



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i7/14321>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i7/14321

Received: 14 May 2022, **Revised:** 17 June 2022, **Accepted:** 29 June 2022

Published Online: 09 July 2022

In-Text Citation: (Kamaruzaman et al., 2022)

To Cite this Article: Kamaruzaman, M. Y., Karim, S. A., Ishak, F. A. C., & Arshad, M. M. (2022). A Review on the Notions of Food Heritage Conservation. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. 12(7), 908 – 924.

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Vol. 12, No. 7, 2022, Pg. 908 – 924

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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



www.hrmars.com

ISSN: 2222-6990

A Review on the Notions of Food Heritage Conservation

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Abstract

The topic heritage has been researched more these days for the simple reason that it needs re-searching. It can be tangible to the senses and intangible as abstract ideas which both are equally susceptible to extinction. In the intangible heritage, food is despite its tangible dynamic sensorial attributes, it is also non-material in existence as the true heritage lies in the ideas, recipes, methods, cultures, and practices of making rather than the food itself. These instances mentioned, also could mean for varying comprehensions across the globe. This paper argues on the global differences in the basics of food heritage and its aspects as well as how it is compared to Malaysia's notions of the topic. Inevitably, this includes the issues of traditional food authenticity, as elusive features of perfection, are deemed to be obligatory. Understanding the basics is vital for Malaysia to strengthen its food heritage antiquity against globalization's compromises. Henceforth, this review article discusses the perceived authenticity and introducing artisanal food to better understand the heritage food's production.

Keywords: Malaysia's Food Heritage, Traditional Food, Food Authenticity, Artisanal Food, Globalization

Introduction

Food heritage has recently increased the interest of scholars in its rejoice and appreciation. From the quest of cultural heritage sustainability (Zeng et al., 2014), to the increasing interest in the products of food heritage, namely the traditional food (Barska & Wojciechowska-Solis, 2018) we cannot deny that it is getting into the limelight in many research. It seems that within the past decades, the spot light of novelty researches have been shifted to the fundamental and inground element of the food itself; the image representation, symbolism and its birthplace (Barska & Wojciechowska-Solis, 2018; Pieniak et al., 2009). After all, it is valued for the intrinsic features that make one food special in one place compared to another. Despite that the general diet now has commoditized untraditional foods like instants, ready-to-eat, and other related convenience foods (Casini et al., 2015; Creel et al., 2008; Sharif et al., 2013; Zahari et al., 2013), food with distinct antiquities is gaining its prime in this era which also acknowledged to be the best quality a food could have (Pieniak et al., 2009).

However, with the lack of basics to stand on, vague ideas of one's food heritage would pose a risk to its demise. This will incline to standardization and commoditization of modern food upon the otherwise, preciously distinct and personal heritage (Abidin, Ishak, Ismail, & Juhari, 2020). Not to mention also the emergence of neophiliac gastronomy enthusiasts these days as it sparks new opportunity in food industry, unleashing creativity through innovations into the food that we are eating (Geyzen et al., 2019; Kavitha et al., 2011; Trichopoulou et al., 2006).

Purpose

In the era of modernization, the practical scrutiny in the production of traditional food left constant within the older generation by the fate of having reluctant successors to inherit the traditions (Sharif et al., 2017). The understanding of these traditions and to acknowledge respectively to its origin is becoming less of a concern, Malaysia included. Specifically to Malaysia, historical events in the olden days have accepted set of attributes for its heritage food from various influences (Abidin et al., 2020). However, as time passes by, modern norm revolves around instant measures to get by the days. People are more prone to purchase foods instead of making them or even learning the basics from the elders (Sharif et al., 2017). This is also including traditional food. According to Sharif et al (2017), the sheer amount of neglect in the traditional practices suggestively imply to the lessened idea of what traditional means in the food they consumed. Additionally, new generations are not skilled enough to distinguish the status of traditional food that is sold in the market. Here, one should know his own ground to be confidently walk with pride of his origin – one should know his onions.

Most literatures in food heritage would argue the traditional foods as regionally specific, mostly on the healthier and correlates to sustainability of the local's crops. While in Malaysia, the food heritage mostly covered by the local literatures to be of any historical events that concocted its traditional delicacies. The purpose of this review article is to highlight the gap of understanding on the heritage food in Malaysia as compared to the international as well as suggesting future research with regards to the strengthening of Malaysia's food heritage conservation.

Methods

References were gathered through the Web of Science, Scopus and Google Scholar as well as various related Malaysia's local authority's official webpages. The keywords of "food

heritage”, “cultural heritage”, “intangible heritage”, “traditional food”, “Malaysia’s traditional food”, “Malaysia’s food heritage” as well as “authenticity” and “artisanal food” were searched. Main discussion articles obtained in the range of year 1994 to 2021 with a further back in 1981 with regards to how the understanding of heritage was in the 90th century. The discussions in each following sub-topics will start in general or international understanding of the situation and followed by discussion within the Malaysia’s setting from the local scholars.

Experimental articles on the laboratory research are excluded in this review as to strictly remain within the heritage discussion and not the nutritional or the microscopic details of the food itself. It is worth mentioning also that this review does not conclude the entire breadth of articles in food heritage, but it helps in highlighting gaps for potential future research, especially within the Malaysia context.

Discussions

Antiquities of Food Heritage

As history penned down its times, civilization of the people around the world have eventually developed collections of conducts of shared knowledge, customs, demeanour, and more together (Molina et al., 2016; Trichopoulou, 2012). Within these instances, lies patterns of norm that make up the identity of a particular group distinctly personal from one to another. This unique feature is acknowledged as special and unique attributes as the separation parameters across different groups (Halim & Mat, 2010; Rusalic, 2009; UNESCO, 2001). Rusalic (2009) argued that the multitude nuances of cultures throughout the world needed to be celebrated which then necessitated their conservation to ensure future inheritance, practice, and acknowledgements. These nuances are to be practiced and normalized throughout the facets of each community’s daily life and sustained for as long as they live. The succession of these nuances are then to be passed through progression’s logic of hereditary on to their newer generations (Barska & Wojciechowska-Solis, 2018). As generation succession progresses from one to another, these norms passed through to the current time (Rashid, 2015). The elder generation taught the younger generation on the etiquettes, morals, beliefs, politics and all in order to prepare them for future when they are entering adulthood, striving not just individually but also as one of a community. UNESCO (2001) summed this as “it is the common heritage of humanity and should be recognized and affirmed for the benefit of present and future generations.”

Inheriting culture denotes such of responsibility within each group in between its generations. The importance in doing so, help to preserve and keep individual antiquities alive in its cultural, natural, tradition, virtual, as well as biological heritage (Halim & Mat, 2010; Oh et al., 2019). In the same line, Rusalic (2009) urged that the preservation of inherited culture is crucial in order to face the future especially the globalization where adaptations to standardization is concerned. The said phenomenon could either pose positive life enhancements moving forward, or negatively being destructive to the traditional way of life.

Cultural heritage seemed to have gotten more and more attention despite its immaterial subjects. Consequently, Jusoh and Hamid (2015); Immonen (2021) expressed the importance in its preservation. The vulnerability of the intangible heritage is presumed to be susceptible to lost as it is explained by its non-physical existence to the human senses. As contradictory as it may sound, food is also considered to be an immaterial heritage which. As heritage is understood, it concerned less on the physical existence of the food but rather the knowledge, traditions, beliefs, and such that moulded and created the food.

Another immaterial part of the food is that it can generally be the ‘people gatherer’ in many communities across the globe. As part of the cultural heritage, food can be considered as memories to be acknowledged as collective individualities of one community to another (Barska & Wojciechowska-Solis, 2018; Immonen, 2021). This can be traced back through times where people used to hunt animals for food together, feast the catch together, right until now having much more options to even dine in a restaurant with companions. In other words, food can also be related to as a medium of communication to gather the community together for events (Yana & Yew, 2017). Despite the globalization, food in general changes nothing in this sense except the extent of how we value food compared to how it used to be. Truthfully, it is understood to be a tradition passed down and practiced in generation succession (Shils, 1981). Sharif et al (2015) denoted “foods in addition, to other activities plays significant role in the Hari Raya celebrations and convey valuable meanings in strengthening the relationships among families, friends, and communities”. This implies the sense of unity from food related activities in the community of Malay Muslims in Malaysia especially.

Malaysia Food Heritage

Speaking of the Malaysia’s food heritage, Sharif et al (2015) argued that there have not been clear historic periodicals as how the Malaysia’s traditional food came about. But from the success of Malacca state in Peninsular Malaysia to be known as initiator, it was the gate for international trade in the 15th century for the country. The travels of traders from around the globe believed to have influenced the formation of old Malaysia’s culinary library in its ingredients, methods of making as well as serving of the food. Despite that, the migration of the Chinese and Indians into Malaya (now Malaysia) then, and now have already been part of the Malaysians, have also influenced the culinary library of the Malaysia as a whole (Karim & Halim, 2014). This contributes to the formation and introduction of the popular sub-dimension to Malaysia gastronomy, namely Nyonya cuisine (Karim & Halim, 2014; Oh et al., 2019; Penang Global Tourism, 2017; Zahari et al., 2019) To date, Nyonya cuisine has gained such successful acknowledgements alongside its genesis; traditional Malay cuisine and both colour the Malaysia gastronomic landscape interestingly. Abidin et al (2020) further noted that the multi-ethnicity state of affairs and the complex amalgamation of the differences has Malaysia blessed with a plethora of foods having bits and pieces of different influences within a dish. Recently, challenges and threats nowadays are becoming more apparent in sustaining the dynamic heritage against the wave of globalization despite of all the years that the traditional Malaysia food feed the local diet.

Standardization Threat of Globalization to Food Heritage

Globalization connotes widespread change around the world. It acquaints with boundless interaction from small elements to the largest continents in the world, as factually mentioned by Boussaa (2021), “the world has become like a small village”. With the tremendous positivity in the technological advancement in the 18th century, the wave of globalization amplified since (Wolf, 2014). Although, discussed by O’Rourke and Williamson (2002), some historians argued that globalization might have started earlier but only to acknowledge that ‘abundant evidence supporting the view that a very big globalization bang took place in the 1820s’ - early 19th century. However, it is not until the 20th century that the globalization peaked and normalized throughout the globe. According to Trichopoulou (2012), the term and scope of traditional has been given to the foods from the moment prior to World War II and backwards. This is due to the birth of mass production of food, post war.

Needless to say, that the communication between geographies refined and became effective which construed to the booming of international exchange of information, trades, immigrant travels and other notions (Ng & Karim, 2016; Oh et al., 2019). Though the well accepted globalization for its positive outcomes, in which reportedly capitalized the world's economy activities, other facets of life may be at numerous threats to its movement (Trichopoulou, 2012), and summed by Wolf (2014), it is to "shaping not just economies, but societies, polities, and international relations". The word "shaping" in the context, treated as a neutral connotation that implies both positive and negative impact depending on to a phenomenon. Despite that, positive side of the globalization is seen and presumed to be desirable and much talked in different aspects of life to that of heritage instances. As such, Mardatillah, Raharja, Hermanto, and Herawaty (2019) relate globalization to the concern of alterations towards the nativities. In this sense, the grounded cultural aspects might be at danger of the standardization brought by the globalization.

As previously discussed on the culture and how it is important to be preserved as a form of heritage. Chang and Mah (2021) argued that "heritage is something that people have grown up with" and in contrary, the change of way of life by the globalization pose threats to such matter (Trichopoulou et al., 2006). Food for example, noting to its intangible being, mocked by the standardization which also coined as 'internationalized' by Miele and Murdoch (2002). The influence of international being indoctrinated into the local traditional delicacies, offsetting the known antiquities within them which then produce standardized products all across (Nahar et al., 2018). The change applied to traditional food compromises the authenticity and the overall mutual ownership to the origin as adaptations from international influences occurred by the boundless yet effective communication means opening up international trades (Abidin et al., 2020; Zeng et al., 2014). Oh et al (2019) expressed the attention needed to be given on food as the globalization also infers migrations and the journey of food across the globe. Ng and Karim (2016) on the other hand geared towards the concern of preservation of the traditional food from the dilution of globalized standard, similarly as discussed by Merrill (2015), in which heritage authenticity could be compromised and commodified by the "market-oriented pressures" signifying changes made in the effort of gaining monetary benefits. Istvandy (2020) argued that especially to communities that more susceptible to the changes of globalization, "the survival and legacy of cultural practices and identities of groups and communities is at stake". With that said, the most researched food heritage concern of the globalization has always centred on the authenticity of the food as well as the changed in youth's consumption pattern from their traditional food to globally commodified regime (Mardatillah et al., 2019; Rahman et al., 2018; Som et al., 2020).

Standardization of Food Heritage in Malaysia Context

In the Malaysia setting, such concerns are inevitably apparent also. Despite the dynamic 'kaleidoscope of appetizing tastes' (Leong et al., 2012); Sharif et al (2017) reported, having stuck with a hectic lifestyle nowadays, youths started to ignore the legacy of heritage that progressively forgotten considering it is an intangible heritage to begin with. It is however, Rahman et al (2018) discussed that youths are to be an important catalyst of the heritage beholder contradicting the current situation completely. Not just that, the authors further enlist of the foodways that have been altered to the globalization which also include eating out instead of preparing and eating at home as supported by Kavitha et al (2011) in their study. Time has been the excuse for the lack of interest and efforts to upholding the

heritage and keep on practicing it in the future. Thus, the neglect creates the concern of ambiguity of traditional food to be portrayed (Leong et al., 2012; Rahman et al., 2018).

However, Kavitha et al (2011) found that youths who are born in the range of year 1977 to 1994 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, resulted in 66.1% frequency of preference in Asian cuisine. This includes Malay cuisine and Chinese cuisine among other Asian's delights. To that, only by 33.9% of respondents lured towards the western, fusion, and not having any preference at all. This contradicts the claim of youths in Malaysia neglecting their roots when Malay cuisine and Chinese cuisine are bounded to the flavours of Malaysia collectively. It was found that sensory appeal of food influenced the most on the preference of generation Y towards consumption thus, confirming the acceptance of highly innovated foods that goes with the trends. Jusoh and Hamid (2015) explained that within the tourism and business side of heritage food, commodification or alterations within heritage foods are inevitable to cater for mass markets of uncertain palate preferences. This leads to innovation taken upon the heritage foods which provoked defensive responses of traditional antiquities towards modern-tainted version of it.

Modern Liberation versus Traditional Orthodoxies in Food

It is understood that tradition encapsulates cultural heritage orthodoxies and as previously discussed, traditional food is notably an instance of cultural heritage that is passed from previous generations before. In summary, Guerrero et al (2009) defined traditional food as "a product frequently consumed or associated with specific celebrations and/or seasons, normally transmitted from one generation to another, made accurately in a specific way according to the gastronomic heritage, with little or no processing/manipulation, distinguished and known because of its sensory properties and associated with a certain local area, region or country". It is understood then that traditional food is of hereditary and unchanged along the inheritance. The untainted heritage then explained to be a parameter that separates one community to another as summed by Zeng et al (2014), the traditional activities and culture of specific community profiled the distinct flavour and depict its locality. Looking into things commercially, Bardone and Spalvena (2019) mentioned that "traditional foods especially play an important role in authenticating an ethnic or national culture, and may be used as vehicles of branding and marketing". Having said that, it is only natural for the groups to respond in protecting and continue passing it down to the future offspring, propelling the persistent for infinite existence. As Munawarah and Sabri (2016) would say, "traditional food is a legacy of culture and heritage from the past which can still be served and tasted today". From these three writings, we can assume that the traditional orthodoxies brought along from the ancestors to their heirs is to be celebrated, continued, and kept unadulterated (Trichopoulou et al., 2006).

Aside from the extent of heritage consensus on the traditional food, the form of the food that is understood to be traditional also being discussed and different thoughts alas, clutter the notion further. For example, Trichopoulou et al (2006) coined the term traditional food to be a healthy in the Mediterranean diet, and due to the fact that it was established and inherited from different layers of generations prior, the authors also mentioned that traditional food's well-being yields are "poorly understood" (Trichopoulou et al., 2006). In 2012 Trichopoulou (2012) acknowledged the traditional food to be "simple, time-honoured approaches". This then, outlines other characteristics of what traditional food should be, which reflects the old and proven ways of making nostalgic foods. Needless to say that, the tedious, meticulous and presumed complicated process of making the traditional foods may

have always been the excuses that youths yawning about, just to stay clear from the old norm (Sharif et al., 2017). Another note worth mentioning is that traditional food has always been associated with plant based resources (Trichopoulou, 2012).

On the other hand, modernity embraces changes and new gears towards betterment in life, which go hand-in-hand with the current fast-paced high technological era (Sharif et al., 2016; Trichopoulou, 2012). Needless to say, that certain things changed to fit the more demanding modern life. As how we say it nowadays, sophistication defines modernity. Amilien and Hegnes (2013) discussed on the circulating debacle of traditions and its bully, modernization. The authors denoted that the arguments based off the idea that modernization equals to destruction of traditions and this was also supported by (Trichopoulou, 2012). Cruz and Menasche (2014), seconded the notion and further expressed that the commercialization of traditional food had always neglect the very core of subject that should upholds its uniqueness, varieties and thus, interests. Boussaa (2021) argued that changes bargained the culture merit to the modernity and economic purposes that leads to the possible demise. Instead of the slow and ritual-rich traditional methods of preparing the food, the food habit shifted to the fast, convenient, international, and standardized by mass manufacturing that modernization has offered (Cruz & Menasche, 2014; Guttman, 2006). Guerrero et al (2009) even reported that France, where classical and traditional culinary expertise revolutionized the world culinary field had the same challenges with the modernization.

Modernization onto Malaysia's Traditional Food

Modernization can mean a complete nemesis to the unique and varied range of traditional foods and especially to Malaysia, the multi-ethnicity context had blessed the nation with great gastronomic abundance traditionally. Realizing the standardization brought by the globalization, the dynamic aspect of the Malaysia's traditional food seemingly disregarded (Abidin et al., 2020). Though, acknowledged that Malaysians are now becoming more inquisitive with other flavours in their diets (Abidin et al., 2020). The inculcation of other cultures adapted from globalization into Malaysian's culture subsequently gave birth to a new cuisine which put at risk the antiquities of traditional food that have been brought from ancestors until now. Another point to consider is that the influences usually being indoctrinated into Malaysia's traditional food has always been the trending flavours of the west which therefore denote the standardization where similarity is seen across the globe. In this case, the common and internationally renowned flavours that is traditionally alien to Malaysian's traditional food like cheese, vanilla, and lots more. The adaptation of such flavours is done by the innovation activities upon the existing Malaysia's traditional food which ideally intended to elevate the value of such food into the current modern diets as well as a universal tourism product for broader palates (Gao & Jones, 2020). This however, tickled another aspect of traditional food which is the state of authenticity which argued to be risked by the changes posed by the innovation (Geyzen et al., 2019) as well as heritage to the marketing purposes (Merrill, 2015). After all, "authenticity has been the core principle and defining element in upholding a discourse of difference" (Gao & Jones, 2020)

Innovation on Authenticity of Traditional Food

Generally, innovation in food production is understood as the changes by means of improvements made upon different aspects of the food (Jusoh & Hamid, 2015). Guerrero et al (2009) concluded that, food innovation entails "the addition of new or unusual ingredient;

new combinations of product; different processing systems or elaboration procedures including packaging; coming from different origin or cultures; being presented and/or supplied in new ways; and always having temporary validity". Noting to the indefinite keyword from the meaning of innovation is 'new' and 'change', the argument of authenticity arises, contending the value of traditional orthodoxies in food. This explains the incongruity to the traditional orthodoxies should such dishes be changed in any way. As Mohammad and Chan (2011) discovered in their study, one of the characteristics defining the term authenticity is "freedom from adulteration" in both the ingredients and the methods. Having said that, it seems like there is no apparent ways that innovation and traditional orthodoxies would have collided, regardless of the idea of it potentially giving birth to a novelty innovation. Gao and Jones (2020) also mentioned that authenticity is also relating to how heritage should be conserved. However, looking at the word authenticity alone, one can interpret it differently. An example can be seen on how Roberts (1994) discussed, the authenticity of food lies as the opposition of food fraud in food business where it involves the impure food products marketed misleadingly. In this sense, the machinery producing the food in mass quantity was to blame for the lack of product authenticity. In other words, particular foods are heavily machine-processed and turned out differently at the end as to compared to what they said to be. While the definition given by this author connotes a different context of the food, we can clearly see that authenticity still is not to be compromised to defend for its intended characteristics. Thus, the consensus revolves around authenticity clearly objects the idea of change that innovation brought in its core.

However, giving innovation another look, Harrington (2004) argued that one may need to acquire both cognitive and practical expertise in order to innovate such traditional delicacies into a more mass and manufactured scale. According to the author, the innovator is valued by which it promises novelty to a product that is not easily copied by other competitors. With that, the idea of innovation towards sustaining the food itself in existence is illusive, but the continuous management of innovation proven to keep the food's competitive edge. In addition to this, Immonen (2021) discussed that within the cultural heritage, other than inheriting and to pass over to succeeding generation, it can be expanded. This implies prospects of room for improvements to related merit with the traditional food to being sustainable from one generation to another. It is however uncontrollable. Trichopoulou et al (2006) discussed on the essential characteristics of traditional food as to be healthy and relatively pleasant in the flavours to each of its owning community. However, the mass marketing and production of the traditional food then be concerned by the incapability to meet the characteristics. Trichopoulou et al (2006) mentioned that there are three requirements in allocating the status of traditional in a food namely "traditional material", "traditional formulation" and "traditional type of production and/or processing". With this, Boussaa (2021) concluded that moderation within the changes to put upon such heritage is considerably favorable as opposed to the drastic innovations.

Malaysia's Traditional Food was a Historically Innovated

In the Malaysia context, one can argue that the traditionally authentic food is not naturally occurred as a heritage material. Chang and Mah (2021) elaborated that heritage is rendered and eventually evolved through times progressively. History wrote events as the traditional food became into existence from the olden days. Wingarten (2006) stated that, "some of the old traditions were, of course, innovations in their own day". By this statement, those chronological events in the history line of Malaysia, deemed its heritage food itself to

be of innovation in its own time span. Not to mention also, with the persistent claim of multi-ethnicity country that created a melting pot of cultures (Karim & Halim, 2014; Oh et al., 2019; Omar et al., 2011; Omar & Omar, 2018; Raji et al., 2017; Zulkifli et al., 2020), we cannot help but acknowledged the amalgamations that happened in the facets of the local life and food was no exception. This shows that innovation has already been a part of Malaysia since the Malaya years and so far, it has bestowed the nation with dynamic gastronomy until now.

Artisanal Eminence as Coveted Authenticity

Artisanal may be loosely used in our day-to-day life. The word artisanal which derived as adjective is an immediate from the word artisan, has been used on and off in the field of gastronomy. While artisan denotes the person who practically perform the work, artisanal on the other hand, Grammarly hoists the adjective given to a product that is produced in specific manner and by the artisan himself. However, it is worth mentioning also that in 2013, Bell (2013) concluded that there were not an exact meaning of artisan yet. Although, the author also denoted that the word artisan revolves with the word “natural” and “gourmet” (Bell, 2013) associated with traditional food products like dairy, bakery, winery, and livestock (Bromberger, 2006; Geyzen et al., 2019). Alas, McKitterick et al (2016) coined the word “specialty” as synonym to artisanal with regards to the agri-food context. Bromberger (2006) suggested a shorter and easier view that artisanal food be synonymized to traditional food as opposed to modern synonymized to industrial. The general idea behind artisanal also has always been associated with the manual aspects of producing the food that requires bare hands instead of relying on machinery. Thus, one can say all manual methods of preparing foods infer an artisanal craftsmanship on the food. Besides that, artisanal food also denotes small to micro scale production befitting its manual “craft-like approach” of making and precise ingredients selection (Guttman, 2006). To its niche, artisanal food products could worth more than the mass-manufactured food (Bromberger, 2006).

Having said that, it can be easily understood that artisanal food is authentic food. It describes the state of place of origin and culture of where a certain food came to existence (Barska & Wojciechowska-Solis, 2018; Guttman, 2006). Further, artisanal food conjures the comprehensive distinction in the food making, from start to finish. This also accounts to specific food that is inherited to specific group of people. Gao and Jones (2020) expressed that, traditional skills, and the embedded experiences within them are crucial in instilling the authenticity within this era of innovation. Taking Philippines for example, Lim-Castillo (2006) mentioned about the traditional, supposedly the artisanal vinegar that through ancient times served them the mean for food preservation. The author even mentioned that the artisanal vinegar, aside from substitutable with the manufactured kinds, contains properties that manufactured vinegars lacking. This infers such quality as a fine line separating between an utter authenticity and the standard mass-produced food. Besides, Sidali et al (2015) said that the closeness between the artisan and the food made by hands is to be acknowledged as “artistic artefact”.

Malaysia's Traditional Food and it's Artisanal Authenticity

The same case as in the Malaysia's heritage food. The range of the traditional delicacies always demanded to meet the exact replica of those made years ago. This has been the benchmark of the claimed traditional within the Malaysia heritage food (Kamaruzaman et al., 2020). Authenticity always been a niche researched within the food on how it portrays exact orthodoxies to that of the past creations by ancestors (Hamzah et al., 2013; Hasni et al.,

2020; Mohammad & Chan, 2011; Omar et al., 2011; Omar & Omar, 2018; Zulkifli et al., 2020). However, there are mix reviews on the understanding of authenticity to say the least. One could denote traditional implementation from the ingredients line up to the method of making and serving. While others, understand authenticity as accurate representation of the product of traditional food to the known sensory appeal. The first has stringent requirements throughout the process but the later has importance put on the end products as they are the subjects presented to the consumers. Figure 1. illustrates the change made upon the use of coconut husk coal as heating elements in the making of Malaysia's traditional *kuih* like *kuih bakar pandan* (a sweet *pandan* flavoured dense cake), *kuih akok* (duck egg custard cake) and *kuih bahulu* (small sponge cakes). Traditionally, these *kuih* are made in a mould locally known as *sarang kuih* (a 2-piece equipment of moulding bottom plate with designed cavities and a lid on top) made from brass or copper. Figure 2. illustrates the typical model of *sarang kuih* with plain oval cavity used to make *kuih akok*. The cooking technique of the mentioned *kuih* will use heating element from top and bottom of the mould using coconut husk coal. However, with the use of modern high-pressure stove underneath had helped to ease the constant change and discard of the coal ashes of the traditional method. Note that the use of coconut husk coal is still practiced on top which responsible in giving the smoky aroma to both techniques as hedonically replicating a true traditional *kuih* in its senses. While the introduction of modern equipment seems to disrespect the orthodoxy in traditional method of making the *kuih*, the product satisfactorily delivers the quality of authentic traditional *kuih*, while the other entitled to be claimed as an artisanal traditional *kuih*.



Figure 1. Comparison on innovated method of using sarang kuih in the making several types of Malaysia's traditional kuih.



Figure 2. Sarang kuih used as a mould for making up individually portioned Malaysia's traditional kuih

Conclusion

Understanding and grasping the basics and pillars of anything means to prepare a solid foundation so that any structure built on top will stay firm to its construct. Applying this into the food heritage, one should understand the basics that made up the food and what constituted to its traditions to work with environmental changes effectively. The globalization and the standardization brought along, may alter things in life almost readily but with lack of determination of something, dilution may occur due to its unapparent existence, making it extinct without us noticing the progression at any traces. Therefore, aside from inheriting the traditions to the youths, one should be determined and precise to the set traditions prior the transfer. Further, the generation in succession should be sensitive enough to upholds the traditions to carry it on in resilience.

As time passes, changes will become more prevalent and to the current era, almost essential. In the case of globalization, one needs to stay abreast and change for the better. However, neglecting the heritage should not be one of the changes mentioned. Food heritage especially, proven to have made the generations prior to survive until today thus why should we neglect our ingrown diet? Or better still, why should we fix something that is not broken? The advancement in technology nowadays arguably shunned the orthodoxies of making the food we used to know. But the argument reaches various ends where authenticity is concerned. Being authentic means to be original but once a heritage food being altered, the authenticity will be questioned. Something to ponder within this notion, how does this important when the products to consumed served accordingly to tradition? The taste and the look. Should traditional food be prepared exactly like how it used to, just to be called authentic traditional food while technological advances aid in practicality and improve production? The real concern should be put in the suitability of the machines' engineering to fit the traditional food expectation and not putting traditional food to fit the machines.

Nonetheless, exact methodology in making traditional food is not at all irrelevant today. The term artisanal, though not as popularly associated with claims in heritage food, it could open a new meaning or branch to the heritage food tree. Fanatics of the orthodoxies may find artisanal traditional food much fitted into their expectations. Manual, hand-crafted, and small-scaled production could potentially be a niche in the traditional food production and market. Thus, the extent of heritage food preservation does not connote to just globalization threats to the availability and authenticity. In fact, it shoots new potential branch which is the league in quality to the production of heritage food, contending artisanal grade of delicacies to the public.

The same can be said to Malaysia, that the educational inputs and awareness of claims should be inculcated to both the providers and the receivers. Within the context of Malaysia's food heritage, this involves the authorities, experts, and producers of the heritage foods as well as the consumers. While the arguments of authenticity and the obsessions of traditional orthodoxies rooted, the understanding and awareness of differences between claims seen apparent. It is therefore essential for the locals to grasp the meaning within the context. Communication plays an important role in the distribution of message here, and in the manifestation of official national definition of terms, it is suggestively nominating official authorities within the field of heritage to step forward and initiate the knowledge transfer. Department of National Heritage Malaysia for example, as a prominent local authority could have determined the terms to be used for both parties, the provider and the consumers or the public to further work upon a consensus towards the Malaysia food heritage and its preservation thereafter.

More research is at vital necessity especially on the documentation of the past. Malaysia has grown its dynamic culture and thus, its gastronomy library. With this profusion, scholarly documentation is indeed vital and further information is utterly needed to quench the thirst of basics. Moving progressively, the precious recipes where ingredients and methods, tips and tricks, and the use of such food should be inculcated within the generations from the older to the younger in continuous fashion. While it is denoted to be an intangible heritage, documentation of these possessions can physically be preserved through generations as the black and white of the previous. Apart from that, practice should also be encouraged to flex the muscle memory to get accustomed to the making of traditional food. By practice, people say it makes perfect, thus promotes to more seasoned individuals to their own heritage.

Declarations

Availability of Data and Materials

All data and materials are used in accordance with the guideline of the Heritage & Society as listed in the reference section. Images are owned and provided by the authors.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declared that there are no conflicts of interest.

Funding

This article was a partial extraction from an ongoing project supported by the Ministry of Higher Education of Malaysia under The Fundamental Research Grant Scheme (FRGS/1/2020/WAB12/UPM/02/1), Project Code: 07-01-20-2334FR.

Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed to the idea, overall construction, and the write up of this manuscript. All authors have responsibly reviewed and came to agreement on approving the final manuscript.

Acknowledgements

The authors acknowledge Universiti Putra Malaysia for the opportunity and encouragement in pursuing research on the scope of food heritage.

Data Availability Statement

The authors confirm that the data used in this review paper are available within the article and its supplementary materials.

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