

Reviving Traditional Food Product to Today's Civilization (Case Study: BangkerokSundanese Traditional Snack DapurOh)

Annisa Rakhmasyifa¹, HerryHudrasyah²

¹School of Business and Management / Bandung Institute of Technology, Indonesia

²School of Business and Management / Bandung Institute of Technology, Indonesia

ABSTRACT : *Traditional food is a cultural identity that changes over time, creating new local food that would put aside traditional food and abandon it. In fact, traditional food preservation is important to be the tourism attraction and contribute to the regional economy. In Japan, Toraya Confectionery Co. successfully produced Wagashi, traditional Japanese sweets, accepted by people, and documented their history for hundreds of years. Indonesia also has a Sundanese Traditional food called Bangkerok that people have forgotten, which one of it sold by DapurOh. Inspired by Toraya, DapurOh also wants to contribute to cultural preservation and culinary tourism. This study will focus on learning and explore how DapurOh could reintroduce Bangkerok by communicating and presenting appropriately. We will consider preferences, consumption habits, ethnographic studies involving young people as DapurOh target market. The result shows a lack of young people's inclusion and unattractiveness. In this case, DapurOh must make adjustments in concepts, branding, products, and communication strategy so that young people can feel more embraced and relate.*

KEYWORDS -communication strategy, product development, traditional food, transforming tradition

I. INTRODUCTION

Each region has a different cultural identity built by the values, beliefs, attitudes, and habits of a group of people who live in that place, including cultural identities in the form of food. The local food, also called traditional food, is built not only from humans but also from the environment and the availability of resources. This cultural wealth can be used for local attractions, especially in the tourism sector [1]. Unfortunately, traditional food is challenging to preserve because of the civilization changing, and people would abandon traditional foods that have been around for years.

Japan is famous for its technological advancement, but it has not faded its traditional culture in everyday life, including food. For example, Wagashi, Japanese sweet food that has been around for hundreds of years. Wagashi is known as a friend of tea ceremony culture, which still exists. Many places offer the tea ceremony experience that is served along with Wagashi in various tourist spots. There is also a Wagashi company called Toraya, which has been around for almost 500 years and continues to innovate to create Wagashi with various modifications. They also consistently document the development process into a special archive (Toraya bunko) [2]. This shows us a conducive environment of society as a whole, making efforts together in preserving the culture.

Indonesia also has many kinds of cultural heritage, including traditional food but cannot preserve tradition well, so many of them disappear. One of the examples is Bangkerok, Sundanese Traditional snack that Sundanese people had forgotten. Lately, this food has just started to be recognized by a few people since one or two FnB business owners start to sell it, including DapurOhFnB business who sold Bangkerok specialization exclusively. However, DapurOh still manages market penetration because bangkerok is not popular enough or even just a typical food in society. Moreover, Indonesian people is not a good cultural keeper yet struggling with doing cultural documentations. This situation makes things harder to reach society, both in the context of profit and cultural preservation.

Reflecting on how Japanese and specifically Toraya, DapuOh also wants to preserve Bangkerok by reintroducing it to society that this could be a popular food around Bandung. To do so, DapurOh will need a specific strategy to make sure that the product could be accepted by the public, specifically the target market. This study will explore how to deliver Bangkerok to the public in terms of communication and product presentation as the first touchpoints of market penetration.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Bangkerok is a Sundanese Traditional food from West Java Indonesia, which people forget, especially the older people. This food is a usual homemade food; thus, not many people know about it, especially young people. The taste is quite familiar for some people since it is made from sticky rice and has similarities with other sticky rice-based traditional food.

DapurOh is one of the businesses who sold bangkerok since 2020. Only a few businesses also sold this in Bandung, so there is no significant competitor. DapurOh is focusing on serving unique food, which is why they choose Bangkerok as their signature dish. DapurOh also wants to preserve this food as a common food in the market. They use the family recipe for their product, so they hope it will become a good opportunity to introduce this to the public and maintain their family cultural heritage over time.

Traditional food is different from any other ordinary food product. Many aspects are manifested in traditional food, including the local "story" of what it represents as the identity. Messages invested in traditional food are more complicated but interesting to explore since they have a personal touch of local culture and available resources. In this case, the way we convey the hidden message in traditional food would also need to be different. We might want to use advanced techniques to reach more people, such as digital technology [3].

If we talk about today's society, people are now attached to social media. This type of digital technology might be the one that we could use to disseminate information to more people, especially in this case is the traditional food. The more people know and recognize the food, the easier it will be to remain in society. Referring to what Fill (2013) said in his book, one task in communication is to raise awareness and reinforce the experience [4]. Even though they did not know about the product, we might recall other past experiences with the right way in communication, which has similarities to our product [5]. We try to make sure that people could recall the product, which this kind of food is not usually found in any place. In this case, we could say that the relevancy between the product and people's past experience might affect their memory as a nostalgic memory and increase their attachment with our product.

If we connect with touchpoints between brand and customer, we might want to make sure that we can implement it on stages in the customer journey. Talk about reintroducing traditional food; we might want to approach brand awareness with a nostalgic marketing campaign. Alternatively, maybe on after-sales, we also could recall people's past experience in consuming the food. This approach could be combined with people's habits and current trends to be more relevant to the customer [6].

Traditional food is usually being connected/associated with old, unpopular, and lame. This assumption is somehow strong, especially among young people. If we talk about reintroducing traditional food to the younger generation, we might want to make sure that they are interested in what we offer. Their familiarity with many kinds of food is one threat where they will demand something more new, fresh, and innovative. It is not impossible to do innovation in traditional food, which will need a specific approach.

According to Nugraha (2005), we need to pay more attention to five components of tradition: materials, techniques, gestalt, images, and hidden factors [7]. These components are their point of view to see which one should be kept, modified, or changed. Based on this argument, we cannot entirely change the traditional heritage into something new if we want to ensure that the originality is being kept, also known as the traditional character [8]. In other arguments, Bayona-saez (2017) said that open innovation in FnB business might be the right thing to do, but there is a chance that it will become too much and lead to harm to innovation performance [9][10][11][12]. Balance is a must that could be achieved by managing internal and external knowledge to gain a competitive advantage.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses qualitative method as the research method to explore people's opinions and points of view about a traditional food product, especially bangkerok as one of the products from DapurOh. Further, this study will use the action research method that involves the research objects (clients) to directly interact, collaborate, and explore the problem and solutions based on the responses directly recorded as research primary data to be diagnosed [13]. The diagnosis in this term is by data analysis with its interpretation and comparing the result whether they support each other, vice versa, or found new findings. Here are some details on each analysis and data collection:

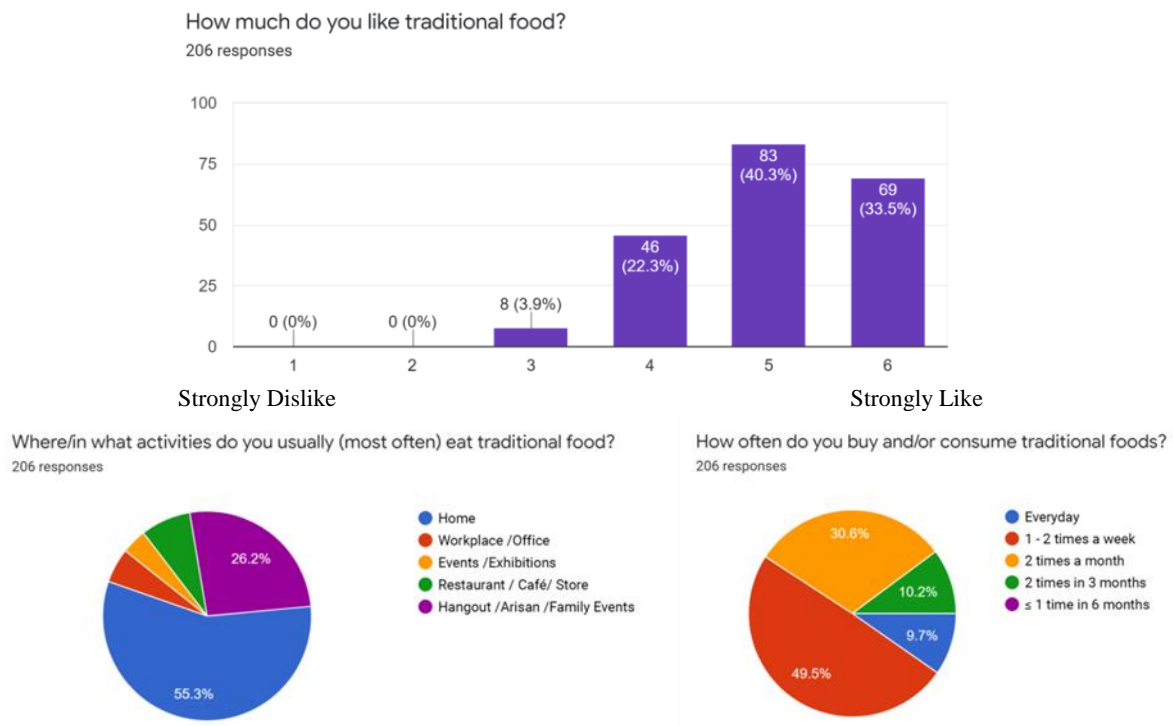
- To explore people's points of view and preferences in Sundanese Traditional food and Bangkerok innovation, we use data from a questionnaire survey that covered questions about preferences in consuming traditional food in general, especially Sundanese. We also ask about their pattern or any habit related to traditional food. We use the online survey as the tool to cover and reach more people in many generations.
- We will do interviews and FGD to ask about their opinion on DapurOh's current bangkerok product specifically to compare with data collected on the questionnaire. In this case, we will specifically choose young people to be involved with this study as DapurOh's target market. We served several menus, varied from original combinations, Indonesian fusion, to Asian-Western fusion. The participants will be asked about their preferences and perspective of how far Bangkerok could be innovative.
- Each analysis result will be processed by SWOT analysis to know the strategic solution to address the problems. Internal and external analysis will be the main study to explore and compare the preferences

and habits of the public in consuming traditional food, people's responses of bangkerok innovation, with the current DapurOh'sBangkerok.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the questionnaire result involving 206 respondents, we could see that Bandung people are already familiar with Sundanese Traditional food for daily and occasional consumption, especially sticky rice-based food. They tend to relate it as a family or all age dish, which will they eat at home with their family. However, based on interviews and FGD, the young generation prefers to choose something more innovative and unique to draw their attention first and get their curiosity, which DapurOh has not yet achieve. They are usually looking for the food trend, so we might get a chance to steal their glance and persuade them to try our food if it could be one of the trends.

Fig. 1 People Liking and Habits Towards Traditional Food



(Source: Data Processed, 2021)

We found that young people are clueless and unfamiliar with our brand and bangkerok itself. Based on the interview and FGD sessions, they basically respond to it very well and enjoy the food. However, our current tastes and variant are not enough to make them impressed.



Fig. 2 Familiarity Towards Bangkerok

(Source: Data Processed, 2021)

They reviewed all the traditional elements based on Nugraha (2005) and found some new perspectives and approaches that DapurOh could do. They suggest being more explorative in taste for the seasonal menu, more practical, more attractive visually, and updating the trend. It is possible and suitable to use modern

modification in recipes, especially the fillings, so that it will attract more attention. The image of DapurOh is still intact with traditional values, which somehow young people sometimes became skeptical and feel unrelated. This is also why they said that this food is not their priority.

Table 1 FGD Feedback

No	Element	Question/Component	Result
1	Materials	Fillings	Keep the original menu while constantly innovate by making a new menu periodically.
		Dipping Sauce/ Toppings	Dipping sauce and topping mix-match are depended on personal preferences.
		Drinks	Younger people prefer cold drinks (depend on the condition (weather, temperature, place, etc.)). Bangkerok image itself is related to hot drinks, so do the older people's preferences.
2	Gestalt	Visual – Shape	They prefer something that looks have much fillings and practical
		Packaging	Need to improve safety (delivery friendly).
		Portion	Based on how many people will eat: Personal → pocket portion (±105gr) Sharing (3-4 people) → regular portion (±400gr).
3	Image	Visual – Perception	Bangkerok is Bandung Traditional Food, with sticky rice as the key ingredient.
		Habit/Stoty/Condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At home, for breakfast or coffee break (snack), with family, gathering, or daily (consumption) • At café/restaurant, with a friend, while hangout, time flexible • Leisure/tourist place, with family/friends, while relaxing, traveling
4	Technique	How to eat	Eating by hands (barehand)
		Cooking technique	Grilled wok pan produces a signature texture of bangkerok.
		Texture	Crispy outside, soft inside. We need to pay more attention to thickness to get the desired texture.
5	Hidden Factor	Sticky rice – Tourist Attraction	Sticky rice has a strong image of tourist attraction in Bandung, which is Lembang.
		DapurOh name	DapurOh's name has an unrelated image, which is far from what the business provides/serves.

Source: Data Processed, 2021

In case of the journey in finding information about new food, recommendation or word of mouth is the most influential in the decision-making process, followed by reliable food reviewers and social media accounts. The role of these sources of information shows that trust and testimonials of others are reliable in society.

Based on the findings, we could see that DapurOh needs more effort to attract young people. One of the solutions would be to reconceptualize and rebranding it to be more inclusive for the younger generation. Traditional value also needs to be delivered in new concepts and branding implicitly so they will not feel irrelevant. We need to make it accessible by making our product available across platforms, including food delivery service, e-commerce, café/restaurant, and information on social media (especially Instagram and Tiktok). DapurOh might want to include their innovation for both daily and seasonal menus. R&D is also needed periodically for seasonal menus based on customer requests, trends, or collaboration projects with other brands. In the context of communication, being interactive and eye-catching in social media will approach young people in a fun way. We could also educate people more about our product in a subtle approach with games, trivial, and others to make people familiar with this food as a cultural heritage.

V. CONCLUSION

Bangkerok, as sticky rice-based food, is struggling to be recognized by the public rather than other similar traditional food such as Lemper or KetanBakar. However, this similar food becomes the bridge between bangkerok and public, which makes people more familiar with it. However, if we talk about young people as the target market, we might want to encourage them by evolving into something they are searching for. Young people's trends, value, and lifestyles would be the concern we need to include in delivering Bangkerok.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper is an essence of the thesis entitled "Communication and Product Development Strategy in Introducing New Traditional Product to Current Society (Case Study: BangkerokSundanese Traditional Snack of DapurOh)", School of Business and Management, Bandung Institute of Technology, Indonesia.

REFERENCES

- [1] Pestek, A., & Nikolic, A. (2011). Role of Traditional Food in Tourist Destination Image Building: Example of the City of Mostar. *UTM Journal Of Economic*, 2(1), 89-100. Retrieved 27 June 2021, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227489725_ROLE_OF_TRADITIONAL_FOOD_IN_TOURIST_DESTINATION_IMAGE_BUILDING_EXAMPLE_OF_THE_CITY_OF_MOSTAR.
- [2] Toraya Confectionery Co. Ltd. (2010). TORAYA Traditional Japanese Confectioner Since 16th Century. *Japan Spotlight*, March/April 2010. Retrieved 27 June 2021, from https://www.jef.or.jp/journal/pdf/170th_japanese_craft&art.pdf.
- [3] Tarcza, T., & Popa, A. (2020). Using New Marketing Technologies for Promoting Traditional Food Products. *International Journal Of Information Systems And Social Change*, 11(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.4018/ijissc.2020010101>
- [4] Fill, C. (2013). *Marketing Communications: Brands, Experiences, and Participation* (6th ed.). Pearson Education Limited.
- [5] Renko, S., & Bucar, K. (2014). Sensing nostalgia through traditional food: an insight from Croatia. *British Food Journal*, 116(11), 1672-1691. <https://doi.org/10.1108/bfj-02-2014-0089>
- [6] Kitagawa, K., & Morisaki, M. (2020). Valuation Dissonance between Traditional and SNS Worlds for Japanese Confectionery Wagashi. *The Annals Of The Economic Society Wakayama University* 2020, 27-35. Retrieved 27 July 2021.
- [7] Nugraha, A. (2005). TRANSFORMING TRADITION FOR SUSTAINABILITY. In *Joining Forces: Design Research, Industries, and a New Interface for Competitiveness*. Helsinki. Retrieved 25 May 2021, from <http://uia.fi/joiningforces/papers/Nugraha.pdf>.
- [8] Kühne, B., Vanhonacker, F., Gellynck, X., & Verbeke, W. (2010). Innovation in traditional food products in Europe: Do sector innovation activities match consumers' acceptance?. *Food Quality And Preference*, 21(6), 629-638. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodqual.2010.03.013>
- [9] Bayona-Saez, C., Cruz-Cázares, C., García-Marco, T., & Sánchez García, M. (2017). Open innovation in the food and beverage industry. *Management Decision*, 55(3), 526-546. <https://doi.org/10.1108/md-04-2016-0213>
- [10] Bertrand, O. (2009). Effects of foreign acquisitions on R&D activity: Evidence from firm-level data for France. *Research Policy*, 38(6), 1021-1031. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2009.03.001>
- [11] Greco, M., Grimaldi, M., & Cricelli, L. (2016). An analysis of the open innovation effect on firm performance. *European Management Journal*, 34(5), 501-516. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2016.02.008>
- [12] Ferreras-Méndez, J., Fernández-Mesa, A., & Alegre, J. (2016). The relationship between knowledge search strategies and absorptive capacity: A deeper look. *Technovation*, 54, 48-61. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.technovation.2016.03.001>
- [13] Bryman, A., & Bell, E. (2011). *Business research methods* (3rd ed.). Oxford Univ. Press.