security projects around the US. A farmer, food justice activist, and community organiser, she turns empty lots into community gardens, bringing fresh vegetables into homes, supporting black growers in both urban and rural settings, and building worker-owned green businesses that create a strong local and democratic economy rooted in racial and gender equity.

**TABLE 1:** Indigenous African crops lost to African communities.

Cultivated fruits	Wild fruits	Wild fruits	Vegetables	Vegetables	Legumes	Roots and tubers
Carissa	African Medlars	Monkey Apple	African Eggplant	Egusi-Ito	Grass Pea (Pea <i>dhal</i> )	African Yam
Horned Melon	Aizen	Nara	Amaranth	Enset	Guar (String beans)	Anchote
Kei Apple	Chocolate Berries	Raisin Trees	Bitter leaf	Ethiopian Mustard	Ground beans (Jugo beans)	Guinea Yam
Marula	Custard Apples	Rubber Fruits	Bitter Melon	Fluted Pumpkin	Lablab	Potato Yam
Melon	Figs	Sour Plum	Baobab	Garden Cress	Locust Beans	Other Yams (Elephant yam)
Tamarind	Gemsbok Cucumber	Sugar Plums	Bologi	Gherkins	Mārama Bean	Hausa Potato
Watermelon	Gingerbread Plums	Sweet Detar	Bungu	Horned Melon (Kiwano)	Pigeon Pea	Sudan Potato
Ziziphus	Grapes	Tree Grapes	Bur Gherkin	Jilo	Sword Bean	Tiger Nut (Chufa)
Balanites (Desert Date)	Ikacina (False Yam)	Tree Strawberry	Celosia	Mock Tomato	Velvet Tamarind	Vigna Roots
Baobab	Imbe (African Mangosteen)	Velvet Tamarind	Cleome	Okra	Bambara Groundnut	-
Butter fruit (Africadon)	Milkwood	Water Berry	Monkey Orange	Ogunmo	Cowpea	-
-	-	Wild Plum	Crotalaria	Oyster Nut	-	-
-	-	Star Apples	Day flowers	Spirulina	-	-
-	-	-	Edible Flowers	Water Leaf	-	-
-	-	-	Edible Mushrooms	Edible trees	-	-

Source: National Research Council, 2006, *Lost crops of Africa: Volume II: Vegetables*, National Academies Press, Washington, DC

In his brief historical analysis of *Novelle Cuisine*, Beauge (2011) notes that French cuisine is no longer at the top of a pyramid but rather is an element of a network, with the state of the cuisine today and its ability for innovation taking precedence over the country of origin. The constant exchange of ideas, which disregards national boundaries is evident. A certain homogenisation may be seen, which is one of the features of globalisation in general, although food is today multidimensional in many different countries and regions of the world.

Can sub-Saharan cuisine ever reach the status of haute cuisine? Does African cuisine need to compete with European menus to be accepted worldwide? Why are the Eurocentric table manners considered a symbol of being civilised? Many Asian, Middle Eastern and African countries eat with fingers, which could be a taboo in many other countries! In a fine restaurant or a formal dining situation, even pizza is expected to be eaten with a knife and fork! What is decorum in one culture may not be acceptable in some communities. What about the social stigma associated with certain behaviours while eating such as the physiological process of burping and sneezing (Korr & Broussard 2004)? In the Muslim-Arab world, belching after a meal shows their appreciation, demonstrates that they enjoyed the meal and signals that they are full (Ajhays 2019).

Earlier observations made by Korr and Broussard (2004) serve as a foundation for hospitality and catering management students' critical analysis of contentious issues and can help them to create a three-dimensional understanding of food, culture, ethics, economics, and the environment. With team teaching and interdisciplinary teaching, students can gain knowledge of how 'facts' are developed in many disciplines and develop the ability to evaluate how those 'facts' are applied. The presence of a humanist approach encourages more self-awareness, enabling the pupils to comprehend how cultural influences affect food preferences and how foods affect cultural dynamics.

The implementation of sub-Saharan culinary heritage into university learning involves a multifaceted approach. Fostering sustainable diversity in higher education is not merely a moral choice; it is a necessity for achieving institutional excellence and promoting a diverse and inclusive society (Smith 2020). The curriculum integration includes a thorough review of existing courses in catering, hospitality, or food science, identifying points for integration, and the development of specialised modules dedicated to sub-Saharan culinary heritage. Faculty training is crucial, conducted through workshops to familiarise faculty members with sub-Saharan culinary traditions. Upgrading culinary laboratories ensures facilities support the preparation of sub-Saharan dishes. Cultural events, collaborations with local experts, student involvement, well-equipped libraries, diverse assessments, community engagement, and continuous evaluation contribute to a comprehensive and culturally enriched academic journey for students, fostering continuous improvement in sub-Saharan culinary education.

Bardolet-Puigdollers and Fusté-Forné (2023) suggest that sustainable food tourism may centre on examining the economic, environmental, and social contributions of cooking classes to local communities. In addition, there could be a focus on how these classes play a role in preserving and promoting culinary heritage. Exploring educational dimensions, fostering cultural exchange, and empowering local communities through cooking classes could offer valuable insights for informing the management and marketing strategies of food tourism. This includes considerations for planning and developing compelling food narratives and creating memorable experiences within the industry.

Decolonisation of the sub-Saharan curriculum in African universities involves all four components as depicted in Figure 1. The three dimensions of indigenous culinary resource mapping include culture, food, and geography and/or tourism. The elements of decolonisation of curriculum



**FIGURE 1:** Framework of sub-Saharan cuisine in university curriculum.

and their interrelationships can be taught with an itinerary of culinary mapping of African indigenous foods, cultural heritage and tourism factors integrated for interdisciplinary learning.

## Food

This consists of cuisine, culinary heritage, defining dishes identified as authentic and reflecting the regional cuisine using indigenous and local produce. It includes food events and activities such as themed food festivals and could include other festivals such as wine and beer festivals, cheese festival, tomato festival (La Tomatina) and food attractions such as farmer's market, flea market food stalls, food trucks and pop-up stalls with both indigenous ingredients and native dishes.

## Culture

The elements of culture include heritage, adornments, and decorations where beauty and traits are considered beautiful as they exist in nature; human characteristics and features considered to be beautiful, and the jewellery worn. Agricultural and utilitarian technologies consist of technologies associated with food, clothing, and shelter; African architecture- organisation and design of living spaces, textile, ceramic, metal working, agricultural, and food technologies of African culture. Other cultural aspects involve

arts and aesthetics – paintings and carvings, music and dance traditions, African symbols; ceremonies, festivals, and rituals, initiation rites; historical and cultural processes, and identity. The cosmology, spirituality, and religion comprise the concepts of ultimate reality, spiritual traditions; cosmogonies; traditional healers and healing. The cultural, regional, and biological derivations include geo-cultural foundations of contemporary beliefs and values, commonality in knowledge, beliefs, and valued behaviours shared among different cultural groups in Africa. Other aspects involve family, kinship and community, childrearing; socialisation and intergenerational culture, transmission; cultural continuity, enculturation (storytelling, proverbs, animal folk tales), as well as linguistic identities.

## Geography and tourism

This comprises land characteristics, soil, climate, topography, proximity, infrastructure, places and historic sites, tourism attractions, tourism routes and trails.

## Decolonisation

The dimensions vary widely including African worldview; Afrocentricity; African-centred thought, decolonisation of the mind; African-mixed race people as the subject of their reality; preservation of African cultural attributes, organisations, and associations, whose visions and activities



are focussed on the preservation of African cultural heritage, African cultural continuity and transmission.

Other important aspects include approaches to the study of African culture, research on the food culture of African indigenous people; impact on the food culture because of colonisation, foods and cooking techniques of indigenous communities (homogeneous food culture), on reconstruction of African cultural concepts; Eurocentric cultural hegemony in Africa, African ways of interpreting sciences and mathematics; technological knowledge, schooling and university education as well as educational policies and training of instructors and students.

## Conclusion

The integration of sub-Saharan cuisine into university curricula represents a crucial step in the broader framework of curriculum decolonisation. By acknowledging the significance of African culture and tradition in educational contexts, particularly in areas such as foodways, gastronomy tourism, and festivals, this initiative aims to celebrate African indigenous cuisine. Incorporating elements of food festivals and emphasising the richness of indigenous culinary arts in hospitality-related courses ensures a comprehensive exploration of sub-Saharan cuisine. This approach encourages a vibrant and inclusive academic journey, providing African students and scholars in Africa with a deeper understanding of their cultural heritage and promoting a more diverse and culturally sensitive educational experience.

Lecturers still have a lot to learn about the fundamental pedagogical theories that each academic department maintains. While working together to teach students about the ethics, ecology, and economics of food, educators are not completely aware of the many perspectives on the understanding of teaching and learning. The difficulties encountered can be overcome gradually. Academics need to support further research into the potential of team teaching on food and foodways to understand the decolonisation of cuisine. Such endeavours necessitate careful consideration of the educational policies of the universities, the cultural backgrounds of instructors and students, and course module descriptors (subject outline) and course contents. This will be rewarding for both students and communities in Africa.

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