



Digitalization Strategies and Innovation in Traditional Cuisine: Efforts to Enhance the Competitiveness of Nasi Jamblang in the Creative Economy Era

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Abstract

This study examines the role of digitalization strategies and innovation practices in strengthening the competitiveness of Nasi Jamblang as a traditional culinary product within the contemporary creative economy era. The research employed an empirical qualitative design using descriptive analysis based on observations, in depth interviews, and documentation collected from Nasi Jamblang culinary enterprises, including Mang Darma restaurant in Bandung. The findings indicate that digital adaptation has contributed to broader market accessibility and improved business visibility, although the implementation remains uneven due to limited technological capability and managerial experience among several business actors. Innovation practices were reflected through product diversification, adaptive service improvement, branding enhancement, and operational transformation that maintained traditional culinary authenticity while responding to changing market demands. The study also reveals that cultural sustainability plays a crucial role in preserving Nasi Jamblang as a socio cultural identity and creative economy asset connected to gastronomic tourism and regional development. The integration of innovation, cultural preservation, and adaptive entrepreneurship strengthens the long term sustainability and competitiveness of traditional cuisine within increasingly dynamic economic environments.

Keywords : *Digitalization, Culinary Innovation, Creative Economy, Cultural Sustainability, Nasi Jamblang.*



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INTRODUCTION

The acceleration of digital transformation within the global creative economy has fundamentally reshaped patterns of production, distribution, and consumption in the culinary sector, particularly through the expansion of platform based markets, social media communication, and digitally mediated consumer experiences that increasingly privilege visibility, convenience, and symbolic branding over traditional modes of cultural transmission. In many developing countries, traditional cuisine is no longer positioned merely as a subsistence based cultural artifact, but rather as an economic resource embedded within tourism, creative industries, and local identity construction. The expansion of Industry 4.0 has intensified the need for small and medium enterprises to adapt their business strategies toward digital entrepreneurship and innovation driven competitiveness, particularly in sectors strongly associated with local cultural heritage (Sudirman, 2025). Recent discussions on the creative economy further emphasize that digital transformation creates both opportunities and structural vulnerabilities for local culinary industries because market expansion through technology often occurs simultaneously with the erosion of cultural authenticity and declining intergenerational attachment to traditional foods (Wibowo et al., 2024). Within this changing landscape, Indonesian traditional cuisine faces increasing pressure to remain relevant among younger consumers whose preferences are heavily influenced by globalized food culture, visual consumption trends, and instant service systems promoted through digital ecosystems.

Contemporary scholarship increasingly recognizes traditional cuisine not only as a commercial commodity but also as a socio cultural symbol that reflects collective identity, local wisdom, and historical continuity within Indonesian society. Studies concerning Indonesian culinary heritage argue that traditional foods function as cultural representations that preserve social memory and reinforce

communal belonging amidst rapid modernization processes (Nadra et al., 2025). Parallel research in tourism and creative economy development demonstrates that local wisdom embedded in culinary traditions possesses significant strategic value for regional economic sustainability when integrated with innovation oriented tourism models and digital branding strategies (Zaini & Ismail, 2024). In communication studies, social media has been identified as a powerful instrument for transforming local culinary products into competitive cultural narratives capable of attracting younger audiences through visual storytelling, participatory interaction, and algorithmic dissemination (Widjanarko et al., 2024). Research focusing on culinary industries in Cirebon similarly reveals that traditional food enterprises are increasingly compelled to adopt adaptive business models involving digital promotion, service modernization, and product diversification in response to market disruption and shifting consumer behavior (Malau et al., 2024). Despite these advances, the existing literature tends to frame digitalization primarily as a technical marketing mechanism rather than as a broader socio cultural transformation that reconfigures the relationship between tradition, consumption, and economic survival.

A critical examination of previous studies reveals several conceptual and empirical limitations that hinder a deeper understanding of how traditional culinary businesses negotiate digital transformation while maintaining cultural authenticity. Existing research frequently isolates discussions of innovation, digital marketing, tourism, and cultural preservation into separate analytical categories, resulting in fragmented interpretations that fail to explain how these dimensions interact simultaneously within the operational realities of traditional food enterprises. Studies on digital entrepreneurship generally prioritize technological efficiency and business scalability without sufficiently addressing the cultural tensions experienced by traditional culinary actors attempting to modernize heritage based products (Sudirman, 2025). Research on creative economy development often emphasizes macroeconomic opportunities while paying limited attention to localized culinary practices and everyday adaptation strategies among small business owners (Wibowo et al., 2024). Meanwhile, communication centered analyses of social media promotion predominantly examine audience engagement and branding effectiveness without critically interrogating whether digital representation alters the cultural meaning and authenticity of traditional cuisine itself (Widjanarko et al., 2024). Empirical investigations concerning Cirebon culinary industries remain largely descriptive and insufficiently explore how digitalization influences long term competitiveness, intergenerational consumption patterns, and innovation trajectories within specific traditional foods such as Nasi Jamblang (Malau et al., 2024).

These unresolved issues carry significant scientific and practical implications because the weakening position of traditional cuisine among younger generations threatens not only the sustainability of local culinary enterprises but also the continuity of intangible cultural heritage embedded within regional food practices. The decline of interest toward traditional foods among digitally oriented consumers reflects a broader transformation in cultural consumption where value is increasingly determined by speed, aesthetics, accessibility, and online visibility rather than historical significance or communal meaning. Within the context of the Indonesian creative economy, this condition creates an urgent need to understand how digitalization can function not merely as a promotional tool but as a strategic mechanism capable of reconstructing the relevance of traditional cuisine within contemporary lifestyles. The urgency becomes more pronounced in the case of Nasi Jamblang because this culinary tradition embodies strong historical narratives, local identity, and symbolic cultural practices associated with Cirebon society, while simultaneously confronting competitive pressures from modern food industries and standardized digital food markets. Failure to develop adaptive innovation strategies risks reducing traditional cuisine into nostalgic symbolism disconnected from actual consumer practices, ultimately weakening its economic viability and cultural transmission across generations.

Positioned within this scholarly and practical context, the present study seeks to bridge the fragmented discourse surrounding digitalization, innovation, and cultural sustainability by examining Nasi Jamblang as both a creative economic product and a socio cultural heritage practice undergoing transformation in the digital era. Rather than treating digital adaptation solely as an operational adjustment, this research conceptualizes digitalization as a multidimensional process involving shifts in consumer interaction, symbolic representation, market positioning, and culinary innovation. The study advances previous literature by integrating perspectives from digital entrepreneurship, creative

economy studies, socio cultural food analysis, and strategic communication into a unified analytical framework capable of explaining how traditional culinary enterprises negotiate continuity and change simultaneously. Through this approach, Nasi Jamblang is not understood merely as a regional food commodity, but as a dynamic cultural entity whose competitiveness depends upon its ability to reinterpret traditional values within digitally mediated consumption environments. Such positioning allows the study to contribute to broader debates concerning the sustainability of heritage based industries in rapidly transforming economies while also providing a localized understanding of digital adaptation within Indonesian traditional cuisine.

This study aims to analyze the strategies of digitalization and innovation employed in the development of Nasi Jamblang as a traditional culinary product within the contemporary creative economy era, with particular attention to how these strategies influence competitiveness, consumer engagement, and cultural sustainability among younger generations. The research contributes theoretically by constructing an integrative perspective that connects digital transformation, culinary innovation, and cultural preservation within the context of traditional food enterprises, an area that remains insufficiently theorized in current scholarship. Methodologically, the study contributes through the use of a qualitative descriptive approach combining literature analysis and direct engagement with culinary business actors, enabling a more contextualized understanding of how traditional food enterprises experience and negotiate digital change in everyday practice.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed an empirical qualitative research design using a descriptive approach to investigate digitalization strategies and innovation practices in the development of Nasi Jamblang within the contemporary creative economy context. The empirical orientation was selected because the research relied on direct field data obtained from observations and in depth interviews with culinary business actors involved in the production, marketing, and management of Nasi Jamblang enterprises. The study was conducted in several Nasi Jamblang culinary businesses, including the Mang Darma restaurant in Bandung, which was selected purposively due to its long operational experience and active adaptation toward digital business practices. Participants consisted of business owners, consumers, and supporting actors relevant to the preservation and commercialization of traditional cuisine. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that participants possessed sufficient experiential knowledge regarding culinary innovation, consumer behavior, and the implementation of digital platforms in traditional food businesses. Data collection techniques included direct observation of production activities, product presentation, and customer interaction, combined with semi structured interviews and documentation of promotional materials, digital transactions, and business records relevant to the research objectives.

The primary research instrument was the researcher as the main analytical instrument supported by interview guidelines, observation sheets, and documentation protocols designed to capture patterns of digital adaptation, innovation strategies, and cultural preservation practices within Nasi Jamblang enterprises. Data validity was strengthened through source triangulation, method triangulation, and prolonged engagement with participants to ensure consistency and credibility of findings across different sources of information. The collected data were analyzed using an interactive qualitative analysis model involving data reduction, data categorization, thematic interpretation, and conclusion drawing in order to identify the relationship between digitalization, innovation, and business competitiveness in traditional culinary industries. Ethical considerations were implemented throughout the study by ensuring voluntary participation, maintaining participant confidentiality, and obtaining informed consent prior to interviews and observations. The research also emphasized interpretive rigor by continuously comparing empirical findings with existing theoretical perspectives concerning digital transformation, creative economy development, and cultural sustainability in traditional cuisine.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digital Transformation and Consumer Behavior Shifts in Traditional Culinary Businesses

The findings indicate that the transformation of consumer behavior in the digital era has significantly influenced the sustainability of traditional culinary businesses, particularly among younger consumers who increasingly prioritize convenience, visual attractiveness, and rapid accessibility in food consumption practices. Interview data revealed that many consumers perceive traditional cuisine as less

adaptive to contemporary lifestyles because traditional culinary businesses often rely on conventional promotional systems and limited digital interaction. Several business owners explained that younger consumers are more responsive to products promoted through visually oriented digital platforms than to traditional word of mouth communication. This condition reflects the broader transformation of the creative economy in which digital visibility functions not only as a promotional instrument but also as a determinant of market legitimacy and cultural relevance (Wibowo et al., 2024).

Observational findings demonstrated that Nasi Jamblang enterprises with active digital engagement experienced stronger consumer interaction and more stable purchasing activity compared to businesses relying solely on offline transactions. Consumers interviewed during the study emphasized that social media exposure increased their curiosity toward traditional cuisine because digital content created a perception of modernity without eliminating cultural authenticity. Business actors also acknowledged that digital communication allowed them to reach consumers outside the local culinary environment, particularly younger urban audiences. Similar tendencies have been identified within digital entrepreneurship research emphasizing that technological adaptation enhances the resilience and competitiveness of small culinary enterprises in Industry 4.0 environments (Sudirman, 2025).

The data further revealed that the decline in youth interest toward traditional cuisine is not exclusively caused by cultural disconnection, but also by the inability of traditional culinary businesses to align their communication strategies with contemporary digital consumption patterns. Several respondents stated that they associated traditional foods with outdated presentation styles and limited online visibility. Culinary businesses capable of integrating visual storytelling and digital branding demonstrated stronger engagement among consumers aged between eighteen and thirty years. These findings correspond with communication studies asserting that social media strategically reconstructs local cuisine into consumable digital narratives attractive to younger audiences (Widjanarko et al., 2024).

Business actors participating in the study explained that digital transformation initially emerged as a survival strategy during periods of declining physical customer traffic and intensified market competition. The introduction of digital payment systems, online ordering services, and social media promotion enabled businesses to maintain operational continuity while expanding customer reach beyond conventional market boundaries. Consumers interviewed during the research perceived digitally integrated culinary businesses as more trustworthy and accessible compared to traditional establishments lacking online presence. Such findings support arguments suggesting that digitalization functions as a critical mechanism for strengthening the adaptive capacity of micro businesses in rapidly changing economic conditions (Astuty et al., 2024).

Field observations also identified significant generational differences in perceptions toward traditional cuisine consumption. Older consumers emphasized authenticity, taste continuity, and historical attachment as primary motivations for consuming Nasi Jamblang, whereas younger consumers tended to value practicality, aesthetic presentation, and online accessibility. The coexistence of these differing preferences creates strategic pressure for culinary businesses to balance cultural preservation with innovation based adaptation. Previous research on gastronomic tourism similarly highlights that digital food culture increasingly shapes consumer expectations concerning convenience, visual experience, and social media shareability (Hjalager, 2022).

Table 1. Consumer Perceptions Toward Digital Adaptation in Nasi Jamblang Businesses

Consumer Perception Indicator	Dominant Response from Participants	Observed Impact on Business Competitiveness
Social media promotion	Increased product curiosity	Higher online engagement
Online food delivery access	Greater purchasing convenience	Expanded market reach
Digital payment systems	Faster transaction process	Improved customer satisfaction
Traditional presentation using teak leaves	Cultural authenticity maintained	Strengthened product differentiation
Product visual innovation	Higher attractiveness among youth	Increased repeat purchase intention

Source: Field Interview and Observation Data Processed by Researchers, 2026.

The findings presented in Table 1 demonstrate that digital adaptation contributes not only to operational efficiency but also to symbolic repositioning of traditional cuisine within contemporary consumption culture. Respondents consistently associated digital accessibility with increased trust and modern business credibility. Traditional presentation elements such as teak leaf packaging remained positively valued because consumers interpreted them as markers of authenticity rather than indicators of outdated practice. This pattern confirms the argument that culinary competitiveness in the creative economy depends upon the integration of technological innovation with cultural distinctiveness (Nazara, 2025).

Interview findings further revealed that many business actors lacked systematic knowledge regarding digital marketing strategy despite recognizing the importance of online visibility. Several participants admitted that social media usage was conducted inconsistently and primarily based on informal experimentation rather than strategic planning. This limitation reduced the long term effectiveness of digital promotion because businesses failed to sustain audience engagement through continuous content management. Similar challenges have been identified in studies concerning digital transformation among micro enterprises where technological adoption often occurs without sufficient managerial capability development (Baroroh et al., 2023).

The study also identified that digital transformation influenced not only external marketing activities but also internal business management practices. Some culinary enterprises had begun implementing digital transaction recording, inventory management systems, and online customer communication to improve operational organization. Business actors reported that these changes enhanced efficiency and reduced transactional errors, particularly during periods of high customer demand. Research concerning entrepreneurial transformation in cultural industries similarly emphasizes that digitalization reshapes both managerial processes and market interaction simultaneously (Lerro et al., 2022).

Consumer interviews suggested that digital engagement strengthened emotional attachment toward traditional cuisine when promotional content successfully communicated cultural narratives and historical meanings. Younger consumers indicated greater appreciation for Nasi Jamblang after encountering online content explaining its historical origins, symbolic packaging, and regional identity. This finding demonstrates that digital platforms can function as educational spaces transmitting cultural heritage through contemporary communication forms. Previous socio cultural analyses of Indonesian cuisine similarly describe traditional food as a collective identity symbol whose meaning can be reinforced through adaptive representation strategies (Nadra et al., 2025).

Digital transformation has become inseparable from the sustainability strategy of traditional culinary businesses operating within the creative economy era. Digital adaptation no longer functions merely as an optional promotional activity because consumers increasingly evaluate business legitimacy through online accessibility and technological responsiveness. Traditional culinary enterprises that fail to integrate digital strategies risk marginalization within competitive food markets dominated by visually oriented and technologically integrated consumption systems. Studies concerning culinary business transformation in creative economies similarly conclude that innovation and digitalization determine the long term competitiveness of local food industries within evolving consumer environments (Fadillah & Hakim, 2025).

Innovation Practices and Adaptive Business Transformation in Nasi Jamblang Enterprises

Business innovation emerged as one of the dominant adaptive strategies implemented by Nasi Jamblang entrepreneurs in response to intensifying competition within the culinary sector. Field observations revealed that business actors no longer relied solely on traditional product characteristics, but also developed operational creativity to maintain market relevance. Several participants explained that menu diversification and service improvement were considered essential for attracting broader consumer segments with different culinary preferences. This finding reflects the argument proposed by Galarraga and Martinez de Albeniz (2025) that gastronomic innovation is increasingly shaped by the integration of creativity, flexibility, and contextual adaptation within local culinary ecosystems.

Interview data demonstrated that innovation within Nasi Jamblang businesses primarily focused on product modification without eliminating the authenticity of traditional taste. Entrepreneurs

developed additional side dishes, adjusted spice compositions, and introduced more varied menu combinations while maintaining the characteristic use of teak leaf packaging. Participants acknowledged that consumers increasingly preferred culinary experiences that combined familiarity with novelty, particularly in urban culinary environments. Similar tendencies were identified by Castillo et al. (2024), who argued that culinary enterprises in the contemporary food service sector increasingly employ adaptive product innovation to strengthen competitiveness and customer retention.

The empirical findings also indicated that operational adaptation was visible through improvements in customer service systems and transaction efficiency. Several business actors adopted structured ordering mechanisms, simplified serving processes, and integrated QRIS based payment systems to improve convenience during peak operational hours. Participants explained that these adjustments were motivated more by practical operational needs rather than technological trends alone. This pattern aligns with the perspective of Sudirman (2025), who emphasized that micro and small enterprises in the Industry 4.0 era require flexible operational transformation to sustain business continuity amid changing market structures.

Another important finding concerned the emergence of branding awareness among traditional culinary entrepreneurs. Business owners increasingly recognized that visual identity, store atmosphere, and menu presentation contributed significantly to consumer perception regarding product quality and business professionalism. Observations at Mang Darma restaurant indicated that branding efforts were reflected through cleaner food presentation, organized display arrangements, and the use of culturally distinctive visual elements associated with Cirebon culinary identity. Nazara (2025) explained that strategic differentiation through branding innovation enables local culinary products to establish stronger market positioning within increasingly competitive creative industries.

Several participants also described how operational creativity became necessary during periods of unstable sales and growing business rivalry. Entrepreneurs adjusted portion sizes, introduced package variations, and developed flexible pricing strategies to accommodate diverse purchasing capacities among consumers. Business actors perceived adaptability as an essential survival mechanism rather than merely a commercial expansion strategy. Similar interpretations were discussed by Games et al. (2025), who highlighted that resilience among small creative enterprises frequently depends on the ability to implement adaptive business experimentation during uncertain economic conditions.

Table 2. Forms of Innovation and Business Adaptation in Nasi Jamblang Enterprises

Innovation Aspect	Empirical Findings from Participants	Operational Purpose
Product Innovation	Addition of varied side dishes and menu combinations	Expanding consumer preferences
Service Innovation	Faster ordering and simplified serving system	Improving customer satisfaction
Payment Adaptation	Implementation of QRIS transactions	Increasing transaction efficiency
Branding Strategy	Improvement of presentation and store identity	Strengthening business differentiation
Pricing Adaptation	Flexible package and portion adjustments	Maintaining market accessibility
Business Creativity	Combination of traditional and modern concepts	Enhancing business sustainability

Source: Processed empirical data from observations and interviews with Nasi Jamblang business actors, 2026.

The findings presented in Table 2 demonstrate that innovation within Nasi Jamblang enterprises operated across multiple operational dimensions rather than being restricted to product modification alone. Participants consistently associated innovation with the ability to balance efficiency, differentiation, and cultural continuity within daily business activities. The data also indicate that adaptive transformation was driven by practical managerial considerations closely related to market competition and consumer expectations. Fadillah and Hakim (2025) similarly argued that business

model transformation within creative economy sectors frequently emerges through gradual operational adaptation rather than through radical organizational restructuring.

The study further identified that culinary entrepreneurs increasingly viewed creativity as a long term economic resource capable of strengthening business resilience. Participants emphasized that maintaining identical operational patterns for extended periods often resulted in declining customer interest and stagnant market performance. Innovation was interpreted not as abandoning tradition, but as reorganizing traditional culinary value into forms that remained economically attractive within contemporary urban settings. Hidayat and Alifah (2022) explained that creative economy development depends substantially on the ability of local enterprises to transform cultural assets into sustainable sources of economic innovation.

Field observations additionally revealed that operational resilience was closely associated with the entrepreneurs' willingness to learn and adapt to changing business environments. Several business owners acknowledged that innovation initially emerged through experimentation and gradual adjustment rather than formal strategic planning. Informants explained that direct interaction with customers frequently became an important source of insight for improving menus, services, and operational management. Astuty et al. (2024) emphasized that sustainable resilience among micro businesses is strongly influenced by adaptive learning capacity and continuous responsiveness toward environmental change.

Another important aspect identified in this study involved the integration of culinary creativity with broader creative economy dynamics. Participants recognized that traditional cuisine possesses economic potential extending beyond basic food consumption because culinary products also represent lifestyle experiences and local identity expression. Entrepreneurs who successfully combined authenticity with innovation appeared more capable of attracting stable consumer attention within competitive urban culinary markets. Hasbi (2025) argued that product innovation and business creativity play a strategic role in transforming local culinary enterprises into sustainable creative economy assets capable of supporting regional economic development.

The findings also revealed that innovation practices among Nasi Jamblang entrepreneurs reflected the characteristics of a developing gastronomic innovation ecosystem. Business actors continuously interacted with suppliers, consumers, digital payment providers, and local culinary communities in shaping adaptive operational strategies. These interconnected relationships strengthened the capacity of enterprises to survive despite increasing market competition and shifting consumption patterns. Galarraga and Martinez de Albeniz (2025) explained that culinary innovation ecosystems emerge through collaborative interactions that encourage experimentation, knowledge exchange, and adaptive creativity within local gastronomic industries.

Cultural Sustainability and Future Competitiveness of Nasi Jamblang in the Creative Economy Era

Nasi Jamblang was interpreted by participants not merely as a culinary commodity but also as a representation of local cultural identity rooted in the historical development of Cirebon society. Interview findings indicated that consumers often associated the culinary experience with memories, regional pride, and cultural belonging connected to traditional food practices. Several business actors emphasized that preserving traditional culinary products carried symbolic value because food functioned as a cultural marker within community life. Nadra et al. (2025) explained that traditional cuisine possesses an important socio cultural function because culinary practices contribute to the construction of collective identity and social continuity within Indonesian society.

The empirical findings also revealed that cultural sustainability within traditional culinary enterprises depended on the ability to maintain authenticity while remaining relevant within contemporary economic structures. Participants explained that preserving the use of teak leaves, traditional serving concepts, and local taste compositions represented efforts to maintain the cultural originality of Nasi Jamblang. Consumers perceived these elements as indicators of authenticity that distinguished Nasi Jamblang from standardized modern food products circulating in urban markets. Zaini and Ismail (2024) argued that local wisdom embedded within traditional culinary products constitutes an important cultural resource capable of strengthening sustainable creative economy development.

Several participants further highlighted that traditional culinary preservation increasingly intersected with broader creative economy opportunities. Business actors acknowledged that culinary heritage had economic potential extending beyond direct food sales because traditional cuisine also attracted cultural tourism interest and regional branding value. Informants explained that visitors frequently perceived Nasi Jamblang as part of the cultural experience associated with Cirebon identity rather than solely as a consumption product. Hjalager (2022) emphasized that gastronomic tourism increasingly relies on authentic culinary narratives capable of connecting visitors with local cultural experiences and regional heritage values.

The study additionally identified that cultural sustainability required stronger collaboration among culinary entrepreneurs, educational institutions, and local government actors. Several participants expressed the view that preserving traditional cuisine could not depend exclusively on individual business initiatives because broader institutional support remained necessary for long term continuity. Informants believed that culinary literacy programs, cultural festivals, and educational promotion activities could strengthen younger generations' awareness regarding local culinary heritage. Salvador and Comunian (2024) explained that educational institutions play an important role in sustaining creative and cultural industries through knowledge transfer, cultural literacy, and innovation support mechanisms.

Participants also recognized that the future competitiveness of traditional cuisine depended on the ability to integrate cultural value with creative economy dynamics. Business actors perceived traditional food not only as a heritage product but also as an economic asset capable of generating employment opportunities and supporting local economic circulation. Several informants emphasized that culinary sustainability required the development of stronger creative ecosystems connecting production, tourism, education, and cultural promotion sectors. Silalahi and Syarbaini (2025) argued that creative economy development depends substantially on the integration of local cultural resources with sustainable economic strategies capable of generating long term community benefits.

Table 3. Cultural Sustainability Dimensions in the Development of Nasi Jamblang

Cultural Dimension	Empirical Findings from Participants	Strategic Implication
Cultural Identity	Nasi Jamblang perceived as regional culinary symbol	Strengthening local identity
Culinary Authenticity	Preservation of teak leaf packaging and traditional taste	Maintaining cultural originality
Gastronomic Tourism	Culinary experience associated with Cirebon heritage	Supporting tourism attractiveness
Educational Role	Need for culinary literacy among younger generations	Enhancing cultural awareness
Creative Economy Potential	Traditional cuisine viewed as economic asset	Expanding local economic opportunities
Institutional Collaboration	Expectation of support from government and education sectors	Increasing sustainability capacity

Source: Processed empirical data from interviews, observations, and documentation conducted in Nasi Jamblang enterprises, 2026.

The findings presented in Table 3 demonstrate that the sustainability of Nasi Jamblang extends beyond commercial performance because cultural preservation remains central within its long term development trajectory. Participants consistently linked culinary continuity with the preservation of symbolic practices, collective memory, and regional identity representation. The data also indicate that cultural sustainability requires structural support systems capable of integrating heritage preservation with contemporary economic opportunities. Prasajo and Adinugraha (2026) explained that culinary industries within the creative economy increasingly function as strategic sectors connecting cultural preservation with regional economic growth and social empowerment.

Another important finding concerned the growing awareness among business actors regarding cultural entrepreneurship as a mechanism for sustaining traditional cuisine in modern society. Participants described their culinary activities as part of a broader effort to preserve local cultural identity while simultaneously securing economic survival for future generations. Several entrepreneurs emphasized that maintaining traditional culinary practices represented a form of social responsibility toward local heritage preservation. Adinugraha et al. (2024) argued that micro enterprises operating within the halal and creative economy sectors possess strategic potential for strengthening cultural resilience and sustainable community development.

Field observations further revealed that younger consumers demonstrated increasing appreciation toward culinary products perceived as authentic and culturally meaningful. Participants explained that traditional cuisine became more attractive when consumers understood the historical narratives and cultural significance attached to the food experience. Informants suggested that cultural storytelling and educational communication could strengthen public attachment toward traditional culinary heritage. Wibowo et al. (2024) emphasized that digital transformation within creative economies should support cultural preservation objectives rather than reducing traditional products into purely commercial commodities.

The findings also showed that institutional collaboration remained one of the most important requirements for ensuring the future sustainability of traditional cuisine industries. Business actors expected stronger support through culinary festivals, educational partnerships, tourism integration, and cultural promotion programs capable of expanding public awareness regarding local culinary heritage. Participants perceived that isolated entrepreneurial efforts would be insufficient for protecting traditional cuisine against long term pressures associated with industrial standardization and shifting consumer lifestyles. Baroroh et al. (2023) argued that community empowerment and collaborative development strategies are essential for strengthening the sustainability capacity of local culinary enterprises within rapidly changing economic environments.

The broader analysis indicates that Nasi Jamblang possesses substantial strategic potential within Indonesia's evolving creative economy landscape because it combines economic value with cultural significance. The sustainability of traditional cuisine depends not only on market competitiveness but also on the ability of stakeholders to preserve cultural meaning across generations and institutional contexts. Participants consistently interpreted culinary preservation as a multidimensional process involving economic adaptation, educational reinforcement, cultural continuity, and collective participation. Lerro et al. (2022) explained that sustainable transformation within creative and cultural industries requires integrated ecosystems capable of balancing entrepreneurship, innovation, and cultural preservation simultaneously.

CONCLUSION

The findings demonstrate that the competitiveness of Nasi Jamblang in the creative economy era is shaped through the interaction between digital adaptation, business innovation, and cultural sustainability. Digitalization contributes to improving market reach and business visibility, while operational innovation enables culinary enterprises to maintain relevance amid changing consumption patterns and increasing competition. The empirical evidence further indicates that adaptive transformation within traditional culinary businesses does not necessarily eliminate cultural authenticity, because entrepreneurs continue to preserve symbolic elements such as traditional taste, serving practices, and local culinary identity. Cultural sustainability also emerged as a strategic factor influencing the long term continuity of Nasi Jamblang through its connection with gastronomic tourism, regional identity, and community based creative economy development. The study highlights that the future resilience of traditional cuisine depends on the capacity of business actors, educational institutions, communities, and policy stakeholders to collaboratively strengthen innovation ecosystems that integrate entrepreneurship, cultural preservation, and sustainable economic opportunities within contemporary culinary industries.

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