



Revitalizing Traditional Colenak Cuisine Through Digital Platform Engagement Among Younger Generations

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Abstract

This study examines the revitalization of colenak as a traditional culinary heritage through the utilization of digital platforms among younger generations. The research addresses the declining interest in traditional food caused by changing consumption patterns shaped by visual culture, digital trends, and contemporary lifestyle preferences. An empirical qualitative approach grounded in interpretive analysis was employed through in depth interviews with colenak business actors, literature review, and digital platform observation. The findings reveal that the decreasing relevance of colenak is associated with limited visual innovation, weak digital promotion, and the transformation of youth consumption behavior emphasizing symbolic and aesthetic experiences. Digital platforms were identified as effective instruments for strengthening consumer engagement through cultural storytelling, interactive communication, and visual branding strategies. Product adaptation through flavor innovation and creative presentation also contributed to improving market acceptance while maintaining culinary authenticity. The study further demonstrates that cultural sustainability depends upon intergenerational participation, educational involvement, and community based preservation efforts. The integration of cultural authenticity, entrepreneurial adaptation, and digital engagement provides an important framework for sustaining traditional culinary heritage within contemporary digital society.

Keywords : Cultural Sustainability, Digital Platforms, Colenak Revitalization, Traditional Cuisine, Youth Engagement.



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INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of digital consumer culture has fundamentally transformed the relationship between younger generations and traditional culinary heritage, particularly in societies experiencing accelerated urbanization and platform driven lifestyles, where food is increasingly consumed not only as a material necessity but also as a symbolic object embedded within visual culture, identity performance, and algorithmic visibility. Contemporary discussions within cultural economy and food studies emphasize that traditional foods are no longer sustained solely through intergenerational inheritance, but through their ability to adapt to digitally mediated patterns of consumption shaped by social media engagement, aesthetic representation, and participatory cultural production (Zheng, 2023). Recent scholarship further demonstrates that digital platforms have become strategic infrastructures for preserving intangible cultural heritage by enabling communities to reconstruct traditional values within modern communication ecosystems, especially through user generated narratives and visual storytelling that reconnect heritage products with younger audiences (Sharma et al., 2026). In parallel, debates concerning sustainability and cultural continuity increasingly position traditional food heritage as an essential component of inclusive economic development because local culinary practices preserve collective memory, regional identity, and social cohesion amid homogenizing global consumption patterns (Sulea, 2025). Within this evolving landscape, the revitalization of traditional foods cannot be interpreted merely as nostalgic preservation, but rather as a dynamic negotiation between cultural authenticity, market adaptation, and digital visibility in contemporary society.

Existing studies have generated important insights regarding the revitalization of cultural heritage through digitalization, yet the majority of these investigations tend to privilege either tourism oriented commercialization or broad cultural branding without sufficiently interrogating the everyday

consumption practices of younger generations. Research on cultural festivals and local heritage revitalization illustrates that traditional products can regain public relevance when integrated into contemporary experiential spaces capable of generating emotional attachment and communal participation (Sahar, 2024). Similarly, investigations concerning social media and heritage preservation reveal that digital platforms enable marginalized cultural products to acquire renewed exposure and symbolic legitimacy through viral circulation and online engagement (Zheng, 2023). Studies within culinary digitalization further indicate that younger consumers increasingly construct food preferences through visually curated content, peer interactions, and platform based trends that shape perceptions of authenticity and desirability (Quang et al., 2025). At the same time, scholarship on sustainable community empowerment argues that revitalization initiatives become more effective when local actors are actively involved in adaptive innovation processes capable of integrating economic resilience with cultural preservation (Susanto & Winarto, 2022). Despite these contributions, previous research frequently treats traditional food as a static cultural artifact rather than as a socially negotiated product whose relevance depends upon its capacity to engage with evolving digital aesthetics, emotional consumption patterns, and participatory online cultures among younger demographics.

The conceptual and empirical limitations within the existing literature become increasingly visible when examining the revitalization of traditional culinary products in highly localized cultural contexts such as *colenak*, whose declining popularity among younger consumers reflects broader tensions between heritage continuity and modern consumer expectations. Current scholarship has predominantly concentrated on macro discussions concerning heritage preservation, tourism promotion, or digital marketing efficiency, while insufficient attention has been directed toward the micro sociocultural mechanisms through which younger generations interpret traditional foods within digitally saturated environments. Studies emphasizing social media promotion often assume that visibility alone automatically generates cultural attachment, even though platform exposure may simultaneously commodify heritage into superficial visual consumption detached from historical meaning and communal identity (Zheng, 2023). Research concerning culinary digital trends similarly highlights the growing influence of visual aesthetics and online interaction on food consumption, yet it rarely explores how traditional foods perceived as visually outdated negotiate symbolic competition against highly stylized modern culinary products (Quang et al., 2025). Existing discussions also inadequately explain how innovation can be introduced without eroding perceptions of authenticity, creating a conceptual ambiguity between cultural preservation and market adaptation that remains unresolved in studies of traditional culinary revitalization.

These unresolved tensions possess substantial scientific and practical urgency because the marginalization of traditional foods among younger generations extends beyond changing dietary preferences and signals a deeper erosion of cultural transmission mechanisms within digitally mediated societies. Traditional foods such as *colenak* embody local histories, production knowledge, intergenerational memory, and regional identity that risk becoming socially irrelevant when excluded from dominant digital consumption spaces. Recent discussions concerning sustainable cultural futures argue that food heritage preservation constitutes a critical dimension of long term cultural sustainability because culinary practices function as accessible and everyday forms of identity reproduction within communities (Sulea, 2025). Simultaneously, the expansion of social media economies has intensified competition for consumer attention, causing products lacking strong visual narratives or digital engagement strategies to become increasingly marginalized regardless of their cultural significance (Sharma et al., 2026). The practical implications are equally significant for local culinary entrepreneurs whose economic sustainability depends upon their ability to adapt traditional products to changing market logics without sacrificing authenticity. In this context, revitalizing *colenak* through digital platforms represents not only an effort to preserve culinary heritage, but also a strategic response to the structural transformation of consumption behavior among younger generations who increasingly associate value with visibility, aesthetic experience, and digital participation.

Positioned within the intersection of cultural economy, digital consumer behavior, and heritage revitalization studies, this research seeks to extend existing scholarship by examining *colenak* not merely as a traditional food product, but as a contested cultural object negotiating relevance within algorithm driven consumer environments. Unlike previous studies that primarily frame digital platforms as promotional instruments, this study conceptualizes social media as a sociocultural arena in which meanings of authenticity, attractiveness, and cultural identity are continuously reconstructed through

interaction between producers and younger consumers. The study also advances prior discussions by integrating analyses of visual culture, consumption preferences, and local entrepreneurial adaptation into a single interpretive framework capable of explaining why certain traditional foods succeed or fail in sustaining intergenerational relevance. Through this perspective, revitalization is understood not as a linear preservation effort, but as an adaptive cultural process involving negotiation between traditional values and contemporary digital aesthetics. Such positioning enables this research to contribute a more context sensitive understanding of how local culinary heritage can survive within rapidly changing digital societies while remaining anchored in its historical and cultural foundations.

This study aims to analyze the factors contributing to the declining interest of younger generations toward colenak, to examine how younger consumers perceive colenak as part of cultural heritage within the digital era, and to formulate effective revitalization strategies through the utilization of digital platforms. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach based on literature studies and direct interviews with colenak business actors, this research contributes theoretically by developing an integrative framework connecting cultural preservation, digital consumption behavior, and culinary innovation within the context of traditional food revitalization. Methodologically, the study offers an interpretive approach that combines critical literature synthesis with empirical insights from local culinary practitioners, enabling a deeper understanding of how traditional foods can maintain cultural authenticity while adapting to contemporary digital consumption dynamics among younger generations.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts an empirical qualitative research design grounded in an interpretive approach to examine the revitalization of colenak through digital platforms among younger generations. The research focuses on understanding how traditional culinary products negotiate relevance within contemporary digital consumption patterns shaped by visual culture, social media engagement, and changing lifestyle preferences. The population of the study consists of traditional culinary business actors and younger consumers familiar with local food culture, while the purposive sampling technique was employed to select informants considered capable of providing rich and contextually relevant insights regarding the transformation of traditional food consumption in the digital era. Primary data were obtained through in depth semi structured interviews with colenak business owners, particularly family based entrepreneurs involved in the preservation and commercialization of colenak, whereas secondary data were collected from scholarly literature, digital platform observations, and documentation related to traditional culinary revitalization. The operationalization of the study was structured around several analytical dimensions, including digital promotion practices, visual product innovation, youth consumption preferences, perceptions of cultural authenticity, and strategies of culinary preservation within online environments.

The analytical process employed a qualitative descriptive method supported by thematic interpretation to identify patterns, meanings, and relational dynamics emerging from both empirical findings and theoretical perspectives. Data obtained from interviews and literature sources were systematically categorized, reduced, and interpreted through an iterative coding process emphasizing recurring themes associated with digital engagement, cultural sustainability, and consumer behavior transformation among younger generations. To ensure analytical rigor, the study applied source triangulation by comparing interview findings with conceptual and empirical discussions within the relevant literature concerning food heritage preservation and digital marketing practices. The interpretive analysis was further directed toward examining how digital platforms function not only as promotional media but also as socio cultural spaces in which traditional culinary identities are reconstructed and negotiated. This methodological approach enables the study to generate a nuanced understanding of the interaction between cultural preservation, entrepreneurial adaptation, and digitally mediated consumption practices in sustaining the relevance of colenak within contemporary society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digital Consumption Shifts and the Declining Appeal of Traditional Culinary Heritage

The interview findings indicate that younger consumers increasingly associate food consumption with visual representation, social interaction, and digital exposure rather than with cultural continuity or traditional value. Informants explained that purchasing decisions are frequently influenced by social media trends circulating through short video platforms and image based applications that prioritize

aesthetics and novelty. This transformation reflects broader cultural changes in which food operates simultaneously as a lifestyle symbol and a performative identity marker within digitally connected communities (Quang et al., 2025). Similar tendencies have been identified in discussions concerning globalization and local cultural displacement, where digitally mediated lifestyles reshape patterns of cultural attachment among younger generations (Kasiyarno & Apriyanto, 2025).

The narratives obtained from younger participants reveal that traditional foods such as colenak are often perceived as outdated because they are rarely represented within dominant digital food cultures. Several respondents stated that modern culinary products appear more attractive due to creative packaging, contemporary branding, and consistent online visibility through influencers and content creators. Such findings illustrate how digital visibility has become a determinant of symbolic relevance in contemporary consumer markets (Alauddin et al., 2025). Cultural products lacking adaptive promotional strategies gradually experience social marginalization despite possessing historical and cultural significance (Mohyeddin, 2024).

Interview data also demonstrate that younger consumers do not necessarily reject traditional foods because of taste quality, but because traditional culinary products frequently fail to align with evolving experiential expectations. Informants emphasized that visual presentation, interactive consumption experiences, and online shareability strongly shape purchasing behavior among urban youth communities. This tendency confirms arguments suggesting that food consumption has shifted from utilitarian necessity toward experiential and symbolic engagement shaped by digital interaction (Putra et al., 2022). Research concerning urban culinary identity similarly highlights that local foods must adapt to contemporary experiential culture to sustain relevance within younger demographics (Htet et al., 2024).

Business actors participating in the interviews acknowledged that traditional production practices remain heavily oriented toward preserving authenticity rather than developing competitive visual branding. Several entrepreneurs admitted that product presentation and digital promotion had historically received limited attention because culinary quality was considered sufficient to attract consumers. Such assumptions appear increasingly incompatible with digital consumption patterns characterized by rapid visual judgment and algorithmic competition. Existing scholarship explains that traditional culinary businesses often encounter structural difficulties when attempting to reconcile authenticity preservation with modern branding expectations (Zheng, 2023).

The decline in colenak consumption among younger generations also reflects broader tensions between globalization and local identity preservation. Respondents frequently compared colenak with foreign influenced food trends that dominate social media environments through highly stylized visual campaigns and celebrity endorsements. This comparative framework positions traditional foods within unequal symbolic competition against industrialized food cultures possessing stronger promotional infrastructures (Manara & Weber, 2023). Contemporary cultural studies increasingly emphasize that local identity preservation requires adaptive representation strategies capable of operating within globalized digital ecosystems (Khairanis & Aldi, 2025).

Several interview participants noted that younger consumers often possess limited historical understanding regarding the cultural significance of colenak within regional culinary heritage. The absence of educational exposure contributes to weakened emotional attachment and reduced appreciation toward traditional foods as cultural assets. Findings from this study indicate that digital media exposure alone cannot strengthen cultural identity when historical narratives and intergenerational transmission processes remain fragmented. Similar concerns emerge in studies examining sustainable food systems, which argue that youth engagement depends upon meaningful cultural participation rather than passive exposure to traditional products (Huambachano et al., 2022).

Table 1. Factors Contributing to the Declining Interest in Colenak Among Younger Generations

Identified Factor	Interview Interpretation	Related Scholarly Perspective
Limited visual innovation	Product appearance perceived as outdated	Visual culture shapes modern food preferences
Weak digital promotion	Minimal social media exposure reduces relevance	Digital engagement influences cultural visibility

Preference for trendy foods	Consumers follow viral food trends	Social media accelerates symbolic consumption
Limited cultural education	Historical value poorly understood	Cultural transmission affects identity attachment
Lack of experiential packaging	Consumption viewed as ordinary	Experiential marketing influences youth engagement

Source: Processed qualitative interview data and thematic interpretation based on Quang et al. (2025), Alauddin et al. (2025), and Putra et al. (2022).

The patterns presented in Table 1 demonstrate that declining interest in colenak emerges from interconnected cultural, visual, and technological dynamics rather than from a singular market issue. Informants repeatedly associated attractiveness with visibility and experiential consumption rather than with authenticity alone. Such findings support arguments that traditional culinary sustainability increasingly depends upon adaptive communication strategies operating through digital channels (Sgroi & Marino, 2022). The inability to translate cultural meaning into contemporary visual language weakens the competitive position of traditional foods within digital consumer environments.

Interview findings further reveal that younger consumers remain interested in local culinary products when traditional elements are creatively integrated with modern presentation styles. Respondents expressed positive reactions toward examples of traditional foods redesigned through contemporary packaging, digital storytelling, and interactive marketing strategies. This tendency indicates that younger generations are not inherently detached from local heritage but require forms of engagement compatible with current communication cultures. Similar observations appear in media co-creation studies showing that youth participation increases when traditional gastronomy is embedded within collaborative digital narratives (Jongsuksomsakul, 2024).

Business actors also recognized that digital transformation creates opportunities for expanding market reach beyond conventional community based consumption. Several entrepreneurs described growing public attention after uploading visual content through social media platforms, particularly when emphasizing authenticity and production uniqueness. These developments illustrate that digital platforms function not only as promotional spaces but also as mechanisms for reconstructing cultural legitimacy within broader consumer networks (Pamularsih et al., 2025). Studies concerning rural digital economies similarly suggest that technological adaptation enables local products to achieve broader socio-economic sustainability (Lu et al., 2025).

The empirical findings suggest that the declining popularity of colenak cannot be interpreted solely as a consequence of modernization, but rather as an outcome of unequal adaptation between traditional culinary practices and contemporary digital consumer culture. Younger generations continue to value authenticity when cultural products are presented through formats compatible with visual communication trends and participatory online interaction. Traditional foods positioned outside dominant digital narratives become increasingly invisible despite their cultural significance. Existing discussions concerning food heritage sustainability emphasize that revitalization efforts require simultaneous attention toward cultural preservation, technological adaptation, and youth centered communication strategies capable of reconnecting heritage products with contemporary lifestyles (Sulea, 2025).

Digital Platform Adaptation and Visual Branding Strategies in the Revitalization of Colenak

Interview findings reveal that colenak entrepreneurs have gradually shifted from conventional word of mouth promotion toward digitally mediated communication strategies centered on social media interaction and visual branding. Business actors explained that Instagram functions not merely as a promotional platform but as a space for constructing product narratives capable of attracting younger audiences through aesthetic presentation and continuous engagement. The transition toward digital marketing practices reflects broader transformations within traditional culinary entrepreneurship, where visibility within online ecosystems increasingly determines market competitiveness (Hidayat & Lestari, 2021). Research concerning digital cultural transformation similarly argues that social media platforms reshape how traditional products communicate value and identity to contemporary consumers (Alauddin et al., 2025).

Several informants emphasized that visual adaptation became necessary after observing that younger consumers responded more actively to products featuring attractive photographic presentation and modern packaging styles. Entrepreneurs described efforts to redesign plating composition, lighting arrangement, and color contrast when producing social media content intended for online audiences. Such practices indicate that visual branding now operates as a strategic mechanism for translating traditional culinary identity into contemporary digital aesthetics. Studies examining food heritage marketing suggest that creativity and visual storytelling significantly strengthen the competitive positioning of local culinary products within digitally saturated markets (Del Soldato & Massari, 2024).

The findings further demonstrate that social media engagement encouraged entrepreneurs to experiment with interactive communication techniques capable of generating stronger emotional relationships with consumers. Business owners explained that replying to comments, reposting customer content, and sharing production processes increased consumer trust and strengthened perceptions of authenticity. Digital interaction therefore extends beyond transactional promotion and functions as a relational mechanism connecting producers with younger audiences through participatory communication practices. Existing literature highlights that digital engagement strategies contribute substantially to strengthening emotional attachment and consumer participation within cultural branding environments (Pamularsih et al., 2025).

Interview data also indicate that storytelling emerged as a central strategy in differentiating colenak from commercialized modern food products circulating within digital spaces. Entrepreneurs frequently integrated historical narratives, family heritage, and traditional cooking methods into online promotional content to reinforce perceptions of authenticity and cultural continuity. Respondents acknowledged that audiences showed stronger engagement when posts combined visual attractiveness with meaningful cultural narratives connected to local identity. Similar observations appear in studies discussing the preservation of traditional craftsmanship, where social media storytelling enhances both public awareness and symbolic appreciation of heritage products (Sharma et al., 2026).

The adaptation process additionally involved product innovation strategies designed to expand market accessibility without eliminating traditional culinary characteristics. Informants explained that flavor diversification and packaging refinement were introduced to accommodate broader consumer preferences while maintaining original preparation methods and core ingredients. Such strategies reveal that innovation was interpreted as a complementary process aimed at strengthening relevance rather than replacing authenticity. Discussions concerning sustainable culinary revitalization similarly emphasize that adaptive innovation enables traditional food products to survive within evolving consumer environments while preserving cultural integrity (Sgroi & Marino, 2022).

Table 2. Digital Revitalization Strategies Implemented by Colenak Entrepreneurs

Digital Strategy	Practical Implementation	Consumer Response	Cultural Significance
Instagram visual branding	Professional food photography and curated feeds	Increased online engagement	Reinforces traditional food visibility
Storytelling content	Historical narratives and production documentation	Higher emotional interaction	Strengthens authenticity perception
Product innovation	New flavor variants and modern packaging	Broader youth market appeal	Preserves tradition through adaptation
Interactive communication	Comment responses and reposted user content	Enhanced customer loyalty	Creates participatory cultural exchange
Digital promotional consistency	Routine uploads and content scheduling	Greater algorithmic exposure	Expands cultural recognition

Source: Processed interview data and thematic analysis informed by Hidayat and Lestari (2021), Del Soldato and Massari (2024), and Sharma et al. (2026).

The patterns presented in Table 2 indicate that digital revitalization strategies involve simultaneous interaction between technological adaptation, cultural communication, and consumer engagement. Informants repeatedly emphasized that online visibility improved when promotional content balanced aesthetic appeal with representations of authenticity and heritage value. Such findings support arguments that digital branding for traditional culinary products requires multidimensional strategies integrating emotional narrative, symbolic identity, and visual communication (Zheng, 2023). Studies on digital economies similarly suggest that localized products achieve broader sustainability when technological adoption is combined with culturally grounded branding approaches (Lu et al., 2025).

Several entrepreneurs also highlighted that content consistency significantly influenced audience retention and platform visibility within social media algorithms. Informants explained that sporadic promotional activity often resulted in declining interaction rates and weakened consumer engagement, particularly among younger audiences accustomed to continuous digital stimulation. The strategic management of posting frequency, visual themes, and interactive communication therefore became essential for sustaining market presence within competitive online environments. Research examining digital promotion in local culinary sectors identifies consistency and audience responsiveness as critical determinants of successful online branding performance (Hidayat & Lestari, 2021).

The empirical findings further reveal that digital platforms enabled small scale culinary businesses to expand promotional reach beyond geographically localized markets. Entrepreneurs reported receiving inquiries and orders from consumers outside their immediate regions after increasing online activity and strengthening visual branding strategies. Digital connectivity therefore reduced structural limitations traditionally associated with small family based culinary enterprises by creating broader opportunities for cultural and economic expansion. Similar conclusions appear in studies discussing digital food networks, which argue that technological platforms facilitate more inclusive participation within sustainable local food economies (Sgroi & Marino, 2022).

Interview findings additionally suggest that younger consumers responded positively to promotional content incorporating interactive and immersive visual experiences. Some entrepreneurs experimented with short form videos and process documentation to create stronger audience immersion and increase product curiosity. These developments indicate that digital revitalization increasingly depends upon experiential communication capable of transforming culinary products into engaging cultural experiences within online environments. Research concerning interactive cultural technologies similarly explains that immersive digital representation strengthens audience engagement and cultural participation among younger demographics (Dawis et al., 2024).

The findings of this study demonstrate that digital adaptation within traditional culinary businesses extends beyond technological modernization and represents a broader transformation in how cultural products negotiate relevance within contemporary market systems. Entrepreneurs who successfully integrated storytelling, visual branding, interactive communication, and adaptive innovation were more capable of sustaining engagement with younger audiences while preserving perceptions of authenticity. Digital platforms functioned simultaneously as promotional infrastructure, symbolic communication space, and cultural marketplace through which *colenak* acquired renewed visibility and social legitimacy. Existing scholarship increasingly recognizes that sustainable revitalization of traditional culinary heritage depends upon the strategic integration of creativity, digital communication, and culturally grounded entrepreneurial adaptation within evolving consumer ecosystems (Del Soldato & Massari, 2024).

Cultural Sustainability and Intergenerational Engagement in Traditional Culinary Preservation

Colenak was interpreted by informants not merely as a traditional food product but as a cultural representation associated with collective memory, family continuity, and regional identity. Interview findings indicated that younger consumers who possessed prior exposure to traditional culinary environments demonstrated stronger emotional attachment toward *colenak* than those whose food experiences were primarily shaped by urban commercial culture. This pattern reflects the argument that culinary heritage functions as a medium through which social identity and local belonging are constructed across generations (Pugra et al., 2025). The findings also revealed that cultural attachment toward traditional cuisine becomes stronger when food consumption is linked with narratives of family history and communal values rather than commercial consumption alone.

Several business actors explained that preserving authenticity constituted an important principle in maintaining the legitimacy of colenak as a cultural product. Traditional preparation methods, including the use of charcoal roasting and manually prepared kinca sauce, were maintained because these production practices were perceived as integral components of cultural meaning. Informants emphasized that younger consumers increasingly appreciated authenticity when it was contextualized through educational narratives regarding local culinary history and traditional craftsmanship. This interpretation corresponds with the perspective advanced by Mohyeddin (2024), who explains that cultural continuity in modern societies depends on the ability of communities to negotiate tradition without eliminating symbolic authenticity.

The study also identified that cultural sustainability was strongly connected to intergenerational transmission within family based culinary enterprises. The transfer of recipes, preparation techniques, and business values from older to younger family members functioned not only as entrepreneurial succession but also as cultural inheritance. Younger family members involved in the business gradually became mediators between traditional culinary knowledge and contemporary social environments. Similar observations were reported by Huambachano et al. (2022), who noted that youth engagement in sustainable food systems frequently emerges through relational learning processes grounded in community knowledge networks.

Interview data further demonstrated that younger generations tended to interpret traditional food preservation through broader social and environmental perspectives. Several respondents associated colenak preservation with local economic resilience, cultural sustainability, and the protection of regional culinary diversity. Traditional food was therefore positioned not only as heritage consumption but also as part of sustainable local development discourse. This finding aligns with Sulea (2025), who argues that food cultural heritage contributes significantly to sustainable social futures by strengthening local identity and community continuity.

Educational institutions emerged as influential actors in strengthening awareness regarding traditional culinary preservation among younger audiences. Informants reported that participation in school festivals, local exhibitions, and university cultural events increased students' familiarity with colenak and stimulated curiosity regarding local food traditions. Exposure through educational spaces encouraged younger individuals to reinterpret traditional cuisine as a meaningful cultural resource rather than an outdated consumption practice. Sahar (2024) similarly emphasizes that cultural festivals and educational participation create experiential environments capable of revitalizing public interest toward traditional cultural expressions.

Table 3. Cultural Preservation Dimensions in the Revitalization of Colenak

Preservation Aspect	Forms of Youth Involvement	Sustainability Implication
Intergenerational culinary knowledge	Participation in family based production activities	Continuity of traditional preparation techniques
Culinary education programs	School festivals and university exhibitions	Increased cultural awareness among younger generations
Community cultural engagement	Local food campaigns and cultural discussions	Strengthened local identity and collective memory
Authentic production preservation	Appreciation toward traditional processing methods	Protection of culinary authenticity
Cultural entrepreneurship	Youth participation in heritage based business initiatives	Economic sustainability of traditional cuisine

Source: Processed qualitative interview findings combined with interpretive analysis adapted from Huambachano et al. (2022), Sahar (2024), Pugra et al. (2025), and Sulea (2025).

The data presented in Table 3 indicate that cultural sustainability depends upon the interaction between community participation, youth engagement, and continuity of traditional knowledge systems. Informants explained that younger individuals who actively participated in culinary production activities developed deeper appreciation toward local cultural values than passive consumers. Engagement was interpreted as a transformative process through which cultural identity became personally meaningful and socially relevant. This interpretation supports the argument of Susanto and

Winarto (2022), who explain that revitalization initiatives become sustainable when communities are positioned as active cultural actors rather than symbolic beneficiaries.

Community participation also contributed significantly to the preservation ecosystem surrounding colenak. Several respondents described how local culinary communities created collaborative activities involving traditional food exhibitions, storytelling sessions, and discussions concerning local heritage preservation. These interactions strengthened social solidarity while simultaneously creating public spaces for cultural transmission among younger participants. Saptadinata and Purnamasari (2025) similarly observe that sustainable preservation of traditional cuisine requires collaborative ecosystems connecting businesses, communities, tourists, and younger generations.

The findings additionally revealed tensions between commercialization and cultural authenticity within the revitalization process. Some informants expressed concern that excessive commercialization could reduce colenak into a purely market oriented commodity detached from its cultural meaning. Younger consumers nevertheless demonstrated preference toward products that retained symbolic authenticity despite being introduced within modern consumption spaces. This dynamic reflects the perspective advanced by Nadalipour et al. (2022), who argue that traditional culinary promotion becomes culturally sustainable when commercialization remains connected to local community values and heritage narratives.

Another important finding concerned the role of local identity in shaping long term preservation awareness among younger generations. Informants stated that colenak symbolized regional pride and represented continuity between historical memory and contemporary identity formation. The preservation of traditional cuisine was therefore understood not merely as maintaining food products but as protecting cultural distinctiveness within increasingly homogenized global environments. This interpretation corresponds with the arguments developed by Manara and Weber (2023), who emphasize that local communities preserve cultural resilience by maintaining symbolic identities amid accelerated globalization processes.

The interpretive analysis demonstrated that revitalization strategies achieve greater sustainability when younger generations are positioned as cultural agents rather than passive consumers. Younger participants who engaged with cultural activities surrounding colenak frequently developed stronger commitment toward local heritage preservation and community participation. Cultural sustainability consequently depended upon the ability to create participatory environments in which traditional cuisine remained socially meaningful within contemporary life contexts. Similar conclusions were proposed by Kasiyarno and Apriyanto (2025), who explain that cultural continuity in the global era requires active generational involvement in preserving local identity and cultural expression.

CONCLUSION

The revitalization of colenak reflects the complex interaction between cultural preservation, digital transformation, and changing patterns of youth consumption within contemporary society. The findings demonstrate that the declining relevance of traditional cuisine among younger generations is influenced not only by shifting lifestyle preferences but also by limitations in cultural communication, visual adaptation, and market engagement. Digital platforms emerged as important spaces through which traditional culinary products could reconstruct relevance by integrating visual storytelling, cultural branding, and interactive consumer engagement without eliminating authentic production values. The study further reveals that sustainable revitalization depends upon the ability of traditional culinary actors to balance innovation with cultural authenticity while simultaneously strengthening intergenerational transmission and community participation. Educational institutions, local communities, and family based enterprises were identified as essential actors in reinforcing cultural awareness and sustaining culinary heritage within digitally mediated environments. Traditional cuisine therefore functions not merely as a consumption product but as a socio cultural asset capable of strengthening local identity, cultural continuity, and community resilience in the era of globalization. The preservation of colenak ultimately requires adaptive cultural strategies that integrate digital engagement, entrepreneurial innovation, and long term cultural sustainability within contemporary food systems.

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