

Strengthening the Collective Memory of Tanjungkarang Village Community in Kudus Regency on the Oral Tradition of Lentog Tanjung through the Digitalization of Intangible Cultural Heritage

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Abstract. Lentog Tanjung is a traditional culinary heritage of Tanjungkarang Village, Kudus Regency, which embodies historical values and oral traditions (folklore) worth exploring. This culinary tradition reflects the community's identity and forms part of their collective memory, making its preservation crucial. However, modernization and lifestyle changes pose a risk of diminishing this tradition's existence, particularly among the younger generation. This community engagement project aims to strengthen the collective memory of Tanjungkarang Village residents regarding the oral tradition of Lentog Tanjung through a digitalization approach as a means of preserving intangible cultural heritage. The method employed is CBPAR (Community-Based Participatory Action Research), involving relevant stakeholders in a collaborative engagement process. The project consists of seven stages: preliminary study, material digitalization, creation of a digital platform, dissemination, evaluation, and monitoring. Digital technology was utilized to document the Lentog Tanjung oral tradition through videos, audio recordings, a website-based digital platform, and comics. Prior to the implementation of the engagement activities, research was conducted on the history and existence of Lentog Tanjung. The results indicate that digitalizing oral traditions can strengthen community connections with their cultural heritage, particularly among younger generations, and enhance community awareness of the importance of preserving local traditions through modern technology. Digitalization appears to be a promising method for documenting and disseminating the Lentog Tanjung oral tradition, thus prolonging its lifespan amidst globalizations. This project contributes to the development of local cultural preservation strategies through innovative, technology-based approaches.

Keywords: collective memory, oral tradition, lentog tanjung, digitalization, intangible cultural heritage

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INTRODUCTION

The preservation of intangible cultural heritage is a shared responsibility to ensure that unique cultural identities and values remain alive and continue to flourish within society (Ulumuddin, Biantoro, Nurrochsyam, Pratiwi, and Julizar, 2018; Ibrahim, 2018). One region that possesses intangible cultural heritage in the form of traditional cuisine intertwined with oral tradition (folklore) is Tanjungkarang Village, Jati Subdistrict, Kudus Regency. The cultural heritage in question is *Lentog Tanjung* (Mawanti, Gumilar, and Nastiti, 2023; Bashori, 2023).

Lentog Tanjung is a combination of the words *lentog* and *tanjung*. The term *lentog* refers to 'soft

and plump', describing a type of rice cake (*lontong*) that is larger and not elongated, unlike similar rice cakes found in other regions (*lontong* is a food made from rice wrapped in banana leaves, usually cylindrical in shape). Meanwhile, *tanjung* refers to the place of origin of this cuisine, Tanjungkarang Village. As a tradition, this cuisine holds historical significance within the Islamic culture of the Tanjungkarang community. *Lentog Tanjung*, as a tradition, has been orally passed down from generation to generation, becoming a cultural legacy that enriches the social and spiritual life of the community.

Syamsuddin, the caretaker of the sacred site of Mbah Kulah or Mbah Sukesu (interview, 2024), along with several residents of Tanjungkarang, recounted that the story of Lentog Tanjung began

when Sunan Kudus assigned Mbah Sukesi, one of his disciples, to build a mosque in the southern region of Kudus. The mosque's construction, intended to be completed in one night, failed because it was discovered by a woman who was cleaning rice of dust at the same time. Mbah Sukesi then told the people of Tanjungkarang that one day, sellers of rice would lose business while sellers of porridge would thrive. Inspired by Mbah Sukesi's words, the residents of Tanjungkarang, who initially sold rice, shifted to selling *lontong* or *Lentog* instead.

Lentog Tanjung continues to exist as a culinary specialty in Kudus, and since 2005, a dedicated culinary area for Lentog Tanjung has been established (AR, interview, 2024). However, as a tradition, its existence warrants scrutiny, especially among younger generations. This is due to various changes occurring across all aspects of life, including traditions and culture. Globalization has negatively impacted Nusantara's culture, both directly and indirectly (Cahyawati, 2022). Ermawan (2017) emphasized that globalization poses challenges in the process of passing down Nusantara's culture and traditions to future generations, leading to the contamination of the nation's character with foreign cultural influences.

Moreover, the marginalization of local cultures due to external influences is a plausible phenomenon (Anista, 2023). Lifestyle changes, the spread of mass media, and the lack of appreciation for local cultural heritage are some of the factors contributing to the sidelining of these traditions. Amid these challenges, the digitalization of intangible cultural heritage emerges as a promising alternative to preserve and strengthen the collective memory of society regarding Nusantara's culture (Sunarti & Bafadhal, 2022), particularly the oral tradition of Lentog Tanjung.

Collective memory refers to the shared memories held by a community, playing a crucial role in shaping identity and social cohesion. In this context, preserving the collective memory of Lentog Tanjung is essential, as this culinary tradition is not merely food but also a representation of the cultural identity and history of the Tanjungkarang community, which must be passed down through generations. Neglecting the preservation of Lentog Tanjung means allowing a vital part of the Tanjungkarang community's history and oral tradition to erode over time, ultimately threatening the loss of their cultural identity.

The digitalization of cultural heritage serves as a key measure to safeguard cultural preservation by

leveraging contemporary technology in the process (Agustinova, 2022). Research on the digitalization of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage has been carried out. Agustinova (2022) highlights the importance of digitalizing cultural heritage sites to facilitate cultural promotion, both locally and internationally, as well as to encourage public participation in their preservation. Nur'aeni, Anwar, and Hermawan (2022) demonstrate a correlation between cultural heritage preservation through digitalization and the transliteration of prayers attributed to Kanjeng Nabi Khidir.

For intangible cultural heritage, digitalization has shed light on the revitalization of Damar Kurung culture (Sakre and Koeshandari, 2019) and preserved the cultural values of dance art museums and Toraja folklore using telematics technology (Rumpa, Gasong, Sampelawang, and Kayang, 2018) through documentary videos. Similarly, Mentari and Syahputra (2024) digitalized the cultural heritage of *guritan*, *rejung*, and *tandut* through documentary videos. In short, digitalizing intangible cultural heritage serves as a step towards preserving such heritage, especially for future generations. It also fosters public engagement and acts as an educational tool for cultural learning (Revianur, 2020).

The oral tradition of Lentog Tanjung has undergone digitalization efforts several times. For instance, Setiawan and Bastian (2019) created an interactive culinary web platform featuring Nusantara cuisine, which positively impacted tourism sector revenues. More recently, Nugroho (2024) developed a web-based e-LKPD with an ethnomathematics theme centered on Lentog Tanjung. The results showed positive responses and improved students' literacy skills. Apart from digitalization, other transformation efforts have been undertaken, such as destination branding for the Lentog Tanjung culinary area (Christiawan, Bramantya, and Susanto, 2014), incorporating Lentog Tanjung as a motif for batik designed by the Manjing Werni Batik Community (KBMWI) on the slopes of Mount Muria (Sa'diyah, 2018), and creating illustrated books as informational media (Mawanti, Gumilar, and Nastiti, 2023).

Unlike previous research or community engagement initiatives, this program introduces the Lentog Tanjung digital platform, which features the history of Lentog Tanjung, information about Kudus, comics, and a documentary video on Lentog Tanjung.

Through the use of digital technology, this initiative aims to: 1) Strengthen the collective memory of Tanjungkarang Village residents

regarding the Lentog Tanjung oral tradition, 2) Provide a meaningful contribution to fostering pride and cultural identity among the local community, and 3) Enable the community to reconnect with their cultural wealth and reinforce social cohesion in the face of modern challenges. Additionally, this activity is expected to raise collective awareness among the community to preserve the Lentog Tanjung oral tradition for future generations.

METHODS

This community engagement project employs the CBPAR (Community-Based Participatory Action Research) method, a participatory approach involving relevant stakeholders throughout the engagement process (Burns, Cooke, & Schweidler, 2011). Koch, Selim, and Kralik (2002) highlight a distinctive feature of CBPAR: its focus on justice, fostering collaboration between participants and academics/researchers to achieve sustainable positive outcomes for the community (Friedman, 2018). The method emphasizes addressing practical issues faced by the community (Putri, 2021).

In this project, the *community-based* aspect refers to the people of Tanjungkarang Village, Kudus. The *participatory* component includes relevant stakeholders, such as the Kudus Department of Culture, the Tanjungkarang village government, Lentog Tanjung culinary vendors, history and cultural practitioners, and the younger generation of Tanjungkarang, especially students from SD Negeri 1 Tanjungkarang. The *action-based and oriented* aspect focuses on strengthening the collective memory of the Tanjungkarang community regarding the oral tradition of Lentog Tanjung through the digitalization of intangible cultural heritage.

There are seven main steps to implementing this activity, namely:







- 1) Preliminary Study: The initial step involves conducting a preliminary study to gain a deeper understanding of the Lentog Tanjung oral tradition and the cultural context of Tanjungkarang Village. This study includes collecting primary and secondary data on the history, meaning, and practices of the Lentog Tanjung tradition, as well as analyzing the social, economic, and cultural conditions of the Tanjungkarang community. Data collection techniques include field studies and interviews with 20 informants, comprising representatives from the Kudus government through the Department of Culture, the Tanjungkarang

village government, the caretaker of Mbah Sukesi's shrine, and Lentog Tanjung vendors. Details are illustrated in the following table.

Table 1. List of Research Informants

No	Initial Name	Gender	Age (years)	Position
1	SSN	F	57	Head of the Dinas Kebudayaan Kabupaten Kudus
2	SM	M	-	Head of Tanjung Karang Village
3	WD	F	-	Fifth Grade Teacher at SD Negeri 1 Tanjungkarang
4	TN	M	-	English Teacher at SD Negeri 1 Tanjungkarang
5	SY	M	-	Grave Keeper of Mbah Sukesi
6	RN	M	36	Lentog Seller, third generation (Mbah Saepah – Pak Mitro)
7	ST	M	48	Lentog Seller, third generation
8	AR and AN	F and M	53	Lentog Seller, third generation
9	AM	F	47	Lentog Seller, third generation
10	AF	F	63	Lentog Seller, second generation (Pak Ndek)
11	IY and SN	F and M	72	Lentog Seller, first generation since the 90s
12	SK	F	46	Lentog Seller, fourth generation
13	KF	F	43	Lentog Seller, second generation, resident of Undaan Tengah
14	RD	F	50	Lentog Seller, third generation
15	RM	F	-	Lentog Seller
16	SS	F	41	Lentog Seller, third generation
17	UM	F	36	Lentog Seller, third generation
18	UY	F	36	Lentog Seller, third generation
19	AM	F	30	Lentog Seller, third generation
20	FR	F	24	Lentog Seller, fourth generation

Table 2. Data Collection Documentation as Preliminary Study

<p>The Lentog Tanjung culinary center on Jl. Kudus-Purwodadi, Central Java (Personal documentation, December 2023)</p> 	<p>"Pikulan", the portable selling tool for Lentog Tanjung, before it became stationed in a kiosk (Personal documentation, December 2023)</p> 
<p>Lentog, the ingredient for making Lentog Tanjung, similar to lontong but larger (Personal documentation, December 2023)</p> 	<p>Portrait of the legendary Lentog Tanjung by Pak Ndek, since 1952 (Personal documentation, January 2024)</p> 
<p>The inscription of Mbah Sukesi's legacy as the originator of Lentog Tanjung (Personal documentation, January 2024)</p> 	<p>Mbah Sukesi's legacy site, the pioneer of lentog (Personal documentation, January 2024)</p> 

- 2) Program Planning: After understanding the context and the issues at hand, the community service program planning was carried out. This planning includes setting goals, targets, and strategies to strengthen the community's collective memory of the Lentog Tanjung oral

tradition through the digitalization of intangible cultural heritage. The program plan also includes the allocation of resources, activity schedule, and budget planning.

- 3) **Material Collection:** The next step is the collection of materials related to the Lentog Tanjung oral tradition through various methods, such as interviews with community figures who preserve the tradition, audio and video documentation, as well as collecting stories related to the Lentog Tanjung tradition.
- 4) **Material Digitalization:** The next stage involves the digitalization of the collected materials. This includes the processes of recording, editing, and storing the digital materials in formats that can be accessed and preserved properly.
- 5) **Digital Platform Creation:** To ensure accessibility and sustainability, a digital platform was created that can be accessed by the Tanjungkarang Village community. This platform was designed to store and share digital content related to the Lentog Tanjung oral tradition, including photos, videos, written texts, and comics.
- 6) **Dissemination:** The dissemination of the digital platform at SD Negeri 1 Tanjungkarang (21 fifth-grade students) aims to introduce and familiarize the Lentog Tanjung tradition to the younger generation through familiar and interactive media, so that students not only learn how to create Lentog Tanjung but also appreciate the historical and cultural values contained within it.
- 7) **Evaluation and Monitoring:** During and after the implementation of the program, an evaluation was conducted to assess the effectiveness and impact of the community service. The results of this evaluation are used to improve and refine the program.

Through the use of CBPAR, this community service reflects a collaborative approach that actively involves the community in all stages, from planning to the implementation of digitalization, as a concrete step to preserve and revitalize the Lentog Tanjung tradition.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digital Platform Implementation and Documentation

The application of science and technology (IPTEK) is key to facilitating the digitalization of intangible cultural heritage, specifically the oral

tradition of Lentog Tanjung, to strengthen the collective memory of the people of Tanjungkarang Village. Digital technologies such as audio and video recording, digital processing, and digital platforms are used to record, edit, and package high-quality digital content about this tradition. The development of a digital platform was carried out to store and share digital content related to this tradition, designed to be easily accessible by the community, including the younger generation.

Below are the results of the developed platform:

Digital Platform Page

The digital platform page for the oral tradition of Lentog Tanjung can be visited via the following link: <https://sites.google.com/mail.unnes.ac.id/lentog-tanjung>

Video Content

The platform page contains a video explaining several versions of the Lentog Tanjung Legend circulating in the community in the form of a story. The video includes subtitles, making it accessible for the hearing-impaired.



Figure 1. Video display in the digital platform

Photos and Captions

Photos and Captions on the page function to explain the details of the culinary and oral tradition of Lentog Tanjung. Some of the photos include images of gardens, monuments, and the Lentog Tanjung center.



Figure 2. Photo display and captions in the digital platform

Digital Comics

The e-comic features a humorous story about the culinary and oral tradition of Lentog Tanjung. This e-comic aims to attract the interest of young audiences to learn about this tradition.

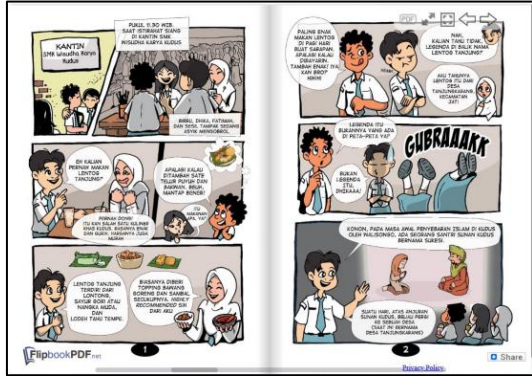


Figure 3. E-comic in the digital platform

Activity Documentation

The dissemination activity was conducted as a means of spreading the idea of strengthening the collective memory of the younger generation in Tanjungkarang Village. This activity was carried out at SD Negeri 1 Tanjungkarang using a participatory approach.



Figure 4. Socialization of the digital platform at SD Negeri 1 Tanjungkarang

Increased Cultural Awareness

A total of 72% of the 21 fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 1 Tanjungkarang stated that they often enjoyed Lentog Tanjung cuisine. However, they rarely heard stories about Lentog Tanjung (56%). Currently, they also seldom hear the narratives behind Lentog Tanjung cuisine. Therefore, the students (as respondents) expressed that it is highly important to preserve the oral tradition of Lentog Tanjung (90% stated it as very important).

Meanwhile, 63% of respondents mentioned that it is not easy to access information about Lentog Tanjung through the internet or applications.

Hence, digital media was chosen by respondents as the preferred means to preserve the Lentog Tanjung oral tradition. Among the digital options, the internet and video were the respondents' top choices. Based on this data, it is crucial to strengthen the collective memory of the Lentog Tanjung oral tradition through digitalization processes.

Digital Media for Preserving Oral Traditions

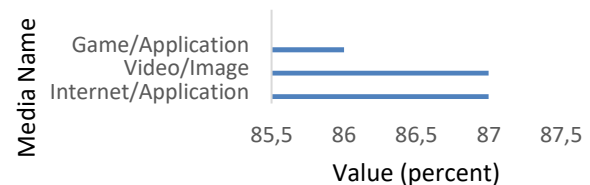


Figure 5. Digital Media for Preserving Oral Traditions

Strengthening the Collective Identity of the Village Community

Based on the questionnaire data, 90% of respondents (21 students from grade V of SD Negeri 1 Tanjungkarang) expressed pride in the culture of Tanjungkarang village through learning the oral tradition of Lentog Tanjung. Not only that, respondents also strongly agreed to encourage their friends or others to learn about Lentog Tanjung (86% agreement). Digital media has proven to be very helpful in preserving the Lentog Tanjung tradition to prevent it from disappearing or becoming extinct (90% found it very important).

A different perspective on strengthening the collective memory of Lentog Tanjung for the people of Tanjungkarang village was shared by the government. According to an interview, the government plays a role in the preservation of Lentog Tanjung. In addition to establishing a Lentog Tanjung culinary center on the Kudus-Purwodadi road in Tanjungkarang village, Jati district, the government has also supported small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through initiatives such as granting patents, establishing the Koprataselen Cooperative (Lentog Tanjung Cooperative), and issuing certificates for the unique recipes of individual vendors (SM, interview 2024).

To ensure the continuity of Lentog Tanjung as a culinary tradition and oral heritage, the Tanjungkarang village government organizes a regular procession every Friday Pahing in the "Big Month", once a year. This procession involves all Lentog vendors and the community of

Tanjungkarang village. The procession is conducted on foot from Mbah Sukesi's tomb to the Lentog Tanjung market, located behind the village hall. The participants in the procession are divided into several contingents, including the village government, community or religious leaders, Lentog vendors, and residents from RW 1 to RW 7. The procession serves not only as a means of preservation but also as a symbolic tribute to Mbah Sukesi, the historical figure behind Lentog Tanjung (SM, Interview 2024).

Similar efforts are also being made by the Cultural Office of Kudus Regency. They have worked to obtain a patent for Lentog Tanjung through the Kudus Bappeda and the Ministry of Law and Human Rights of Central Java. In addition, Lentog Tanjung has been promoted in Jakarta (at the Kudus Community Forum event) alongside other traditional Kudus foods such as soto kebo, sate kebo, and keong strutup (SSN, Interview 2023).

In addition to the government's efforts, private entities are also helping to preserve Lentog Tanjung. UY (interview, 2023), a Lentog Tanjung seller, mentioned that Teh Sosro had provided capital since 2000, helping her grow her business. Similarly, AR-AN (interview, 2024), who has been selling since 1984, was able to improve her stall thanks to sponsorship and capital from Sosro. In contrast, ST (interview, 2023) has been sponsored by Djarum at every event they organize. Meanwhile, RN (interview, 2023) had the opportunity to collaborate with Bank Rakyat Indonesia and the Kudus Tourism Office in terms of funding.

Lentog Tanjung vendors play a central role in preserving the recipe and ensuring the continuation of this tradition and culinary heritage for future generations. FR and AM (interview, 2023), young Lentog vendors, stated that Lentog Tanjung is a family business passed down through generations in Tanjungkarang. Many vendors inherit the business from their great-grandparents. KF (interview, 2023) and AF (interview, 2024) are now continuing their parents' business as the second generation. RN, ST, RD, SS, UM, UY, and AM (interview, 2023) are continuing their grandparents' business as the third generation. Meanwhile, SK and FR (interview, 2023) are continuing their great-grandparents' business as the fourth generation. The vendors are committed to maintaining the recipe and the quality of the taste despite the rising prices of raw materials (AF, interview, 2023) and ensuring the business is passed down to their children so that it does not disappear, in line with the wishes of their

children (AF, SK, SS, and UM, interview, 2023).

Evaluation of the Lentog Tanjung Digitalization Program

The Lentog Tanjung digitalization program in Tanjungkarang Village has successfully provided a platform to preserve and strengthen the community's collective memory of oral traditions and culinary heritage that have been passed down for decades. Through the use of digital platforms, information about the history, cultural significance, and the process of making Lentog Tanjung is now more accessible to the broader public, including younger generations. It is even presented in more engaging forms such as a comic and an educational video. This approach is seen as promising in documenting oral knowledge that was previously only shared verbally. Additionally, the program has helped foster a sense of pride among the local community for their cultural heritage, reflected in the active participation of residents in the process of collecting and curating digital content.

However, evaluations have revealed several challenges that need to be addressed for the optimization of this digitalization program. One of the challenges is the limited access to technology for some villagers, particularly the elderly, who are not accustomed to using digital devices. Moreover, the ongoing maintenance and updating of digital content is also a challenge to ensure the relevance of the information presented.

Therefore, to overcome the above obstacles, the Lentog Tanjung digitalization program needs to be supported by technology training for the community and collaboration with external parties, such as local government or educational institutions, to ensure the sustainability of the project and maximize its impact.

The Role of Digitalization in Strengthening Collective Memory

Digitalization plays a crucial role in strengthening the collective memory of Tanjungkarang Village by recording, storing, and disseminating various forms of oral traditions such as Lentog Tanjung in digital format. Through digitalization, the stories and cultural values contained within this tradition can be permanently documented, making it easier for future generations to access and understand them. Digitalization also facilitates the storage of data in various formats such as text, audio, and video, which can present local cultural richness in a more vivid and interactive way. This step is effective in preserving the authenticity and historical value of the tradition

in a form that can be accessed anytime and anywhere, even amidst changing times. Furthermore, digitalization also provides a broader reach while strengthening local culture, fostering a sense of ownership, and encouraging participation in preserving traditions within each generation.

CONCLUSION

Digitalization has become an important step in strengthening the collective memory of intangible cultural heritage, passed down from generation to generation. In the case of Lentog Tanjung, which holds the collective memory of the people of Tanjungkarang Village, Jati District, Kudus Regency, digitalization efforts were carried out through the creation of a digital platform featuring a video, the history of Lentog Tanjung, narratives about Kudus regional diversity, a Lentog Tanjung comic, and photos of locations with explanatory narratives at the Lentog Tanjung culinary center. This step is an innovative move in strengthening the collective memory of the oral tradition of Lentog Tanjung culinary heritage. The digitalization program of the Lentog Tanjung oral tradition has successfully helped reinforce the collective memory of the people of Tanjungkarang Village, Kudus, regarding their cultural heritage. Through data collection, documentation, and digital distribution, the stories and cultural values embedded in the Lentog Tanjung oral tradition are now more easily accessible and understood by the younger generation. This digitalization also provides a new space for the community to celebrate and promote local cultural identity, while presenting the oral tradition of Lentog Tanjung culinary heritage as part of the cultural wealth that remains relevant in the modern era. This program is expected to serve as a model for the preservation of other local traditions in Kudus and other regions, ensuring that the collective memory of the community continues to thrive and be passed down through generations.

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Interviews (Initial Name)

Interview with Mr. SM (Head of Tanjungkarang Village, Jati District, Kudus Regency), December 2023.

Interview with Mrs. SSN (Head of the Cultural

- Office of Kudus Regency), December 2023.
- Interview with Mrs. WD (Fifth-Grade Teacher at SD Negeri 1 Tanjungkarang), July 30, 2024.
- Interview with Mr. TN (English Teacher at SD Negeri 1 Tanjungkarang), July 30, 2024.
- Interview with Mr. SY (Caretaker of Mbah Kulah), January 6, 2024.
- Interview with Mr. RN (Lentog Tanjung Culinary Seller), December 24, 2023.
- Interview with Mr. ST (Lentog Tanjung Culinary Seller), December 26, 2023.
- Interview with Mrs. AR and Mr. AN (Second-Generation Lentog Tanjung Culinary Sellers), August 4, 2024.
- Interview with Mrs. AM (Lentog Tanjung Culinary Seller), December 24, 2023.
- Interview with Mrs. AF (Lentog Tanjung Culinary Seller), January 7, 2024.
- Interview with Mrs. IY and Mr. SN (Husband and Wife Lentog Tanjung Culinary Sellers), January 6, 2024.
- Interview with Mrs. SK (Lentog Tanjung Culinary Seller), December 24, 2023.
- Interview with Mrs. KF (Lentog Tanjung Culinary Seller), December 24, 2023.
- Interview with Mrs. RD (Lentog Tanjung Culinary Seller), December 24, 2023.
- Interview with Mrs. RM (Lentog Tanjung Culinary Seller), January 6, 2024.
- Interview with Mrs. SS (Lentog Tanjung Culinary Seller), December 24, 2023.
- Interview with Mrs. UM (Lentog Tanjung Culinary Seller), December 2023.
- Interview with Mrs. UY (Lentog Tanjung Culinary Seller), December 24, 2023.
- Interview with Ms. AM (Lentog Tanjung Culinary Seller), December 24, 2023.
- Interview with Ms. FR (Lentog Tanjung Culinary Seller), December 24, 2023.