

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Indonesia is a country whose characteristic is almost inseparable from spices and herbs (Mapussa, 2019). Indonesian cuisine encompasses a wide array of regional specialties, each characterized by its unique blend of spices. It is not uncommon for food processing processes to also utilize this spice blend, resulting in the creation of dishes that are characteristic of each region (Yuniastari & Putri, 2019). One of the most popular dish known for its complex and diverse blend of spices is *Coto Makassar* from South Sulawesi region. *Coto Mangkasara* or *Coto Makassar* is one of Makassar's traditional foods since the 16th century which has a characteristic raw material using 40 kinds of spices and sauce using ground peanuts (Lestari et al., 2023).

The preparation of authentic *Coto Makassar* requires a harmonious blend of various spices such as ginger, galangal, lemongrass, turmeric, and a myriad of other ingredients, meticulously combined to achieve its distinctive savory broth. However, despite its widespread acclaim, preparing *Coto Makassar* from scratch can be time-consuming and requires access to a diverse array of spices, which may not always be readily available to consumers. Other than that, the process of sourcing, measuring, and blending a multitude of spices can be daunting and time-consuming, often requiring access to specialty stores and knowledge of traditional recipes. According to Mapussa (2019), the busyness level of society is increasing day by day and they desire everything in instant form, including their need for spices. Recognizing the growing demand for convenient yet authentic culinary experiences, there exists an opportunity to introduce a solution that encapsulates the essence of *Coto Makassar* while offering ease of preparation.

In recent years, the culinary world has witnessed the rise of convenience-driven solutions, particularly exemplified by the Japanese curry roux. This pre-packaged blend of spices and thickening agents has revolutionized the way people prepare Japanese curry, offering simplicity and consistency without compromising on flavor. Inspired by this innovative approach, there emerges an opportunity to introduce a similar concept to the realm of Indonesian cuisine, specifically tailored for *Coto Makassar*. The concept of a *Coto Makassar* spice mix block draws upon the convenience and accessibility of Japanese curry roux while honoring the rich culinary heritage of Indonesia. Emergence of convenient food products changed people's lifestyle as well as provide a high and new quality of convenient food products to them which saves their time as well as energy (Zacharia, 2019).

The authentic taste of *Coto Makassar* largely relies on the spice mix itself, which is carefully crafted to achieve the perfect balance of flavors. The key aromatic ingredients typically include shallots, garlic, galangal, ginger, lemongrass and a variety of spices such as coriander, cumin, and candlenut, also ground peanuts. To resemble the Japanese curry roux, this version of spice mix block use beef tallow as a binding agent that helps hold the spices together and add a distinct beef flavor. In addition to the ingredients, the method of preparation also contributes significantly to the dish's authenticity and depth of flavor. The spices and aromatics are ground into a fine paste, then cooked with beef tallow and ground peanuts before it's going to be shaped in cube molds and dehydrate to extend the shelf life. The drying method is quite effective for food ingredients because, in addition to extending shelf life, the drying process can also facilitate transportation, as the volume of the material has already decreased during the drying process (Tambunan et al., 2017). This product seeks to explore the feasibility and potential market viability of introducing a pre-packaged *Coto Makassar* spice mix block. By meticulously selecting and blending high-quality spices in precise proportions, this product aims to empower consumers to recreate the authentic taste of *Coto Makassar* in their own kitchens effortlessly.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are following below:

1. To preserve and promote the culinary heritage of South Sulawesi by investigating and documenting the traditional recipe and preparation methods of *Coto Makassar* spice mix.
2. In order to enhance convenience, the development of *Coto Makassar* spice mix block product offers convenience and ease of use for consumers, allowing them to recreate the authentic flavors of *Coto Makassar* with minimal preparation time and effort.
3. To analyze the composition and proportions of spices in the *Coto Makassar* spice mix to find the standardized flavor profile, ensuring consistency and authenticity in every batch of the spice mix block product.