



A Socio-Cultural Study of Food: Its Significance and Impact on Social Bonds in the Context of Change Case Study of a Sample of Families in Algiers

ABED Mahdia

University of Algiers 2-
Algiers

mahdia.abed@univ-alger2.dz

Abstract

Our article addresses food as a social phenomenon with cultural, material, and symbolic dimensions. Its necessity extends beyond the biological aspect, carrying meanings that affirm it as a social product and a cultural construct.

Food represents one of the characteristics of society that undergoes change across various dimensions. The changes explored in our study pertain to culinary habits, including the preparation of dishes and their connection to traditional heritage on one hand, and modern trends and development on the other. Additionally, we examine shifts in meal times, dining etiquette, and the act of sharing meals, all of which are influenced by contemporary lifestyles shaped by the practices of modernization.

Finally, we explore the evolving role of food as a communicative system that strengthens, repairs, and shapes social relationships.

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1. Introduction

The culture of food among different peoples is inseparable from the broader culture of society. Each community strives to root its identity by distinguishing itself through its food culture, which represents one of the unique characteristics of that society. Food serves as a witness to various transformations and changes—social, economic, cultural, and beyond—that have made it a fertile field for research and study across disciplines concerned with food and nutrition. These disciplines attempt to examine the form and content of dietary habits, table manners, and the interaction between food and human biological needs, which are met through daily meals. This interaction reflects the relationship between humans and nature, as well as their social environment, manifesting in levels of production, processing, consumption, and preservation, along with various techniques such as drying, freezing, salting, and cooking in its diverse forms.

This transformation is not only technical but also symbolic. Food is no longer merely a response to a biological need (filling the stomach); its role extends far beyond that. It points to a cultural construct that transcends nutritional content to encompass social, economic, psychological, and political dimensions.

Food influences various social relationships, both in their general and specific meanings, within a value system

that varies from one society to another depending on cultural differences. It strengthens and enhances relationships between individuals, fostering

communication, which is embodied in certain behaviors, habits, and ritualistic practices. These practices are often linked to specific occasions such as celebrations and mourning, which are centered around food. Food also serves as a factor in forming new relationships that may surpass kinship ties based on blood relations.

In Algerian society, particularly within families, food is an important and fundamental subject due to the multiple meanings, connotations, and symbols it carries. These are tied to the various functions it serves for individuals, the relationships it fosters, and the goals it achieves, all within the framework of norms and rules that govern the dining table, both within the family and beyond.

Given the above, our topic of discussion concerns food within the context of social and cultural change, particularly in terms of its content, habits, and social functions, especially in relation to social bonds.

Problematic:

Food, as a subject of thought, has been identified and described as a social, historical, cultural, material, and symbolic phenomenon, connected to all dimensions of existence and the social system. Food has been linked to identity, health, geography, cultural traits, the body, technology, religion, and other forms and issues. This connection has allowed for various systems of understanding and interpretation across different eras, eliminating the idea of separation between the eater and the eaten, and affirming that human existence is conditioned by food, though the nature of the later is culturally determined.¹

Food is essential for life, but in human societies, it is not merely present, served, or consumed in ways dictated solely by biological needs. It carries multiple meanings that help regulate social relationships. Kinship ties, in particular, are governed by laws, customs, traditions, and norms, all of which are socially inherited and understood by members of the same society, who learn them to explain and organize social relationships among themselves.

The social significance of food has attracted the attention of many thinkers, including sociologists and anthropologists such as Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes. They consider food a phenomenon with social factors that play a role in determining its patterns. There are a set of factors behind essential needs and demand determination. Food culture is a collection of practices, habits, rituals, and techniques that indicate the relationship between nature and culture, emphasizing the functions of food beyond biology. Food carries symbols that reflect ethics and values within the societal value system, such as generosity, solidarity, reassurance, combating illness, and meal-sharing, all of which result in food bonds with social symbolism, whether in general social relationships or kinship ties in particular. Food also effectively functions as a system of communication.

Through this research, we aim to shed light on the significance of food in Algerian society, whose social and cultural position is defined between two cultural models (traditional and modern) that characterize its various systems. Food, as a phenomenon for study and

research, has cultural backgrounds and social meanings that include symbolic and moral tools related to multiple aspects of life. What concerns us in this discussion is its relationship with social bonds within values framed by traditional and modern references. Our questions revolve around the nature of the social meanings of food and its relationship with social bonds in both general and specific senses.

Concepts:

Significance:Linguistically:

"significance" (دلالة) is derived from "دل" (to indicate), meaning evidence or indication.²

Terminology:

It is defined by Pierre Guiraud as the proposition through which a thing, being, concept, or event is linked to a sign that can be suggested.³

Samia Ahmed defines it as the process of adding and clarifying a set of meanings to interpret a scene or theatrical performance, such as visual, auditory, and kinetic elements.⁴ The social and psychological significance of food is well-known and has been defined by human studies scholars. Food, invitations to eat, and sharing meals, like gifts and their exchange, are means of communication and interaction among people, eliminating aggression and distancing danger or threats that may come from others.⁵

Food:

Food is any substance that an organism can convert into energy and cell building. It is composed of calories, proteins, fats, minerals, and carbohydrates. From an anthropological perspective, food is a product of societal organization and a mirror of society,

whether at the broadest or most intimate levels. It is linked to many types of behavior and carries endless meanings. It absorbs and reflects a set of cultural phenomena, as ways of dealing with food influence the formation of society, personality, and family⁶. Food, therefore, is a tool for expressing a specific culture and shaping interactions among humans. It reflects the identity that forms society and serves as a classificatory criterion distinguishing traditional from modern societies. Its pattern and form are determined by the environment.

Social Bond:

Social bonds are everything that connects people and ties them together, whether materially or symbolically, making them interdependent and consistent. Among the traits of bonds are connection, adherence, commitment, and consistency. Thus, bonds are the ties and threads that bring people together, regardless of their nature—be it blood-related, traditional, or modern.

Social bonds, therefore, are the sum of ties and commitments that make people feel they are members of a single group with shared values, norms, and ideals, whether these ties and commitments are traditional and blood-related or modern, formal, voluntary, and free⁷. The social relationships that bind members of a particular society are subject to evolution, disintegration, tension, and disturbance, influenced by their surroundings, making them non-static.

Social Change:

Social change refers to the emergence of observable differences in social structure, social habits, or tools and

machines that did not exist before. In other words, it refers to the process that leads to differences in subject, system, rule, or value compared to a previous state⁸, it is a transformation and alteration that affects the social structure at various levels, from simple to complex, and is reflected in the values and norms that regulate individual behaviors according to social expectations aligned with change.

Social change, therefore, occurs in the social system and the relationships it encompasses, as well as in various social structures and institutions, including the family and all that pertains to it. It influences values, norms, roles, and practices, manifesting in the permanent modification of individual behaviors due to their connection to the continuity of change.

Food: A Relationship Between Nature and Culture:

Interest in the subject of food dates back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when early pioneers in anthropology focused more on description than analysis. However, this soon shifted toward adopting theoretical and dominant approaches in studying food, particularly in linking it to culture, ethnicity, and religious rituals. Research thus turned to discussing the key topics raised by cultural anthropology in the study of food and highlighting the most important studies that addressed it.

Functionalists and structuralists began studying food in the 20th century. Functionalists attempted to describe food habits as a type of ritual behavior that supports the production of a stable society. They identified values and norms in eating patterns that serve as symbols for broader

structures within society as a whole. They found that habits foreign to a society may have functions that help strengthen its cohesion. They also emphasized the utilitarian nature of food and prioritized its material traits.⁹

This approach was criticized for analyzing patterns and processes within a fixed and stable framework. Early anthropologists such as Bronisław Malinowski, Edward Evans-Pritchard, and Margaret Mead focused on the social meaning of food while analyzing the results of their fieldwork, giving priority to the symbolic meaning of food. They considered food an important element in building individual and collective identities in traditional societies, intertwined with power relations, gender, kinship, and social structure.¹⁰

Food culture is a set of practices, habits, norms, and techniques applied to food and eating. It includes food production, distribution, and consumption, as well as many issues related to our daily lives. Food was not a primary focus for early anthropologists, but they were interested in it as a means of discovering other features of a particular society.

The Function and Significance of Food:

Food has multiple functions, some of which we will address:

Religious Significance: There are prophetic sayings about food and drink and their relationship to affection and mercy among believers¹¹. Islam encourages charity and feeding others, as food and drink are among the blessings God has bestowed upon humans, necessitating gratitude and praise.

Educational Significance: Food is an opportunity to instill concepts, values, and principles in children to correct behavior through family gatherings for meals. It is also an opportunity for parents to learn about their children's preferences and aversions. Eating together as a family is an indicator of the strength or weakness of relationships and the level of communication among individuals.¹²

Food as a Social Ritual: Sharing or distributing food according to certain principles can bring peace and harmony. Participation in eating symbolizes all types of relationships, as the way of eating, determined by a community's culture, reflects the identity of the society, as well as its principles and intellectual and aesthetic patterns.¹³

Collective eating, whether in tribal patterns within a primitive culture or urban patterns within a civilized culture, requires respect as a primary principle—respect for the food, the effort put into preparing it, and the people eating together.

Food as a Tool for Hospitality:

Hospitality practices and table manners vary today across cultures. In some cultures, the guest eats first and is served the largest portion, expected to finish it regardless of quantity. Finishing all the food served indicates respect and acknowledgment of the delicious taste.¹⁴

Food as a Means of Expression: Food carries meanings in all occasions and rituals. The meaning of celebration, for example, is that we share food, becoming one body. When a tribe eats our food, they become like us, or when we eat their food, we become like them. Relationships and

bonds resembling kinship ties are formed between us.

Theoretical Framework of Social Bonds:

Social bonds are an important topic in sociology and anthropology, studied by many researchers attempting to analyze their nature, causes, types, and goals. Attempts have been made to break down social bonds and relationships into their simplest units to explain them and identify the key characteristics of society amid changes, such as rapid urbanization and accompanying social, economic, and cultural phenomena.

For Ibn Khaldun, the social bond is represented by the phenomenon of "asabiyya" (group solidarity), which sociologists have translated as "social solidarity," "tribal cohesion," "kinship by blood," and "social cohesion by blood." It also refers to a psychological, conscious, and unconscious social bond that connects members of a group, based on kinship, which becomes stronger when the group is threatened. For Ibn Khaldun, "asabiyya" transforms the "I" into "we" and "we" into "I," emphasizing cohesion and solidarity, particularly in Bedouin societies, where it arises from kinship and is rooted in unity of lineage and blood ties, aiming to foster affection¹⁵. With kinship, the tribe is established. Auguste Comte explained the social bond through his discussion of the law of social solidarity. The family is the first social bond, followed by groups of families, then unions and collective bodies that come together in nations and other forms of human gatherings. He believed that the basis of social cohesion and the division of social labor is what he called "general consensus" or "collective agreement."

Every social force results from the cooperation and coordination of activities among a large or small number of individuals, leading to the formation of social bonds and relationships, which begin with the alignment of ideas among individuals, termed "consistency" or "harmony." Without harmony in ideas, individuals cannot cohere or bond¹⁶. Durkheim also addressed the topic of social bonds in his book **The Division of Labor in Society**, where his focus was on social solidarity, which forms the basis of the transition from traditional, simple societies to modern, complex ones.

If we attempt to refer to studies on bonds in Algerian society, they are few compared to other topics. We cannot fail to mention Addi Houari, who addressed the various transformations Algerian society underwent after independence. The change was particularly evident in the Algerian family, encompassing all different social bonds, starting with rural migration to cities, which, in his view, led to what he called the "crisis of the social bond," as it shifted from strong blood ties to modern, interest-based bonds¹⁷. Hamid Aït Amara also tackled the topic of building social bonds in modern societies, focusing on how social relationships form and evolve, the factors that influence societal cohesion and solidarity, and the various challenges facing social bonds amid economic, cultural, and political transformations. Through this study, he concluded that this construction is not easy, given the many dimensions encompassed by individualism in Algerian society¹⁸. Rachid Hamdouch approached this topic within the cultural duality of tradition/modernity, concluding that there

are three types of social bonds: local (traditional) social bonds, where the individual is connected and attached to the local group; modern or contractual social bonds; and an intermediate, unstable type that lies between the traditional local and the modern contractual.¹⁹

This is the same approach we adopted in addressing the relationship between food and social bonds, focusing on the various changes that have affected food in terms of associated habits, meanings, and their impact on social bonds within the traditional/modern cultural models.

The Relationship Between Food and Social Bonds:

Food establishes human gatherings. Through its tables, relationships are strengthened and solidarity is reinforced. In its absence or scarcity, conflicts and competition intensify, as the desired consensus cannot be achieved without food and drink. In all religious and social occasions, regardless of their nature and purpose, food must be present. Food communication helps strengthen social bonds, enhance statuses, and reinforce opportunities for competition or solidarity. As an Irish proverb says, "All problems are solved at the dining table."

Dietary habits are the history of society and can be defined as encompassing all behaviors and practices followed in preparing, managing, and using food. They are the ways in which food is produced, consumed, and managed, justified, and maintained through social upbringing patterns. Reflecting on the dining table and comparing the past and

present confirms that significant changes have occurred in dietary behavior patterns, connected to the transition from the collective to the individual, from the simple to the complex, influenced by numerous factors we can summarize as follows:

- Educational level
- Colonization
- Migration to cities
- Celebration formats and accompanying rites of passage
- Monthly income

The impact of these factors is reflected in dietary habits, which in turn affect social relationships. Food, therefore, is a social and cultural product²⁰, that determines the nature of society, its social formations, conflicts, solidarities, and competitions. It is a window for reading action and interaction and justifying societal practices. It strengthens social relationships among individuals and groups.

Results of the Field Study:

Research Methodology:

In the field research, we relied on a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews in case studies. Data were analyzed using content analysis (thematic analysis). The sample was determined using a non-probabilistic method, consisting of 14 volunteer families from the Algiers region.

Sample Characteristics:

The table represents the characteristics of the studied cases.

Here is the data organized into a table:

Case	Number of Family	Family Member	Age	Family Type	Education Level	Living Standard
Case 1	08	- Father - Mother - Children - Son's wife - Son's son	66-61	Extended	Primary Middle	Average
Case 2	05	- Father - Mother - 3 Children	51-52	Nuclear	Secondary University	Good
Case 3	04	- Father - Mother - 2 Children	56-53	Nuclear	Secondary Secondary	Average
Case 4	05	- Father - Mother - 3 Children	67-62	Nuclear	University University	Good
Case 5	07	- Father - Mother - 5 Children	55-50	Nuclear	Secondary Secondary	Good
Case 6	05	- Father - Mother - 3 Children	69-60	Nuclear	Middle Illiterate	Moderate
Case 7	07	- Father - Mother - 6 Children	48-40	Nuclear	University University	Good
Case 8	06	- Father - Mother - Son - Wife - Children	70-68	Extended	Middle Middle	Good
Case 9	04	- Mother - 3 Children	55	Nuclear	Primary	Good
Case 10	03	- Father - Mother - 1 Daughter	72-52	Nuclear	University Secondary	Good
Case 11	05	- Father - Mother - 3 Children	67-56	Nuclear	Secondary University	Good
Case 12	04	- Father - Mother - 2 Children	63-55	Nuclear	University Secondary	Good
Case 13	04	- Father - Mother - 2 Children	68-57	Nuclear	Middle Middle	Poor
Case 14	04	- Mother - 3 Children	63	Nuclear	Illiterate	Poor

The number of family members in the studied households ranges from 3 to 8, with 9/14 cases having between 4 and 5 members, 2/14 cases having 7 members, and 1/14 cases each having 8, 6, and 3 members. Most families are of moderate size, indicating a balance between the large size associated with traditional family norms and the smaller size dictated by modern values of birth control. This has influenced the family type, with the nuclear family predominating.

The age of respondents ranges from 72 to 48 for males and 68 to 40 for females. Family members, particularly parents, belong to the independence generation, which experienced change in all its imensions and measures, especially in adopting modernity, reflected in the nuclear family type (13/14 cases) and the educational level, which is predominantly secondary and university, followed by average, primary, and illiterate, with no distinction between males and females.

The living standard of families is mostly good (7/14 cases), followed by average (3/14 cases), good (2/14 cases), and poor (2/14 cases).

Many economic studies agree that the living standard in Algerian society is improving, though its indicators are difficult to determine. According to respondents, a good living standard is associated with conditions that align with modern life, including luxury and a consumer culture based on constantly renewing needs, transforming what was once a luxury into a necessity. The average living standard is defined by the availability of basic necessities, allowing individuals to live with dignity, as stated

by respondents (Case 3 Mother – Case 6 Father), with dignity meaning not needing others. The good standard is characterized by the absence of pressure in meeting various needs, unlike the poor standard, where Cases 13 and 14 face many difficulties in meeting needs, especially in the current era where needs have multiplied, and appearances have gained importance.

Significance of Food:

For respondents, food is an important and essential element due to its social and cultural dimensions, which emerged from our extraction of the meanings it carries for them, as follows:

- Food, with all its meanings, represents one of the manifestations of societal culture.
- It is a source and manifestation of social solidarity and support.
- Food serves the function of strengthening social relationships, including kinship ties.
- Food carries religious significance, represented in responding to one of the commandments of Islam, which is to feed the poor, the needy, neighbors, relatives, and travelers without exception.
- Food strengthens kinship ties and enhances relationships.
- Through food, reconciliation is achieved, as the dining table serves as a medium for resolving conflicts and disputes, in addition to reducing enmity, which Islam prohibits.

These meanings are associated with the positive impact on social relationships, represented in strengthening, supporting, and enhancing or in reconciliation and

repair. They also represent a form and manifestation of social solidarity.

Food also has a metaphysical dimension, represented in:

- Food charity that wards off calamities and misfortunes: "Charity wards off calamity and prolongs life."
- Food charity in anticipation of a specific event, such as recovery from illness, among other matters, hoping for God's favor by offering food as charity.
- Food charity is also a means of giving thanks when certain awaited matters are achieved.
- Food has a material significance, as it represents a source of livelihood, especially in the current era. With development and change, it has gained significant importance, as individuals now work in food-related fields at a basic personal level, such as preparing and selling certain dishes and sweets at home, and at a larger level, as seen in restaurants of various specializations, including traditional ones. There has also been significant development in a task that was once practiced on a very small and simple scale—cooking for occasions and feasts—which has now become a regular, institutionalized practice. This profession has also developed in schools and academic education, whether in vocational training or higher levels such as specialized schools.
- Food has become an element of boasting, as it indicates living standards and social belonging.

Food and Identity:

Food, in its cultural dimension, contributes to shaping individuals' identities. Through food, their belonging to a specific culture or their difference

from it becomes evident. Respondents, regardless of age or gender, unanimously stated that Algerian cuisine is one of the landmarks of Algerian culture, and they are proud of it, especially given the awards it has won in various local, regional, and even international competitions. "Algerian food is unparalleled," "We have all types of cooking that express our culture and belonging, from simple and economical to complex and expensive dishes." All respondents' statements were in this direction, with some even considering the abandonment of traditional cooking in occasions and feasts as affecting Algerian identity. "We now cook anything at our weddings, n'importe quoi," changing traditional dishes for modern ones or modifying them, or presenting dishes unrelated to the original culture, indicates a lack of cultural belonging markers. This situation was observed in 6/14 cases (parents). Conversely, others see modification and change as positive, as the law of change is inevitable. Cultures must evolve, change, and open up to other cultures.

Changes in Food Habits:

Food is a social given and a cultural product subject to change like all phenomena. It has undergone changes in many aspects.

- In terms of dish preparation, which has become a measure of development and keeping up with the times, all respondents confirmed this, with differences regarding acceptance or rejection of change and a middle stance that accepts change within certain limits without rigid adherence to tradition.

- For daily meals, there is a group whose daily diet is mostly based on traditional dishes, while modern and new dishes are prepared occasionally. The justification for this is habit on one hand and the variety and quality of traditional dishes on the other, which suffice to offer many different types of food with the required nutritional value.

The second group's diet is a mix of traditional and modern dishes, and even those from other cultures, such as Asian cuisine.

Despite the diversity of dishes and attempts to prepare a varied table with new dishes and cuisines, imitating Western societies, especially with the spread of fast food and dishes from other cultures, traditional dishes have not been abandoned, even if it requires purchasing them. For example, on Fridays, most families prepare couscous, chakhchoukha, or rechta, among other traditional dishes. The family gathers for these meals, and the same applies to religious holidays.

A minority of families (3/14 cases) do not give importance to these dishes and rarely prepare them, opting for modern dishes on the grounds that they are healthy and easy to prepare, while consuming traditional dishes at restaurants (traditional restaurants).

Eating out is a foreign culture to Algerian society, but it is spreading more and more. However, in our sample, most families eat at home (9/14 cases) and go to restaurants on occasions such as birthdays, children's academic success, end-of-exam celebrations, or when there is tension and anxiety, and family situations are unstable,

to relieve stress and break the daily routine. 2/14 cases eat out almost every weekend, in addition to some occasions and during holidays.

2/14 cases rarely go to restaurants due to lack of means.

The only time the family gathers regularly is for dinner. Other meal times, such as breakfast and lunch, are irregular, and not all family members gather due to parents' work and children's studies or work, leading them to either eat outside or wait until evening to return home.

8/14 cases stated that gathering around the table is important and not to be neglected, especially as it is the only time everyone gathers to share food and talk. No one is allowed to miss dinner except in extreme cases such as illness or absence. "It's the only time we gather together to talk, consult, and laugh, especially with social media separating the family." Gathering around the table has become a safeguard against the social isolation imposed by social media.

Regarding food and gender/age discrimination: Many habits have disappeared, though they persist among a minority, such as separating food between males and females and between adults and children. "We don't have a problem; we prefer to eat all together, women and men, adults and children. When there are many, the children eat separately, the men separately, and the women separately," in cases where separation occurs due to limited space and resources, such as chairs and utensils, preventing everyone from gathering at the table.

Food as a Communicative System:

As Roland Barthes confirmed, food is a set of communicative signs and images²¹. For respondents, the dining table is not limited to sharing food but also serves as a means of communication and conversation. Gatherings around the table organize various details of daily life, revealing dietary behavior, social positions, cultural backgrounds, and beliefs produced by food, evident in the changes that have affected it, as discussed earlier.

For some families, gathering around the table is conditional on certain elements: time, work, technological factors, changing values, etc. The family no longer gathers fully and regularly except for dinner, the only time that allows for gathering, eating, and communicating with each other, discussing family matters and even problems. "Each of us spends time at school or work, and we only meet at the end of the day, so I insist that everyone gathers for dinner to share food, talk, consult, and laugh."

Respondents' statements suggest anxiety about social isolation, for reasons mentioned earlier. Among the solutions to confront and resist this situation is maintaining gatherings around the table and sharing meals. Preserving family relationships is not limited to the nuclear family but also includes kinship ties, especially those related to parents and siblings.

Some respondents view maintaining kinship ties as very important and are unwilling to abandon them, regardless of the cost, as they believe they will be held accountable for it. "When too much time passes without meeting my brothers and

sisters, I invite them for coffee and sweets. We meet to relieve the pain of separation, spend time together, exchange news, and then each goes home."

"Even if there are no occasions, we create opportunities to meet and spend time together; this is necessary."

The dining table is a means of acquaintance and forming new social relationships. Feasts are held with the aim of getting to know each other and establishing new social bonds, such as marital relationships, which are strengthened in their early stages by feasting on food, as well as neighborly relationships, which begin by welcoming a new neighbor with food or hosting them as an expression of good reception and a desire to consider them as relatives (kinship of salt).

Respondents, especially those aged between 72 and 55 (parents), expressed discomfort and dissatisfaction with the absence of such habits related to various occasions, which are primarily based on food and gatherings, particularly weddings or funerals. This has led to a decline in kinship bonds and a reduction in family gatherings and meetings.

Respondents justified this situation by:

- Accumulation of tasks between professional obligations and daily life requirements.
- High cost of living and lack of means.
- Changing mentalities.

The combination of these reasons forms the characteristics of the lifestyle that has changed the values, norms, practices, and habits of individuals. This has led some respondents to limit their gatherings with relatives to occasions only, while preferring social relationships outside the

kinship framework. "We prefer outsiders over brothers," "A brother not born of your mother." This preference is due to conflicts and problems among siblings and even relatives, some related to inheritance, a problem mentioned by most cases, and others with trivial reasons, as stated by respondents, such as jealousy, lack of consideration, and envy.

Food is also used in contractual contexts to conclude deals and achieve certain interests and needs within or outside institutional frameworks.

Deduction:

The meanings associated with food are linked to a traditional perspective shaped by the values and norms internalized by respondents, which continue to influence society. On the other hand, they are connected to a modern perspective, particularly in the material significance of food and the evolution of some practices, modified and institutionalized within modern organization.

Food remains a marker of identity. For some, preserving it requires maintaining original cooking, while for others, it involves keeping up with change by opening up to the world without abandoning the original.

Food has undergone changes due to several factors, including lifestyle, consumer culture, the rise in individuals' educational levels, and the shift from extended to nuclear families. This has led to a decline in kinship relationships and food-related gatherings as they were in the past.

Conclusion:

In this research, we have addressed the relationship between food and social bonds, as they cannot be separated, considering that food is one of the factors that strengthen and support social bonds through various manifestations and meanings it carries across social, cultural, and economic dimensions.

Food is not merely dishes that fill the table and stomachs; it holds great importance for society due to its role in the communicative process that influences social bonds in general and kinship ties in particular, either by strengthening and supporting them or by weakening and making them fragile.

The topic is highly significant, with socio-cultural and anthropological dimensions, forming a fertile field for study. What we have addressed in this research is only a limited aspect, and many other aspects remain open for research and study by various disciplines, especially sociology and anthropology.

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