

Cultural Factors Linked to the Gastronomy on the Saraguro Town

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Abstract

Almost forty thousand years ago, since ancestors settled in America, the climatic and ecological conditions have determined the availability of food resources. Nutritional adaptation of towns had been facing a great impact over the years. Thus, the food customs have been changing, and new eating habits have been imposing with the development of towns. In the Saraguro town, several indigenous communities are settled, which still retain some customs and food traditions. For this reason, this research aims to make an approach to the reality of the Saraguro population in order to identify which cultural factors influence food, and from this, to develop strategies that allow the recovery and revaluation of ancestral recipes in order to do not lost this ancestral, and heritage knowledge. The Saraguro culture is characterized by a great cultural wealth around the traditions, a unique gastronomy, customs that are characterized by maintaining a deep relationship with the elements of life.

Keywords: Food, Culture, Gastronomy, Nutrition, Saraguro.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Since our first ancestors populated America at least forty thousand years ago, climatic and ecological conditions have determined the availability of food resources, thereby conditioning the nutritional adaptation of the villages [1].

Over the year's food habits have been changing, and new eating habits are being imposed with the development of people [2].

Currently the influence and diversity of the food industry has imposed new eating habits in ancestral communities and people [3].

The alimentary customs of a town have particular characteristics according to the climate, type of soil and geography where the communities settle [4].

In the Saraguro town, there are several indigenous communities themselves that still preserve some customs and food traditions, it should be noted that

they are characterized by an exquisite and varied cuisine, based on ancestral products; for this reason, this article aims to make an approach to the reality of the Saraguro population to know the cultural factors that influence food.

The main contribution of this research is focused on the identification of the factors that influence the culture and food identity of the Saraguro people, and through these studies and analyzes through a time line it has been possible to know for sure how they have affected the customs habits the same that have undergone a process of transculturation and from this research it was also possible to establish strategies that safeguard the identity of the intangible heritage of these peoples, with the aim of being the historical legacy for future generations and these practices do not be forgotten.

II. STATE OF ART

2.1 Food assets

Food Heritage is not only related to the development of traditional dishes or drinks, but also to the products used as ingredients; Therefore, we talk about Natural and Cultural Heritage. The Natural Food Heritage refers to the native products with which the food is prepared, for example quinoa, corn, and mortiño. The preparation, knowledge, techniques and tradition -transmitted from generation to generation to prepare a dish, in addition to the dish itself, are considered Food Cultural Heritage [5].

2.2 Eating habits

According to [6]; eating habits are the expression of the food beliefs and traditions of a population and are linked to the geographical environment and the availability of food. The factors that condition them are economic, religious, psychological and pragmatic. Traditions and myths are determinants of these habits, and they intervene in the preferences and aversions that individuals manifest and play an important role in the preparation, distribution and service of food.

For the description of eating habits, [1] express “*The term eating habit expresses a set of customs that determines the behavior of man in relation to food. It*

includes from the way you select food to the way you eat it or serve it to people whose food is in your hands. Eating habits are the product of the interaction between culture and the environment, which are transmitted from one generation to another”.

2.3 Traditional food

Traditional cuisine is a fundamentally social art, with local and traditional characters, but modern society has managed to facilitate its elaboration, supported by the easy acquisition of raw materials that are sometimes grown thousands of kilometers away. It is important, in modern cuisine, this base of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The Saraguro population feeds mainly on the products they grow, such as grains, corn and vegetables [7].

The feeding is defined by 2 zones: high or cold zone, and hot zone; food production includes:

Upper area: mellocos, geese, mashua, corn, beans, beans, potatoes, peas, barley, wheat, long onion, cabbage, coriander, zambo, chard, achira, achogchas, lemon, blackberry, squash, parsley.

Hot zone: cassava, sweet potato, white carrot, lemon, orange, luma, orange, yellow and red guineo, custard apple, avocado, guavas and sugar cane [7].

In the figure 1 some products of Saraguro cousin are showed.

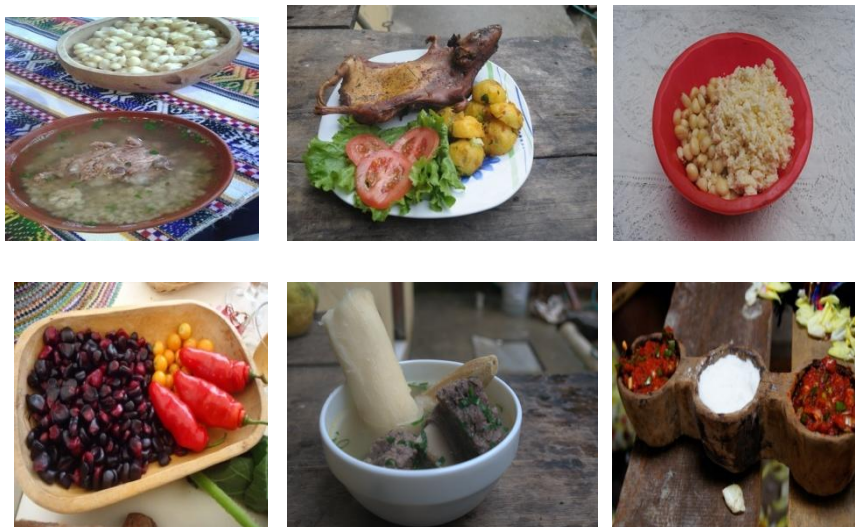


Fig. 1. Traditional food of Saraguro town

2.4 Ancestral Nutrition of the Saraguro population

[8] indicate that when talking about ancestral and contemporary nutrition, we refer tacitly to the customs or practices of each place or human group. These customs are transmitted from generation to generation and remain intact or combined with other customs, as human groups relate to other people belonging to different cultures.

They also indicate that as we have "*civilized*" and developed agriculture to provide a stable and superabundant food supply, our dietary intake has changed dramatically compared to that of our ancestral past. The genes we now have were acquired by those who were genetically adapted to survive with the ancestral diet. The "*survivors*" are believed to have "*thrifty genes*", a code hereditary that allowed the effective storage of limited food through its rapid conversion into fat.

Ancestral food has been replaced by fast and junk food, which is harmful to our body, it is also a social problem, which we must try to recover with the organisms responsible for the health of human beings, to maintain a healthy and adequate diet.

2.5 History and identity of the Saraguro ethnic group.

To understand the origin of the Saraguro ethnic group, we must analyze the Inca culture, because apparently the Saraguro people are descendants of the Mitimaes and arrive in Ecuador with the Inca conquest [8].

The Inca empire was founded in Cuzco-Peru, the Incas belonged to the Quichua race and knew how to overcome other tribes such as the collas that came from the shore of the Titicaca, so it is likely that these races would merge and give rise to the Mitimaes, elements of colonization and conquest.

The territories currently inhabited by the Saraguro were occupied by the Paltas, until 1450 Tupac-Yupanqui managed to submit to his devotion and obedience to the southern part of the Andean region it should be mentioned that the Paltas offered no resistance, were subjected to the Inca conquest and became part of the great empire.

The Inca conquest was accompanied by the installation of tribes from other regions, this confirms the presence of the Saraguro in this land. Over time the Paltas understood the value of their freedom and wanted to recover it by force, then Huayna-Capac son of Tupac-Yupanqui fell on them and killed them, in addition as revenge he takes thousands of Paltas from their territory and sent them to the provinces del Collao in Peru, and populated the territory of the current Saraguro people with the Mitimaes.

The Mitimaes were privileged and honored by the Incas because they were considered the noblest of the provinces, they were in charge of maintaining and strengthening the submission of the defeated peoples, taught them their customs, their religion and their language [9].

In the figure 2 Saraguro people are shown.



Fig 2.Saraguro People

III. METHODOLOGY

The research was based on a qualitative study, which according to [6]; defines it as a type of holistic research, since it encompasses the phenomenon as a whole and recursive, since the research design is emergent, it is being developed as the investigation progresses.

Likewise, it was developed in an exploratory-explanatory study because the reason for the food cultural loss of the Saraguro ethnic group was addressed, for which surveys, bibliographic compilation, which forms an initial knowledge base for development, were applied of this investigation, the explanatory nature allows to analyze in a real way, the results obtained through surveys and technical visits in situ, carried out; to establish the relationships and causes on the cultural factors linked to the food part of the locality language [12].

3.1 Steps of Qualitative Research.

1. Obtain the Information through: Interviews, Observations, Discussion Groups.
2. Transcribe and sort the data.
3. Categorize-Encode Connect categories. Interpret.
4. Validate findings.

5. Theorize

Elements.

1. Elements of quantitative research:
2. Its nature is descriptive.
3. Allows the researcher to "*predict*" consumer behavior.
4. Research methods include experiments and surveys.
5. The results are descriptive and can be generalized.

3.2 Survey

The survey is the data collection technique that uses as a tool a list of questions that are strongly structured and that collects information to be treated statistically, from a quantitative perspective.

The survey carried out consists of a total of 28

questions, which were asked in September and October 2016, through on-site visits, to the inhabitants of the parishes of Saraguro, Urdaneta, Celen's Paradise, Jungle Alegre and San Pablo de Tenta, it is worth mentioning that they worked with these parishes for the presence of the Saraguro population, giving us a total of 375 surveys [12].

To apply the surveys in the Saraguro town, the population is made up of young people (10-24 years), adults (25-49 years), and older adults (50-100 years) according to INEC 2010 data, specifically in the parishes Saraguro, Urdaneta, Selva Alegre, El Paraíso de Celen and San Pablo de Tenta, where the Saraguro population resides.

To determine the sample of research applied in surveys, stratified sampling with proportional affixation is used, which is performed in cases where the universe is not homogeneous, so we have:

$$n = \frac{Nz^2pq}{d^2(N-1) + Z^2pq}$$

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$$n = \frac{15.976 \times 1,96^2 \times 0,5 \times 0,5}{0,05^2(15.976 - 1) + 1,96^2 \times 0,5 \times 0,5}$$

$$n = \frac{15.343,35}{40.8979}$$

$$n = 375[12].$$

In the table 1 the data distribution of surveys is shown.

Table 1. Data Distribution of Surveys

Place	People	% people	Surveys
El Paraíso de Celen.	1.961	12,27%	46
San Pablo de Tenta.	2.801	17,53%	66
Saraguro.	6.991	43,75%	164
Selva Alegre.	1.376	8,61%	32
Urdaneta.(Paquishapa)	2.847	17,82%	67

TOTAL	15976	100%	375
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3.3 Evidence of results

Once the information of the interviews and surveys of the inhabitants of the parishes of the Saraguro town is obtained, the analysis and presentation of results are carried out with the objective of summarizing the most important aspects of the study.

To explain the results in a better way, we divided the information into two parts, on the one hand, the information obtained from the interviews and on the other, the surveys.

In the case of interviews, the MAXQDA12 tool is used, that facilitates the interpretation of data

3.4 MAXQDA12

The MAXQDA12 is a research program for qualitative data that has the following characteristics:

1. Manage data
2. Encode data
3. Analyze data
4. Organize theory and memos
5. Allows research with mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative)
6. It allows you to work in a team by being able to merge two projects into one.
7. Visualize results through different tools.
8. Import data from the social network twitter[10]

The interviews were recorded in a recorder, later transcribed into a word document, and then introduced into the MAXQDA12 software where the coding system began, which allowed generating codes that facilitated the analysis of the information. The statistical program SPSS it was used to analyze the surveys.

IBM SPSS Statistics Base is statistical analysis software used to perform the analytical process from start to finish. It is easy to use and includes a wide range of procedures and techniques to help you

increase revenue, overcome competition, conduct research and make better decisions [11].

The surveys were recorded manually, and then entered into the statistical program, generating variables to then be able to present the information graphically.

IV. RESULTS

Once the analysis of the cultural factors linked to the food part of the population of the Saraguro town is concluded, the most important aspects of the investigation are considered appropriate:

1. Within the food habits of the community we can affirm that their diet is based on: green grains, dried beans, tubers, foods such as corn, beans, peas, wheat, barley, cassava, carrots, and potatoes stand out.
2. Regarding the loss of food habits, the majority of respondents agreed that if several food habits have been lost, this is due to factors such as: imposition of new products based on chemicals, migration of people from rural areas to urban area, and another important factor is that the land no longer produces as before.
3. To recover these customs, the interviewees propose: to recultivate the ancestral products, train people to know about the nutritional values of these foods and raise awareness in youth to value the ancestral cuisine of the Saraguro ethnic group.
4. The families of the community of the Saraguro people, have as production unit the farm, place where they grow food for family consumption but also for the supply of some local markets, in addition to the land preparation process the yunta, and Plowing machine is already owned or rented and fertilizer uses natural and chemical fertilizer.
5. When talking about the food recipes made in the community, it can be seen that corn, potatoes, zambo and wheat are the main products used to prepare the typical dishes of the community, such as: corn with guinea pig , potato with guinea pig, tamales, potato locro accompanied by pepper, vegetable soup, and

wheat soup.

6. Regarding medicinal foods, the inhabitants of the communities' mention: that some ancestral plants have healing properties, herbs such as melasa, chamomile, lemongrass, begonia, plantain, etc. stand out.

7. When talking about the main festivals that are celebrated in the communities, we can verify that the communities celebrate the Andean worldview festivities: the Raymis, as for example in Inti Raymi, KapakRaymi, PawkarRaymi and the KullaRaymi, which coincide with the Christmas holidays, Corpus Christi, Easter, therefore in the Canton indigenous and mestizos join to celebrate the festivities.

8. Each party is different therefore the food served for each occasion is different for example in the Inti Raymi, cattle are peeled and broth is made with cassava and cabbage to provide visitors; In the PawkarRaymi the Pinzhi is prepared, which is the typical Saraguro dish, it consists of a large basket of peeled mote, a source of rice, guinea pig, bread and drink the chicha de jora.

9. It was also investigated if new generations have learned the preparation of typical dishes, however the answers were mostly no, so it can be seen that customs are being

10. Another important factor investigated is the consumption of alcoholic beverages at celebrations or special occasions; it was determined that the majority of respondents do consume alcoholic beverages, when inquiring about the reason they state that it is customary.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The food customs of the Saraguro people are based on the consumption of green, and dried grains (corn, peas, wheat, beans, beans), and tubers (potato, carrot, melloco, goose and mashua), which are used for the realization of ancestral recipes.

The food practices are determined by the ancestral customs, and traditions of the Saraguro people, the ancestral products have high nutritional values, however, at present the new generations are no

longer dedicated to cultivating the land and sowing these products, in addition to the way of feeding it has changed due to the introduction of new products made from chemicals, and young people do not know how to prepare ancestral recipes.

Another cultural factors such as the consumption of alcoholic beverages, have also changed so that the ancestors did not consume alcohol, due to their beliefs while at present young people are more liberal, as far as the Quichua language it was observed

that is being lost, this due to the lack of interest on the part of the new generations.

lost.

In relation to the information collected from the surveys, it can be mentioned that the person in charge of food purchases in the family is the mother, that the main characteristic that influences when making purchases is the price, market purchases are usually made weekly in a neighborhood store; The main products that make up the family basket are dairy products: milk, yogurt, cheese; meat guinea pig, green dried beans, corn, and peas.

Regarding the language, it is determined that the majority of respondents speak only Spanish, so it can be concluded that the Quichua language of the Saraguro ethnic group is being lost, since the new generations are not interested in speaking the language their mother language.

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