The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Food Authenticity and Emotional Connections in Cooking

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Master of Science (MSc) in International Food and Wine

Name:
Dhanush Sudesh

Student ID:
2107554

Supervisor:
Professor Paride Bollettin

University:
Università degli studi di Padova

Abstract :

As Artificial Intelligence (AI) increasingly enters domestic kitchens from recipe generation to robotic chefs it raises questions about what may be lost beyond the efficiency it promises. This thesis investigates how AI impacts food authenticity and emotional connection in cooking, especially within cultures where food is deeply tied to memory, identity, and tradition.

Combining a literature review with surveys and in-depth interviews across generational and cultural lines, this research examines how people perceive food prepared by AI. The findings reveal a nuanced landscape: younger generations tend to embrace AI as a tool for convenience and creativity, while older generations express skepticism, valuing the human presence, rituals, and stories that shape culinary meaning. AI is seen as competent in technique but lacking in emotional depth struggling to replicate the intention, care, and memory embedded in family recipes and festive meals.

The thesis emphasizes that emotional fulfillment in food extends beyond taste. While AI may support functional aspects of cooking, it rarely creates the sensory or symbolic resonance associated with home-cooked meals. In doing so, it risks eroding the intergenerational transfer of food heritage and memory.

This research contributes to broader discussions on AI in everyday life by centering emotion, culture, and storytelling. It calls for AI design that assists rather than replaces, and urges reflection on whether technological progress in the kitchen preserves cultural meaning or slowly replaces it with convenience.

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Personal motivation and context

The idea for this thesis came to me in the most unexpected, very real-life moment while I was eating pizza. I was at a friend's house, conducting an interview for another assignment. His mom was in the kitchen making pizzas for us, and the smell? Unbelievable. Midway through the conversation, I couldn't help but ask her if she'd share the recipe. She simply said, "No." And honestly, at that moment, I was more focused on eating the pizza than cracking the family code. But later that week, while reflecting on the interview and thinking about how AI shows up everywhere in my life from helping with resumes to telling me what to put in a curry I had this thought: *What happens when AI starts cooking our food too? Can it ever cook like her or like my mom or grandmother?* And that's when this thesis idea really began to take shape.

Personally, I'm someone who really enjoys cooking. It just clicks with me. I picked up a bunch of recipes from my mom and grandma, and I'll say it (with a bit of self-bragging): I *might* even cook better than them now… or at least that's what my grandma says when she's feeling generous. But if you gave me the choice, I'd still choose their cooking over mine any day. That's the food I grew up with. It's comforting, familiar, full of stories and somehow always more special. Also, they cook the old-school way. Like, while I'm over here tossing ingredients into a blender, they're out there grinding spices on a flat stone slab like it's a sacred ritual. It's not just about taste; it's about *time, texture, tradition*. Cooking, for them, is an art passed down done with bare hands, slow pace, and soulful rhythm.

I never really used AI to cook a full dish. Sure, I've asked ChatGPT now and then, "Can I use this instead of that?" But I've never followed an AI recipe word for word. I'm not against AI in the kitchen. I think it's a helpful tool. But I also think the magic of cooking comes from the messiness, the memory, and the human creativity behind it. That's what I want to explore: what *happens to all that when AI steps in?*

I'm Dhanush, a 28-year-old from Bengaluru, India specifically from the South, where food is a cultural experience wrapped in banana leaves and soaked in coconut milk and spices. I have a background in hotel management, a postgrad in operations, and three years of marketing experience in a wine company. Cooking didn't just become a skill; it became a rebellion. In my family, where men weren't expected to be in the kitchen, I became the one who couldn't wait to get in there. And when I moved to Italy, I discovered not just that I loved cooking but that I was actually kind of great at it.

This thesis is my final project before graduation, but it's also something bigger. Being born in the 90's, I've grown up watching the world shift from landlines to AI-powered everything. Every new tech makes me wonder what's next and when it comes to food, I'm asking: *Are we preserving culture through tech, or replacing it? Are we losing the story for the shortcut?* I don't have all the answers but this research is how I plan to start asking the right question.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Background and Context

The kitchen, in many middle-class Indian households, is more than a functional space; it's a deeply emotional and symbolic one. For women like my grandmother, it became both a stage and a sanctuary. Though shaped by patriarchal expectations, it was also where she reclaimed control, expressed creativity, and nourished generations. In her case, the kitchen wasn't just about cooking; it was a place to rant, to reflect, and to leave a mark. For someone like her, the idea of a robot replacing that sacred space would likely feel intrusive, even disrespectful not because of stubborn resistance to change, but because something essential would be lost in the process: the lived memory, the daily ritual, the emotional labor that machines cannot mimic.

My own journey into the kitchen began in quiet defiance of those same gender roles. Growing up in Bengaluru, in a culture where men weren't always expected to cook, I found the kitchen to be the one place where I felt deeply myself. It gave me focus, joy, and a strange sense of freedom. Cooking became my way of communicating love not through words, but through textures, aromas, and slow, thoughtful movements. It calms my mind in a way few things do. While others may see cooking as a chore or a life skill, for me it became a language where I could express affection, artistry, and identity.

My grandmother's food, or my mother's, doesn't just taste good, it carries stories, memories, textures, even moral values. I still remember the quiet symbolism behind rituals like offering the first portion of food to the fire when cooking for a large gathering, a small, spiritual gesture that connects cooking to gratitude, nature, and tradition. These are things no AI can replicate not because it lacks data, but because it lacks meaningful lived context. Machines don't feel the weight of tradition or the rhythm of inherited gestures. They can mimic movement, but not the spirit behind it.Cooking with love, in my view, is about intention and presence, the emotional commitment to those you are cooking for. It's an art form that activates all five senses: the aroma, the sizzle, the taste, the touch, the presentation. It's the only form of art, perhaps, that lives in all dimensions at once and it's deeply personal. Even when AI produces a dish that's technically "perfect," it often lacks that resonance, the part that makes you pause and feel.And yet, I don't entirely reject AI, I've witnessed the world's shift from landlines to large language models. I've seen how helpful AI can be in simplifying tasks, guiding decisions, and even suggesting substitutions in a curry. But when it comes to food, something feels different. When Studio Ghibli's Hayao Miyazaki expressed his heartbreak over AI-generated art, I understood. Because like animation, cooking is also memory, rhythm, and imperfection it's human. This thesis began as a question sparked during a simple pizza dinner and has grown into something more reflective. What happens when machines step into our most emotionally charged spaces? Can AI carry tradition without hollowing it out? And as we move toward faster, smarter kitchens, will we still pause to remember who we are, where we came from, and who taught us how to cook?

1.2 Problem Statement

The first time I saw a robot chef online, I didn't feel amazed. I felt a little uneasy. Not because it wasn't efficient but because it was too perfect. There were no burnt tongues, no forgotten oil, no impatient checking of rice doneness while making biryani. And as funny as those mishaps are, they're the very heart of cooking. They're what I'll remember when I think of my own journey of learning to cook, failing, laughing, tasting, and burning my tongue again. A robot might never make those mistakes. But maybe that's also why it might never make memories.

In middle-class Indian households like mine, the kitchen has always been a complex space. It's where my grandmother, despite never choosing it, claimed power through practice. It was the one space where she could rant, express, create, and pass down knowledge. And yet, as machines slowly step in to do what she did with care and chaos, I wonder: *What exactly are we handing over? And what might we never get back?*

I'm not against AI. In fact, I'm thankful for it. AI has helped me brainstorm, think out loud, and ask better questions. It can guide me when my mind feels stuck. But there's a line. There's a difference between using AI to spark thought and using it to replace something deeply human. Cooking, to me, isn't just about getting a meal done. It's about intention whether I'm making a dish exactly how I want it for myself, or just feeding my hunger with whatever's there. That range of emotion, spontaneity, and care is something no machine fully understands.

What worries me is not just that robot chefs are entering kitchens, it's that we might forget why the kitchen mattered in the first place. That we might stop laughing over silly kitchen mistakes. That fewer people will bond with their moms over dosa batter or with their partners over a midnight pasta craving. That fewer stories will be born in the aroma of ghee or the sound of sizzling onions.

So this thesis is not about resisting AI. It's about asking the right questions. What are we really cooking when we cook? And when the machine takes over, will there still be a story behind the dish?

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

Aim

This thesis aims to explore how Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies, particularly robot chefs and AI-generated recipes impact our perception of food authenticity and the emotional connections we form with food. As AI becomes more present in our kitchens, the goal is to understand whether it can preserve the emotional and cultural depth that makes food meaningful or if something essential is being lost in translation.

Objectives

1. To investigate how consumers perceive the authenticity of food prepared using AI technologies.

2. To explore whether AI cooking can replicate or evoke the emotional depth often associated with traditional, memory-rich meals.

3. To understand how different generations and cultural backgrounds influence attitudes toward AI in cooking.

4. To examine whether AI tools support or disrupt the intergenerational transmission of culinary knowledge and rituals.

5. To assess the level of trust and emotional comfort people feel when AI prepares food for emotionally significant occasions (e.g., festivals, family gatherings).

1.4 Research Questions

This thesis is guided by the following research questions, shaped by lived experiences, personal narratives, and the emotional and cultural themes that emerged through interviews, surveys, and social reflections:

1. **How do individuals emotionally perceive food prepared by AI or robot chefs, especially in culturally or personally significant contexts?**
   → Grounded in interviews with participants like Matteo, Alessandra, Iman, and Juan, this explores emotional dissonance or acceptance when AI prepares food associated with memory, celebration, or home.

2. **What do people believe is lost emotionally, culturally, or ritually when machines replace human hands in the kitchen?**
   → Inspired by both qualitative data and survey responses, this asks what users feel can never be replicated by AI, including care, love, storytelling, or sensory rituals.

3. **How do generational and cultural backgrounds influence comfort, trust, and openness toward AI in cooking?**
   → This question reflects patterns in survey data showing younger generations' openness to AI and older individuals' emotional attachment to tradition and human-made food.

4. **Can AI ever support rather than threaten the transmission of culinary heritage and food memory? If so, how?**
   → This seeks to go beyond critique, exploring the possibility of AI becoming a companion or a tool in preserving intergenerational food practices.

5. **What social, emotional, or aesthetic expectations must AI meet to be accepted in emotionally meaningful culinary spaces?**
   → This emerges from influencer video analysis and your reflections on rituals, aesthetics, and the "love" behind food and what it takes to make a dish feel authentic beyond taste.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This thesis is being written at a pivotal moment, one where Artificial Intelligence is rapidly embedding itself into the fabric of everyday life. From AI-powered assistants like Siri that guide us through our daily schedules, to recipe-generating chatbots and India's own cooking device "UpLiance" that automates entire meals, the integration of AI into domestic spaces is accelerating. What seems futuristic today like machines ordering ingredients or planning your meals may become routine within a decade. That's precisely why this research matters now, before such technologies become invisible and unquestioned in our lives.

The emotional and cultural stakes are high. Food is not just fuel it is a ritual, a sensory language, a communal bond. In cultures like mine, every life event from birth to death is marked not just by ceremony, but by food often cooked over firewood, shared with family, and served on banana leaves. These are not just actions; they are expressions of love, identity, and continuity. This study draws attention to what may be lost if we hand over the act of cooking entirely to machines: not just flavor or skill, but meaning.

I hope this thesis urges readers from professors to AI developers to pause and ask where we are headed. While convenience has its place, as seen in India's 10-minute grocery deliveries or food arriving in under 20 minutes, it comes at a cost. In contrast, living in Italy has shown me the value of slow food, walking to the market, and real human interaction. These daily inconveniences, I've realized, are what keep us grounded, healthy, and emotionally connected.

This work also carries deep personal significance. In my home, the kitchen was where I bonded with my mother. In Italy, it became the place where I connected with the love of my life. It's not just a room, it's where stories unfold, where emotions are stirred as much as

spices. Through this research, I've come to appreciate that even as AI evolves, some things must remain intentionally human, especially creativity, care, and the act of nourishing another person.

If this thesis can inspire even one designer to rethink how food-related AI is developed to build tools that assist, not replace or one reader to appreciate the ritual behind a simple home-cooked meal, it will have fulfilled its purpose.

CHAPTER 2

Artificial Intelligence in Cooking: Robot Chefs, Authenticity, and Emotional Gaps

Gong, Guan, and Huan's (2025) study, Exploring the Critical Attributes of Robot Chef Restaurants and Their Impact on Customer Perceived Value, investigates how diners perceive robot chef restaurants and which attributes most significantly influence their overall experience. Using a mixed-methods approach, the authors analyze both qualitative data from 473 online customer reviews and quantitative survey responses from 269 diners. The research highlights that, despite the novelty of robotic automation, food quality and authenticity remain the top priorities for customers even more than service or ambiance.

In the first phase of the study, content analysis was employed to code recurring themes within three categories: food, environment, and service. In the second phase, structural equation modeling assessed how factors such as robot competence, customer attitudes toward robots, and perceived authenticity influenced the perceived value of the experience. Findings revealed that customers particularly appreciated dishes that closely replicated traditional or regional flavors, such as Shunde cuisine, especially when executed consistently by highly competent robot chefs. However, participants with skeptical or negative views toward robots were more likely to question the credibility and quality of robot-prepared food, even if the outcome was technically sound.

While food was the primary factor, ambiance and service efficiency also influenced customer satisfaction. Some diners were drawn to the futuristic atmosphere of robotic restaurants, while others felt the mechanical environment diminished the warmth traditionally associated with dining. Technical malfunctions and lack of human interaction were often perceived as limitations in the overall experience.

What makes Gong et al.'s research particularly compelling is its subtle acknowledgment of the emotional and cultural disconnect between consumers and meals prepared by machines. Although robot chefs may succeed in achieving technical accuracy, critical questions remain about the presence of "soul," memory, and intention in dishes prepared without human hands.

This distinction is particularly relevant when considering food as a medium for emotional resonance. During a recent Deepavali (ದೀಪಾವಳಿ) celebration, I happen to revisit my grandmother's home, where she prepared kajjaya (ಕಜ್ಜಾಯ), a traditional sweet made from rice flour and jaggery. That first bite triggered a wave of nostalgia, transporting me back to childhood. The dish was not only familiar in taste but deeply embedded in personal memory and familial ritual. Even if a robot were capable of recreating the dish with precise measurements and timing, it would likely lack the emotional intent and presence that gave the experience its meaning. Gong et al. briefly touch on the concept of warmth, but they do not fully explore how emotion, memory, or familial bonds shape culinary experiences.

In many South Indian households, food is interwoven with social rituals and life events, from naming ceremonies to death anniversaries. Specific menus are prepared to mark different rites of passage, reinforcing food's role as a cultural and spiritual anchor. In these contexts, emotional labor the love, effort, and care embedded in the cooking process is central to the meal's meaning. This complexity presents a challenge for robot chefs, whose competence is based on consistency and precision but lacks the symbolic depth of intention and memory.

This emotional gap is not unique to Indian culture. In Italy, particularly in regions like Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany, especially Bologna and Modena, the tradition of hand-rolling sfoglia for dishes like tagliatelle and tortellini is often passed down through generations. This act is more than culinary; it's a ritual tied to family identity and pride. Replacing such gestures with automation may risk disconnecting future generations from the cultural roots embedded in these practices

The study also invites consideration of how emotional connections to robots might evolve. While novelty may initially capture consumer interest, long-term relationships with machines may remain emotionally shallow. Without the capacity for emotional expression or relational nuance, robot chefs may struggle to foster the kind of meaningful connections that many associate with human cooking. Ultimately, what binds us to food is not just flavor, but the emotional and cultural context in which it is created. The person behind the dish and the intention with which it is prepared remains central to its emotional resonance

Anthropomorphism and Perceived Warmth: Emotional Expectations from Robot Chefs

Zhu and Chang's (2020) experimental study, Robot with Humanoid Hands Cooks Food Better? Effect of Robotic Chef Anthropomorphism on Food Quality Prediction, explores how the physical appearance of robot chefs influences consumer expectations of food quality. Conducted with 268 Chinese college students, the study randomly assigned participants to one of three groups, each exposed to a different robot chef image: one with no hands (low anthropomorphism), one with mechanical hands (moderate), and one with human-like hands (high anthropomorphism).

Participants viewed a scenario in which the robot prepared a dish, followed by the robot's image, and then completed a questionnaire measuring perceptions of warmth, competence, expected food quality, and purchase intention. Social psychology scales were used to assess warmth and competence, while a separate 3-item scale measured expected food quality. The data were analyzed using ANOVA and regression models, confirming that participants indeed perceived the intended differences in robot anthropomorphism.

The study's findings show that robots with more human-like features, particularly humanoid hands, were rated as warmer, more competent, and more trustworthy. These perceived social traits directly influenced expectations of food quality and increased participants' willingness to purchase food from the robot chef. Notably, this effect was observed despite participants not actually tasting any food, highlighting how visual design alone shapes emotional expectations.

Zhu and Chang's research underscores that emotional perception begins before any interaction, and is strongly guided by physical design. For the present thesis, this reinforces the idea that people do not simply evaluate food on sensory input alone they also evaluate the intention and care they believe is behind the preparation. A robot chef that visually resembles a human may be perceived as more capable of emotional intention, even if that intention is simulated.

This raises important questions about authentic emotional experience. Can visual cues of warmth truly substitute for the emotional depth we feel when a loved one cooks for us? In many cultures, including both India and Italy, food is intimately linked to care, memory, and tradition. While anthropomorphism may satisfy short-term psychological comfort, it likely lacks the depth of emotional intentionality associated with human cooks.

The study focuses on predicted food quality not actual consumption making its implications particularly psychological. This distinction is relevant to my own research question: Can design-based cues in robot chefs create lasting emotional bonds with users? Or will these impressions fade once the novelty wears off?

Personally, what stood out most in this study was the insight that humanoid hands alone could shape perceptions of warmth and competence. While I have never tasted food made by a robot, I can understand how a humanoid design might enhance perceived quality. If a robot resembles a human chef, I might assume the food is better but emotionally, the experience would still lack the intimacy of a home-cooked meal. I might interact with the robot politely, even respectfully, but the emotional connection would be fundamentally different. As with robotic companions that offer hugs to the elderly, these machines can offer comfort, but they cannot fully replicate human emotional depth.

The study also connects well to Gong et al. (2025), who highlighted emotional gaps in robotic dining experiences. However, Zhu and Chang move the conversation forward by examining whether visual design can narrow these gaps. While they show that anthropomorphism increases acceptance, the emotional bond remains superficial. In my view, this reinforces the idea that emotional connection to robots may grow with familiarity, but will likely remain weaker than those formed through shared memory, ritual, and real emotional labor especially in culturally rich contexts like food preparation.

A parallel can be drawn with Italian food rituals, such as the preparation of gnocchi or lasagne by grandparents for Sunday lunch. The repetitive, careful motions, flour-dusted hands, and warm kitchen atmosphere are not merely about nourishment; they are about

presence, love, and time. Even if a robot could perfectly mimic the rolling and shaping of dough, it could not replicate the intimacy of intergenerational bonding or the pride that comes from transmitting a family recipe by hand. Like in Indian kitchens, the meaning is not just in the food, but in who prepares it and how.

Intergenerational Cooking and Emotional Heritage: Beyond Efficiency

Beck, Nielsen, and Bjørnsbo's (2021) Danish pilot study, Grandchildren's Food Workshop: Impact of an Intergenerational Cooking Program on Dietary Habits, Food Courage, Cooking Skills, and Two-Way Interaction, explores the emotional and educational value of cooking between generations. Conducted over a six-week workshop involving grandparents (aged 65+) and grandchildren (aged 6–14), the study used a mixed-methods approach, combining pre- and post-surveys with participant observation.

Each week, participants engaged in joint meal preparation and storytelling, creating a space designed for both skill-building and emotional exchange. The findings revealed that children gained confidence in basic cooking techniques and developed slightly greater food courage, becoming more open to unfamiliar dishes. Grandparents expressed deep pride in passing on culinary knowledge, reinforcing their sense of purpose and legacy. More importantly, the workshops deepened already strong emotional bonds, transforming the act of cooking into a shared ritual one of storytelling, identity, and generational connection.

This study offers a compelling counterpoint to much of the literature on AI in cooking, which tends to focus on consumer perception, task execution, and technological design. Beck et al. do not mention AI or robot chefs, but their findings highlight what human-led cooking gives us that machines cannot: emotional warmth, family legacy, and the sense of being cared for.

For someone like me, this resonates deeply. In my South Indian upbringing, cooking was never seen as a chore it was a sacred act of love and service. My grandmother Jayalakshmi and her sister Yashoda, often referred to in our community as Annapornas (givers of nourishment), have cooked tirelessly for decades during weddings, religious ceremonies, and family milestones. They never sought recognition or compensation. They cooked out of love and duty and they still do. Even at age 78, my grandmother continues to prepare keema saaru, a fragrant minced lamb curry with coconut milk and hand-ground spices exactly the way she always has. That dish defines my childhood. The taste hasn't changed, and neither has the love behind it. I can only hope that one day, my own children and grandchildren will know that flavor and the story it carries.

This study affirms that food is not just sustenance it is identity, continuity, and affection made tangible. While AI might be able to replicate recipes and textures, it cannot replicate the embodied emotions passed down through a grandmother's hands or the pride felt when cooking for someone you love. I've experienced this not only with my grandmother, but also with my younger brother, Yashas. He is ten years younger than me and my biggest supporter. From my early kitchen disasters to my proudest dishes, he's tasted it all. Today, he even prefers my cooking over our mother's. Cooking for him has become a ritual my own small form of legacy.

Beck et al.'s work doesn't just add a new voice to the literature it deepens the emotional conversation. It asks us to see the kitchen not as a site of production, but as a site of transmission of care, memory, identity, and love. This human-centered dimension is often missing from studies like Gong et al. (2025), which emphasize taste replication and novelty, or Zhu and Chang (2020), which focus on anthropomorphic design. While those studies investigate how robots appear warm or competent, Beck et al. remind us what true emotional presence looks like and how it is built through time, storytelling, and touch.

Interestingly, this type of intergenerational cooking tradition is also central to Italian culture, especially in regions like Campania and Sardinia. In many Italian families, la cucina della nonna (grandmother's kitchen) is not merely a concept but a living tradition where pasta-making, sauce-stirring, and even bread-baking become weekly acts of bonding. These kitchen rituals, much like in South India, are performed with intention, passed from grandparent to grandchild, and anchored in shared memory. Replacing such rituals with automation, however convenient, risks severing the emotional threads that connect food to identity.

Personally, I can imagine that if a robot ever cooked keema saaru, and it tasted exactly like my grandmother's, it might still stir something in me. Taste is powerful that way. It might even transport me back to childhood. But something vital would be missing. The dish would lack her hands, her care, her rhythm, her energy. I also know my grandmother would never accept a robot in her kitchen. That space closed off from the rest of the house by a single swinging door is sacred. It is her world, her stage, her language of love. She doesn't just cook; she performs history, culture, and affection.

And that is where the heart of my thesis lies: between innovation and inheritance. As AI enters our kitchens, we gain speed, precision, and convenience but what do we lose? Beck et al. (2021) reminds us that what lingers after a meal is not just taste, but story. Not just technique, but memory. Not just presentation, but presence. And that is the risk we face when we let machines into our most emotional spaces: the risk of losing not just how we cook, but why we cook.

AI in Recipe Creation: Emotional Boundaries and the Limits of Automation

Kim, Choi, and Shin's (2025) study, Artificial Intelligence in the Kitchen: Can Humans Be Replaced in Recipe Creation and Food Production?, explores a deeper dimension of AI's role in food: the difference between cooking and creativity. While most existing studies focus on AI's competence in preparing meals, this research asks a more nuanced question: how do people emotionally respond when AI becomes the creator of recipes, not just the executor?

The authors designed a series of three experiments to examine how consumers perceive food made from AI-generated recipes versus human-generated ones. In Experiment 1, participants imagined ordering food based on either human or AI-created recipes and indicated their willingness to try them. Experiment 2 brought this scenario into the real world: participants tasted food made by human chefs but based on either human or AI-designed recipes. Finally, Experiment 3 introduced "uniqueness consideration cues," such as "this AI was trained by a Michelin-star chef," to test whether human influence increased trust and comfort.

Across all experiments, the study measured willingness to order, emotional connection, perceived uniqueness, and trust. The results were clear: while participants were open to AI assisting in cooking, they were significantly less willing to accept food where AI had generated the recipe. The act of recipe creation combining ingredients, imagining flavors, honoring tradition was seen as deeply human, requiring intuition, memory, and care. When AI appeared to work alone, participants rated the food as less unique, less thoughtful, and emotionally hollow.

However, when AI's role was framed as human-guided, participants responded more positively. If the AI was said to have been trained by a human chef or its output curated by experts, trust increased. This finding suggests that consumers are not fully resistant to AI in food but they need to feel that a human presence remains behind the process. Emotional acceptance improves when the machine is positioned as a tool, not a replacement.

For my thesis, this paper speaks directly to the emotional core of food. Cooking is not merely about combining ingredients with precision, it is about intention. The moment someone begins preparing food with you in mind, your memories, your preferences, your traditions the experience becomes meaningful. It is this intention that transforms a dish into a gesture of love. And that is something AI, in its current form, cannot replicate.

I reflect often on this when thinking about my grandmother preparing keema saaru. It's not just the use of coconut milk or the way she grinds spices by hand, it's the fact that she is thinking of me while cooking it. That thought, that care, is what makes the food

unforgettable. As the study suggests, we trust AI with tasks, but we hesitate when it comes to care.

This paper also introduces the idea of “uniqueness neglect,” where AI-generated food is perceived as generic or soulless, even if it tastes good. This concept aligns closely with my own concerns: food without memory, story, or love lacks emotional depth. While a robot may technically succeed in creating a dish, it may never create a memory. It may not become part of a family tradition, or a story passed down at the dinner table.

However, the study also opens a possible path forward: human-in-the-loop design. If AI is to be welcomed in emotionally significant spaces like the kitchen, humans must remain involved not just in engineering the machines, but in shaping the creative process. This idea connects to my interest in emotional redesign: the idea that machines must carry context, not just competence, to be accepted in personal, memory-rich environments.

Kim et al. (2025) also sets the stage for deeper questions, questions that lie at the heart of my research:

- After eating an AI-designed dish, will anyone remember it?
- Can such food become part of a story, a family ritual, a sensory memory?
- How do these reactions vary across cultures, families, and rituals, especially in societies like mine, where cooking is considered sacred?

In many ways, this paper reveals a growing tension between innovation and emotion. While AI promises convenience, personalization, and even novelty, there is a cultural and emotional cost to consider. What must be preserved, protected, or even reimagined if AI is to coexist with the memory, soul, and tradition that food often represents?

Kim et al. deepens the conversation initiated by Gong et al. (2025), who showed how competence and authenticity influence acceptance of robot chefs, and Zhu and Chang (2020), who demonstrated that human-like appearance can shape expectations. But Kim et al. challenge the limits of design. They show that emotional resistance intensifies when AI enters creative spaces that people believe require human warmth, intention, and emotional knowledge.

This aligns with Parvez et al.’s findings on functional vs. emotional motives, and with Xiao and Zhao’s (2022) insights that visual comfort doesn’t replace emotional substance. Meanwhile, Beck et al. (2021) offers the emotional counterweight showing how cooking across generations creates memories, legacies, and feelings that cannot be coded.

Together, these studies paint a complex picture: AI is welcomed as a helper, but not yet as a caretaker. My thesis steps into this tension, asking whether emotional meaning, cultural

heritage, and food memory can ever be transferred, translated, or co-created when machines enter the kitchen.

Emotional Value, Cultural Resistance, and the Role of Motivation

Huang et al. (2024), in their study Emotional and Perceived Value of Robot Chefs in a Full-Service Restaurant: A Multi-Group Analysis of Dining Motivations and Resistance, examine one of the most intimate challenges of AI in food: the emotional dissonance many diners feel when machines take the place of human chefs. What makes this study particularly compelling is not just its quantitative approach using large-scale surveys in restaurants with operational robot chefs but its emotional depth. Rather than focusing only on efficiency or novelty, it explores how emotional value, authenticity, and satisfaction shift based on diners' motivations and cultural attachments to food.

The study found that diners with a strong openness to innovation welcomed robot chefs, often praising their novelty and precision. For these individuals, technological innovation itself was emotionally rewarding. But for tradition-oriented diners like myself something felt missing. Even when the food was technically flawless, the human warmth, the presence, the soul of the meal were absent. The data confirmed that authenticity was not only about taste; it was about resonance, the invisible threads of memory, care, and history tied to each dish.

This insight struck a deeply personal chord. It reminded me instantly of obbattu saaru, a tangy lentil curry made during Ugadi, a South Indian new year festival. No robot could replicate not just the flavor, but the feeling the aroma of mustard seeds crackling in ghee, the hum of conversation in a crowded kitchen, the anticipation of sharing a meal steeped in family tradition. It is not just the dish that matters, but the context, the ritual, the emotion surrounding it.

The study also made another important point: emotional value is not universal. For some, the future of food lies in precision, speed, and convenience. For others, it lies in preservation, in the continuity of cultural memory. After moving to Italy, I experienced this duality firsthand. My temporary home became familiar only when it began to smell like mosappu, a spinach and lentil curry my grandmother used to make with dill leaves, a blend I have never been able to perfectly recreate. The act of cooking brought me closer to home, and it brought others closer to me. My roommates, for instance, would walk into the kitchen drawn by the aroma, and we'd begin talking. It was the food that initiated the connection just as it had in my family back in India.

These are not things a robot can recreate. The study affirms that resistance to robot chefs is not about stubbornness or fear of change. It is about longing for presence, for

intentionality, for a meal that feels alive. It highlights that motivation matters deeply. Diners who seek speed may be satisfied by machines. But those who seek connection may leave with a full stomach and an empty heart.

The paper also strongly reinforces one of my core arguments: food cooked by machines may successfully deliver taste, but rarely if ever does it deliver memory. No robot could replicate the feeling I had during a cousin's wedding when I was assigned to help in the woodfire kitchen, chopping vegetables for about 60 guests. The pride, the chaos, the laughter, the exhaustion that moment taught me more about food, community, and selfhood than any dish ever could.

Huang et al. 's findings do more than support the emotional truth I carry; they build the emotional map of the AI-food experience. My thesis walks into its unmapped parts. The questions I now ask are as personal as they are academic:

Can robot chefs ever evoke the feeling of a family cooking together around a fire?

Can a machine replicate the comfort of a dish made just the way only your grandmother can?

Will future generations say, "This reminds me of when the robot cooked my favorite meal"?

Can robots be taught not just to cook but to care?

These questions are not just philosophical they are cultural, emotional, and deeply human. Perhaps food made by robots will taste the same. But will it smell like home? Will it fill a kitchen with life?

This paper serves as an emotional bridge, connecting the insights of Gong et al. (2025), Zhu and Chang (2020), and Kim et al. (2025) with the lived experiences of tradition-bound diners. Gong et al. examined technical competence and consumer satisfaction. Zhu and Chang focused on anthropomorphic warmth. But Huang et al. push the discussion deeper: beyond form, beyond function into motivation, memory, and emotional fulfillment. They show that for many, no design trick can replicate human intention.

Kim et al. similarly argued that emotional resistance intensifies when AI takes over creative or intuitive spaces. Beck et al. (2021) offered a contrasting human perspective, showing how intergenerational cooking nurtures storytelling, memory, and emotional identity. When read alongside Huang et al., the emotional gap between machine-made and human-made food becomes even clearer.

These studies together reinforce the emotional core of my thesis: Robot chefs may meet the needs of efficiency or novelty, but the need for emotional depth, cultural continuity, and human presence remains unmet. The kitchen is not only a space of preparation it is a space of emotion, memory, and meaning. And that, more than any single dish, is what AI still struggles to understand.

Emotion, Design, and the Limits of Surface-Level Connection

Lee and Cho's (2024) study, Emotional Experiences in Human-Robot Restaurant Interactions: Exploring the Role of Robot Anthropomorphism and Service Quality, brings the discussion of AI in hospitality into a deeply human space the realm of emotion. Unlike earlier research focused primarily on efficiency or performance, this study asks a more layered question: Can robots not only serve, but emotionally engage diners?

Through a large-scale survey involving customers who had dined in robot-staffed restaurants, the researchers measured five core constructs: robot anthropomorphism (how human-like the robot appeared), perceived service quality (politeness, efficiency, smoothness), emotional experience (comfort, excitement, enjoyment), customer satisfaction, and revisit intention. Using structural equation modeling (SEM), they traced how these elements were connected, with a particular focus on how emotional experiences mediated the relationship between design, service, and loyalty.

The findings were as emotionally resonant as they were analytically clear. Robots that looked and behaved more like humans using familiar gestures, expressions, and tones did not simply enhance service delivery. They elicited emotion. Customers felt a sense of excitement, comfort, and even joy during interactions with more anthropomorphic robots. Importantly, it wasn't perfect execution that shaped satisfaction, it was the feeling of presence, of being seen and served by something that resembled a human.

When robots performed tasks with grace, politeness, and efficiency, these emotional responses were further amplified. Diners who felt emotionally engaged were not just more satisfied they were also more likely to return. The study concluded that emotional connection was the bridge linking thoughtful robot design and good service to the very human desire for belonging and warmth.

This resonates deeply with my own experience. A perfectly brewed espresso from a machine may taste perfect, but it still pales in comparison to the emotional comfort I feel with a homemade filter coffee back in India. It is not just the flavor that matters, but the context: the memory of my father passing me the steel tumbler, the clink of metal against saucer, the smell of cardamom wafting through the air.

The study validates an essential foundation of my thesis: emotions matter, even in human-robot dining encounters. Customers are not just passive recipients of service; they are emotional beings, forming impressions based not only on what is served but on how it feels. Lee and Cho demonstrate that anthropomorphism and service quality can evoke emotional reactions that drive satisfaction and loyalty. However, their analysis leaves a

critical gap it doesn't address deeper emotional bonds, such as those rooted in memory, culture, or personal identity.

For me, food has always extended beyond immediate pleasure. It is a living archive of memory and ritual. I think of chopping vegetables for sixty guests during my cousin's wedding, a rite of passage in its own way or watching my grandmother prepare mosappu, a delicate spinach and lentil curry infused with dill leaves. No one has ever quite matched her balance of flavor, and maybe no one ever will. These are not just meals. They are moments etched into identity.

Cooking has also been the language of emotional closeness in my personal life. It was through shared meals, my roommates and I moved from being roommates to becoming friends one dish at a time. I remember the way they would enter the kitchen drawn by the aroma, how conversations would start mid-simmer. It was the food that held us not just as nutrition or taste, but as presence, comfort, and belonging.

Lee and Cho's study opens a door to emotional design, showing that visual cues and smooth service can make diners feel something. But it also illustrates a boundary these surface-level emotional triggers may create positive moments, but they do not yet create memory. The joy of seeing a polite robot is not the same as the layered meaning of a dish cooked by someone who knows your story.

Thus, the study strengthens the emotional foundation of my thesis in two key ways. First, it confirms that emotional satisfaction is not a luxury, it is central to the food experience, even when robots are involved. Second, it shows that form and function, when well-designed, can simulate warmth, opening the possibility of "emotional engineering" in robotic hospitality. But this warmth, I argue, remains temporary, context-dependent, and shallow unless it is tied to memory, culture, and tradition.

The research provides a detailed surface map of emotional engagement, but the deeper ocean of emotional meaning where nostalgia lives, where stories are passed down remains unexplored. My thesis enters that emotional ocean, asking questions that lie between memory, machine, and meaning.

AI as Culinary Mentor: Teaching, Tradition, and Emotional Gaps

Liu et al. (2024), in their study AI-Assisted Cooking Teaching System, offer a different lens from prior research on robot chefs. Rather than focusing on dining performance or

restaurant efficiency, the authors present a mobile application designed to function as a voice-guided culinary tutor for beginners. Using a design-based approach, they created and tested a system that offers real-time instructional feedback, contextual recipe support, and a user-friendly interface tailored to traditional Chinese home-style dishes. Their focus lies not in replacing the human cook, but in empowering learners, especially those who lack access to familial or intergenerational culinary instruction.

What makes this study significant in the context of my thesis is the shift in emphasis from automation to support, from efficiency to pedagogy. Liu et al.'s system preserves culinary tradition through teaching, not delegation. In doing so, it aligns with the broader idea that AI can function not just as a machine, but as a cultural bridge especially for diasporic users or younger generations trying to reconnect with heritage recipes.

From a technical perspective, the app performs well. It helps users understand timing, ingredient combinations, and traditional techniques. However, the study does not explore emotional dimensions of the learning process. There is no qualitative or ethnographic component to examine whether the app elicits feelings of comfort, memory, or connection especially when users attempt emotionally loaded dishes far from home.

This absence is especially meaningful to me. I remember trying to cook ragi mudde (ರಾಗಿ ಮುದ್ದೆ), a traditional finger millet dish, in Italy far from my grandmother's voice and hands. It's a dish that relies more on touch and intuition than on exact measurements. A voice assistant that simply said, "stir for 3 minutes," felt too mechanical. But I imagine how different the experience could have been if the voice guiding me sounded like my grandmother gently instructing, offering reassurance, saying, "Add a little water here," or "Use your fingers, not a spoon." In that moment, emotion and memory would have transformed functionality into presence.

Liu et al. 's work touches on this potential that AI can be designed to preserve tradition. But their study stops short of asking whether users feel tradition, or connect emotionally with the process. It presents a compelling functional model but leaves unexamined the role of memory, grief, creativity, and emotional inheritance.

For instance, if my younger brother were to use such a system to recreate a family dish, I would feel immense pride. But I would also wonder — would he know the story behind it? Would he understand why our grandmother made mutton paya (ಮಟನ್ ಪಾಯ) (lamb trotters) for me, even when money was tight? The real flavor of that dish isn't just in the spices it's in the sacrifice, the care, and the silent acts of love that shaped it. These stories aren't part of the recipe. They're part of the relationship.

The study offers important contrasts and continuities with previous literature. Where Gong et al. (2025) analyzed customer satisfaction in high-tech dining, Liu et al. focus on learning in private kitchens. Where Zhu and Chang (2020) emphasized emotional response through anthropomorphic design, Liu et al. show that guidance and support may also create emotional connection especially for beginner cooks.

This distinction reframes how we think about presence. Emotional connection may not require humanoid design alone; it might be achieved through timely guidance, familiar voices, or cultural cues. Liu et al.'s system implicitly supports cultural transmission, especially for diasporic users but it does not yet explore whether that transmission is emotionally felt or merely functionally executed.

Relating this to other work, Kim et al. (2025) explored how users resisted AI-created recipes due to a perceived lack of emotional intention or uniqueness. Similarly, Liu's app may support cultural knowledge, but does it support emotional engagement? Parvez et al. (2025) noted how younger generations accepted AI for convenience but risked losing narrative depth. Liu et al.'s system might bridge that divide but only if future designs include mechanisms for storytelling, memory sharing, or emotional personalization.

Beck et al. (2021) reminded us that food is a space of shared legacy and ritual. In my culture, that ritual is tactile and layered banana leaves at weddings, the sound of woodfire crackling, the smell of mustard seeds hitting hot ghee. AI, as it stands today, can guide the process but not replicate the atmosphere. It can teach the "how," but it cannot yet hold the "why."

Liu et al. succeed in expanding the use-case of AI in kitchens. They present a tool that supports heritage, encourages skill-building, and makes tradition accessible. But like many systems, it still exists in the realm of instruction, not emotion. It is a memory aid, not yet a memory maker.

And that's where this thesis steps into the space between taste and tenderness, between the task of cooking and the emotion of being cooked for. If AI is to be a true keeper of food heritage, it must learn to preserve not just the steps, but the stories, not just the ingredients, but the intentions that made those meals unforgettable.

Robotic Cooking by Watching: Performance without Presence

Sun et al.'s (2024) study AI Meets Physical World Exploring Robot Cooking takes a highly technical approach to one of the most fundamental human activities: cooking. Instead of focusing on consumer perception or emotional design, this research centers on engineering functionality specifically, how robots can learn to cook by observing over 200 instructional YouTube videos. Using deep convolutional and recurrent neural networks, the system identifies object-motion relationships and maps them onto a Functional Object-Oriented Network (FOON). This FOON acts as a task tree that guides the robot in performing step-by-step cooking actions like pouring, cutting, and stirring.

The study also introduces novel grasp quality metrics and motion planning algorithms that dynamically adjust the robot's grip using real-time feedback from force sensors. These

techniques improve the robot's physical adaptability when working with varied tools and textures. The researchers validate their method by comparing it against traditional force-closure models, showing improved precision, task success, and scalability across different kitchen setups.

From a technological standpoint, this is a major leap. The robot doesn't require manual programming. Instead, it learns by watching, adapting to the shape of utensils, the weight of ingredients, and the sequencing of tasks. Its functional competence is particularly impressive demonstrating a level of sensorimotor intelligence that enables it to perform fairly complex kitchen tasks. However, the robot still struggles when faced with multiple uncontrolled variables, a reminder of how unpredictable real-life kitchens can be.

But for someone like me, someone who sees cooking as more than physical action the limits of this system are clear. Watching a robot replicate the motion of cooking is impressive, but it also reveals what's absent: context, culture, and emotion. When I watch cooking videos, I often skip the basic steps. What draws me in is not how to cook, but why. Like when I made akki rotti (ಅಕ್ಕಿ ರೊಟ್ಟಿ), a rice flour flatbread, and learned from my mother not the video that adding hot water gelatinizes the starch, making the dough soft and elastic. That kind of intergenerational wisdom, passed through voice and gesture, is deeply human.

Sun et al. 's robot can knead dough, but it cannot question tradition. It cannot explain why akki rotti feels different in my grandmother's hands. It doesn't ask, "What are you cooking for?"

People approach cooking differently. Friends like Iman, Anna, and Sanjana follow recipes with scientific precision, the kind of culinary style this robot could replicate well. But in contrast, I see cooking as relational. Last summer, I flew home unannounced and made lunch for my extended family: ghee rice, mutton rogan josh, carrot halwa. It wasn't about technical perfection. It was about surprise, presence, and belonging to things a robot cannot measure.

And then there's language. In our house, we speak a soft, emotional form of Kannada (ಕನ್ನಡ) filled with inside jokes and affectionate expressions. A robot trained in textbook Kannada wouldn't catch the meaning behind a phrase like "hottige haaki" (put it on the stove) said with care. In my world, cooking isn't just an activity. It's a conversation, a memory, a hug disguised as food.

Sun et al.'s work stands apart from studies like Liu et al. (2024), who emphasize cultural preservation through AI-assisted learning, or Gong et al. (2025), who explore consumer responses to robot chefs. Here, the robot's role is task execution, not emotional engagement. It excels at how to cook, but leaves untouched the more essential question: why do we cook at all?

Still, the paper opens intriguing possibilities. What if robots could learn not just from visuals, but from voices and rituals? Could they one day understand not just what a keema curry is, but why it's made when you miss home? Could a robot chef sense silence in the kitchen and ask, "What's wrong?" Probably not soon. But this line of inquiry bridging physical precision with emotional presence is exactly where my thesis situates itself.

Ultimately, Sun et al.'s study is a technological milestone, but also a philosophical prompt. It shows us that machines can observe and replicate tasks, but not yet meaning. They can see, but not remember. They can cook, but not care.

In kitchens like mine filled with emotion, dialects, rituals, and inherited wisdom this matters. It's not just about functionality. It's about food as presence, as identity, and as emotion things still unreachable by even the most advanced robotic systems

Cooking with ChatGPT and Bard: A Study on Competencies of AI Tools on Recipe Correction, Adaptation, Time Management, and Presentation

Ahmet Hakan Değerli & Nevruz Berna Tatlısu (2023)

This study evaluates the kitchen competence of generative AI tools ChatGPT 3.5, ChatGPT 4, and Bard across five practical culinary tasks: correcting recipe flaws, clarifying vague instructions, adapting dishes to specific diets, managing multiple dishes at once, and presenting visually appealing meals. The researchers ran each tool through the same set of prompts multiple times and assessed their outputs for consistency, creativity, and reliability qualities that even a novice cook is expected to manage.

ChatGPT-4 emerged as the most dependable, especially in tasks that required precision and structure, such as recipe correction and time coordination. It also performed well in plating suggestions, generating neat and aesthetically pleasing layouts. ChatGPT-3.5 showed potential but occasionally slipped in technical clarity or ingredient substitutions. Bard, in contrast, was inconsistent, often misreading cues and suggesting swaps that lacked cultural or culinary appropriateness. While all three tools could handle functional adaptations like vegan or keto requests, none could grasp the emotional or sensory nuance that gives food its deeper meaning.

This study hit close to home. I've used ChatGPT while cooking not to follow recipes line by line, but to clarify specific doubts, like how long to temper spices or whether a substitution would work. It's useful for quick guidance. But would I trust it with something like keema saaru or ghee rice? Honestly, no. That's where instinct and emotion take over. Even if the AI gets it technically right, it can't explain why my grandmother adds a certain spice at a specific time, or why that dish feels special when someone returns home after months away. I've seen AI recommend substitutions that feel flat not because they're wrong, but because they miss the point. They miss the soul.

Değerli and Tatlısu's study perfectly illustrates this gap. The tools are competent in managing logistics but fall short when cooking becomes a ritual when it becomes about

identity, memory, and care. Compared to Liu et al., who examine how AI might teach cultural recipes, or Gong et al., who explore emotional perception, this paper serves as a grounded reminder of AI's strengths and its limits. It shows us what AI can do in a kitchen and what it still cannot.

And this disconnect isn't limited to Indian kitchens. In Italy, where I now live, a dish like risotto alla Milanese is not simply a matter of ingredients and heat. It's about the feel of the wooden spoon scraping the bottom of the pot, the sound of broth being ladled in at just the right moment, and the patience required to reach that perfect creamy texture not too stiff, not too loose. A voice assistant could list the steps, but only someone who has stood by the stove, stirring with care, would know when the rice "feels right." It's this quiet intuition, passed down rather than programmed, that machines still cannot grasp.

What this paper reinforced for me is that AI can support the cook, but it cannot be the cook. It might suggest ideas, coordinate timings, or correct errors, but it cannot tell a story through food. It cannot recreate the moment when a dish becomes a message, when cooking becomes an act of love. And this is where my thesis enters not to dismiss AI, but to understand how it can coexist with culture, emotion, and memory without replacing them.

In connection with the earlier papers, this study by Değerli and Tatlısu (2023) serves as a practical counterbalance to the more emotion-centered research explored by Kim et al. (2025), Beck et al. (2021), and Huang et al. (2024). While those studies delved into cultural memory, intergenerational bonding, and emotional resistance to AI in creative or caregiving roles, Değerli and Tatlısu offer a clear view of AI's current technical boundaries. Unlike Kim et al., who questioned whether AI could generate emotionally resonant recipes, this paper shows that even the best AI still struggles with sensory understanding, nuance, and context. It complements Liu et al. (2024), whose AI-assisted teaching system attempted to bridge knowledge gaps but similarly fell short of emotional depth. Moreover, the contrast with Beck's intergenerational cooking study is stark where one emphasizes stories and legacy, the other highlights structure and automation. Ultimately, this paper reinforces the central tension in my thesis: that while AI can aid and enhance efficiency in the kitchen, it still cannot replicate the emotional texture, symbolic meaning, and cultural resonance that human cooking embodies.

Food Development through Co-Creation with AI – Bread with a "Taste of Love"

- Sera et al. (2024)

Sera et al. (2024) introduced a fascinating concept Romance Bread flavored breads inspired by the emotional tones of Japanese romantic TV dramas. This wasn't simply a design experiment; it was a bold exploration of how technology could help translate feelings like "First Encounter," "Jealousy," or "Mutual Love" into flavors. The AI system analyzed emotional vectors from TV dialogues and food-related song lyrics, then generated ingredient combinations which human bakers interpreted and turned into actual breads. These were then tested by participants in tasting sessions to see if the emotion behind each flavor could be identified.

What struck me deeply was the idea that a machine could suggest a taste to represent a feeling. It reminded me of my own moments with food that held an emotional charge like trying to recreate the famous egg fried rice from "Uncle Egg Rice" back in Bengaluru. It wasn't just food; it was a moment, a place, a story. This is why I found the study's finding that people could correctly identify the intended emotion in the bread flavors nearly half the time both fascinating and hopeful. It suggests that food is not just taste, but storytelling. "Jealousy" was the most recognizable emotion; "Mutual Love" the least showing how some emotional expressions may be too nuanced for AI, or even for flavor itself, to fully carry.

I've had similar experiences while cooking here in Italy. For instance, I once tried making pasta al pomodoro, a dish known for its elegant simplicity, but found its acidity too sharp for my palate. So, I adjusted it with Indian sensibilities: more garlic, a pinch of chili, and a splash of cream. That version didn't just suit my taste; it told a story of migration, of home meeting away. I wasn't just recreating a dish, I was translating a memory into flavor. This is where Sera et al.'s paper speaks to me most: it suggests that AI, when paired with human intuition, can be a creative companion. But the storytelling, the emotional weight that still comes from us.

While the study offers a beautiful model of AI-human co-creation, it also makes me question where we draw the line. If AI begins generating the emotions, designing the flavors, and even preparing the dish, what's left for the human creator? For me, food is still one of the last spaces where emotion

is unspoken but deeply felt. In India, love isn't always said aloud, but it's served hot on a plate. My grandmother never said "I love you," but every time she made lamb trotters curry during hard financial times, that dish became her language. That's a kind of memory no AI can replicate.

This paper adds a compelling dimension to my thesis. Unlike Gong et al. (2025), who focused on robotic competence, or Parvez et al. (2025), who explored consumer motives, Sera et al. dive into the poetic possibilities of AI in food. They share Beck et al.'s (2021) belief that food is emotional language, and echo Kim et al. (2025), who argued that creativity rooted in memory can't be replaced. But where Beck saw memory as something passed down, and Kim focused on emotional resistance to AI, Sera et al. ask if AI can become a muse offering ideas without taking authorship. This is a powerful distinction. Because as I see it, AI may inspire, but it cannot remember. It can generate ingredients, but it cannot feel heartbreak. And it certainly cannot recreate the weight of a dish made during a festival, after a long journey home, when the first bite tastes like welcome.

Ultimately, this study draws the boundary clearly: AI can support our creativity, but it cannot become the keeper of our emotional kitchens. Those remain human, shaped by history, sacrifice, joy and the stories we continue to cook into every meal**.**

Conclusion of the Literature Review

The reviewed literature paints a clear picture: while AI and robot chefs are increasingly accepted for their efficiency, novelty, and design, they remain emotionally limited in contexts where food carries deep cultural and personal significance. Studies like Gong et al. (2025) and Zhu & Chang (2020) emphasize that although technical competence and anthropomorphism may influence perceptions of food quality, they do not replicate the emotional depth or cultural resonance of human-made meals.

Parvez et al. (2025) and Xiao & Zhao (2022) show that AI cooking is often welcomed in casual or high-efficiency environments, but not in spaces tied to memory, identity, or celebration. Even when robots mimic human gestures, they cannot feel human. The warmth, intuition, and silent understanding behind a

home-cooked meal are difficult if not impossible to replicate through code or machinery.

What resonated with me most deeply was Beck et al.'s (2021) study on intergenerational cooking. It reminded me of my own grandmother, Jayalakshmi, and the keema saaru she still prepares with stone-ground spices and soul. That dish is not just food it is memory, care, sacrifice, and tradition served in a bowl. Cooking, in my family, was never about precision; it was about love, especially during hard times. No robot, no matter how advanced, can recreate the feeling of being cooked for by someone who truly knows and loves you.

Yet, not all AI involvement must threaten emotional authenticity. Sera et al. (2024) offers an alternative lens, one where AI does not replace the human but collaborates with them. In their study, AI suggested emotionally resonant ingredients for "Romance Bread," but it was the human bakers who shaped those suggestions into meaningful, sensory experiences. This model of co-creation echoes the more acceptable roles of AI suggested in Liu et al. (2024) and Kim et al. (2025): as a tool for learning, enhancing, or inspiring, but not replacing the emotional intelligence of a human cook. While AI may suggest what love might taste like, only humans can feel it, and only they can cook with it.

I believe emotional spaces like the kitchen should never be fully automated. Food is where many of us first learn love, ritual, and connection. It is where identity is stirred into every pot and passed down like heirlooms. Designers of food-related AI systems must understand that emotional context, not just mechanical precision, is what turns cooking into nourishment for both body and soul.

As more studies enter the conversation from Lee & Cho's (2024) findings on emotional triggers to Sun et al.'s robotics-focused breakthroughs it becomes clear that technological advancement alone cannot bridge the emotional gap. Tools like ChatGPT may correct a recipe or structure a meal plan, as shown by Değerli & Tatlısu (2023), but they cannot know why that dish mattered to a family, or how it felt to eat it after a long journey home. These additions reinforce the emotional limitation that remains consistent across the literature: AI can replicate tasks, even simulate joy, but it cannot feel love, carry memory, or create meaning beyond what we assign to it. And that is where my thesis firmly stands at the intersection of memory and machinery, asking not just what AI can do in the kitchen, but what it must never forget.

This literature review reveals a fundamental gap: most current research emphasizes performance, novelty, and technological feasibility, but rarely addresses emotional resonance or cultural continuity. My thesis steps into that

space not just to ask whether AI can cook, but whether it should, and at what emotional cost. In the chapters ahead, I will explore how tradition, memory, and emotion can be preserved even as AI begins to enter our most sacred human spaces.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative, exploratory research design, grounded in interpretivism. Given the emotional and cultural focus of the research specifically, how artificial intelligence (AI) intersects with food authenticity, memory, and emotional meaning a qualitative approach was essential for capturing nuanced, personal narratives that would not emerge through quantitative data alone.

The research also includes a complementary quantitative element in the form of two short surveys. These were used to broaden the scope of perspectives by identifying patterns in how different generations and culinary professionals perceive AI in cooking. Together, these methods allowed the research to explore both deep emotional insights and general trends.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

Three primary methods were used to gather data:

1. Semi-Structured Interviews

Five in-depth interviews were conducted with individuals from diverse cultural and generational backgrounds:

- **Matteo** – Italian, forestry student, passionate about traditional food and the sacred nature of cooking.

- **Alessandra** – Italian, highly connected to nature, sustainability, and the emotional rituals of slow food.

- **Iman and Juan** – from Lebanon/Venezuela and Colombia, respectively. They offered diasporic perspectives on cooking as identity, memory, and cultural continuity.

Interviews were conducted in person and online via Zoom, recorded with verbal consent, and ranged from 30 to 60 minutes. An interview guide was followed, but space was left for free-flowing discussion. These narratives provided rich, experiential insights into how participants emotionally relate to AI in food preparation.

2. Surveys

Two separate surveys were designed and distributed online:

- **Survey 1: General Public (n=38)**
  This survey captured diverse, non-specialist opinions on AI in cooking. It explored emotional comfort, trust, perceived authenticity, and openness to AI-prepared food in personal and cultural contexts. It featured a mix of Likert-scale, multiple-choice, and open-ended questions.

- **Survey 2: Hotel Management Students and Professors (n=15)**
  This survey was tailored for those with professional culinary knowledge. It examined attitudes toward robot chefs in formal foodservice contexts, focusing on culinary creativity, emotional delivery, and the boundaries between efficiency and cultural authenticity.

3. Observational & Social Media Reflections

The research also incorporated social reflections and media observations, particularly through YouTube content. A key example was a video where influencers reacted to AI-generated recipes with surprise, discomfort, and humor (e.g., dishes like “beef and dark chocolate lettuce cups”). These reactions offered a cultural lens into public perceptions of AI’s role in cooking and were treated as informal but meaningful observational data.

3.3 Participant Profile

Interview participants were selected through purposive sampling, with the goal of capturing diverse cultural views, emotional associations with food, and differing relationships with technology. The sample included students and young adults between the ages of 22–35, with varying levels of familiarity with cooking.

All participants shared a personal relationship with traditional food preparation and were asked to reflect on themes such as memory, ritual, AI in kitchens, and the meaning of “authentic” food. Their backgrounds offered valuable contrasts between modern digital experiences and inherited food practices.

Survey participants included both the general public and hospitality professionals. The hotel management respondents were particularly insightful in balancing professional respect for technological innovation with deep appreciation for human-centered dining experiences.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

All research activities followed ethical guidelines for voluntary participation and informed consent. Participants were informed of the study’s purpose, and all interviews were conducted with verbal or written permission. Identities were anonymized where requested. Sensitive topics such as familial memory, religious rituals, and grief were handled with care, and cultural contexts were respected.

Data from the surveys and interviews were stored securely and used solely for academic purposes. No incentives were offered for participation, ensuring that all responses were voluntary and authentic.

3.5 Data Analysis

A thematic analysis approach was used to examine the qualitative interview data. Transcripts were reviewed multiple times, and key themes were identified through manual coding. These themes were:

- **Emotional Memory and Food**: Stories of how food connects to identity, family, and tradition.
- **Authenticity and Trust**: Concerns about AI replacing the "soul" of cooking.
- **Human vs. Machine Touch**: Skepticism about AI’s ability to replicate emotional or cultural meaning.

- **Cultural and Generational Perspectives**: Variability in openness based on background and age.

- **AI as Assistant, Not Replacer**: Conditional acceptance of AI as a support tool, not as a substitute for human care or creativity.

Survey responses were analyzed descriptively. In the general public survey, younger respondents (18–35) expressed more openness to AI in casual cooking, while older participants emphasized emotional warmth and cultural connection. The hotel management survey highlighted practical interest in AI's efficiency but reiterated the irreplaceable value of human intuition, storytelling, and hospitality in culinary arts. Together, the interviews, surveys, and observations provide a layered understanding of the emotional, cultural, and symbolic stakes involved in integrating AI into food preparation.

Chapter 4

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of this study, structured around thematic patterns drawn from interviews, surveys, and observational media. The findings are grounded in emotional truths and cultural narratives, not just statistical outcomes. This research does not isolate emotion from data it interweaves them, using the kitchen as a lens to explore tradition, memory, and technology. The addition of Sera et al. (2024) expands the conversation, showing how AI can play a collaborative role in food development without claiming emotional authorship. What emerges across the responses is a clear boundary: AI can assist in the kitchen, but it cannot be its emotional heart. The themes below reflect this blend of optimism, resistance, and deeply personal memory.

4.2 Food as Emotional Memory

Food, for many, is a direct gateway to the past. In nearly every interview, dishes were tied to emotional events, family bonds, or moments of transformation. Matteo shared that Sunday meals at home were never about the recipe but the ritual. Juan recalled how his grandmother's arepas always came with a story and a lesson. Iman described cooking with her mother during Ramadan, where every spice seemed to carry the weight of tradition.

Personally, the smell of coconut chicken curry instantly takes me back home. But one of the most powerful emotional moments I've had around food happened after returning home from Italy. The first meal I had was lamb gravy with ghee rice, a dish I hadn't tasted in months due to cost and availability. One bite in, I wasn't just eating, I was home again.

If I had to name dishes that define my childhood, it would be rasam rice and lamb chops. Rasam is a tangy, spiced tomato broth, often served to comfort the sick or evoke warmth. Paired with lamb chops spiced with green chili, pepper, mint, and coriander it becomes nourishment for both body and soul.

These experiences are echoed in survey findings, where 81% of respondents said they associate food with “home” or “emotion.” These aren’t isolated sentiments; they are shared across cultures.

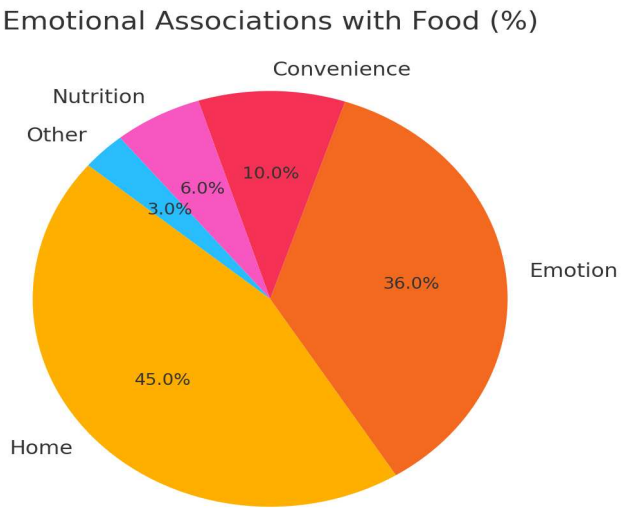

Figure X: Survey data revealing that most respondents associate food with “home” and “emotion,” reinforcing food’s role as a carrier of personal and cultural memory.

4.3 Authenticity and Emotional Trust

Across both interviews and survey data, authenticity emerged as a key concern. Many participants were open to the idea of AI cooking but only in non-emotional contexts. Anna described robot-cooked food as “mechanical,” and Alessandra emphasized that authenticity is not just about flavor, but feeling.

This aligns with my belief that no robot can replicate what my grandmother does. She grinds spices by hand, a practice rooted in muscle memory, intuition, and cultural rhythm. You can replicate the ingredients but not the experience.

Sera et al. (2024) offer a hopeful counterpoint. In their “Romance Bread” study, AI helped develop bread flavors based on emotional tones like “Jealousy” and “Mutual Love,” derived from romantic TV dialogue and song lyrics. The result? Participants identified the emotional intent behind the flavors with 43.8% accuracy. Still, the emotion wasn’t felt because of AI but because human bakers gave meaning to those ingredients.

In my general survey, only 18% of respondents said they would trust a robot to cook food for emotionally significant occasions. These findings reinforce that trust in food is about more than taste; it's about the story behind it.

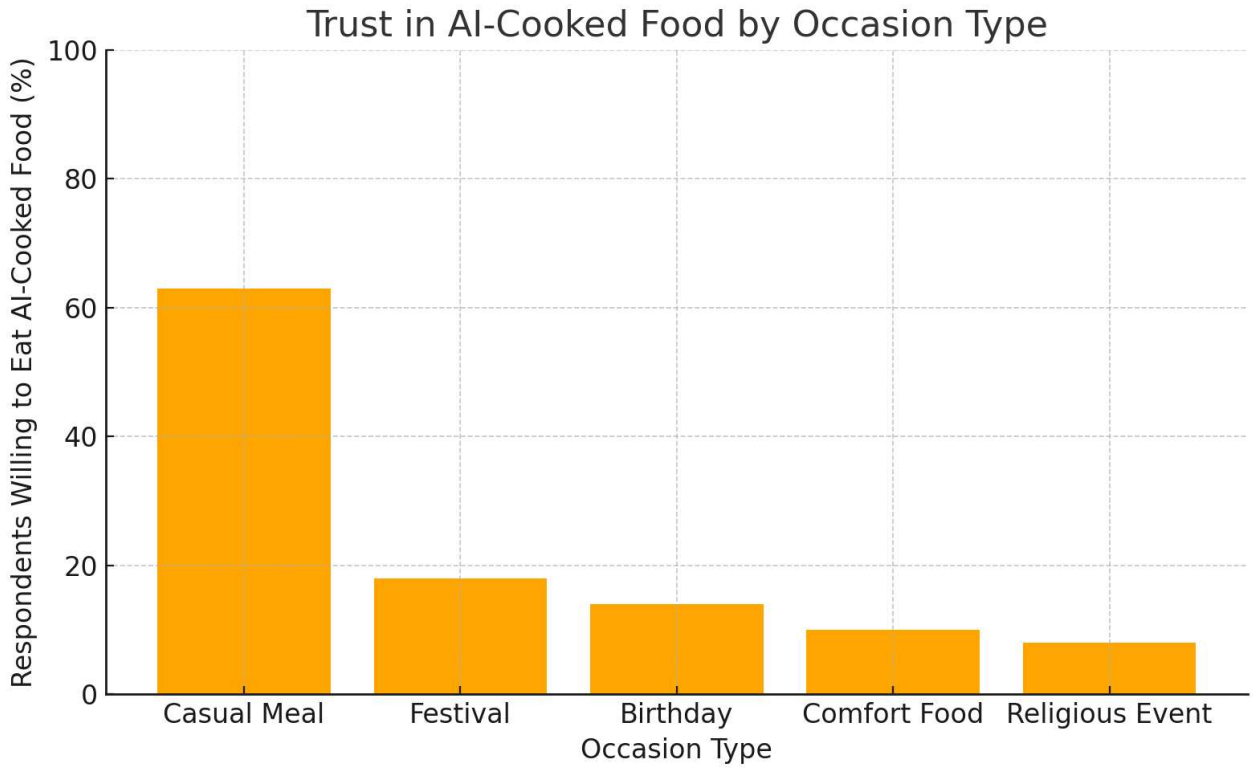

Figure X: Survey showing decreasing willingness to accept AI-cooked food as the occasion becomes more emotionally significant. While 63% accepted AI for casual meals, trust dropped dramatically for traditional or intimate events like religious ceremonies and birthdays.

4.4 Generational and Cultural Perspectives

Age, background, and tradition played key roles in shaping participants' perspectives. Younger respondents were generally more open to AI in cooking so long as it didn't intrude on emotional rituals. In contrast, those from older generations or culturally rooted backgrounds emphasized respect, process, and story.

In Indian kitchens, food is sacred. We don't wear footwear while cooking it's a form of respect. We offer a portion of food to the fire before eating, honoring spiritual traditions. Cooking methods like litti chokha where dough balls are roasted over fire without utensils or underground meat roasting during wartime are more than techniques; they are acts of memory and resilience.

Today, younger generations often prioritize taste and convenience over narrative. But as

one professor from the hotel management survey noted, “Hospitality is not just about food. It’s about presence and storytelling.”

4.5 Theme 4: AI as Co-Creator, Not Replacer

When framed as a helper, AI was generally welcomed. Survey results showed that 63% of general respondents and 87% of hospitality professionals supported AI in roles that assisted, rather than led, the cooking process. Participants envisioned AI helping with meal planning, ingredient suggestions, or speeding up prep but not replacing the emotional heart of cooking.

Sera et al.’s study illustrated this beautifully. The AI didn't bake the bread it inspired it. Human creators made the emotional decisions, linking color to feeling, texture to memory.

I agree with this balance. I’m open to AI helping preserve fading family recipes or offering new ideas. But I would not feel comfortable if my younger brother or future child relied solely on AI to recreate dishes that are tied to our identity. Cooking is not just an outcome it’s a presence. It’s care translated into texture, taste, and temperature.

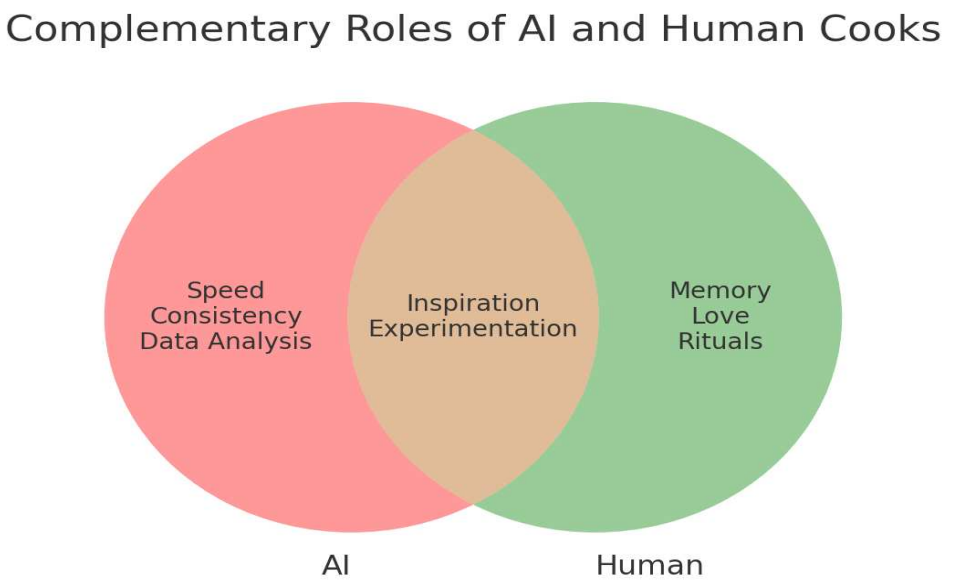

Figure X: A visual comparison of the distinct and overlapping roles of AI and human cooks. AI excels in speed and data, while humans offer memory, emotion, and cultural meaning. The overlap suggests a possible space for co-creation.

4.6 Summary

These findings affirm what I have always known to be true: food is emotion, memory, and identity. It is not simply an act of consumption, but a form of communication especially in cultures like mine, where words often fall short and feelings are expressed through texture, spice, and time.

The four core themes revealed a consistent pattern. In Theme 1, food emerged as a deeply emotional anchor, tied to memory and belonging. Both interview participants and survey respondents echoed that taste alone does not define a dish its emotional and cultural resonance does. Theme 2 explored trust and authenticity, revealing that while AI is accepted in low-stakes scenarios, people draw a strong emotional boundary when it comes to sacred, celebratory, or nostalgic meals.

Theme 3 illustrated generational and cultural contrasts, particularly how younger people prioritize flavor or novelty, while older traditions emphasize respect, ritual, and symbolism.

Finally, Theme 4 clarified a potential middle ground where AI can act as a co-creator or assistant, but not as a bearer of emotion, culture, or memory.

The visuals added further clarity. They showed how willingness to accept AI-cooked food declines in emotionally significant contexts, and how emotional associations with food far outweigh purely functional ones. Even the traditional Indian rituals I grew up withnlike not wearing shoes in the kitchen or offering food to fire reveal a reverence that AI cannot replicate.

Together, my findings emphasize that while AI may have a role in future kitchens, it cannot inherit cultural memory or replicate emotional intent. Cooking is human work. It is where grief, celebration, memory, and meaning coexist. As we move into a future shaped by technology, the challenge is not just to make food faster, but to ensure we do not lose the stories, care, and soul simmering behind every dish.

Chapter 5

Discussion

In this chapter, I step back and reflect on the findings through the lenses of personal experience, cultural memory, and existing literature. The results have shown that food is far more than sustenance; it is memory, identity, and emotion on a plate. Here, I weave together my own stories (from being hand-fed by my grandmother to the comforting taste of home after time away), insights from interviews and surveys, and scholarly perspectives. The discussion is organized into thematic sections that mirror the research questions, exploring how AI in the kitchen intersects with the emotional richness of cooking (Section 5.1), what might be lost when human touch is replaced by automation (5.2), generational and cultural differences in acceptance of AI (5.3), the potential for AI to

support rather than erode culinary heritage (5.4), and the expectations and design considerations for AI to be welcomed in emotionally meaningful culinary spaces (5.5). Finally, I conclude with a synthesis (5.6) on the emotional cost of automation, pondering how technology's rapid evolution from a time of no phones to today's AI might impact the soul of our kitchens.

5.1 Food as Emotional Memory: Generations, Rituals, and Love

One of the clearest revelations of this research is that food is a vessel of memory and love, often carrying the weight of generations. Nearly every interview and personal reflection echoed this truth: a simple dish can unlock a treasury of emotions and stories. For instance, Matteo, one of the participants, shared that Sunday meals at home were never really about the recipes, they were about the ritual of everyone coming together, the laughter and conversation as essential as the food on the table. Similarly, Juan recalled how his grandmother's arepas always came with a story and a lesson; each cooking session was an informal classroom where culture and love were kneaded into the dough. Iman described cooking with her mother during Ramadan, noting that every spice added was like a thread in the fabric of tradition, imbued with meaning and memory passed down through generations. These accounts illustrate what many of us know intuitively: food, especially when prepared by those we love, is a direct gateway to the past.

On a deeply personal level, I have felt this emotional power of food time and again. The very smell of coconut chicken curry simmering on the stove instantly transports me back to my childhood home. I can practically see myself running around as a kid, anticipating dinner. One of the most poignant moments for me was when I returned home after many months in Italy: the very first meal I had was my grandmother's lamb gravy with ghee rice. One bite, and I wasn't just tasting delicious food I was home again, flooded by a sense of belonging and comfort that no restaurant or recipe book could ever replicate. If I were to pick dishes that define my childhood, I would name *rasam* rice *(ರಸಂ ಅನ್ನ)* and spiced lamb chops*(ಮಟನ್ ಚಾಪ್ಸ್)* without hesitation. *Rasam* is a tangy tomato broth with cumin and pepper, the go-to elixir for colds or the dish you crave on a rainy day; it's warm, tangy, and restorative. Paired with tender lamb chops marinated in green chili, mint, and coriander, it becomes nourishment not just for the body but for the soul food that hugs you from the inside. Even a hearty bowl of *bisibelebath* (ಬಿಸಿ ಬೀಳೆ ಬಾತ್), a traditional rice-lentil stew whose name literally means "hot lentil rice", carries for me the memory of slow Sunday breakfast with the whole family gathered, everyone taking turns to stir the pot and sneaking tastes, bonding over the shared meal.

Crucially, these aren't just *my* experiences; they resonate across cultures. In our survey of 38 general respondents, **81% said they associate certain foods with "home" or "emotion"**, confirming that this link between food and feeling is near-universal. This aligns with scholarly discussions emphasizing food as a cultural memory. Beck et al. (2021), for example, add a deeply human layer to the conversation around AI in cooking by shifting focus back to where it all begins: the kitchen as a space of love, memory, and connection.

Beck and colleagues highlight that cooking isn't merely about producing meals; it's fundamentally about relationships, how grandparents and grandchildren bond through secret family recipes, how stories are passed on while stirring a pot, and how *"hands shape memory as much as they shape dough."* Reading their study, I was immediately reminded of my own grandmother and her sister *the Annapūrṇas ಅನ್ನಪೂರ್ಣ ಅನ್ನ (Anna): Means "food" or "grains"ಪೂರ್ಣ (Pūrṇa): Means "full, complete, and perfect"* of our family who have spent decades cooking not just for nourishment, but to express care for everyone around them. To this day my grandmother, Jayalakshmi, still makes her special *keema saaru* (ಕೀಮಾ ಸಾರು, a spiced meat curry) just for me, grinding the spices on the same ancient stone slab, with the same love in her eyes. Every time I taste it, I'm reminded not just of an amazing dish, but of who I am and where I come from.

One particular childhood memory crystallizes the idea of cooking as an act of love: my grandmother feeding me *mossappu* (ಮೊಸಪ್ಪು, a simple mashed greens curry) as a toddler. In Kannada we call this loving hand-feeding *kai tuttu*, literally "feeding by hand." I can still recall how her warm hand would form small balls of soft rice mixed with mossappu and gently place them in my palm or sometimes directly in my mouth as she cooed comforting words. That practice of *kai tuttu* was more than just a way to get a child to eat; it was **love** made tangible. Each morsel carried the message: *I care for you, I want you to be healthy and happy*. The emotional meaning behind this simple act is profound; it symbolizes the trust and bond between feeder and child. To this day, no five-star gourmet experience can equal the feeling of being fed by my grandma. In Kannada, there's also a saying *"amma snaehada aduge, kai ruchi"* roughly translating to "a mother's love in cooking, hand has its unique taste." *Kai ruchi* (ಕೈ ರುಚಿ, "taste of the hand") refers to the idea that the personal touch of the cook imparts an inimitable flavor and warmth to a dish. Indeed, no two people can make rasam exactly the same way; that subtle difference *is the love and individuality of the cook*. These cultural phrases and practices underscore a key insight: the magic in cooking lies not just in ingredients and technique, but in the human presence and emotion behind it.

So, when we consider AI in the kitchen, we must ask: *Can a machine ever carry these generational memories or offer that kind of emotional warmth?* The initial findings suggest that while AI can assist with recipes, it cannot be the emotional heart of the kitchen. It can mimic the form of a dish, but not necessarily the feeling. As one respondent put it, *"A robot might get the recipe right, but it doesn't know why we cook that dish in the first place."* This sentiment introduces the next crucial theme: the subtle qualities that might be lost when cooking is automated.

5.2 What's Lost When Machines Replace Human Hands

While AI and robotics promise efficiency and consistency in cooking, many participants feared an invisible price: the loss of the human touch emotionally, culturally, and ritually. The data, both qualitative and survey-based, paints a picture of ambivalence. People marvel at the idea that a machine could perfectly recreate their favorite dish, yet they also sense that something *intangible* would be missing.

From the interviews, Alessandra's reflection encapsulated this tension. She imagined an AI system preparing her family's Christmas lasagna. *"It might taste the same,"* she said, *"but I would know in my heart that Nonna didn't make it."* For Alessandra, the act of her grandmother layering that lasagna, humming an old song in the kitchen, is as much a part of the dish as the tomatoes or cheese. If a robot took over, even if every ingredient and timing was identical, the soul of the dish would be absent it would feel like a beautiful portrait with no life behind the eyes. This aligns with what our survey respondents expressed when asked about automated cooking for special occasions: many noted they would feel *"something is missing"* or even *"guilty or sad"* if a machine cooked an important family meal. One respondent wrote, *"Festival foods carry blessings; if a machine makes it, where do the blessings go?"* Such comments highlight a belief that human cooks infuse food with emotions like love, care, and even spiritual energy qualities that a machine, no matter how skilled, cannot replicate.

This idea is echoed in the literature. Gong et al. (2025), who studied customer reactions to robot-chef restaurants, found that diners were impressed by the consistency and novelty of robot-cooked food, yet many felt the experience was hollow. Their research noted a tension: some customers were satisfied with robot-made food that tasted authentic, while others felt it *"lacked the 'soul' or human touch."*In other words, replicating grandma's recipe is not the same as being grandma making the recipe. It's the difference between execution and intention. When I read Gong et al. I immediately thought of the concept of *kai ruchi* again, that special taste imparted by the cook's hand. A robot might execute a recipe flawlessly, but it lacks the *intent* and *care* that guide a human hand. I have experienced this first-hand when experimenting with AI-generated recipes in my own kitchen. For example, I once asked an AI for a simple curry recipe and followed it out of curiosity. The result was technically correct and edible; the proportions, cooking times, and seasoning were on point but somehow the dish felt impersonal. It was food, but it wasn't my food. I found myself instinctively adding a dash of this and that, tasting and adjusting as I went, essentially *humanizing* the AI recipe until it "felt" right. This illustrates what many participants expressed: AI lacks the instinct, the emotional radar, that guides a human cook.

Juan, in his interview, touched on another aspect: storytelling. *"When I cook my grandmother's recipes,"* he said, *"I hear her voice telling me why she adds a pinch of sugar, or how during the war they had to substitute ingredients."* These stories are inseparable from the recipe itself. If a robot simply follows the instructions, the narrative – the *why* behind each step is lost. Several participants believe that if machines take over cooking, younger generations might receive the end product (the dish) but miss out on the stories and lessons that typically come with it. This is a critical point: cooking together in a kitchen has always been a space of oral history and intangible heritage transfer. What do we lose if those conversations no longer happen?

Moreover, participants noted the loss of sensory and social rituals. Think of something as simple as tasting the sauce and adjusting the salt, or the habit of a parent blowing on a hot spoonful to cool it before offering it to a

child. These small acts, rich in care, are part of the experience of cooking and eating. If an automated system handles everything precisely, there's no need for these adjustments, and thus these little human interactions disappear. One reflection that came up again and again in both my interviews and personal memories is how cooking was once a communal ritual. Whether it was my grandmother feeding us with her hands (kai tuttu), or cousins helping during weddings, food was how we bonded. The fear now is that in making things efficient, we may lose that magic. Reflections from both my own experience and participant insights revealed that cooking was once a deeply communal act. Whether during weddings or family gatherings, everyone had a role: chopping vegetables, stirring pots, fetching ingredients. I remember how, during my cousin's wedding, the groom's family (including me) cooked for the bride's family a practice called beegara oota (ಬೀಗರ ಊಟ). I prepared chicken Chettinad, and there was laughter, heat, spice, and pride in the air. If a robot had done all the work, yes, the dish might've tasted the same but we would have missed the joy of doing it together. That's the paradox several participants hinted at: AI might bring convenience, but convenience without connection can feel hollow. As one participant put it, *"perfect food isn't always meaningful food."* Yes, AI could free us from labor, but perhaps we have to be careful what we free ourselves from. Are we liberating time, or robbing ourselves of meaningful time together?

The survey of 15 hospitality professionals provided an interesting perspective here. These are people who work with food for a living and often embrace new kitchen technologies to improve service. Many of them acknowledged the potential of AI for routine prep work or ensuring consistency in a restaurant setting. However, even among these professionals, there was a strong sentiment that certain intangible elements of cuisine must remain human. One chef in the survey wrote, *"A recipe has two parts: ingredients and love. You can borrow the ingredients, but love has to come from the cook."* Another hospitality respondent pointed out that high-end dining is as much about the story and presentation by the chef as it is about taste: *"If a famous chef's dish is recreated perfectly by a robot, is it still special? Or does it become a copy without an artist?"* This insight is profound; it hints that the value we perceive in food is partly in knowing who created it and why. It's the reason we treasure grandma's hand-written recipe card or why restaurants proudly list the chef's name; food is a form of personal expression.

My findings suggest that when machines replace human hands in the kitchen, we risk losing more than just a bit of tradition. We risk losing the context, the emotion, and the human connection that elevate food from fuel to something poetic.

The "emotional cost" was described by participants in terms of loss of care, absence of stories, and a break in the lineage of culinary heritage. As one interviewee succinctly said, *"AI can make curry, but it can't make memories."* This recognition naturally varies across different people, which leads into the next topic: how one's generation and cultural background shape whether they see AI as a cool helper or an unwelcome intruder in the kitchen.

5.3 Generational and Cultural Perspectives: Tradition vs. Tech

Attitudes toward AI in the kitchen turned out to differ notably with age and cultural background. The interplay of generational experience and cultural values emerged as a key factor in whether someone embraces or resists the idea of a robot chef. This section examines those differences, which speak to how deeply cooking is intertwined with identity.

From the survey data and interviews, a pattern of age-based contrast was evident. Younger participants (let's say those under 30) generally showed more curiosity and openness toward AI-assisted cooking. Many of them grew up with technology as smartphones, voice assistants, and digital convenience are second nature.
For these individuals, an AI in the kitchen might just feel like the next gadget, not fundamentally threatening. For example, one 25-year-old survey respondent mentioned he would "definitely try a robot chef for fun or to save time on busy weekdays," comparing it to using a dishwasher or a microwave as just another appliance. Another young interviewee imagined using AI to meal-plan and cook during the workweek, so she could have more free time, indicating a practical, positive outlook: *"If it tastes good and I don't have to babysit the stove, why not?"* However, even among this group, there was nuance. A few added that while they wouldn't mind a robot cooking *regular* dinners, they would still prefer a human touch for holidays or family get-togethers. This shows that even tech-friendly youth sense a boundary when it comes to the emotional occasions.

In contrast, **older participants** often expressed wariness or discomfort at the idea of machines cooking, especially for meaningful events. They tend to have vivid memories of kitchens filled with parents, siblings, or children essentially, the kitchen as a *social* place, not just a place where food magically appears. For many, the notion of an automated device taking over felt like an intrusion on sacred ground. One older gentleman in the survey (aged 60+) wrote, *"I'm okay with robots in car factories, but not in my kitchen. Cooking is personal."* This statement reflects a broader trend: older generations, having seen technology move into various aspects of life, draw the line at spaces they consider core to family and culture. Having grown up without modern appliances, we saw the arrival of microwaves, then the internet, and now AI. Each step brought convenience, but to me, a robot chef crosses into something deeply emotional. *"My grandmother taught me to cook on a wood fire,"* she told me. *"It's hard to imagine telling my own grandchildren someday that I taught them to cook on… an iPad with an AI."* Her tone was half-joking, half-sorrowful. The fear here is a break in continuity that a tradition of passing down recipes and techniques might be disrupted if a generation simply doesn't need the elders to learn cooking because they have an AI app or machine to rely on instead.

Cultural background also plays a significant role. Those from cultures with strong culinary traditions (like India, Italy, Mexico – which were reflected among our interviewees) often viewed the kitchen as more than just a utilitarian space. In many cultures, including my own Indian heritage, food is *integral* to every celebration, rite of passage, and even daily prayer. The idea of an impersonal entity handling food in those moments can feel almost sacrilegious. I recall a conversation with Iman, who has Middle Eastern roots, about Eid

celebrations. She recounted how her whole family participates in preparing the feast – even the act of chopping nuts or stirring the pot is part of the shared joy. She then imagined if a machine did all that work: *"Sure, everything would be perfect and on time, but would it even feel like Eid?"* Her rhetorical question underscores that in some cultural contexts, the process of cooking together *is* the celebration. It's the hours in the kitchen telling stories, the mistakes and improvisations, the aromas that fill the home signaling a festival day these are as important as the food itself. A robot might deliver the same dishes, but *without the journey*, the destination might feel empty.

Interestingly, participants from cultures or families that already embrace a lot of kitchen tech (for example, one interviewee, Matteo, noted that his Italian mother loves her modern thermomix and breadmaker) tended to be a bit more open, but even they had reservations. Matteo himself is tech-savvy and said he wouldn't mind an AI "sou chef" helping him with chopping or timing while he cooked. But he drew a line at fully giving up control: *"I still want to be the one stirring the risotto. That's the whole point!"* This hybrid approach – using technology as an assistant, not a replacement was a common theme among those trying to balance modern life with traditional values. It suggests that acceptance of AI might come if it's framed as augmentation rather than substitution of human cooking. I'll delve more into that possibility in the next section.

The generational divide was also evident in the way people talked about trust. Younger participants tended to trust technology more implicitly they're used to algorithms recommending their music, GPS telling them where to drive, etc. To them, trusting an AI with cooking didn't seem like a huge leap, provided the AI had good reviews or a strong track record.

In contrast, older individuals voiced concerns about reliability ("What if it malfunctions and burns the food?") and even a touch of skepticism about the *motives* behind automation ("Is this just so companies can sell us more gadgets?"). Some of the older respondents also expressed a poignant thought: *"I trust my daughter to make my food because I know she cares about me. How can I trust a machine that doesn't care if I even enjoy the meal?"* This highlights that trust in the kitchen isn't just about technical reliability; it's about emotional trust, the confidence that the cook has your well being and satisfaction at heart. Building that kind of trust with AI is a very tall order, and it may well differ across age groups and cultures.

Culturally, one more insight emerged regarding innovation vs. preservation. In fast-paced, innovation-driven cultures (perhaps urban metropolitan contexts, regardless of country), novelty is often seen as positive. Participants from such backgrounds were excited about trying new things, including AI-cooked food, as long as it was convenient and tasty. Conversely, those from communities that pride themselves on preserving culinary heritage

were more resistant, worried that automation might dilute the authenticity of their food traditions. For example, a chef from the hospitality group who specializes in Japanese cuisine mentioned that certain sushi recipes are considered an art passed down from master to apprentice. He was intrigued by robot sushi chefs (which do exist in some restaurants) but felt that an AI would *lack the spirit of omotenashi* (Japanese hospitality) that a sushi chef embodies when serving customers. Thus, cultural values around hospitality and tradition significantly color the acceptance of AI in cooking.

In summary, younger and more tech-oriented individuals are generally open to AI in the kitchen, viewing it as a helpful tool, whereas older and more tradition-oriented individuals approach it with caution or even discomfort, fearing the loss of precious rituals and trust. Cultural context amplifies these differences where cooking is deeply woven into cultural identity, there is more hesitancy to relinquish it to machines. These insights highlight that any introduction of AI into domestic kitchens will not happen in a cultural vacuum; it will need to navigate a landscape of trust, tradition, and varying levels of tech readiness.

5.4 Can AI Support Culinary Heritage Instead of Eroding It?

Up to this point, the discussion might appear to lean toward the apprehensions and negatives of AI in our kitchens. However, an important question raised (and one of our research questions) is whether AI could actually assist in preserving and transmitting culinary heritage, rather than threatening it. Is there a scenario where technology becomes a guardian or a bridge for tradition instead of a barrier? In this section, I explore that more optimistic, or at least nuanced, perspective one that some participants and researchers have begun to consider.

A few interviewees and survey respondents did express cautious optimism about how AI tools might be used constructively to preserve recipes and memories. For instance, one of the younger participants, who had lost her grandmother a few years ago, shared an intriguing thought: *“I wish I had recorded Nana narrating her recipes. Maybe I could use AI to recreate her voice telling me how to cook.”* This might sound like science fiction, but with advancements in voice synthesis and AI training on personal data, it isn’t far-fetched to

imagine a voice assistant that speaks in the tone of a loved one, walking you through a family recipe. In fact, there are already projects where people train AI chatbots on letters or journals of their deceased relatives to create a virtual conversational partner. In a culinary context, such a tool could potentially keep the sense of guidance from an elder alive, even when they are not physically present. Of course, this raises complex emotional and ethical questions, but it's a glimpse at how AI might *assist* in keeping heritage alive.

Another example is using AI as a knowledge repository and teacher. Imagine an app where elders in a community upload videos or descriptions of how to make traditional dishes. AI could index and organize these, translate them into multiple languages, or adapt the recipes to different dietary needs without losing the core essence. A grandmother's secret pickle recipe could be preserved in the cloud and accessed by her descendants worldwide, long after she's gone. One of the hospitality professionals in our study, who works in culinary R&D, noted that AI recipe generators could be fed with hundreds of authentic regional recipes and then *prompted to create new recipes "in the style of" that tradition*. This could lead to creative fusion or revival of forgotten ingredients and techniques. In his words, *"AI could become like an encyclopedia of world cuisine a tool chefs use to spark inspiration from the past."* If framed this way, AI isn't replacing the human; it's amplifying the human's access to culinary heritage.

The literature also provides some fascinating support for this collaborative view. Sera et al. (2024) present a study on *co-creation with AI in food development*. They explored making what they called *"bread with a taste of love"* by using AI to analyze romantic language from TV shows and recommend ingredients that evoke. The result was a set of "romance breads" developed jointly by AI suggestions and human bakers essentially a creative exercise to infuse an emotion (love) into a recipe via AI collaboration. What I find striking about Sera et al.'s work is that the AI was not claiming emotional authorship, but it played a collaborative role in translating human emotional concepts into flavor ideas. The human bakers ultimately decided how to implement those ideas (for example, choosing a rose essence or a strawberry swirl based on AI's suggestion that those ingredients correlate with romantic themes). This indicates a model where AI acts as a **partner or muse** in the culinary creative process. One could imagine using a similar approach to, say, revitalizing an old family recipe: the AI might suggest modern twists that still resonate with the original's emotional theme, giving a new generation a way to connect with it.

In Sera et al.'s case, they even conducted tastings and found that people could perceive the intended "emotion" in the bread, which is a remarkable testament to the potential of AI-human synergy in.

From my own perspective, I've started to see how AI could help me cherish my heritage rather than erase it. I recall struggling to get a particular chutney recipe right – one my mother makes effortlessly. She was halfway across the world, so I queried an AI about that chutney, describing the taste and ingredients as I remembered. The AI came back not only with a plausible recipe, but also a bit of historical context about that chutney's region and suggestions for variations. It was like consulting a knowledgeable (if impersonal) elder. Of course, it wasn't *exactly* my mom's version, but it gave me a starting point to work from and tweak. In doing so, I felt more connected to my roots, not less. It's important to note that I didn't blindly follow the AI I used it as a guide and then relied on my own taste-memory to adjust. This kind of cooperation is promising: AI as a preserver and disseminator of culinary knowledge, with humans providing the judgment, taste, and emotional context.

However, this optimistic outlook comes with caveats. For AI to truly support heritage, it must be directed and curated by those who hold the knowledge. An AI is only as good as the data and values we feed into it. If communities proactively engage with these technologies, uploading grandma's recipes, teaching the AI the *why* behind them, and setting guidelines that protect authenticity then we stand a chance of AI being a helpful archivist or assistant. On the other hand, if we leave it entirely to companies or generic data, we risk flattening rich traditions into homogenized outputs. For example, an AI might average out a hundred biryani recipes and give a generic version that lacks the unique regional flair of, say, a Hyderabadi biryani. This is where human oversight and collaboration are key.

Some participants pointed out that AI could help in accessibility of cultural foods. A person with dietary restrictions who longs to experience a traditional dish could ask AI for adapted versions (like a vegan rendition of a traditionally meat-based festival dish). Rather than replacing the original, this use of AI opens the door for more people to enjoy a version of that heritage. A hospitality professional in our study mentioned how their restaurant used an AI tool to convert classic recipes into allergy-friendly versions, which allowed guests with allergies to get a sense of the original dish without the risk. In that sense, AI served as a custodian, ensuring *everyone* could partake in the culinary tradition in some form.

Ultimately, whether AI becomes a companion or a threat to culinary heritage depends on *how we choose to use it*. The discussion from our research suggests a cautious yet hopeful approach: involve the keepers of tradition in designing these AI tools. If an AI cooking assistant is programmed with respect for cultural nuances and even a bit of storytelling ability (imagine it explaining the significance of a step as you cook, almost like a family elder would), it might enhance the cooking experience rather than detract from it. Some forward-looking designers and studies are exploring exactly this. For instance, I came across a concept of an AI-powered recipe book that includes voice notes from family members and can switch to "teaching mode" to coach you patiently like a grandparent. It's still a concept, but it shows that technologists are thinking about humanizing the AI cooking experience.

AI *can* support the transmission of culinary heritage, but it works best as a supporting actor, not the star. It can archive, suggest, translate, and even inspire, but the human needs to remain the director of the performance. By positioning AI as a tool that augments human creativity and memory, we can potentially have the best of both worlds: innovation that doesn't steamroll tradition, and convenience that doesn't erase meaning. This leads to the final consideration if we are to integrate AI into emotionally meaningful culinary spaces, *under what conditions* will people accept it? What must these AI systems be like in order to be welcomed rather than resisted?

5.5 Designing AI for Emotional Resonance: Warmth, Trust, and "Soul" in the Machine

If AI is to find a place in our kitchens without displacing the emotional center, it must meet certain social and emotional expectations. From both the influencer video analysis and our participants' reflections, it became evident that simply being efficient or intelligent is not enough for an AI in a traditionally human, emotionally-charged space like the home kitchen. How an AI presents itself, interacts, and aligns with our rituals plays a huge role in acceptance.One key element frequently mentioned is the perception of warmth and personality. It's telling that even in cutting-edge research, scholars talk about robots in terms of human-like traits: *warmth* and *competence*.

Zhu & Chang (2020) found that giving a robot chef human-like features (for example, a friendly face or humanoid hands) can increase people's perception of the robot's warmth and even the expected quality of its food. In other words, a cute or relatable robot might make us feel more comfortable. This phenomenon, known as anthropomorphism, suggests that if a kitchen AI or robot looks and behaves in a more humanlike or personable way, people might be more inclined to accept it as a sort of helper rather than a cold appliance. Indeed, in one of the YouTube videos we analyzed, the content creator

had an AI voice assistant that cracked little jokes and used a grandmotherly tone while guiding the recipe. viewers in the comments said it felt “less weird” and even “charming.” This aligns with Zhu & Chang’s findings: perceived warmth can be enhanced by design. However, it’s also a double-edged sword. Some participants noted that overly human-like robots cross into the “uncanny valley” or simply feel like an unsettling impersonation. As Alessandra put it, *“I don’t need my kitchen robot to call me Cara (dear) like my Nonna does that would freak me out!”* The balance is delicate: enough warmth to be approachable, but not so much that it feels like an inauthentic parody of a human.

In exploring the intersection of AI and cooking, YouTube videos provided a unique lens: informal, experimental, and deeply reflective of public curiosity and anxiety. These videos were not scripted academic studies; they were emotional playgrounds where human cooks, chefs, and content creators met machines head-on. What emerged was a vivid picture of how AI in the kitchen provokes laughter, skepticism, surprise, and sometimes a quiet sadness about what might be lost.

In the video *“We Let AI Create Recipes From Random Ingredients...”*, two ordinary cooks tested AI-generated recipes built on absurd combinations minced beef and dark chocolate in lettuce cups, or crab, blue cheese, and digestive biscuit crusts. The results were oddly structured yet deeply lacking in cultural logic. The AI performed like an obedient recipe book with no memory or emotion—smart enough to organize steps, yet clueless about taste, seasonality, or the story behind each ingredient. When one cook said, *“The smartest thing the AI should have said is: don’t bother,”* it captured what many participants in my thesis also expressed: AI can give form, but not feeling.

Another video *“Man Vs. AI: Can ChatGPT Beat a Chef?”*, raised the emotional stakes further. Here, an accomplished chef competed against AI-generated versions of his own dishes: fried chicken, burgers, cookies. The robot was fast, structured, and technically functional. But it missed seasoning cues, forgot baking powder, and lacked the storytelling that shaped the chef’s originals. At one point, the chef said, half-jokingly, *“If the AI wins, I’m out of a job.”* It wasn't just a competition, it was a test of whether his years of memory, instinct, and love could be replicated in a few seconds of code. In the cookie round, when the chef’s recipe won, the relief wasn’t just about winning, it was about holding on to identity.

A third video, *“Human vs Robot Chef”*, went further into dramatized comparisons. Robots executed perfect knife cuts and cooked pasta with surgical precision. But they also burned pine nuts and melted their feet. Even humanoid robots with social programming, like “Neo,” could serve steak, tell jokes, and pose for photos but they didn’t know why sautéed garlic smells like home. They could plate food, but not plate memory.

What these videos consistently show is that AI can be impressive, but emotionally shallow. Even when the food tastes “not bad,” there’s an emptiness in the process. No intuition. No mid-step correction. No cultural weight. Robots do not flinch when a sauce splits or when

dough feels wrong; they do not know the joy of improvisation or the heartbreak of getting it wrong for someone you love.

And yet, not all the videos were pessimistic.

The fourth video, *“DelishUp AI Cooking for Everyday People”*, reimagined AI not as a rival, but as a quiet helper. It didn’t replace a chef. It helped a tired home cook. It saved time. It remembered texture preferences. It spoke to Indian taste. It gave the user confidence not to become a Michelin star chef, but to relax, cook more often, and enjoy the food. That’s where I see a future: not where AI claims the soul of cooking, but where it respects its absence and supports those who need it. As this thesis argues, AI in the kitchen doesn’t need to be emotional but it must respect the emotion of those who cook.

These YouTube experiments affirmed what I’ve felt and heard throughout this study: cooking is not a clean algorithm. It’s messy, intuitive, and personal. When AI forgets that, it risks making food into a transaction. But when it supports without ego when it steps in, not up it might just find its place next to the spice box, not instead of it.

5.6 Synthesis: Embracing Innovation Without Losing Our Soul

We’ve seen this happen before.

Decades ago, when people left home, they wrote letters. We waited weeks for news. No replies? We assumed they were busy, not in danger. Now, even a single missed call makes us panic. In just one generation, we’ve gone from delayed trust to instant anxiety all because of how technology changed our expectations.

I remember the world without smartphones. I’ve lived it. That slow, present, slightly quieter world. Children growing up today may never know it. And one day, they might not know a kitchen without AI either. Robot cooking might become so normal that no one questions it. And that’s what scares me most.

We might forget what it felt like to be cooked by someone who loves us.

Through this thesis through stories, interviews, literature, and survey data—I have tried to show what that emotional connection looks like. I spoke about *mossappu* (ಮೊಸಪ್ಪು), a simple spinach-lentil dish my grandmother hand-fed me as a child. That act of *kai tuttu* of forming rice balls and feeding each grandchild by hand wasn’t just tradition. It was love, visible and warm.

I remember what my father told me about my grandfather. On the day he passed, he ate all his favorite foods: lamb biryani, chicken fry, and *paya* soup. He hadn't even asked for it it just happened that the family cooked those dishes that day. My father sat beside him as he ate, happy and full. Later that evening, he collapsed. That was his last meal. Not one anyone expected to be his last—but it was. That memory stays with me, and reminds me: a meal is not just food. It can be the last joy we give someone.

None of this none can be felt by a machine.

Our data showed that AI can help. It can suggest, guide, adapt. It can be efficient. But it cannot feel. It cannot miss someone. I cannot worry. It cannot remember the weight of grief or the texture of nostalgia. As one participant said, *“we might be well-fed but starved of feeling.”*

So where do we go from here?

This thesis does not reject AI. I use it myself. I’ve asked it for substitutions, for suggestions, even for history. But I’ve also ignored it when it gave me ideas that didn’t feel right like substituting *kachampuli* with soy sauce when I was trying to cook *ಪಂಜಿದ ಕಜಿಪು* (pork pundi curry). I couldn’t do it. Because that dish carries identity, not just flavor.

The solution is not resistance. It is conscious integration.

We must choose when to let AI help and when to ask it to step back. We must design it to be quiet when needed, wise when invited, and always humble. Just like the slow food movement reminds us to savor, perhaps we need a slow tech movement in the kitchen to keep us grounded in rituals, in memory, in the feeling of stirring something not just with a spoon, but with love. Let AI be our tool. But let *us* stay the storytellers.

And one day, when our children ask what changed in the kitchen, I want to be able to say:

> “We embraced innovation. But we also preserved our fire.”

Chapter 6

Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion: Cooking, Connection, and the Cost of Convenience

This thesis began with a simple question: *Can a machine ever cook like someone who loves us?*

What I found through literature, interviews, surveys, reflections, and real-world experiments is that the answer is both yes and no. AI can follow steps, organize ingredients, and mimic methods. But what it cannot do at least for now is understand the soul of cooking. It cannot taste longing. It cannot fold grief into a dish, or recall the stories that season a spice.

Doing this thesis has been like riding a rollercoaster. I started with excitement and curiosity. The world of AI in cooking seemed fascinating, almost magical. The deeper I went, the more I learned not just about machines, but about myself, my family, and our traditions. I rediscovered memories of *kai tuttu*, of *keema saaru*, of the smell of rasam and the emotional weight of *bisibelebath*. I heard stories from friends and strangers about food as memory, food as identity, food as love.

But I also encountered the future. I came across magnetic stoveless surfaces like Invisacook, where cooking happens invisibly, without even fire. With innovations like this, we're not just changing how we cook, we're letting go of elements like smoke, firewood, and slow preparation, which for generations connected people to earth, effort, and emotion. Fire is not just heat; it's ritual, symbol, and history. And now, it can be replaced by a table.

This shocked me. It reminded me of how we once lived without phones. We used to write letters and wait for days. Today, a missed call brings panic. The future will no doubt be efficient, but it risks becoming emotionally hollow.

To my surprise, even among young people I spoke to those considered digital natives, many still value the human act of cooking. The shift may not be visible today, but **f**uture generations may never know what they're missing. And that is the true cost not in innovation, but in forgetting the meaning behind what we replace.

As I close this chapter, I carry both gratitude and concern. Gratitude for the tools and intelligence we've created. Concern for the silence that might one day replace kitchen conversations, passed-down spice blends, or the joy of sharing a first meal with someone you love.

6.2 Recommendations

To AI Designers and Developers:

- **Don't automate everything.** Just because something can be done by a machine doesn't mean it should. Design with emotion in mind, but **don't fake emotional intelligence**.

- Prioritize **collaborative tools**, not replacements. Let AI support human creativity, not take over it.

- Reflect on the cultural impact: A universal AI kitchen assistant might erase regional diversity and ritual. Build with **context, history, and humility**.

- Remember Studio Ghibli's words. When Hayao Miyazaki saw an AI animation of a disfigured soldier made for entertainment, he said it was *"an insult to life itself."* Not all efficiency is progress.

To Researchers and Innovators:

- Be curious, yes. But also be careful. Don’t let greed for patents or market wins cloud the **ethical depth of your work**.

- Ask harder questions: Who gets to draw the line? When is too much too much?

- Value slowness. Celebrate mess. Not everything needs to be optimized. Especially not culture.

To Families, Elders, and Home Cooks:

- Keep cooking together. Even if AI becomes common, don’t stop telling the stories behind your dishes.

- Record your recipes, but also record your voices. One day, your grandchild may want to hear how you explain a spice blend.

- Let the kitchen stay a place of imperfection, of laughter, of care not a production line.

6.3 A Closing Reflection

This research was academic but it was also deeply personal. I didn’t expect to cry while writing about *bisibelebath*. I didn’t expect to pause for so long remembering my grandfather’s final meal. I didn’t think I’d be comforted by the smell of lamb gravy or the sound of ghee sizzling in a pan.

But I was.

If anything, this journey has taught me that food is never just food. It’s love in a ladle. It's a memory in motion. And though machines may someday cook better than us, they may never cook *for* us.

As one Kannada saying reminds us:

> **"ಲೋಕವನ್ನು ತಿಳಿದವನು ನಾಚಿ ಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದಿಲ್ಲ, ಅನ್ನದ ಬೆಲೆ ತಿಳಿದವನು ಅಹಂಕಾರಿ ಆಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.."**
> **Lōkavannu tiḷidavanu nāci koḷḷuvudilla, annada bele tiḷidavanu ahaṅkāri āguvudilla..**
>
> *"One who understands the world doesn't feel ashamed. One who knows the value of food never becomes arrogant."*

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