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Research Article

Cultural Acculturation in French and Indonesian Cuisine: The Case of Croissant Geprek

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Abstract

This research examines the cultural acculturation between French and Indonesian culinary traditions, focusing on the structural adaptation of the Croissant Geprek commodity. To maintain academic neutrality, this study shifts away from treating the phenomenon as a mere novelty, instead evaluating the systematic deconstruction of gastronomic standards. Employing a qualitative descriptive methodology, this study analyzes secondary data compiled from culinary literature, market reports, and digital consumer references to examine how the French croissant is adapted and integrated with the Indonesian tradition of *ayam geprek*. The findings reveal a multi-stage acculturation process shifting the traditional pastry's buttery flavor profiling into savory-spicy dimensions, modifying the texture through mechanical flat-pressing via waffle iron mechanisms, and substitution with localized inputs such as chili paste and poultry. This structural hybridization generates predictable consumer traction within urban domestic retail markets, resulting in a hybrid dish that preserves the core identities of both cultures while catering to local palates. Croissant Geprek stands as an empirical indicator of glocalization, merging global culinary elements with specific local preferences. Ultimately, this study demonstrates that culinary acculturation operates through a structured framework of adaptation, integration, and cultural creation within contemporary food systems.

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INTRODUCTION

To maintain structural market sustainability amid the continuous and volatile influx of globalized food commodities, the contemporary culinary industry increasingly relies on cultural acculturation as a core operational strategy to drive systematic product innovation and preserve domestic market share. Within the framework of modern food systems, acculturation operates not as an arbitrary mixing of ingredients, but as a highly controlled, systemic blending of distinct cultural, technical, and sensory components designed to engineer a stable hybrid commodity. Crucially, this mechanism establishes a clear operational differentiation from total cultural assimilation; it intentionally retains the traceable, foundational technical characteristics of each contributing culinary tradition rather than dissolving them into a homogeneous, unidentifiable output (Setyaningsih, 2020).

Within the Indonesian food retail sector, this operational dynamic has become highly visible through the strategic recontextualization of Western pastry architectures to accommodate domestic sensory expectations, local purchasing power, and deeply embedded consumption habits. A prominent material manifestation of this structural negotiation is the emergence of "Croissant Geprek", a hybrid culinary product that systematically bridges classic European fat-lamination techniques with traditional Indonesian street food frameworks. This integration reflects a deliberate commercial effort by retail operators to transform international gastronomic standards into locally viable, high-traction domestic assets capable of navigating rapid shifts in consumer demand.

As a baseline commodity representing rigid French gastronomic standards, the croissant is strictly defined by its highly disciplined, complex fabrication technique. This operational process requires the continuous, precise folding and laminating of a yeast-leavened dough matrix with solid bakery fats (*beurrage*), generating a specialized multi-layered structure that relies entirely on thermodynamic steam expansion during the baking phase to achieve a delicate, high-volume, and airy geometric matrix (Honova et al., 2002; Indra et al., 2019). Conversely, the Indonesian term *geprek* denotes a rudimentary yet highly efficient mechanical crushing, pressing, or deconstructing technique

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originating from Javanese informal culinary practices, which has been widely formalized within the domestic fast-casual sector.

This technique was popularized nationwide through the rapid commercial expansion of *ayam geprek*, a ubiquitous street food staple wherein the mechanical deconstruction of crispy, flour-coated fried chicken cutlets is deliberately executed using a stone mortar and pestle (*ulekan*) to optimize the structural absorption of high-intensity, capsicum-driven local *sambal* condiments (Puspita & Yunita, 2024). The *geprek* subsystem, therefore, prioritizes the breaking down of physical barriers within the food matrix to maximize immediate sensory impact and structural saturation.

Figure 1. Croissant Geprek

Source: GoFood, retrieved from https://gofood.co.id/surabaya/restaurant/croissant-geprek-dharmawangsa-f2897bf9-b4e3-40a5-9aae-af4a3786d469

The technical integration of these two polarized formats establishes a direct architectural, structural, and sensory confrontation within contemporary fusion gastronomy. Mechanically and functionally, the traditional French croissant operates as a fragile, high-volume, air-layered pastry optimized for sweet or light fat-dense flavor profiles. In sharp contrast, the *geprek* infrastructure functions as a dense, high-intensity, flat-pressed main course designed for heavy, pungent, and savory-spicy sensory delivery. This extreme baseline divergence forms the core parameter of this study's central thesis: culinary glocalization does not operate through passive, harmonious blending, but through a calculated, systematic deconstruction of a culture's structural norms.

By deploying a mechanical waffle iron to physically flatten and compress the laminated pastry layers under intense heat and pressure, the production of Croissant Geprek deliberately counteracts the classic baking paradigm, where pastry volume, aeration, and light flakiness are strictly preserved, to accommodate local, savory, and high-density functional street-food applications. Investigating this systemic deconstruction provides critical empirical insights into the operational methodologies through which global culinary assets are dismantled, modified, and managed to conform to contemporary domestic retail demands and automated consumer market spaces.

Theoretically, the structural hybridization and operational recontextualization of this commodity can be mapped through a progressive, three-tier conceptual framework of cross-cultural contact and culinary glocalization:

1) Macro-Contact and Adaptation Phase: As a foundational baseline for structural entry, Koentjaraningrat (1985) defines acculturation as a progressive social process wherein foreign cultural elements are gradually introduced and integrated into a host system without erasing or neutralizing the host's original institutional matrix. In complete alignment, Gillin and Gillin (1950) conceptualize this dynamic as a series of systemic changes resulting from direct, sustained social contact that explicitly avoids total cultural assimilation or the unilateral

dissolution of identity. Within the gastronomic retail domain, this primary entry phase establishes the structural macro-contact necessary for the physical coexistence of French pastry techniques and Indonesian culinary markers within the same domestic supply chain. This phase dictates how the host market decodes, normalizes, and prepares the imported commodity structure for subsequent mechanical manipulation.

2) Strategic Integration and Operational Modification Phase: To map the strategic direction and operational parameters of this contact, Berry's (2019) ecocultural framework advances integration as a balanced, bidirectional adaptive strategy. Under this model, local actors exercise active commercial agency to selectively isolate, modify, and embed foreign asset elements directly into an existing, dominant cultural framework. This framework rejects the reductionist paradigm of globalization as passive cultural homogenization. Instead, it ensures a highly dynamic, regulated interplay where French lamination protocols and Indonesian capsicum-driven spice profiles undergo mutual adjustment. The global input surrenders its traditional geometric volume via mechanical flat-pressing to absorb the localized filling, creating a calculated equilibrium where both contributing formats coexist without one superseding or eliminating the operational relevance of the other.

3) Novel Cultural Creation and Category Transformation Phase: Transcending standard, restrictive bidimensional approaches that merely measure linear movement between global and local poles, Wilczewska's (2023) Tridimensional Process-Oriented Acculturation Model (TDPOM) explains the final evolutionary trajectory of this phenomenon. Utilizing her specialized "baking process" or "third chair" analogy, the model demonstrates that independent cultural ingredients, when subjected to specific operational forces and environmental heat, interact chemically and structurally to generate a qualitatively new phenomenon. Consequently, the Croissant Geprek commodity ceases to function as a simple, static, or temporary mixture of two distinct cuisines. It evolves into an entirely independent, permanent culinary category that establishes its own technical specifications, consumption rituals, and market space, effectively redefining the regularities of contemporary urban gastronomy and retail food systems in Indonesia.

Based on this theoretical trajectory, this research focuses on the development of creativity and unconventional ideas as the primary keys in the acculturation process of Croissant Geprek. The investigative scope covers the period from 2018 to the present (2026) to capture both the early emergence and recent market normalization of the phenomenon. To address this focus, this study seeks to answer the following research question: How does the structural and sensory acculturation process between French pastry techniques and Indonesian culinary traditions facilitate the emergence of "Croissant Geprek" as a qualitatively new cultural creation?

The objective of this research is to identify the precise operational stages of cultural exchange and blending that generated this culinary innovation. The expected outcomes include a technical clarification of the modifications in taste, raw material substitution, and physical form required to suit Indonesian consumer profiles while retaining a distinct, traceable dual-cultural identity. Strategically, this study is intended to serve as an academic reference for contemporary gastronomy studies and provide operational inspiration for stakeholders in the Food and Beverage industry to drive business development through calculated cultural innovation.

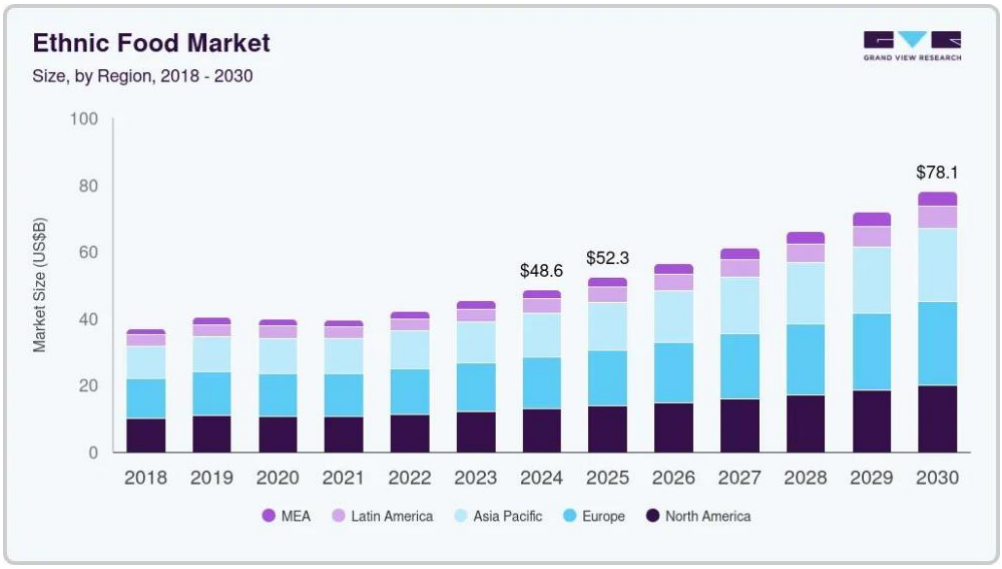

Figure 2. Global Ethnic Food Market Trends

Source: Grand View Research

Data from Grand View Research (2024) indicates that the global ethnic food market is projected to expand from $48.6 billion in 2024 to $78.1 billion by 2030, representing a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 8.3%. This macro-economic trajectory highlights a structural shift in consumer demand, particularly among Gen Z and Millennial demographics who prioritize diversified culinary profiles. It must be emphasized that this macro-level chart functions strictly as contextual background to illustrate industry-wide expansion, rather than serving as direct empirical evidence of the specific financial or operational metrics of the case study itself. While this global growth data represents broader industry tendencies, the emergence of the "Croissant Geprek" serves as a localized, micro-level illustration of these market drivers. By integrating established French pastry techniques with local Indonesian flavor profiles, this hybrid product reflects how macro consumer preferences for fusion gastronomy manifest within a domestic marketplace.

This macro-economic expansion triggers a structural tension between global standardization and local preservation. Rather than viewing global culture as a homogenizing force and local culture merely as passive resistance, contemporary food systems operate through a dynamic of mutual recontextualization. Within this framework, global culinary formats do not erase domestic identities; instead, local traditions actively appropriate and dismantle international commodity standards to maintain regional differentiation amid interconnected market spaces.

The study of culinary acculturation is further enriched by recent research on the strategic adaptation of global food brands to local markets. Azzahrah (2024) examines the glocalization of Japanese sushi in Palembang through localized recipe modifications, while Mubarok (2019) analyzes how Bakso Boedjangan in Malang modernizes traditional items by integrating global trends such as mozzarella cheese. Similarly, Oktavian and Parmono (2023) investigate the glocalization strategies of multinational fast-food entities like McDonald's and Burger King in Indonesia, highlighting how international chains utilize cultural hybridity to remain competitive. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that glocalization involves a deliberate blending of global standards with local preferences to achieve market acceptance. However, a significant research gap persists in the existing literature: while previous studies predominantly focus on the operational adaptation of established multinational brands or the incremental modernization of single local dishes, there is a distinct lack of empirical investigation into the qualitative cultural creations that emerge from the intersection of two separate, high-identity gastronomic traditions. This study diverges fundamentally from prior literature by evaluating how a hybrid product systematically dismantles and deconstructs classic Western pastry architecture to absorb traditional street food dynamics, thereby establishing a novel culinary category rather than a mere brand extension.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive design operationalized specifically to systematically investigate the structural deconstruction and sensory reconfiguration within contemporary fusion gastronomy. Shifting away from abstract conceptual definitions, the procedural execution of this research relies strictly on a purposive secondary data collection framework designed to trace the lifecycle and market normalization of the "Croissant Geprek" commodity within the designated temporal boundary of 2018 to 2026. This specific timeframe is demarcated to capture the continuous evolutionary trajectory of the product, moving from its initial status as a digitally amplified viral novelty to its institutional integration within the contemporary Indonesian food retail sector.

The secondary data infrastructure is constructed from three highly specific operational categories, intentionally selected to ensure empirical depth without relying on generic textbook classifications:

1) Academic Literature and Theoretical Foundations: This category comprises empirical peer-reviewed studies tracking culinary glocalization, food sociology, and cross-cultural acculturation within the Southeast Asian context, specifically incorporating foundational frameworks from Setyaningsih (2020) on Javanese cultural acculturation, Berry (2019) on ecocultural integration models, and Wilczewska (2023) regarding the Tridimensional Process-Oriented Acculturation Model (TDPOM). Additional comparative baseline data are drawn from contemporary localized studies, including Azzahrah (2024) on sushi glocalization in Palembang, Mubarok (2019) on traditional food modernization trends, and Oktavian and Parmono (2023) regarding fast-food brand adaptation mechanisms in domestic markets.
2) Industry Intelligence and Macro Market Reports: To secure objective operational metrics regarding market behavior, this study analyzes specialized market intelligence documentation, primarily utilizing the global Ethnic Food Market Report (2025–2030) generated by Grand View Research (2024). This is supplemented by domestic food and beverage industry analyses, retail growth projections in urban Indonesian sectors, and corporate culinary trend archives tracking the commercial scaling of contemporary fusion bakery products.
3) Digital Documentation and Consumer Behavior Artifacts: To capture real-time consumer reception and physical product modifications, the digital data corpus includes organic multimedia reviews from high-traction food vloggers and micro-influencers on TikTok and Instagram (specifically monitoring hashtags such as #CroissantGeprek and associated culinary challenges between 2024 and 2026). This is cross-referenced with digital media coverages, culinary press releases from contemporary bakery operators (such as Dear Butter and Fika Cakes), and text-based consumer feedback aggregated from online food delivery applications and digital retail cooperatives.

The selection architecture for these data sources adheres to a strict inclusion protocol: the compiled material must explicitly address the physical deconstruction of laminated dough matrices, flavor hybridization (the transition from sweet-buttery to savory-spicy profiles), or the domestic market reception of transnational fusion foods. To guarantee academic rigor and prevent individual subjective bias, the study deploys source triangulation by systematically cross-referencing formal macroeconomic industry reporting with the empirical, organic consumer data extracted from digital media platforms.

Data analysis follows a highly contextualized interactive qualitative framework structured into three interconnected operational phases, focusing strictly on the physical and cultural realities of the food product rather than abstract methodological generalities:

First, in the data reduction phase, the raw textual and visual data compiled from the digital and academic archives were subjected to systematic filtering to isolate three precise operational parameters: (a) structural deconstruction parameters, which trace the physical transition of a multi-layered, high-volume laminated French pastry into a flat-pressed format via mechanical waffle irons; (b) sensory adaptation parameters, which document the modification of classic fat-based, sweet-buttery taste profiles into high-intensity, capsicum-driven savory-spicy dimensions; and (c) material substitution

parameters, which analyze the integration of traditional Indonesian street food elements, such as poultry and regional chili pastes (sambal), into European bakery structures.

Second, in the data display phase, these isolated data points were organized into an explicit comparative matrix. This matrix systematically contrasts traditional French pastry standards (which strictly dictate volume preservation, delicate flakiness, and sweet flavor profiling) directly against the modified Indonesian street food characteristics (which prioritize flattening, structural stuffing, and pungent sensory delivery). This structured visualization completely isolates the specific technological and cultural shifts that occurred during the product's development.

Third, in the final phase of conclusion drawing and verification, an interpretative analysis was executed by mapping the synthesized empirical findings directly against the established acculturation models. The observed physical and market data were evaluated against Koentjaraningrat's contact theory, Berry's integration dimensions, and Wilczewska's "third chair" analogy. This specific procedural step was conducted to definitively establish whether the Croissant Geprek commodity merely represents an incremental, temporary integration of global brands or if it functions as a novel, qualitatively separate cultural creation that has successfully established an independent operational category within contemporary urban gastronomy.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Dynamics of Culinary Acculturation and Innovation

The entry of the croissant into the Indonesian gastronomic landscape is historically interpretive, yet structurally linked to the macroeconomic modernization of urban consumer markets, the expansion of the transnational hospitality sector, and the evolution of domestic baking technologies (Tarigan, 2018). Initially, Western laminated pastries were introduced primarily through international hotel bakeries and specialized, high-end pastry shops operating strictly within primary economic and tourism hubs such as Jakarta and Bali during the colonial and post-colonial eras (Prabowo & Wijaya, 2021). Scholarly evaluations suggest that by the late 1980s and early 1990s, the proliferation of modern café culture, the establishment of localized franchise bakeries, and the rising purchasing power of the urban middle class accelerated the integration of European bakery products into the daily consumption habits of younger demographics (Suryani et al., 2022).

To align with domestic market preferences, which traditionally favor high-fat, distinctively sweet, or familiar savory components, bakery operators introduced localized adaptations (Suryani et al., 2022). This involved modifying the traditional plain, multi-layered French croissant with internal fillings such as chocolate, processed cheese, and tropical fruit preserves (Prabowo & Wijaya, 2021). This phenomenon reflects an ongoing structural transformation in urban Indonesian dietary patterns, characterized by an increasing openness to transnational food commodities and a significant shift toward Westernized premium bakery segments as markers of modern lifestyle and social mobility (Tarigan, 2018).

Conversely, *ayam geprek* represents a contrasting, bottom-up domestic gastronomic innovation that emerged from the informal food sector in Yogyakarta during the early 2000s, widely attributed in culinary historiography to localized food stall (*warung*) operators catering to university students (Putri & Setiawan, 2020). Analytical documentation shows that the structural uniqueness of *ayam geprek* lies strictly in its mechanical processing technique: instead of serving the chili paste as a passive side condiment or a dipping sauce, a crispy, flour-coated fried chicken cutlet is physically crushed and corporate-mixed with fresh, oil-slicked *sambal* using a traditional stone mortar and pestle (*ulekan*) (Puspita & Yunita, 2024). Empirical consensus indicates that the rapid geographical expansion of this dish across Indonesia was driven by its high cost-efficiency, practical preparation method, and strong alignment with the traditional Indonesian preference for high-intensity, capsicum-driven spicy flavor profiles (Puspita & Yunita, 2024). While its exact historiographical origin remains subject to localized commercial debates, its rapid evolution from an affordable student meal into a ubiquitous nationwide

culinary staple demonstrates the dynamic adaptability, grassroots resilience, and democratic nature of Indonesian street food architecture (Putri & Setiawan, 2020).

To systematically evaluate the intersection of these two highly distinct, independent culinary traditions, the analytical framework is mapped directly against the operational stages of cross-cultural contact, moving from macro-contact to reciprocal modification, and ultimately to distinct cultural creation.

The first stage is defined as Adaptation or Macro-Contact, which occurs when distinct cultural groups or their material artifacts interact within a shared, highly dynamic market space (Koentjaraningrat, 1985). As conceptualized by Koentjaraningrat (1985) in his contact theory, foreign cultural elements are gradually introduced to a host community through trade, institutional placement, or media dissemination. In this case study, Croissant Geprek perfectly fits this operational baseline. The widespread physical availability, technological replication, and commercial normalization of the French croissant across various socio-economic tiers in urban Indonesian centers established the necessary structural contact (Tarigan, 2018). Without this initial phase of widespread market familiarity, where the croissant ceased to be an exotic luxury and instead became a standard commodified pastry base, subsequent cross-cultural hybridization would lack an empirical and commercial foundation. The host community must first decode the foreign object before attempting to structurally manipulate it.

The second stage transitions into Integration or Reciprocal Modification, which aligns directly with Berry's (2019) ecocultural framework. This framework rejects the reductionist view of globalization as passive assimilation or cultural homogenization, positing instead that local actors exercise strategic agency, selectively incorporating foreign elements while maintaining their own core cultural integrity (Berry, 2019). The Croissant Geprek fits this concept precisely because the deployment of the traditional Javanese *geprek* technique onto a European pastry matrix represents an active, highly strategic choice by domestic operators (Puspita & Yunita, 2024). The global commodity is intentionally modified via physical compression and mechanical flattening—often using specialized commercial waffle irons—to accommodate local savory-spicy sensory expectations and functional street-food eating formats. This process is reciprocal: the croissant surrenders its traditional vertical, airy volume to absorb the local filling, while the *geprek* infrastructure transcends its traditional rice-and-chicken boundary to inhabit a Western bakery casing. This ensures that the core identities of both contributing cultures coexist in a high-intensity negotiation, rather than one erasing the other.

The final stage achieves full manifestation in Cultural Creation, often conceptualized through the "Third Chair" framework (Wilczewska, 2023). Transcending traditional bidimensional acculturation models that only measure movement back and forth between global and local poles, this stage reflects Wilczewska's (2023) Tridimensional Process-Oriented Acculturation Model. Croissant Geprek demonstrates full structural alignment with this framework as it cannot be categorized as a mere midpoint compromise, a superficial garnish, or a static mixture of two separate entities. Applying Wilczewska's "baking process" analogy—where individual raw ingredients react under heat to form an entirely separate state of matter—the direct structural and chemical interaction of these two high-identity gastronomic components yields an entirely independent culinary category (Wilczewska, 2023). The resulting product possesses a texture, consumption ritual, and flavor complexity that belongs neither exclusively to French pastry protocol nor to traditional Indonesian street-side dining. By establishing its own distinct operational, technical, and symbolic space in the market, the Croissant Geprek transforms from a temporary mashup into a novel, qualitative cultural creation that defines a new niche within contemporary urban gastronomy.

Operational, Cultural, and Sustainability Challenges

Gastronomic Technique and Textural Integrity

The primary operational difficulty in combining these two distinct culinary forms lies in the physical and thermodynamic incompatibility of their structural properties. The traditional French croissant relies on structural crispness, high vertical volume, and distinct internal air layering achieved via complex fat lamination and water-vapor expansion during baking (Honova et al., 2002; Indra et al.,

2019). Introducing moist, high-water-activity condiments like Indonesian *sambal* directly threatens this delicate multi-layered matrix, accelerating starch retrogradation and causing the pastry to turn soggy almost immediately.

Furthermore, processing the croissant in a mechanical waffle iron—the defining step in fabricating Croissant Geprek—deliberately flattens the laminated dough matrix. This structural deconstruction requires precise temperature and time calibration; improper thermal exposure will either char the exterior butter layers or fail to heat the internal poultry filling, making strict operational standardization mandatory to ensure the chicken remains crunchy while the compressed exterior retains an acceptable flaky profile.

Flavor Profiling and Sensory Calibration

Balancing opposing taste spectrums represents a complex sensory engineering challenge within contemporary fusion gastronomy. The baseline flavor profile of a classic French pastry is fat-dense, dairy-driven, and sweet-savory, which must interact directly with the high-intensity, capsicum-driven chemical burn of traditional Indonesian *sambal* (Prabowo & Wijaya, 2021; Puspita & Yunita, 2024).

Achieving structural product stability requires rigorous sensory experimentation to ensure that the pungent, volatile sulfur compounds in garlic and shallots do not completely overwhelm the delicate, short-chain fatty acid characteristics of the imported butter base. If the spice concentration is too high, the product loses its cross-cultural identity and becomes an ordinary street snack; if it is too low, it fails to satisfy the domestic palate's preference for high-intensity sensory delivery.

Cultural Authenticity and Resistance

Because regional culinary traditions function as core institutional markers of national identity, cross-cultural experimentation frequently encounters consumer resistance and ideological pushback. Conservative culinary factions within the domestic market often view the integration of premium European bakery products into grassroots street food formats as an artificial degradation of *ayam geprek*'s working-class authenticity and cultural heritage (Putri & Setiawan, 2020).

Conversely, Western culinary purists criticize the deliberate physical flattening and mechanical deconstruction of a laminated pastry as a total disregard for classic baking protocols, framing the hybrid commodity as a gastronomic anomaly rather than a legitimate innovation. Food operators must navigate these conflicting consumer perceptions, transforming the product's narrative from an eccentric gimmick into a valid form of contemporary cultural hybridity (Herminingrum, 2017).

Supply Chain and Commodity Management

From a procurement and supply chain perspective, the production of Croissant Geprek demands the continuous synchronization of two distinct, highly unaligned raw material streams. Premium laminated pastry production requires specialized, highly structured inputs—such as high-softening-point dry butter (fats) and high-protein wheat flour—which cannot be produced domestically and remain heavily import-dependent in Indonesia (Tarigan, 2018).

Conversely, the core components of the *geprek* infrastructure rely entirely on local agricultural commodities, namely fresh bird's eye chili, shallots, and broiler poultry—which are subject to severe climate shocks, seasonal supply disruptions, and extreme domestic price volatility (Puspita & Yunita, 2024). Managing the cost-efficiency of these dual streams is highly difficult, requiring tight margin management to keep the final retail price accessible to middle-class urban consumers without sacrificing baseline ingredient quality.

Market Saturation and Trend Sustainability

A critical commercial risk for contemporary fusion food innovations is their operational tendency to function as short-term viral phenomena driven by digital media algorithms, rather than sustainable market commodities. Consumer segments motivated primarily by novelty consumption often abandon hybrid products rapidly once the initial marketing saturation peaks and the social media traction declines.

To prevent rapid product obsolescence and ensure long-term corporate survival, food and beverage operators face the continuous challenge of managing product lifecycles through systematic line extensions, such as introducing regional spice variations or alternative structural fillings, to transition the item from a temporary digital trend into a normalized, permanent category within urban retail gastronomy (Suryani et al., 2022).

Market Evolution and Digital Media Traction

Since its initial commercial introduction, Croissant Geprek has transitioned from a localized, digitally amplified viral novelty into a highly structured, permanent niche segment within contemporary urban consumer markets (Tarigan, 2018). Originally confined to independent fusion cafés, experimental culinary laboratories, and pop-up weekend markets in major metropolitan centers like Jakarta, Bandung, and Yogyakarta, the product's distribution network has undergone systematic corporate scaling and market formalization (Suryani et al., 2022).

Empirical market tracking confirms that this hybrid commodity has moved beyond the highly fragmented informal food sector and is now integrated into the permanent, standardized product portfolios of established contemporary bakery chains and fast-casual dining brands, such as *Dear Butter* and *Fika Cakes*, alongside various organized urban food truck cooperatives (Prabowo & Wijaya, 2021). This formalized distribution expansion allows operators to achieve economies of scale and establish predictable production lines, transitioning the commodity from an erratic, short-term trend into an institutionalized culinary asset that systematically captures diverse consumer demographics—ranging from budget-conscious university students to middle-class corporate workers and regional culinary tourists (Tarigan, 2018; Suryani et al., 2022).

The commercial scaling and long-term stabilization of Croissant Geprek within the competitive food retail market are heavily accelerated by systematic product diversification strategies designed to satisfy distinct consumer sub-segments and maximize marketplace penetration (Suryani et al., 2022). The commercial introduction of the *Cheese Croissant Geprek*, which integrates melted low-moisture mozzarella or high-viscosity cheddar sauce, provides a high-fat, savory profile tailored precisely to younger consumer cohorts that prioritize creamy textures, heavy mouthfeel, and high-calorie sensory satisfaction (Prabowo & Wijaya, 2021). Meanwhile, the *Sambal Matah Croissant Geprek* strategically substitutes the heavy, oil-dense traditional Javanese chili paste with a fresh, raw, aromatic Balinese lemongrass-shallot condiment, offering a distinct regional variation that appeals to health-conscious consumers or those seeking lighter, more complex flavor profiles (Puspita & Yunita, 2024).

Additionally, premium upmarket adaptations have emerged within high-density metropolitan sectors, replacing traditional low-cost poultry with high-grade savory shredded beef, slow-cooked brisket, or smoked mutton. This specific material substitution allows upscale food and beverage establishments to justify significantly higher retail price points and larger profit margins, effectively targeting higher socio-economic consumer brackets and elite gastronomic segments that associate fusion pastries with premium lifestyle markers (Tarigan, 2018; Prabowo & Wijaya, 2021).

Data from digital media monitoring indicates that the domestic popularity, consumer acquisition rates, and commercial sustainability of this hybrid dish are structurally reinforced by algorithmic amplification on visual-centric social media platforms (Suryani et al., 2022). On TikTok and Instagram, specialized search parameters, user-generated content (UGC), and short-form video metrics associated with contemporary fusion food adaptations—specifically surrounding the hashtag #CroissantGeprek and localized food review challenges—generated millions of organic impressions between 2024 and the present year of 2026.

Micro-influencers, culinary content creators, and digital food vloggers drive this consumer reception by producing high-definition, multi-sensory video reviews that strategically showcase the audible crunch of the pressed pastry, leveraging Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR) marketing trends, alongside the vibrant visual contrast of the red *sambal* against the golden, caramelized laminated dough (Prabowo & Wijaya, 2021; Suryani et al., 2022).

This digital word-of-mouth structurally transforms the physical product from a simple food item into a form of social currency, digital visibility, and lifestyle performance for the consuming youth (Tarigan, 2018). Consequently, this intense algorithmic visibility drives consistent, predictable foot traffic to physical retail outlets, reduces customer acquisition costs for bakery operators, and generates measurable demand spikes across urban retail food sectors, illustrating how digital media platforms function not merely as communication channels, but as active co-creators of contemporary culinary demand and market normalization within urban Indonesian sectors (Prabowo & Wijaya, 2021; Suryani et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

The process of cultural acculturation in the food industry has become a very important strategy for businesses to survive in today's globalized market. This study shows that combining the classic French croissant, which is famous for its buttery, multi-layered texture, with the Indonesian *ayam geprek* tradition, which is known for its crunchy texture and spicy chili paste (*sambal*), is a very successful example of mixing two completely different food styles.

By looking at this product through the stages of acculturation, this research proves that the development of Croissant Geprek goes through a clear process, starting from the first market contact, moving to a stage of mutual modification, and finally creating a completely new product category. By flattening the pastry with a waffle iron and adding local spicy ingredients, this product is no longer just a simple variation of a croissant, but it has become a brand-new, independent food category in the Indonesian urban food scene.

Market data tracked from 2018 to 2026 shows that Croissant Geprek has successfully grown from a short-term internet trend into a stable and permanent business segment in Indonesia's big cities. Its popularity is heavily supported by social media algorithms on platforms like TikTok and Instagram, as well as the creation of new flavor variants like *Sambal Matah* and cheese toppings to attract different types of customers.

However, for this product to stay successful in the long run, business owners and bakery chains must solve several practical problems. These challenges include keeping the taste balanced so the spicy chili does not ruin the buttery flavor of the pastry, managing the changing prices of local ingredients like fresh chili and chicken, and handling some customer resistance from people who prefer traditional, unmodified local food.

Despite these useful insights, this study has a clear limitation because it only used secondary data, such as academic papers, market reports, and online documentation from social media. Because there was no direct field observation, lab testing, or face-to-face interviews with real customers, this paper cannot measure exact customer satisfaction levels or the specific cooking adjustments made in different restaurant kitchens.

To fix this limitation, future research needs to move toward direct field-based studies. It is highly recommended that future researchers use customer surveys, direct taste-testing panels, and real financial tracking inside bakery businesses. This will provide a much more complete and practical understanding of how fusion food products can survive over a long period in the competitive Indonesian food industry.

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