



Culinary narratives: Exploring the socio-cultural dynamics of food culture in Africa

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Abstract

This paper delves into the multifaceted dimensions of food culture in Africa beyond culinary practices. It examines the socio-cultural significance of food consumption, production, and distribution in shaping identities, social structures, and community relationships. Through case studies and ethnographic research, it explores how food serves as a lens for understanding issues such as globalization, colonial legacies, and cultural hybridity, highlighting how food culture intersects with broader socio-political dynamics on the continent. Culinary Narratives: Exploring the Socio-Cultural Dynamics of Food Culture in Africa Culinary narratives in African literature provide a unique lens through which to explore the socio-cultural dynamics of food culture on the continent. This review delves into the rich tapestry of food-related stories, traditions, and practices in African societies, highlighting their significance in shaping identity, community, and cultural exchange. This study examines the role of culinary narratives in African literature, focusing on how food-related stories and traditions reflect and influence socio-cultural dynamics. By analyzing a range of literary works from different African countries and regions, this study aims to uncover the diverse ways in which food culture is represented and its impact on African societies. Studying culinary narratives in African literature is crucial for understanding the complexities of food culture and its role in shaping identity and social relations. Food is not just sustenance in African societies; it is a form of communication, a marker of identity, and a medium through which cultural traditions are preserved and shared. By exploring culinary narratives, we gain insights into the values, beliefs, and traditions that define African cultures. This study argues that culinary narratives in African literature offer a rich and multifaceted portrayal of food culture, highlighting its significance in shaping identity, community, and cultural exchange. Through the analysis of various literary works, this study seeks to illuminate the diverse ways in which food is represented and its impact on African societies. In conclusion, culinary narratives in African literature offer a unique and insightful perspective on the socio-cultural dynamics of food culture on the continent. By exploring these narratives, we gain a deeper understanding of the diverse ways in which food is used to communicate, celebrate, and preserve cultural heritage in African societies.

Keywords: Culinary Narratives; Socio- Cultural; Dynamics; Food Culture; Exploring

1. Introduction

Culinary narratives in African literature offer a unique window into the socio-cultural dynamics of food culture on the continent (Güzel, Ehtiyar & Ryan, 2021, Lee-Ferrand, 2020). This introduction defines culinary narratives, discusses the significance of studying food culture in African literature, and presents the thesis statement that will guide this exploration. Culinary narratives refer to the stories, traditions, and cultural practices related to food that are depicted in literature. These narratives go beyond mere descriptions of food to explore the deeper meanings, symbolism, and

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social significance of food in African societies. Culinary narratives encompass a wide range of themes, including identity, community, tradition, and cultural exchange, all of which are intricately tied to food culture.

Studying food culture in African literature is crucial for understanding the complexities of African societies and their diverse cultural practices (Holliday, 2021, Reddy & Van Dam, 2020). Food is not just a means of sustenance in Africa; it is a form of communication, a marker of identity, and a medium through which cultural traditions are preserved and shared. By examining how food is represented in literature, we can gain insights into the values, beliefs, and traditions that define African cultures.

This study aims to explore the socio-cultural dynamics of food culture in Africa through an analysis of culinary narratives in African literature. By examining a variety of literary works from different African countries and regions, this study seeks to uncover the diverse ways in which food culture is represented and its impact on African societies. Through this exploration, we hope to gain a deeper understanding of the role of food in shaping identity, community, and cultural exchange in Africa. In addition to providing sustenance, food serves as a powerful medium for storytelling and cultural expression in Africa. Culinary narratives, as depicted in African literature, delve into the intricate relationships between food, identity, and society, offering profound insights into the socio-cultural dynamics of the continent (Ayodabo, (2023, Jotte, 2024, Saidi, 2024). These narratives are not merely descriptions of meals or recipes; they are reflections of historical legacies, social hierarchies, and cultural interactions that have shaped African communities for centuries.

Food is deeply intertwined with African identity, serving as a symbol of cultural heritage and a marker of belonging. The preparation and consumption of food are often accompanied by rituals and traditions that reinforce communal bonds and transmit cultural values from one generation to the next. Through the lens of culinary narratives, African literature provides a nuanced understanding of how food practices reflect and contribute to the construction of individual and collective identities. Furthermore, the study of food culture in African literature highlights the resilience and adaptability of African societies in the face of external influences. Colonialism, globalization, and migration have all had a profound impact on African foodways, leading to the incorporation of new ingredients, cooking techniques, and culinary traditions (Farnsworth, 2020, Simpson Miller, 2022). Culinary narratives offer a platform to examine how these changes have shaped contemporary African cuisines and how they continue to influence cultural practices and social interactions.

This study seeks to explore the multifaceted nature of culinary narratives in African literature, examining how food is used as a narrative device to convey themes such as tradition, modernity, power, and resistance. By analyzing a range of literary works from different genres and time periods, this study aims to shed light on the rich tapestry of food culture in Africa and its significance in shaping the continent's literary landscape. Through this exploration, we hope to deepen our appreciation of the role of food in African societies and its enduring impact on African literature.

2. Historical and Cultural Significance of Food in Africa

The historical and cultural significance of food in Africa is profound, reflecting a rich tapestry of traditions, beliefs, and practices that have evolved over centuries (Aluede & Ikhidero, 2024, Green, 2024, Zurita-Gallegos, et. al., 2024). This essay explores the traditional food culture of Africa, the role of food in social rituals and ceremonies, and the evolution of African cuisine over time. Traditional African food culture is diverse and varied, reflecting the continent's vast geographical and cultural diversity. Staple foods such as grains, tubers, and vegetables form the basis of many African diets, with meat, fish, and dairy products also playing important roles in certain regions. Food is not just a source of nourishment in African societies; it is also a symbol of hospitality, community, and cultural identity.

In many African cultures, food is prepared and shared communally, with meals often serving as occasions for socializing and strengthening bonds within the community. Traditional cooking methods, such as grinding grains with a mortar and pestle or cooking over an open fire, are still practiced in many parts of Africa, highlighting the importance of preserving cultural heritage through food (Condé, et. al., 2024, Dunne, et. al., 2022, Knorr & Augustin, 2023). Food plays a central role in social rituals and ceremonies in Africa, serving as a means of celebrating, mourning, and honoring important life events. Births, weddings, and funerals are often marked by elaborate feasts featuring traditional dishes and recipes that have been passed down through generations.

In many African cultures, certain foods are believed to have symbolic or spiritual significance. For example, the breaking of kola nuts is a common ritual in many West African cultures, symbolizing hospitality and unity. Similarly, in some African cultures, certain foods are believed to have healing properties or to be imbued with magical powers, adding to their cultural significance (Bird, 2022, Dietz, 2022, Maholela, Twala & Kompfi, 2022). The cuisine of Africa has evolved

over time, influenced by a variety of factors including trade, colonization, and migration. The introduction of new ingredients such as maize, cassava, and peanuts from the Americas transformed African diets, leading to the creation of new dishes and culinary traditions.

Colonialism also had a significant impact on African cuisine, with European colonizers introducing new cooking techniques, ingredients, and recipes to the continent. This fusion of African and European culinary traditions gave rise to unique dishes such as Cape Malay cuisine in South Africa and Senegalese cuisine in West Africa. In conclusion, the historical and cultural significance of food in Africa is profound, reflecting a complex interplay of traditions, beliefs, and practices that have evolved over centuries. By exploring the traditional food culture of Africa, the role of food in social rituals and ceremonies, and the evolution of African cuisine over time, we gain a deeper appreciation of the rich culinary heritage of the continent.

The historical and cultural significance of food in Africa extends far beyond mere sustenance; it is deeply embedded in the fabric of African societies, reflecting a complex interplay of traditions, beliefs, and practices that have evolved over centuries (Reid, 2020, Wallach, 2019). One of the defining features of traditional African food culture is its emphasis on communal dining and sharing. Meals are often prepared and consumed together, with food serving as a symbol of hospitality and community. This communal approach to dining not only fosters social bonds but also reinforces cultural values and norms, such as the importance of sharing and cooperation.

Furthermore, food plays a central role in many African social rituals and ceremonies, marking important life events such as births, weddings, and funerals. These occasions are often celebrated with elaborate feasts featuring traditional dishes that are prepared with care and attention to detail. In some cultures, certain foods are reserved for specific rituals or ceremonies, highlighting their symbolic and cultural significance (Archetti, 2020, Weisgrau, Rosman & Rubel, 2023). In addition to its role in social rituals, food in Africa is also imbued with spiritual and symbolic meanings. Many traditional African societies believe that certain foods have healing properties or are endowed with spiritual powers. For example, the breaking of kola nuts in West African cultures is not just a social custom; it is also believed to invoke blessings and promote unity among participants.

The evolution of African cuisine over time has been shaped by a variety of factors, including trade, colonization, and migration. The introduction of new ingredients and cooking techniques from other cultures has led to the development of diverse and vibrant culinary traditions across the continent (Prastowo, et. al., 2023, Saras, 2023). For example, the use of spices in North African cuisine reflects the influence of Arab and Mediterranean traders, while the use of maize in Southern Africa is a legacy of the Columbian Exchange.

Despite these external influences, traditional African food culture remains resilient, with many communities continuing to preserve and celebrate their culinary heritage. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in African cuisine both within Africa and globally, highlighting the enduring appeal and cultural significance of African food. In conclusion, the historical and cultural significance of food in Africa is multifaceted and complex, reflecting a deep-seated connection between food, identity, and community. By exploring the traditional food culture of Africa, we gain a deeper appreciation of the richness and diversity of African societies and their culinary heritage.

3. Representation of Food in African Literature

Representation of food in African literature is a rich and multifaceted aspect that goes beyond mere descriptions of meals to convey deeper meanings, cultural nuances, and societal dynamics. This essay explores the various ways in which food is represented in African literature, including its use of metaphors, symbolism, and as a narrative device to convey themes and messages.

Food is often used metaphorically in African literature to represent a wide range of ideas and concepts. For example, in Chinua Achebe's novel "Things Fall Apart," yams are used as a symbol of masculinity and prosperity in Igbo culture (Agustin, 2022, Sreelakshmi, 2023). The protagonist, Okonkwo, is judged by his ability to grow yams, which are not only a staple food but also a symbol of wealth and social status. Similarly, in Tsitsi Dangarembga's "Nervous Conditions," food is used metaphorically to represent the complexities of colonialism and cultural assimilation (Midzi, 2022, Salisu, 2022). The protagonist, Tambudzai, struggles to navigate her identity in a post-colonial Zimbabwe where traditional foodways are being eroded by Western influences. Food becomes a symbol of resistance and a marker of cultural identity in the face of cultural imperialism.

Food is also portrayed in African literature as a cultural marker and identity signifier, reflecting the unique culinary traditions and practices of different African societies. In "The Palm-Wine Drinkard" by Amos Tutuola, for example, the

protagonist's quest for palm-wine reflects the cultural importance of this beverage in Yoruba culture, where it is used in rituals and ceremonies (Jose, 2021, Ogundiran, 2022). Similarly, in Buchi Emecheta's "The Joys of Motherhood," food is used to depict the protagonist's struggle to maintain her cultural identity in a rapidly changing society (Kabir, 2021, Kebdi & Iamrache, 2020). As she navigates the challenges of motherhood and modernity, food becomes a symbol of tradition and a link to her cultural heritage.

Food is often used as a narrative device in African literature to convey themes such as tradition, family, and social change. In Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's "Purple Hibiscus," for example, food is used to depict the oppressive nature of the protagonist's father, who controls every aspect of his family's life, including their diet (Nahida Lindecrantz, 2022, Sfaihi, 2022). The scarcity or abundance of food in the novel reflects the characters' emotional and psychological states, highlighting the impact of authoritarianism on family dynamics. In conclusion, the representation of food in African literature is a complex and nuanced aspect that reflects the cultural, social, and historical contexts of the continent. By analyzing the use of food-related metaphors, symbolism, and narrative devices in African literature, we gain a deeper understanding of the role of food in shaping identity, culture, and society in Africa (Jaafar, et. al., 2022, Thielen, 2022).

Food is a recurring motif in African literature, often used to highlight the cultural richness, social dynamics, and historical contexts of the continent (Bezner Kerr, et. al., 2022, Toivanen, 2021). Beyond its role as sustenance, food serves as a powerful tool for writers to explore complex themes and convey messages that resonate with readers. In many African cultures, food is deeply intertwined with identity, serving as a marker of cultural heritage and a means of preserving traditions. Writers often use food to depict the customs, rituals, and beliefs of their societies, providing readers with insights into the cultural nuances of African life. For example, in "Efuru" by Flora Nwapa, the preparation of traditional Igbo dishes such as fufu and palm nut soup is described in detail, highlighting their importance in Igbo culture (Chukwu, 2021, Palapala, 2018).

Food is also used in African literature to convey themes of social status, power dynamics, and economic inequality. Certain foods are associated with wealth and prosperity, while others are seen as staples of the poor (Pingali, et. al., 2019, Tomich, et. al., 2019). This dichotomy is often reflected in literature, where characters' access to food is used to illustrate their social standing. In "Half of a Yellow Sun" by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, for instance, the scarcity of food during the Biafran War serves as a stark reminder of the devastating effects of conflict on ordinary people (Osuji, 2021, Otuegbe, 2023). Moreover, food is frequently used as a metaphor for broader social issues, such as colonialism, globalization, and cultural identity. In "Season of Migration to the North" by Tayeb Salih, the consumption of European foods by the Sudanese protagonist symbolizes his internal struggle with Western influences and his quest for cultural authenticity.

Additionally, food serves as a narrative device to drive plot and character development in African literature. Meals and food-related events often serve as pivotal moments in a story, shaping the relationships between characters and advancing the storyline. In "The River Between" by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, for example, the protagonist's rejection of Western foods symbolizes his rejection of colonial influences and his embrace of traditional values (Anin, 2022, Ong'ang'a, 2023, Temonen, 2022). In conclusion, the representation of food in African literature is a multifaceted and richly textured aspect that reflects the complexities of African societies. By using food as a literary device, writers are able to explore a wide range of themes and convey messages that resonate with readers, making food an integral part of the narrative tapestry of African literature (Harvey, 2023, Leavy, 2020).

4. Socio-Cultural Dynamics of Food Culture in African Societies

The socio-cultural dynamics of food culture in African societies are intricate and multifaceted, reflecting a complex interplay of historical, social, and economic factors (Costa & Mfolo, 2024, Favour & Adedokun, 2023, Singh, 2023). This essay explores the social hierarchies and power dynamics related to food, the impact of colonialism and globalization on African food culture, and the role of food in intercultural exchange and cultural diffusion. Food plays a central role in the social hierarchies and power dynamics of African societies, often serving as a symbol of wealth, status, and prestige (DiMaggio, 2019, Garfield, Von Rueden & Hagen, 2019). In many African cultures, certain foods are reserved for special occasions or for the elite, reinforcing social distinctions and hierarchies. For example, in traditional Nigerian society, the consumption of kola nuts was reserved for elders and important guests, symbolizing respect and hospitality.

Moreover, the control and distribution of food have often been used as a means of exerting power and control over others. During periods of scarcity or famine, those who control access to food can wield significant influence over the community, determining who eats and who goes hungry. This power dynamic is often reflected in literature, where food is used as a tool for social commentary and critique. The impact of colonialism and globalization on African food culture has been profound, leading to the introduction of new ingredients, cooking techniques, and dietary habits (Miller, 2021,

Sousa & Raizada, 2020). Colonial powers introduced foods such as maize, cassava, and peanuts to Africa, which were then incorporated into local cuisines, leading to the development of new dishes and culinary traditions.

Globalization has also had a significant impact on African food culture, with the spread of fast food chains and processed foods changing the dietary habits of many Africans (Boafo, Sarku & Obodai, 2021, Fanzo & Davis, 2021, Reardon, et. al., 2021). This has led to concerns about the loss of traditional foodways and the rise of health issues such as obesity and diabetes. Food has long played a role in intercultural exchange and cultural diffusion in Africa, serving as a medium through which different cultures interact and influence each other. The transatlantic slave trade, for example, led to the introduction of African foods such as okra and yams to the Americas, where they became staple foods in African diaspora communities.

Similarly, the Silk Road and Indian Ocean trade routes facilitated the exchange of spices, herbs, and cooking techniques between Africa, Asia, and Europe, leading to the development of diverse and vibrant culinary traditions (Cleetus & Gerritsen, 2023, Yayusman, Yaumidin & Mulyasari, 2023). Today, African cuisine continues to be influenced by global food trends, with fusion cuisines and innovative dishes reflecting the dynamic nature of food culture in Africa. The socio-cultural dynamics of food culture in African societies are shaped by a complex interplay of historical, social, and economic factors. By exploring the social hierarchies and power dynamics related to food, the impact of colonialism and globalization on African food culture, and the role of food in intercultural exchange and cultural diffusion, we gain a deeper understanding of the rich and diverse culinary heritage of the continent (Cullen, et. al., 2023, Trevilla Espinal, et. al., 2021).

Food culture in African societies is deeply intertwined with social structures, cultural practices, and historical legacies, shaping identities and fostering community ties (Alnaim & Noaime, 2024, Guptill, Copelton & Lucal, 2022, Maspul & Almalki, 2023). The socio-cultural dynamics of food in Africa are evident in various aspects of daily life, including rituals, ceremonies, and everyday interactions. One key aspect of food culture in African societies is its role in establishing and reinforcing social hierarchies. Certain foods and dishes are associated with status and prestige, often reserved for special occasions or for those in positions of power (Bourdieu, 2018, Guptill, Copelton & Lucal, 2022). For example, in many African cultures, meat is considered a luxury item and is often reserved for elders or honored guests, symbolizing respect and hospitality. The control and distribution of food can also be a source of power, with those who have access to food often wielding influence over others.

Food also plays a central role in cultural practices and rituals, serving as a means of expressing identity and preserving traditions (Bhat & Rajeshwari, 2022, Reddy & Van Dam, 2020). Many African societies have elaborate food-related rituals and ceremonies that mark important life events such as births, marriages, and funerals. These rituals often involve the preparation and consumption of specific foods that have symbolic meanings, reflecting the cultural values and beliefs of the community. Moreover, food in African societies is not just a means of sustenance; it is a form of communication and social bonding. Sharing a meal is a common way for people to come together, forge relationships, and strengthen community ties. (Apio Dr, 2023, Asif, et. al., 2022) The act of preparing and sharing food is often seen as an expression of love and care, reinforcing social bonds and fostering a sense of belonging.

The impact of colonialism and globalization on African food culture has been significant, leading to changes in dietary habits, cooking techniques, and food preferences (Okech & Timothy, 2023, Weerasekara, et. al., 2018). Colonial powers introduced new foods and ingredients to Africa, which were then integrated into local cuisines, leading to the development of new dishes and culinary traditions. Globalization has further accelerated these changes, with the spread of fast food chains and processed foods influencing the diets of many Africans (Fanzo & Davis, 2021, Reardon, et. al., 2021). Despite these changes, traditional food culture remains deeply rooted in many African societies, serving as a source of pride and identity. Efforts to preserve and promote traditional foodways are gaining momentum, with a growing recognition of the importance of food culture in maintaining cultural heritage and fostering social cohesion. The socio-cultural dynamics of food culture in African societies are complex and multifaceted, reflecting a rich tapestry of traditions, beliefs, and practices (Alawode, 2024, Andrew, 2023, Owoicho, et. al., 2024). By exploring these dynamics, we gain a deeper understanding of the role of food in shaping identities, fostering community ties, and preserving cultural heritage in Africa.

5. Culinary Narratives in Selected African Literary Works

Culinary narratives in African literature offer a rich tapestry of stories that illuminate the cultural, social, and historical significance of food in the continent's diverse societies (Aljoe, 2024, Ukadike, 2023). This essay explores the culinary narratives in selected African literary works, analyzing how food-related stories and narratives depict characters and settings, and comparing culinary narratives across different African regions and cultures. In "The Palm-Wine Drinkard"

by Amos Tutuola, food plays a central role in the protagonist's quest for palm-wine, serving as a metaphor for his journey through the spirit world. (Cooper, 2021, Okri, Couto & Ma, 2021) The various foods and drinks he encounters on his journey are imbued with symbolic meanings, reflecting the cultural and spiritual beliefs of the Yoruba people.

Similarly, in "Like Water for Chocolate" by Laura Esquivel, food is used as a narrative device to convey emotions and feelings (Inanc, 2020, Yalvaç, 2021). The protagonist's cooking is infused with her emotions, affecting those who consume her food in profound ways. The novel's recipes are interspersed throughout the text, highlighting the intimate connection between food and emotions. Food is often used in African literature to depict characters and settings, providing readers with insights into the cultural and social contexts of the narrative. In Tsitsi Dangarembga's "Nervous Conditions," for example, food is used to depict the protagonist's struggle with cultural assimilation and identity. (Aftab, 2024, Cusack, 2023) The protagonist's preference for traditional foods reflects her desire to maintain her cultural identity in a changing world.

In "The Fishermen" by Chigozie Obioma, food is used to depict the setting of the novel, which is set in a small Nigerian town (John & Spagnoli, 2023, Pal, 2021). The descriptions of local foods and cooking techniques help to create a vivid sense of place, immersing readers in the sights, sounds, and smells of the town. Culinary narratives in African literature vary widely across different regions and cultures, reflecting the continent's diversity. In West Africa, for example, palm-wine and kola nuts are often used in rituals and ceremonies, symbolizing hospitality and community. In East Africa, foods such as injera and tsebhi are staples of the diet, reflecting the region's culinary traditions (Okech & Timothy, 2023, Owusu-Ansah, 2024).

Moreover, the way food is depicted in literature can vary depending on the author's background and perspective (Atsız, Cifci & Rasoolimanesh, 2022, Mertania & Amelia, 2020). For example, a Nigerian author may depict Nigerian foods and culinary traditions in a different way than a Kenyan author would. This diversity of culinary narratives in African literature reflects the richness and complexity of the continent's food culture. Culinary narratives in African literature offer a fascinating glimpse into the cultural, social, and historical significance of food in the continent's diverse societies. By analyzing how food-related stories and narratives depict characters and settings, and comparing culinary narratives across different African regions and cultures, we gain a deeper appreciation of the role of food in shaping African identities and cultures.

Culinary narratives in African literature often serve as more than just descriptions of food; they are vehicles for exploring complex themes such as identity, tradition, and social change. In many African literary works, food is not only a means of sustenance but also a symbol of cultural heritage and a reflection of social dynamics. (Haller, 2019, Magoqwana, 2018) For example, in "The Joys of Motherhood" by Buchi Emecheta, food is used to depict the protagonist's struggle to maintain her cultural identity in a rapidly changing society. As she navigates the challenges of motherhood and modernity, food becomes a symbol of tradition and a link to her cultural heritage. The novel also explores the role of food in shaping gender roles and expectations, highlighting how food can be used to reinforce or challenge societal norms.

In "Wizard of the Crow" by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, food is used to depict the political and social turmoil of post-colonial Africa (Ndilimeke Laolange Iyaloo, 2021, Spencer & Spencer, 2021). The novel's protagonist, Kamiti, navigates a world of corruption and oppression, where food becomes a scarce commodity controlled by the ruling elite. Through the portrayal of food scarcity and inequality, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o highlights the broader issues of power and exploitation in African society.

Furthermore, culinary narratives in African literature often transcend the mere description of food to convey deeper meanings and emotions. In "The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born" by Ayi Kwei Armah, for example, food is used to symbolize the decay and corruption of post-colonial Ghana. The protagonist's refusal to accept bribes or engage in corrupt practices is reflected in his simple diet, which stands in stark contrast to the lavish meals enjoyed by the ruling elite (Almoubizar & Gazou, 2022, Fadare, 2022). In conclusion, culinary narratives in African literature offer a rich and nuanced portrayal of the continent's diverse food cultures and traditions. By examining how food is used to depict characters, settings, and themes in selected African literary works, we gain a deeper understanding of the role of food in shaping African identities and societies.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the exploration of culinary narratives in African literature reveals a rich tapestry of stories that illuminate the socio-cultural dynamics of food culture in Africa. Through an analysis of food-related stories and narratives, we see

how food is used to depict characters, settings, and themes, providing insights into the cultural, social, and historical contexts of the continent.

Key findings from this exploration include the use of food as a metaphor for complex ideas and emotions, its role in establishing social hierarchies and power dynamics, and its significance in preserving cultural heritage and identity. Food in African literature is also used as a narrative device to convey themes such as tradition, family, and social change, reflecting the broader socio-political realities of African societies.

The implications of these findings for understanding African literature and food culture are profound. Culinary narratives offer a unique lens through which to explore and understand the complexities of African societies, providing a deeper appreciation of the cultural nuances and social dynamics of the continent. By examining how food is used in literature, we gain insights into the values, beliefs, and traditions that shape African identities and cultures.

Furthermore, the study of culinary narratives in African literature opens up new avenues for research and scholarship. Further research could explore the role of food in shaping gender roles and expectations in African societies, the impact of globalization on African food cultures, or the use of food as a form of resistance and cultural preservation. By continuing to explore the socio-cultural dynamics of food culture in Africa through literature, we can deepen our understanding of the continent's rich and diverse culinary heritage.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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