



The Role of Taste Image And Popularity of The Taliwang Bersaudara Chicken Restaurant In South Jakarta As The Culinary Identity Of Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara

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Abstract:

Background. The shift of traditional food to urban environments is a clear example of cultural interaction in the modern era. A Lombok specialty, Ayam Taliwang Bersaudara (also known as Ayam Taliwang Brothers in South Jakarta), remains a popular choice among Jakartans.

Aims. The purpose of this study was to examine how the flavor and popularity of Ayam Taliwang Bersaudara Restaurant contribute to Lombok's culinary identity, as well as the adaptation strategies used to remain authentic and relevant in the market.

Methods. Qualitative descriptive data collection methods used observation, documentation, and in-depth interviews. A qualitative SWOT analysis was used to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats affecting the restaurant's sustainability.

Result. The use of Lombok raw materials and traditional cooking methods maintains the authentic flavor, according to the study. The level of spiciness and effective word-of-mouth approach are tailored to the market. The balance between contextual innovation and cultural preservation is crucial for the restaurant's success.

Conclusion. The results indicate that maintaining the sustainability of traditional culinary in urban areas requires collaboration between managers, the community, and the government.

Keywords: Taliwang Chicken, Taste, Authenticity, Culinary Identity, SWOT Strategy, Urban Gastronomy.



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INTRODUCTION

Culinary history bears witness to Indonesia's rich culinary heritage throughout its long history. It reflects numerous stories related to the history, social, and cultural fabric of a region's people. Indonesia's tourism industry is undergoing a significant transformation,

particularly in the gastronomy sector, which is a key attraction at many destinations. Ministry of Tourism data indicate that the culinary sector accounts for 30% of total tourist spending in the tourism economy. In this context, traditional regional foods face both challenges and opportunities as they transition to metropolitan areas. Jakarta, as an economic and cultural hub, presents both a competitive arena and an opportunity for regional cuisine to gain wider recognition.

One regional culinary tradition experiencing this phenomenon is Ayam Taliwang, a specialty dish from Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. Ayam Taliwang is a dish made from free-range chicken grilled with a special seasoning of cayenne pepper, shallots, garlic, shrimp paste, tomatoes, palm sugar, galangal, salt, and lime juice, resulting in a distinctive spicy and savory flavor (Liputan6, 2024). This strong flavor characteristic makes it an authentic representation of the taste of the people of Lombok. The development of the Ayam Taliwang culinary tradition in Lombok is closely related to the existence of the Karang Taliwang community in Cakranegara District, Mataram City, who were the first pioneers in introducing this culinary dish and explained that traditional culinary dishes such as Ayam Taliwang serve as cultural symbols that strengthen the identity of their original community while preserving culture through intercultural communication (Ramdhani et al., 2024).

Kurniansah and Rojabi (2023) emphasized that local culinary delights, such as Ayam Taliwang, have significant potential as a tourist attraction, offering not only delicious flavors but also a unique cultural experience. This phenomenon demonstrates that, despite being outside its native region, Ayam Taliwang maintains its appeal through its unique flavor and inherent cultural values.

These findings highlight the importance of preserving the flavors and cultural values of culinary delights when they are introduced to new environments, such as large cities like Jakarta. The growing popularity of traditional culinary delights in the capital presents a crucial opportunity to examine the interplay between preserving cultural authenticity and adapting to contemporary consumer tastes. Ayam Taliwang's presence in Jakarta is not merely a matter of serving food, but also a means of cultural communication, marking the transition of culinary culture from Lombok to the big city.

Previous research has addressed the preservation of traditional culinary traditions within the context of their regions of origin, but has not explored in depth the dynamics of culinary cultural migration to metropolitan areas with distinct socio-cultural characteristics. Unlike this study, which specifically examines the phenomenon of culinary cultural

migration from Lombok to Jakarta as a form of cultural mobility within the context of urbanization, this study focuses on culinary cultural preservation within the local context and inter-ethnic acculturation in the NTB region. This contrasts sharply with previous research, which focused on Jakarta, with its distinct socio-cultural dynamics. Popularity was added as an indicator of success, and this study focuses on how traditional foods remain relevant to modern consumer preferences without sacrificing authentic quality.

Therefore, this study not only examines how the taste of Ayam Taliwang is maintained but also identifies the factors influencing its popularity in the Jakarta area. This offers a fresh perspective on the dynamics of the shift and adaptation of Indonesian culinary culture during the era of globalization.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Culinary as a National Identity

Traditional cuisine represents the identity and characteristics of a region, reflecting the cultural richness of the local community.(Rajan, 2023). According to Qurbatusifa in(Sofiyanita et al., nd). Traditional foods originate from various regions in Indonesia. These foods are passed down through generations, giving them their own unique characteristics and flavors. Each region boasts a diverse array of traditional dishes.

Traditional food has three important dimensions: locality, time, and space. The locality dimension refers to the community groups that enjoy the food and the food's place in people's lives (Almansouri et al., 2021).

(Hakim & Hamidah, 2021) explained that traditional food plays a crucial role in tourism as a component that shapes a destination's unique image. Culinary arts account for nearly a third of global tourist spending, influenced by geographic, historical, and cultural factors, which can provide memorable experiences and authentic value to those who enjoy them. This is in line with(Parantika & Jenica, 2022). This suggests that traditional food can be a unique attraction and leave a lasting impression on both domestic and international visitors.

History and Characteristics of Taliwang Chicken

The development of the culinary tradition of Ayam Taliwang in Lombok is closely related to the existence of the Karang Taliwang community in Cakranegara District, Mataram City, West Nusa Tenggara Province. According to historical records, the area

known as Taliwang existed when the Majapahit Kingdom ruled most of the Indonesian archipelago. This is proven by the mention of the name Taliwang in the *Negarakertagama* book. This prose describes the life of the people of the Majapahit Kingdom, written by Empu Prapanca. According to the book, Taliwang was a region located east of the island of Java. During the reign of King Hayam Wuruk, between 1350 and 1389, Majapahit controlled the areas of Taliwang, Samawa, Dampo, Sapi (Sape), Sangyang Api (Mountain of Fire), Seram (Seran), Hutan (Utan), Kedali (Buru), Gurun (Gorong), Lombok Mira (West Lombok), Saksak (East Lombok), and Timor. Currently, these areas in western Sumbawa are called Utan, Kedali, Taliwang, and Siren or Seteluk. (Ramdhani et al., 2024).

(Insanaputra, 2021) Stated that the attraction of Taliwang chicken lies in the spicy, spiced taste of the spices, and also that the chicken used is a young village chicken.

According to Sudarma in (Achmad Taufiq et al., 2023) Because Taliwang chicken is so popular among the local community, especially in the surrounding area, it has become a highly sought-after commodity. Its distinctive characteristics have enabled it to develop a diverse customer base, ranging from ordinary individuals to government officials. Initially, Taliwang chicken was served simply with rice and *beberuk* (a type of rice paste). This is a typical Lombok chili sauce made from sliced long beans and raw eggplant, mixed with chili, shrimp paste, salt, and tomato.

However, with market developments, the dish evolved into *Pelecing Kangkung*. This is a type of water spinach native to Lombok that is boiled and then tossed with a tomato sauce made from a mixture of cayenne pepper, salt, shrimp paste, and tomatoes. *Pelecing kangkung* is usually mixed with bean sprouts (or *togedo* and fried peanuts) to reduce the spiciness.

Gastronomy in influencing consumers

(Wachyuni et al., 2021) Identified seven variables that shape the gastronomic experience of tourists, in order of highest level of impression as follows:

1. Authenticity: Tourists prefer food with an original and authentic taste.
2. Sociability: Food as a tool for social interaction, tourists tend to share experiences through social media.
3. Emotions: Feelings of pleasure and satisfaction that encourage repeat visits
4. Deliberate & Incidental Gastro-tourist: Specific motivations for culinary tourism
5. Travel stages: Planning and satisfaction of a gastronomic trip

6. Foodie risk-taking: The courage to try new culinary delights
7. Interdependent co-created tourist-host relationship: Good relationships with employees and feedback

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(Pradini et al., 2024) The book "Management of Marine Tourism" explains that products or brands easily influence millennials, prefer social activities, and actively use social media as a source of information. Millennials' primary motivation for culinary tourism is to refresh themselves from their busy work routines.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method, aiming to gain an in-depth understanding of consumer experiences, perceptions, and opinions, while also assessing the restaurant's position as a representative of Lombok's culinary scene in Jakarta. A qualitative approach was chosen because it emphasizes contextual understanding and subjective meanings provided by informants (Moleong, 2019). The descriptive strategy was employed to explore the taste and popularity of Ayam Taliwang Bersaudara as a culinary identity of Lombok.

The research location was Ayam Taliwang Restaurant Bersaudara in South Jakarta, chosen based on its popularity and ability to represent Lombok's culinary specialties. In qualitative research, the researcher acted as the primary instrument, interacting directly with informants. Data collection was conducted using triangulation, combining in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation (Moleong, 2019).

In-depth interviews were used to gather detailed information regarding informants' perceptions of Ayam Taliwang's taste and popularity. The questions were open-ended and flexible, allowing informants to share their experiences and opinions freely. Observations included monitoring the food serving process, observing restaurant activities, and analyzing customer interactions with the menu. Documentation, in the form of photographs and field notes, supported the validity of the interview and observation data. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, consisting of employees and several customers who could assess the taste and reasons for choosing the menu. Informant selection was based on experience and knowledge relevant to the research topic.

Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative SWOT analysis, as guided by Sugiyono (2017). This analysis evaluates the restaurant's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, drawing on interviews, observations, and documentation. The qualitative SWOT approach not only describes the restaurant's current condition but also emphasizes a deep understanding of the social context and experiences of the informants, and helps assess the internal and external factors that influence the restaurant's strategic position as a Lombok culinary icon in Jakarta.

The results of the analysis are presented in the form of a descriptive narrative, so that readers can understand the perceptions, experiences, and factors that influence the restaurant's position, as well as the potential for development and strategies that can be implemented to maintain or enhance its role as a culinary representation of Lombok.

DISCUSSION

Interviews with informants suggest that this restaurant preserves the authenticity of Lombok's ingredients and traditional cooking methods. However, the spiciness level is adjusted to make it more palatable to Jakarta residents. This demonstrates the dialectic between authenticity and adaptation.

Based on interviews with managers and consumers, a SWOT analysis can be compiled to describe the internal and external context of the shift in Ayam Taliwang's culinary culture from Lombok to Jakarta. This analysis aims to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced in maintaining its taste and popularity in a multicultural urban environment. The findings from this analysis will then serve as a foundation for understanding the dynamics of the shift and adaptation of Indonesian culinary culture in the era of globalization.

Internal	Strength <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The authenticity of the typical Lombok taste is achieved with the use of free-range chicken and traditional spices that are perfectly absorbed. 2. Operational experience since 1998 has built a reputation and consumer trust in Jakarta. 3. Powerful organic word-of-mouth as the primary mechanism for building popularity. 4. The combination of the menu with plecing kangkung creates a balance of taste and a complete culinary identity. 5. Commitment to cultural preservation through recipes and processing techniques passed down through generations 	Weakness <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Limited operational human resources (4 employees) affect the consistency of taste. 2. Dependence on raw material deliveries from Lombok poses the risk of logistical constraints. 3. The lack of presence and responsiveness on digital platforms limits the reach of the youth market. 4. Small business scale with simple operational systems limits expansion capacity 5. The challenge of adapting tastes between Lombok and Jakarta consumers
External	Opportunity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The increasing interest of urban Jakarta residents in traditional Indonesian cuisine. 2. Participation in culinary events has proven effective in increasing visibility and brand awareness. 3. The market segment of Lombok migrants who need culinary nostalgia from their hometown. 4. Potential as a promotional medium for Lombok tourism through authentic culinary experiences 5. High consumer loyalty with willingness to recommend to social networks 	Threat <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tight competition with mainstream grilled chicken restaurants and other regional culinary delights in Jakarta. 2. A shift in preferences among younger consumers favoring restaurants with a strong digital presence. 3. The risk of losing authenticity due to the pressure of excessive adaptation to Jakarta's tastes. 4. Slower word-of-mouth reliance compared to competitors' digital promotion strategies. 5. Potential disruption to raw material supply from Lombok due to external factors (weather, logistics).

	6. Positive value perception towards reasonable prices for authentic quality	
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CONCLUSION

After conducting a thorough study of how the flavors and popularity of Ayam Taliwang Bersaudara Restaurant in South Jakarta serve as a culinary representation of Lombok in Jakarta, it can be concluded that this restaurant has successfully implemented the idea of translating traditional culinary culture into the multicultural environment of Jakarta. Since its establishment in 1998, this restaurant has been dedicated to preserving authentic flavors while adapting to the city's evolving lifestyle. However, many structural and operational issues remain that hinder its implementation, particularly those related to human resources and a limited digital presence.

Research confirms that the success of culinary cultural transfer is determined not only by the availability of authentic ingredients from the region of origin but also by the quality of strategic adaptation to local consumer preferences, organic word-of-mouth support, and positive perceptions of value, which serve as social capital for business sustainability. Conversely, a more organized and participatory strategic approach must be employed to address challenges such as labor shortages, reliance on raw materials from Lombok, and low digital innovation.

According to an analysis of popularity mechanisms, word-of-mouth and customer loyalty are effective, but a sustainable digital marketing strategy does not match either. Success hinges on the combination of authentic flavors through the use of free-range chicken and authentic Lombok spices, as well as the adjustment of spiciness and presentation with plecing kangkung (a type of spinach salad). Furthermore, the restaurant's appeal as a representation of cultural interaction is reinforced by emotional elements such as memories for visitors to Lombok and curiosity for customers not from Lombok.

This finding supports Wachyuni's theory of authenticity in gastronomy.(Preetha & Lazarus, 2024) Which states that authenticity stems not only from ingredients and recipes, but also from cultural values that are maintained amidst changing social contexts. Furthermore, traditional foods help communicate between social identities, allowing the originating and receiving communities to exchange meaning and understand each other.(Romadloni, 2025).

From the results of the research and SWOT analysis, four main groups of strategies were formulated to maintain sustainability and expand the existence of the Taliwang Brothers chicken in the urban market:

SO Strategy (Strengths-Opportunities):

Optimizing internal strengths to take advantage of external opportunities.

1. Digital storytelling of Lombok culture: Building a narrative of the history and philosophy of Ayam Taliwang on social media to strengthen brand awareness and attract the millennial generation.
2. Collaboration with national culinary promotion programs: Actively participate in activities such as the Indonesian culinary festival or Indonesia spice up the world.
3. Gastronomic tourism package development: Presenting the “Taste of Lombok in Jakarta” experience in collaboration with the tourism community and MSMEs.
4. Standardization of product quality for branch expansion: Developing SOPs for ingredients and spices to ensure consistency of taste is maintained at each branch.

WO Strategy (Weakness-Opportunity):

1. Digitalization of promotions and ordering systems: Optimizing the use of digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and GoFood to expand market reach.
2. Recruitment and training of new employees: Conducting Lombok culinary training for local employees to maintain taste standards.
3. Contextual menu diversification: Offering two authentic and moderate flavor variants to suit urban consumer preferences without changing the original character.
4. Raw material partnership with West Java suppliers: Reducing supply risks from Lombok without compromising quality.

ST (Strength-Threat) Strategy:

1. Establishing position as culinary heritage: Applying for cultural heritage certification from the Tourism Office to strengthen brand image.
2. Cultural value-based customer loyalty program: Forming a “Sahabat Taliwang” customer community to increase customer retention.
3. Collaboration with fellow regional culinary actors: Forming a traditional Jakarta culinary association to face competition with modern brands.
4. Cultural awareness campaign: Raising the slogan “Eat while Preserving Culture” in every promotional activity.

WT (Weakness) Strategy:

1. Modernization of management and operational systems: Adopting point of sale (POS) systems and inventory monitoring to maintain efficiency.
2. Raw material supply contingency plan: Prepare alternative backup suppliers and independent logistics systems to reduce geographical dependency.
3. Improvement of service quality and restaurant atmosphere: Focus on customer experience to maintain differentiation advantage from mainstream restaurants.
4. Crisis and reputation communication strategy: Building proactive communication on social media to maintain public trust in the brand.

IMPLICATION

This research significantly benefits the academic world, society, nation, and state. It demonstrates how traditional culinary culture can be transformed into a multicultural urban environment, broadening the horizons of tourism research, particularly gastronomy, in Indonesia. Specifically, research on intercultural communication, traditional culinary management, and Indonesian culinary sustainability strategies is enriched by findings related to the balance between authenticity and contextual adaptation. Furthermore, the qualitative SWOT approach offers an alternative methodology that can be used in similar research in tourism, culture, and communication.

For the public, this research raises awareness that food is not just for consumption; it is also a way to promote cultural identity and preserve local values. The community is expected to actively contribute to preserving authentic flavors while innovating in line with current developments. Furthermore, the results of this study can serve as a guide for MSMEs and traditional culinary entrepreneurs to develop competitive products while preserving their local identity and cultural values.

This research demonstrates that preserving traditional culinary delights plays a crucial role in strengthening Indonesia's cultural diplomacy worldwide. Using these findings, the government can expand the implementation of strategic initiatives such as "Indonesia Spice Up the World," which utilizes traditional culinary delights to promote tourism and enhance national pride. The success of the Ayam Taliwang brothers can also serve as inspiration for other regions to develop local culinary identities based on local cultural values while remaining globally competitive.

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