

Article

# The symbolism and cultural significance of “Tuei” beverage among the Fantes in Ghana

Patience Darko <sup>1,\*</sup>, Juliana Opoku Yeboah <sup>2</sup>, Francesca Anowie <sup>3</sup>, Esther Kumea Ashun <sup>1</sup>, Florentina Ajibisa <sup>4</sup>,  
Manasseh Edison Komla Amu <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Food and Nutrition Education, University of Education, Winneba, Ghana

<sup>2</sup> Department of Vocational Education, Ola College of Education, Cape Coast, Ghana

<sup>3</sup> Agricultural, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ATVET) Department, Komenda College of Education, Komenda, Ghana

<sup>4</sup> Vocational and Technical Department, Akatsi College of Education, Cape Coast, Ghana

<sup>5</sup> Department of Vocational & Technical Education, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

\*Correspondence: Patience Darko (pdarko@uew.edu.gh)

## Abstract:

**Background:** Traditional foods, once carriers of cultural identity and heritage, are being quietly replaced as globalization and modern ideals redefine the choices of younger generations. This ethnographic study investigated the cultural meaning and symbolism of *Tuei*, an indigenous maize-based beverage, among the Fante people in the Central Region of Ghana. The study aimed to document how *Tuei* is rooted in Fante social and ceremonial life, exploring its role as a symbol of identity, continuity, and tradition. **Methods:** A qualitative approach with semi-structured interviews were done with 7 participants involving one cultural expert, three elders, and three local producers. **Results:** The findings revealed that *Tuei* has a significant role in rites of passage such as marriages, funerals, and naming ceremonies, where it functions as a marker of status and social cohesion. It was daily used as a gesture of hospitality and symbol of community unity. Additionally, the study found that the nutritional benefits of *Tuei* was rich in essential nutrients from maize, which contribute to energy provision and digestion. Some participants also reported its traditional use in promoting digestive health and general well-being. Again, *Tuei* was influenced by modernization which has reduced its consumption among younger generations and elite groups. **Conclusions:** The study concluded with recommendations to strengthen these preservation efforts through educational initiatives, the integration of *Tuei* into cultural festivals, and ongoing community engagement to ensure the continuity of this cultural practice.

**Keywords:** *Tuei*; Traditional Indigenous Beverage; Cultural Symbolism; Fante; Ghana

## How to cite this paper:

Darko, P., Yeboah, J. O., Anowie, F., Ashun, E. K., Ajibisa, F., & Amu, M. E. K. (2025). The symbolism and cultural significance of “Tuei” Beverage among the Fantes in Ghana. *Open Journal of Food and Nutrition*, 4(1), 1–11.

DOI: 10.31586/ojfn.2025.6160

Received: July 1, 2025

Revised: September 3, 2025

Accepted: September 30, 2025

Published: October 6, 2025



**Copyright:** © 2025 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## 1. Introduction

Beverages, defined as liquids produced primarily for human consumption, play a significant role in cultural, social, and nutritional contexts worldwide (Li et al., 2024) [1]. These beverages, ranging from water and tea to alcoholic drinks and traditional concoctions, are integral components of human diets and societal practices. They not only satisfy thirst but also provide essential nutrients, promote social interactions, and embody cultural heritage. In many cultures, traditional beverages are intricately linked to rituals, ceremonies, and daily life, reflecting a community's distinct character and history. In Africa, traditional beverages are often prepared from single or combined cereals, legumes, animal milk, and various plant components, including flowers, sap, and fruits (Ashaolu & Adeyeye, 2024) [2]. Cereal-based beverages, in particular, are prevalent and are made

from grains such as maize (*Zea mays* L.), pearl millet (*Pennisetum glaucum* L.), finger millet (*Eleusine coracana*), and sorghum (*Sorghum bicolor* (L.) Moench) (Xiong *et al.*, 2022) [3]. These beverages hold social, religious, nutritional, and therapeutic significance within traditional settings (Ashaolu & Adeyeye, 2024; Xiong *et al.*, 2022) [2,3].

In Ghana, traditional beverages are a vital part of the nation's diverse cultural heritage. Among the numerous ethnic groups, each community has its own set of traditional drinks, frequently produced using locally available materials and methods (Nimoh *et al.*, 2024; Sefah *et al.*, 2024) [4,5]. These beverages serve not only as consumables but also as transmitters of tradition and symbols of collective beliefs. One such traditional beverage is *Tuei*, a maize-based drink that holds particular significance among the Fante people of the Central Region. *Tuei* is a traditional maize drink that occupies a prominent place among the Fante people of Central Ghana, serving as a symbol of cultural heritage and identity. This indigenous beverage is not only a staple among the Fantes but also plays a crucial role in their social and ceremonial traditions. The production and consumption of *Tuei* are deeply rooted in the Fante community's cultural dynamics, reflecting their agricultural practices, social structures, and customs.

Historically, maize has been an important crop in Ghana, and its grains are commonly used in the production of beverages due to their availability, low cost, and ease of processing (Aboagye *et al.*, 2020; Sefah *et al.*, 2024) [5,6]. Generally, *Tuei* is a traditional drink prepared from sprouted, fermented maize, which is boiled for several hours, depending on the quantity. Salt and sugar are added for taste, and the dark brown colour is enhanced by the addition of caramelized sugar. After cooking, the mixture is allowed to stand for an hour to sediment, after which it is strained to separate the liquid from the residue. Interestingly, both the liquid and the residue are served as drinks, each known by different names among various Ghanaian tribes. The residue, rich in fiber, is called *Tuei* by the Fantes. The lighter portion, more popularly known as street food in Ghana, is referred to as *Asana* by the Hausas, *Ahe* by the Fantes, and *Aliha* by the Ewes.

During social gatherings and festivals, *Tuei* is often served to guests as a gesture of welcome and goodwill. It also plays a significant role in rites of passage, such as naming ceremonies, weddings, and funerals. These practices highlight the cultural significance of *Tuei* in reinforcing social ties and maintaining cultural continuity among the Fantes. Recent studies have shown a growing interest in the nutritional and health benefits of traditional foods and beverages (Peulić *et al.*, 2023) [7]. Nutritionally, traditional maize-based drinks like *Tuei* are rich in essential nutrients, including carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals, contributing positively to the overall diet quality of consumers (Aboagye *et al.*, 2020) [6]. This renewed interest highlights the importance of preserving and promoting indigenous cooking practices as part of cultural heritage and public health strategies.

Given the cultural and nutritional importance of *Tuei*, documenting and studying its symbolism and cultural value is crucial for its preservation for future generations. This study aims to explore the rich cultural significance of *Tuei* among the Fante people, focusing on its symbolic meanings and its integration into Fante traditions.

## 2. Materials and Methods

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the symbolism and cultural significance of *Tuei* among the Fante people in Mankessim, the capital town of the Central Region of Ghana. The qualitative approach was chosen for its effectiveness in providing a deep understanding of complex social phenomena within their natural context (Creswell & Poth, 2018) [8]. An ethnographic research design was adopted, allowing the researchers to immerse themselves in the Fante community to observe, document, and interpret the cultural practices and meanings associated with *Tuei* (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019) [9]. This design facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the cultural context and everyday practices related to *Tuei*. Mankessim,

as both the capital town of the Central Region and a cultural center for the Fante people, was selected as the study area. The town's rich cultural heritage and traditions make it an ideal location for exploring the symbolism and cultural significance of *Tuei*.

The sample size for this study was determined based on the concept of data saturation, which occurs when additional data collection no longer provides new insights or information relevant to the research questions. A total of seven participants were selected using purposive sampling techniques. The participants were chosen based on their relevance to the study, including cultural experts, community elders, sellers of *Tuei*, and other community members who could provide valuable insights into its cultural significance. The primary data collection method was in-depth, interviews. This approach allows for flexibility in questioning while ensuring that key topics are covered. The interview guide (semi-structured) was designed to elicit detailed responses about the history, symbolism, and cultural practices associated with *Tuei*. The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim using Nvivo 21, and analyzed thematically through inductive reasoning with the help of qualitative data analysis software.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Demographics of Respondents

The study involved a total of seven (7) participants, comprising three males and four females. In terms of age, two participants were between 40–49 years, three were aged 50–59 years, and two were 60 years or older. Regarding their occupations, one participant worked as palace staff, two were traders, and four were producers or sellers of *Tuei*.

**Table 1.** Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic	Category	Frequency
Gender	Male	3
	Female	4
Age Group	40–49 years	2
	50–59 years	3
	60+ years	2
Occupation	Palace staff	1
	Traders	2
	Local producers	4
Total		7

#### 3.2. Cultural and Traditional Significance

The study found out that the cultural and traditional significance of *Tuei* was deeply rooted in the Fante community. For all the interviewees, *Tuei* was more than just a drink; it played an important role in everyday life and special ceremonies. It served various purposes, from providing nourishment to representing cultural identity, and its importance was passed down through generations. Interviewees frequently mentioned that *Tuei* was consumed in the early morning. For instance, Interviewee 6 explained that

*“...Tuei served as food when taken early in the morning”*

and was usually enjoyed warm. Interviewee 5 added that

*“Tuei was always taken early in the morning to help with digestion”.*

This aligned with the findings of Tadesse *et al.* (2020) [10], who stated that traditional foods and drinks were key to local health practices and were closely tied to the community's identity. A crucial aspect of *Tuei's* cultural importance lay in its presence during funerals, traditional marriages, naming ceremonies, and festivals. All interviewees mentioned its role in these events, with Interviewee 4 noting that *Tuei* was a

*"... It was a main part of funeral celebrations and was served to people who attended the night vigil."*

This practice strengthened the communal bond during times of loss and mourning. Interviewee 3 also stated

*"...Tuei played a central role in marriage rites."*

These comments suggested that *Tuei* connected families and communities during important life events. According to Rawat *et al.* (2021) [11], traditional beverages not only provided sustenance but also represented the values and beliefs of a community. Apart from *Tuei* cultural significance, it also had the social value for hospitality and identity. Interviewees often mentioned serving it to welcome visitors. Interviewee 4 shared that

*"...Tuei was always offered when visitors came to our homes, especially those from outside the community."*

This illustrated its role in fostering connection and hospitality. This was in consistent with findings by Aka *et al.* (2014) [12], who noted that traditional beverages were vital in building social relationships and community unity. Besides its role in ceremonies and social bonding, *Tuei* held a certain status in the Fante community. Interviewee 6 noted that

*"Tuei representation within the culture was seen in its demand during significant occasions,"*

showing it was tied to the status and customs of the people. Interviewee 5 added that

*"indigenes who were in the diaspora requested Tuei when they called home,"*

showing its significance among those Fante's living abroad. This importance transcended geographical boundaries. Meena *et al.* (2022) [13] discussed how traditional drinks could reflect social status and cultural identity, especially in community settings.

While *Tuei* remained central to these traditions, its cultural significance evolved over time. Both Interviewee 6 and Interviewee 1 mentioned that fewer people were producing and consuming *Tuei*, largely due to modernization and changing preferences among younger generations. This suggested a gradual decline in traditional practices, yet *Tuei* was still deeply embedded in cultural rituals. This evolution was supported by Yilmaz-Akyuz *et al.* (2019) [14], who pointed out that traditional foods and drinks faced challenges from changing lifestyles and globalization but still retained cultural importance as symbols of identity and heritage. Even though the consumption of *Tuei* may have decreased among younger generations, its role as a cultural symbol and social connector remained vital within the Fante community.

### **3.3. Health Benefits and Medicinal**

The health benefits and medicinal value of *Tuei* were frequently mentioned by all the interviewees, showing that it was more than just a traditional drink. It served important health-related purposes and acted as a natural remedy, especially for digestion and

overall well-being. The main health benefit of *Tuei* that interviewees noted was its role in promoting digestive health. Interviewee 6 explained that

*“...Tuei could also prevent constipation because of its fiber content,”*

showing that it was commonly used as a laxative or digestive aid. The fiber made it a natural remedy for digestive issues. Interviewee 3 said that

*“...Tuei helped to wash and clean the stomach,”*

suggesting it had detoxifying properties. Many interviewees, including Interviewee 5, reiterated this, saying that *Tuei* was often consumed early in the morning after an enema or purgative to cleanse the digestive system. This suggests that *Tuei* may have the ability to restore internal balance and remove impurities from the body, making it a form of natural medicine. These findings supported the work of Meena *et al.* (2022) [13], who explained that bioactive components in traditional fermented foods helped digestion and promoted gut health.

Beyond its digestive properties, *Tuei* was also used to treat common illnesses, especially fever. Interviewee 2 noted that

*“...Tuei improved health, especially when suffering from fever,”*

This suggested that the Fante people viewed *Tuei* not just as food but also as a healing drink with curative powers. Its effectiveness in relieving fever likely came from its warm temperature when served and its ability to provide hydration and nutrients during illness. Interviewee 1 also remarked that

*“...Tuei was taken when someone felt weak or needed energy”*

highlighting its restorative effects when someone was unwell. This perspective matched the findings from Tadesse *et al.* (2020) [10], who stated that traditional foods and drinks were often consumed for their health benefits and medicinal properties, particularly during sickness.

Another aspect of *Tuei*'s medicinal value was its ability to satisfy hunger and provide energy. Interviewee 7 referred to

*“Tuei as food that satisfied hunger”.*

Its thick, porridge-like texture made it a dense source of energy, especially for individuals who might have been feeling ill or tired. Similarly, Interviewee 4 mentioned that

*“Tuei was very filling, and because of this, it was used to provide strength when someone felt weak.”*

Its role as an energy-giving beverage underlined how it was deeply embedded in the traditional health practices of the Fante people. Xiong *et al.* (2022) [3] supported this by pointing out that cereal grain-based functional beverages have essential nutrients. Besides being a remedy for existing ailments, *Tuei* was also seen as a preventative measure. Interviewee 1 noted,

*“Tuei was often consumed to prevent illness, particularly digestive issues.”*

Aka *et al.* (2014) [12] echoed that traditional maize beverages have nutrients which is crucial for maintaining health and preventing disease. *Tuei* was consistently linked to its medicinal role as a laxative or purgative. Interviewee 1 pointed out that

*“It was served as an early morning traditional drink and could help empty the bowels”*

after taking a laxative. Interviewee 2 also noted that

*“Tuei could wash and clean the stomach and was usually taken warm early in the morning”.*

*Tuei* was recognized not only as a traditional drink but also as a substantial food item with notable nutritional benefits. Interviewee 6 noted that

*“Tuei served as food when taken early in the morning”*

and accentuated that it “provided high satiety.” This showed that *Tuei* gave a feeling of fullness and could effectively satisfy hunger, making it an important part of the Fante diet. Furthermore, Interviewee 5 highlighted that *Tuei* was meant to prevent constipation and was served early in the morning during funeral celebrations, suggesting that it was valued for its digestive benefits. The fact that *Tuei* was traditionally consumed warm and early in the morning painted its role as a nourishing start to the day. Interviewee 6 also mentioned that

*“It improved health, especially when suffering from fever,”*

This statement gives an idea that *Tuei* was not just a staple food but also a remedy used to alleviate specific health conditions.

### **3.4 Symbolism and Cultural Significance**

The symbolism and cultural significance of *Tuei* reflected its deep integration into the traditions and identity of the Fante people. Interviewees consistently described *Tuei* as more than just a drink; it held profound cultural and symbolic meaning, representing tradition, status, and community bonds. *Tuei* was embedded in Fante traditions and was seen as a symbol of status and cultural identity. Interviewee 5 stated,

*“Tuei is considered a symbol of status, dignity, and customarily serves as a bond among Fantes.”*

This statement highlighted how *Tuei* was not merely consumed for its health benefits but also served as a marker of cultural affiliation and respect within the community. In support of this, Yilmaz-Akyuz *et al.* (2019) [14] noted that traditional beverages often symbolized cultural heritage and identity, serving as important markers of social status and community connection, much like *Tuei* within the Fante culture.

Interviewee 6 elaborated that

*“Tuei was part of the culture of the Fantes and was historically drawn on palace walls as symbols of the people”.*

Akyeampong and Ntewusu (2014) [15] indicated that during the Gold Coast era, the traditional people used these beverages including Rum, Gin and Maize beverages for cultural and ritual purposes. This symbolism tied *Tuei* to a broader historical and cultural narrative emblem of Fante identity. Rawat *et al.* (2021) [11] emphasized the importance of

traditional beverages in community bonding and cultural representation, aligning with the sentiments expressed by Interviewee 6 regarding the significance of *Tuei*.

*Tuei* held a central role in various rituals and ceremonies as Akyeamong and Ntewusu (2014) [15] explained in their study. According to Interviewee 1,

*"Tuei was used during funeral celebrations, particularly as a morning drink after the wake-keeping."*

This ritualistic use of *Tuei* explains its function in marking significant life events and honouring cultural practices. Similarly, Interviewee 5 mentioned that

*"Tuei played a central role during periods of funeral celebrations, naming ceremonies, and traditional marriage rites,"*

indicating its versatility and importance in a range of traditional events. The consistent mention across multiple interviewees emphasized *Tuei's* role in maintaining cultural continuity and its function as a traditional beverage integral to key life events and communal gatherings.

The role of beverages like *Tuei* in rituals was further supported by the work of Meena et al. (2022) [13], who highlighted the cultural importance of traditional foods and drinks in community rituals, stressing that they fostered social cohesion and continuity. This aligned with the interviewees' perspectives on the significance of *Tuei* in communal events. The cultural significance of *Tuei* evolved over time, reflecting broader changes in societal values and practices. Interviewee 4 noted that

*"Tuei's role became less important because of modern ways of life"*

When the participant was further asked why she thinks that way. She said,

*"...the elite don't buy it again; it is only the locals that mostly purchase it."*

This conversation further suggests that the traditional importance of *Tuei* was being challenged by modern influences and changing lifestyles. Interviewee 6, however said that some traditional family still prepare *Tuei* and she does not see it going out of the market anytime soon. "People will understand and will still buy" she said. Interviewee 6 further added that

*"I have trained my daughter on how to prepare the Tuei and she has been the one preparing it at home to be sold in the market."*

In order words, to the interviewee 6, *Tuei* shall always be kept. Further interview revealed that the preservation of *Tuei* was often achieved through oral transmission and family traditions. Interviewee 3 shared that

*"the production of Tuei was a family vocation handed down through generations."*

Such practices were crucial in keeping the tradition alive and ensuring that the cultural significance of *Tuei* endured. Tadesse et al. (2020) [10] and Staller (2021) [16] emphasized the role of generational transmission in preserving traditional foods and beverages.

### **3.5 Evolution and Adaptation**

*Tuei* has experienced significant changes in its cultural importance over the years. Several interviewees, especially the older ones, observed that while *Tuei* once held a central place in Fante life, its importance diminished in the face of modernization. Interviewee 2 reflected on this evolution, noting that the significance of *Tuei* evolved over time. Interviewee 5 added that its continuous role in the cultural and traditional life of the people gradually continues to diminish as a result of sophistication, modernity, and education. Interviewee 3 observed that younger generations did not know much about *Tuei* compared to the older generations.

Even with the challenges posed by modernization, interviewees expressed a strong belief that *Tuei* would continue to play a role in Fante culture. Interviewee 6 mentioned that

*“the number of people in Tuei production keeps reducing over time”*

This indicated that the practice of *Tuei* production might be diminishing. The importance of passing down knowledge from one generation to the next is not happening for *Tuei*. If this continues, it will affect other traditional beverages and drinks. This practice of transferring knowledge and skills is crucial for maintaining the cultural relevance of *Tuei*. Tadesse *et al.* (2020) [10] emphasized similar themes in their exploration of traditional foods and beverages in Eastern Tigray, Ethiopia, noting that family and community involvement in producing and consuming traditional beverages plays a vital role in ensuring their survival amidst modernization.

Moreover, Interviewee 1 expressed confidence in the continued role of *Tuei*, stating that

*“its significance is embedded in the culture of the people as well as the status associated with its usage.”*

As highlighted by Rogerson (2019) [17], the status associated with traditional beverages can strengthen their cultural significance, suggesting that as long as these cultural ties exist, *Tuei* will likely retain some form of relevance in Fante society.

### **3.6. Artistic and Linguistic Expression**

The artistic and linguistic expressions related to *Tuei* show how this traditional drink is part of Fante culture through oral traditions and symbols. *Tuei* appears in oral traditions and artistic forms, but this presence varies across different areas. Interviewee 4 noted there are songs and artworks related to *Tuei* as stated in the palaces at Eyisam/Abor in the Central Region. On the other hand, Interviewee 4 mentioned that there are no songs, dances, or artworks related to *Tuei*, which indicates a lack of broader artistic representation in popular or contemporary forms. This difference points to a gap in documenting and celebrating *Tuei*'s cultural importance through art and performance. It suggests that while *Tuei* has traditional value, its artistic expressions might be limited or localized. Kudita *et al.* (2024) [18] further explained that the role of local knowledge and cultural practices of traditional beverages should be protected and conserved.

Literary and linguistic expressions about *Tuei* are also very limited. Interviewee 6 stated, “There is no literature, proverb, or saying that relates to *Tuei* in Fanteland,” meaning that *Tuei* does not have a prominent place in written or spoken literature beyond oral histories. This lack of documented proverbs or sayings suggests that *Tuei*'s significance is mainly preserved through oral tradition and personal practices, rather than through formal literary forms. Tadesse *et al.* (2020) [10] noted a similar lack of written documentation about traditional foods and beverages in various cultures. Rogerson (2019) [17] argued that when documentation of cultural values fails, cultural heritage dies out.

*Tuei* may have had come linguistic expression but because there were no documentation, we are unable to verify it.

### 3.7. Comparison with Other Cultural Drinks

Interviewees were often comparing *Tuei* to drinks like Pito and Asana, which are also important in various cultural practices across Ghana. Pito is a local drink from the Northern Region, while Asana is common among the Ga people. Both drinks serve similar ceremonial and cultural purposes as *Tuei*. For example, Pito is traditionally used in important events like weddings and funerals, just like *Tuei*. Interviewee 5 clearly stated,

*“The concept of Tuei can be compared with Pito among the people in the Northern Regions of Ghana.”*

This comparison shows that *Tuei* is part of a broader tradition of culturally important drinks used in various life events and community gatherings. Similarly, *Asana* plays a similar role in the cultural practices of the Ga people. Interviewee 6 pointed out,

*“The concept of Tuei in Ghana can be compared to the use of Pito and Ahei or Asana among the Ga and the people in the Northern regions.”*

Tadesse *et al.* (2020) [10] back this up by explaining how traditional drinks are key to cultural practices across different regions. These comparisons show that, while *Tuei* is unique to its specific cultural and regional context. It shares many similarities with other traditional drinks in Ghana. These similarities include their use in ceremonies, their role in social rituals, and their importance in welcoming guests and marking special occasions.

### 3.8. Future of *Tuei*

Despite the effects of modernization and changing lifestyles, many interviewees believe *Tuei* will continue to matter in Fante culture. They understand that, although fewer people are making and drinking *Tuei*, its cultural importance is still upheld through traditional practices and ceremonies. Interviewee 6 shares this optimistic view, stating,

*“Tuei shall always be preserved. As it was traced down to Eyisam and then to Cape Coast by deceased descendants, so has it been passed from parent to children to grandchildren and continues.”*

This highlights how *Tuei* can adapt to modern times while still holding onto its cultural roots. Interviewee 4 also noted that it will continue into the future suggesting a belief in its enduring significance, albeit in a more limited capacity. This sentiment was supported by Rogerson (2019) [17], who discussed the changing dynamics within the sorghum beer industry in South Africa. His work highlighted that while traditional beverages face challenges, there remains strong demand for them, indicating that these drinks can maintain relevance through adaptation and innovation in their production and marketing.

The future of *Tuei* depends heavily on preserving its production methods and cultural importance through family traditions. Older interviewees stress the need to teach younger generations about *Tuei*, including its cultural meaning and how to make it. Tadesse *et al.* (2020) [10] point out that traditional foods and drinks needs to be taught from generation to generation because it helps build community identity. Interviewee 1 said

*“Education should go on for the youth to know, learn and use Tuei in our cultural settings”.*

This call for education to underlines how important it is to pass on knowledge to ensure that *Tuei* remains relevant.

#### 4. Conclusions

The exploration of *Tuei* among the Fante people reveals a rich tapestry of cultural significance, health benefits, and evolving traditions. From its role as a traditional drink consumed in ceremonies and for its medicinal properties to its symbolic association with Fante identity and heritage, *Tuei* occupies a special place in Fante culture. Interviewees highlighted *Tuei*'s dual function as both a food and a laxative, reflecting its integral role in daily life and health practices. However, modernization has led to a gradual decline in its prominence, although its cultural importance remains steadfast among the community. The comparisons with other local drinks, such as *Pito* and *Asana*, underline the common cultural threads woven across different regions in Ghana, while the ongoing tradition of passing down production methods emphasizes the resilience and adaptability of *Tuei*. From the researchers' perspective, while *Tuei* faces challenges due to changing lifestyles and reduced consumption, its future can be preserved through deep-rooted traditions and family knowledge. The commitment of older generations to educate younger ones and maintain the production of *Tuei* ensures its continued relevance in Fante culture.

#### 5. Recommendations

1. Department of Vocational and Technical Education in collaboration with Community leaders and cultural organizations should create and implement educational programmes to teach younger generations about the cultural importance and production methods of *Tuei*. These programmes should include workshops and demonstrations to ensure that the knowledge and skills related to *Tuei* are preserved and passed down effectively.
2. Department of Vocational and Technical Education in liaison with Local government and event organizers should integrate *Tuei* into cultural festivals and public celebrations, such as the annual Oguaa Fetu Afahye. This will not only increase awareness and appreciation of *Tuei* but also support local producers by providing them with a platform to showcase their products and engage with a broader audience.
3. Academic institutions and health researchers should conduct further studies on the health benefits of *Tuei*, particularly its role as a laxative and its nutritional value. Documenting these benefits will contribute to a greater understanding of *Tuei*'s role in traditional medicine and could potentially enhance its value in modern health practices.
4. Producers of traditional drinks should seek partnerships with modern businesses and distributors to introduce *Tuei* to new markets.

**Author Contributions:** “Conceptualization, D.P. and Y.J.O.; methodology, A.F.; software, D.P.; validation, A.E.K., D.P.; formal analysis, D.P., A.F.; investigation, A.F.; resources, D.P.; data curation, Y.J.O.; writing—original draft preparation, A.F.; writing—review and editing, D.P.; visualization, A.E.K.; supervision, D.P.; project administration, D.P. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.”

**Funding:** “This research received no external funding”.

**Data Availability Statement:** Data is available on request from the corresponding author.

**Acknowledgements:** I acknowledge the participants for their time and patience.

**Conflicts of Interest:** “The authors declare no conflict of interest.” “No funders had any role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript, or in the decision to publish the results”.

## References

- [1] Li, S., Liu, X., Wang, L., Wang, K., Li, M., Wang, X., ... & Wang, Z. (2024). Innovative beverage creation through symbiotic microbial communities inspired by traditional fermented beverages: Current status, challenges and future directions. *Critical Reviews in Food Science and Nutrition*, 64(28), 10456-10483.
- [2] Ashaolu, T. J., & Adeyeye, S. A. (2024). African functional foods and beverages: a review. *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology*, 22(1), 142-177.
- [3] Xiong, Y., Zhang, P., Warner, R. D., Shen, S., & Fang, Z. (2022). Cereal grain-based functional beverages: From cereal grain bioactive phytochemicals to beverage processing technologies, health benefits and product features. *Critical reviews in food science and nutrition*, 62(9), 2404-2431.
- [4] Nimoh, F., Prah, S., Yamoah, F., & Agyei, D. (2024). Consumer perception and willingness to pay for packaged asaana: a traditional drink in Ghana. *British Food Journal*, 126(3), 1147-1165.
- [5] Sefah, W., Engmann, F. N., Adi, D. D., & Serwah, A. (2024). Health and nutritional perspectives of traditional and ethnic foods in the northern belt of Ghana. In *Nutritional and Health Aspects of Food in Western Africa* (pp. 111-132). Academic Press.
- [6] Aboagye, G., Gbolonyo-Cass, S., Kortei, N. K., & Annan, T. (2020). Microbial evaluation and some proposed good manufacturing practices of locally prepared malted corn drink (“asaana”) and Hibiscus sabdarifa calyxes extract (“sobolo”) beverages sold at a university cafeteria in Ghana. *Scientific African*, 8, e00330.
- [7] Peulic, J., Obradovic, A., Vukadinović Jurišić, M., & Obradović, J. (2023). The influence of anthropometric characteristics on swimming speed in adolescent swimmers. *Exercise and Quality of Life*, 15(2), 33–40. <https://doi.org/10.31382/eqol.231204>
- [8] Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- [9] Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2019). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (4th ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315146027>
- [10] Tadesse, N. S., Beyene, G. F., Hordofa, T. B., & Hailu, A. A. (2020). Traditional foods and beverages in Eastern Tigray of Ethiopia. *Journal of Ethnic Foods*, 7(1), 16.
- [11] Rawat, J. M., Pandey, S., Debbarma, P., & Rawat, B. (2021). Preparation of alcoholic beverages by tribal communities in the Indian himalayan region: A review on traditional and ethnic consideration. *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, 5, 672411.
- [12] Aka, S., Konan, G., Fokou, G., Dje, K. M., & Bonfoh, B. (2014). Review on African traditional cereal beverages. *Am. J. Res. Commun*, 2(5), 103-153.
- [13] Meena, K. K., Taneja, N. K., Jain, D., Ojha, A., Saravanan, C., & Mudgil, D. (2022). Bioactive components and health benefits of maize-based fermented foods: A review. *Biointerface Research in Applied Chemistry*, 13(4), 338.
- [14] Yilmaz-Akyuz, E., Ustun-Aytekin, O., Bayram, B., & Tutar, Y. (2019). Nutrients, bioactive compounds, and health benefits of functional and medicinal beverages. In *Nutrients in beverages* (pp. 175-235). Academic Press.
- [15] Akyeampong, E., & Ntewusu, S. A. (2014). Rum, gin and maize: deities and ritual change in the Gold Coast during the Atlantic Era (16th century to 1850). *Afriques. Débats, méthodes et terrains d’histoire*, (05).
- [16] Staller, J. E. (2021). Maize in Andean food and culture: interdisciplinary approaches. *Andean Foodways: Pre-Columbian, Colonial, and Contemporary Food and Culture*, 283-310.
- [17] Rogerson, C. M. (2019). African traditional beer: changing organization and spaces of South Africa’s sorghum beer industry. *African Geographical Review*, 38(3), 253-267.
- [18] Kudita, S., Schoustra, S., Mubaiwa, J., Smid, E. J., & Linnemann, A. R. (2024). Substitution of maize with sorghum and millets in traditional processing of Mahewu, a non-alcoholic fermented cereal beverage. *International Journal of Food Science & Technology*, 59(3), 1421-1431.